

17.523: Ethnicity and Race in World Politics-Fall 2005

Prof. M. Nobles

Lecture 13: International Dimensions of National Ethnopolitical Conflicts

Back to the International stage.

- When thinking about these conflicts, we think that they're local but they have international dimensions.
- In order to get a sense of the international dimensions of national conflicts, you must have a sense of the international arena.
- International Relations (IR) Theory
 - The world is an anarchic place
 - No governing body. There is no world government.
 - States behave according to their own state's interests.
 - Countries routinely sign on to human rights treaties and then ignore them.
 - Separate supra-national organizations.
 - NATO
 - North Atlantic Treaty Organizations-originally formed during the Cold War to protect Western Europe against the Soviet bloc.
 - European Union
 - Euro is doing very well, better than the dollar.
 - What are the aspirations of the EU?
 - Economic unity
 - Open/Common borders
 - Regional Courts
 - Institutionalize cooperation among European states
 - Advantage: The ability to compete against the U.S. economically and diplomatically.
 - OPEC
 - NAFTA
 - North America Free Trade Agreement
 - Reduce tariffs in trade
 - Between Canada and Mexico
 - Part of the idea was that it would bring economic prosperity for all three countries.
 - Student: we were losing a lot of jobs to the other countries.
 - Environmentalists were against NAFTA because when companies moved to Mexico, they didn't obey American environmental standards, which they didn't have to.
 - What would the labor activists have demanded from NAFTA: beef up labor laws (higher wages, health insurance, etc.)

- Environmentalists wanted NAFTA to require tougher environmental standards for American companies when moving to Mexico.
- OAS
 - Organization of American States
 - Members: U.S. Caribbean Islands, Canada, South and Central America
 - It's been instrumental in providing cover for U.S. policy in the region. (e.g. when the U.S. overthrew Aristide of Haiti, we sought the support of the OAS.)