

Assignment: Chanda, Ch. 5

Discussion questions:

1. Why can it be said that Seville gave birth to the modern era of globalization? (146)
2. Who was Magellan, when and where did he travel?
3. What accounts do we have prior to the 15th century of expeditions to Africa? (148-151)
4. When and where did the Chinese explorations take place? How did they differ from the European explorations? What were the most important Chinese engagements with other countries? (151-153)
5. When did Marco Polo travel? What motivated his trip? Why did his journeys have more impact than those of others who followed similar routes? What are some of the debates about his Description of the World? Do they matter? (154-156)
6. Religious motives pushed several early migrations. What was Voyages of Benjamin? Who was ibn Battuta? When, where and for how long did he travel? (156-159)
7. What were some of the most important events and who were some of the most important figures in New World exploration? How did Portugal acquire a spice monopoly? (159-161)
8. Trace the development of the slave trade. What caused the turn from open migration to barriers against immigration? (164-168)
9. What does Chanda mean when he says: “the direction of population movement was reversed” (168-172)?

Assignment: “Gogol”

Discussion questions:

1. In the next few weeks we will be talking about globalization and cultural displacement in “Gogol,” *Mississippi Masala*, and *How the García Girls Lost Their Accents*. Look carefully at the relationship of Gogol’s parents to their country of origin. What cultural characteristics made it easy in some ways, hard in others to assimilate to the USA? As we read these novels and watch the film, bear in mind the importance of the protagonists’ cultures of origin and how they shape their relationship to their new country.

2. Gender and family dynamics are challenging areas for immigrant families. Choose one of the characters in “Gogol” develop a case for or against the liberating aspects of immigration. What does the character gain? What is lost?
3. Acceptance in a culture that is not one’s own—be it Massachusetts for Ashoke and his family, New York City for the García Girls, Mississippi for Mina’s family or the Creole-speaking blacks in Martinique—requires acquisition of a new way of speaking or a new language. Look at the ways that power, economy and cultural displacement shape each of the protagonist’s lives in “Gogol.” (We will look at the other novels and film later.) Analyze the emotional valence of language acquisition: what is lost, what is gained?
4. What role does education play in the assimilation of Ashoke and his family to the U.S.?
5. If you have seen the film “The Namesake,” or have read the novel, think about what is gained by these longer versions of “Gogol.” Is anything lost?

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