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[Adventures in Reaction]

TUESDAY, AUGUST 30, 2011

## Clark on the History of the Ruling Class

Gregory Clark, author of the already-classic *A Farewell to Alms*, has a seminar presentation consisting of his new book-in-progress, [Was there ever a Ruling Class? 1,000 years of Social Mobility](#) (pdf). This came via [race/history/evolution notes](#), which has printed some excerpts. The general idea is that in England over the past thousand years, the line between the ruling class and the the rest of the population has been amazingly fluid, and characterized by a great amount of upward and downward mobility. Certainly the downward part follows almost as a matter of course given the thesis of *A Farewell to Alms*, namely that the greater number of surviving children of the middle and upper classes as compared to the lower classes ensured that the descendents of those comprising the middle and upper classes would eventually come to comprise most of the entire population. This can help explain the secular decline in violence, the rise of middle class values, and the start and location of the Industrial Revolution. In short, genetics has had a decisive effect on the economies of the Western world.

All of the excerpts printed at r/h/e notes are worth reading, but here's Clark's tentative conclusion:

What is the meaning and explanation of these results? This is a much more contentious and difficult area. The book argues for the following conclusions:

A. Why can't the ruling class in a place like England defend itself against downwards mobility? If the main determinants of economic and social success were wealth, education and connections then there would be no explanation of the consistent tendency of the rich to regress to the society mean. Only if genetics is the main element in determining economic success, if nature trumps nurture, is there a built-in mechanism that ensures the observed regression. That mechanism is the intermarriage of the rich with those from the lower classes. Even though there is strong assortative mating, since this is based on the phenotype created in part by chance and luck, those of higher than average innate talent tend to systematically mate with those of lesser ability and regress to the mean.

B. Racial, ethnic and religious differences allow long persisting social stratification through the barriers they create to this intermarriage. Thus for a society to achieve complete social mobility it must achieve cultural homogeneity. Multiculturalism is the enemy of long run equality.

There's something unique about the institutions of white, and especially, British, lineage. (Recall that even the other advanced nations of Europe, such as France and Germany, lagged in the Industrial Revolution and had arguably much stormier political histories.) It wouldn't be surprising that the quintessential institution associated with the West, democracy, owed a great deal to the genetics of the people who developed it. The high levels of trust and individuality, for instance, or the value placed on education, hard work, and responsibility: all of these would seem to have some component rooted in genetics, and without them democracy would hardly be possible. (As we are currently seeing.) The well-known strength of Western economies, which have dominated the world for the past 200 years or more, probably owes much to the genetic heritage of Westerners. All of the efforts of economists to discover the institutional bases of Western success, while not wholly misguided, will ultimately fail unless this is taken into account.

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A number of conclusions follow. For instance, the paleoconservative truism, hardly acknowledged by anyone else, that democracy isn't easily exported to countries outside the European pale. Or that turning the U.S. and other white nations into multiracial ones likely foreshadows the formation of a class-ridden, stratified society characterized by outbreaks of communal violence and general antagonism.

The great truth here is one that the larger public, and especially the ruling elite, are either ignorant of or will not allow to be uttered. That is greatly to the detriment of the U.S. and the West.

Posted by Dennis Mangan at 9:40 AM 

0

Labels: [Decline of the West](#)

## 23 comments:

### Anonymous said...

"There's something unique about the institutions of white, and especially, British, lineage. (Recall that even the other advanced nations of Europe, such as France and Germany, lagged in the Industrial Revolution and had arguably much stormier political histories.)"

Interesting that today, Great Britain is doing a lot worse than continental European countries when it comes to underclass behavior.

"A number of conclusions follow. For instance, the paleoconservative truism, hardly acknowledged by anyone else, that democracy isn't easily exported to countries outside the European pale."

Be careful of over-generalizations. East Asians don't seem to have any genetic block to picking up and maintaining democracy. According to Transparency International, Japan, Qatar and Barbados(!) are all perceived as less corrupt than Great Britain. Botswana and Ghana are ranked as less corrupt than Italy.

European countries--particularly northern European countries--and countries founded by their diasporas \*do\* cluster at the top, but other nations have done well on this index.

[8/30/2011 9:57 AM](#)

### Dennis Mangan said...

Speaking of other European countries, in the early 17th century, The Netherlands defeated the greatest European power, Spain, and went on to become the financial and entrepreneurial center of Europe. It fought 3 wars with Britain and founded colonies in both hemispheres. Then what happened? It became a relative backwater.

[8/30/2011 10:06 AM](#)

### Anonymous said...

"East Asians don't seem to have any genetic block to picking up and maintaining democracy"

Those East Asian countries commonly described as democracies are not the kind that most westerners would readily identify with. These systems are characterized by, among other things, the influence of powerful families and their cronies; the politics of personality; and the comparatively small part that actual policies play in elections.

[8/30/2011 10:45 AM](#)

### Anonymous said...

Off Topic

Dennis, have you seen this video yet? Even WN will be shocked. I just e-mailed the link to Auster.

Foreigner on Korean bus verbally abuses elderly couple--all over a misunderstanding

[http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=135\\_1314585645](http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=135_1314585645)



**Dennis Mangan**

A look at the world from a reactionary

perspective, and whatever else I find of interest. Don't look for premiums or coupons, as the cost of the writing blended into this blog prohibits their use. "I ceased in the year 1764 to believe that one can convince one's opponents with arguments printed in books. It is not to do that, therefore, that I have taken up my pen, but merely so as to annoy them, and to bestow strength and courage on those on our own side, and to make it known to the others that they have not convinced us." - Georg Christoph Lichtenberg

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8/30/2011 11:23 AM

**Anonymous said...**

*The great truth here is one that the larger public, and especially the ruling elite, are either ignorant of or will not allow to be uttered. That is greatly to the detriment of the U.S. and the West.*

The ethnic composition of the current ruling elite that has risen to and consolidated power over the past 2 to 3 generations is different from what predominated in the past.

I don't think they're unaware that "that turning the U.S. and other white nations into multiracial ones likely foreshadows the formation of a class-ridden, stratified society characterized by outbreaks of communal violence and general antagonism." Policy papers at major think tanks make statements suggesting this. I think they've been preparing for it and seeking to protect and insulate themselves from it:

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[http://www.alternet.org/story/152173/how\\_the\\_surveillance\\_state\\_protects\\_the\\_interests\\_of\\_the\\_ultra-rich/](http://www.alternet.org/story/152173/how_the_surveillance_state_protects_the_interests_of_the_ultra-rich/)

[http://www.salon.com/news/opinion/glenn\\_greenwald/2011/08/29/terrorism/index.html](http://www.salon.com/news/opinion/glenn_greenwald/2011/08/29/terrorism/index.html)

8/30/2011 11:47 AM

**Anonymous said...**

"Multiculturalism is the enemy of long run equality."

That is the plan.

8/30/2011 1:25 PM

**Anonymous said...**

Anon of the LiveLeak Video: I see the Koreans are just as supine in the face of blackattack as Westerners are. It figures he'd go after the elderly, isn't that their way?

8/30/2011 1:27 PM

**Anonymous said...**

Anon at 1:27. That video really disturbed me. It would be bad enough if this...."man"...was harassing someone his own age but to target the elderly the way he did? No.

Listening to the cries of that woman and seeing the anguish and fear on her face left me a little shaken. My grandmother helped raise me and she was the kindest, sweetest person I have ever met. To think of her being abused like that fills me with rage.

I don't know. I feel like I have a lot more to say about this video but I can't find the words.

8/30/2011 3:27 PM

**Anonymous said...**

This begs the question as to why India functions as a nominal democracy at least in the eyes of the West's elites. It contradicts Clark's theory completely. Being an ethnically and religiously stratified society with high rates of caste only marriages.

8/30/2011 4:15 PM

**alonzo portfolio said...**

That video really is incredible for what it says about black confidence. Would you have to call it a certain level of insanity that leads an American black (reasonable guess from the backwards ballcap?) alone among a group of Koreans in their own country to assume he could get away with hitting a woman? Does it change the analysis that he turned out to be right?

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8/30/2011 4:53 PM

#### Anonymous said...

*This begs the question as to why India functions as a nominal democracy at least in the eyes of the West's elites. It contradicts Clark's theory completely. Being an ethnically and religiously stratified society with high rates of caste only marriages.*

What makes you think India functions like what we generally mean by "democracy"?

Apparently hundreds of millions of Indians, which means at least almost 10% of the population, have no ID and thus no bank account, credit, insurance, government aid, political participation, etc. They practically don't exist as far as politics is concerned.

[http://www.wired.com/magazine/2011/08/ff\\_indiaid/](http://www.wired.com/magazine/2011/08/ff_indiaid/)

8/30/2011 4:57 PM

#### Caleo said...

I apologize for joining in the hijacking of a great thread, but I watched the video from Korea, and do believe it deserves serious commentary.

In the States we are quite used to seeing this type of nonsense and intimidation from the Angry Negro, but that this happened on a bus in Korea, and the guy is alone, well, even a jaded New Yorker like myself is stunned.

This clown has enough money to travel to Korea, and is taking public transportation, and goes off as if he's in the Bronx on the 6 train.

His assumption that he can/will get away with this is amazing in and of itself.

There has to be someone who can find out what happened to this POS, after he gets off the bus, IN KOREA, and what the Korean authorities are doing about this.

I just keep saying to myself... what the hell is this guy doing IN KOREA ?

He's obviously not your average tourist, and don't tell me he's there teaching ESL.

8/30/2011 5:28 PM

#### Anonymous said...

*Those East Asian countries commonly described as democracies are not the kind that most westerners would readily identify with. These systems are characterized by, among other things, the influence of powerful families and their cronies; the politics of personality; and the comparatively small part that actual policies play in elections.*

Huh. In my opinion, this **precisely** describes "western democracy" as practiced in the United States.

8/30/2011 6:17 PM

#### Nanonymouse said...

Clark's work is fascinating. Wonder if the same can be done for China or Japan.

Re: video. All men on that bus should be ashamed of themselves.

8/30/2011 7:05 PM

#### Walter said...

Dennis,

Farewell to Alms was a good book, but at times disappointing. For instance, after Clark demonstrates that the English escape from the Malthusian trap was at least in part genetic, he then, at the end of the books, recommends mass immigration into England. Talk about a major contradiction. I hear that Clark is getting better, however.

There have been other recent studies of other European countries showing that the modern populations are largely descended from the Medieval upper classes.

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It's noteworthy that throughout history, the aristocracy / upper classes of Europe have been described as very fair skinned. Princesses in fairy tales are always described as "fair," and the very notion of "blue blood" denotes fair skin. People who were tan / swarthy were considered lower class.

Historians in the past attributed this to the Volkerwanderung (that nearly all the modern aristocracies in Europe are Germanic) but the idea of the fair-skinned aristocracy existed in ancient Greece and Rome too. And it is probably a matter of selection. Fair skin probably denotes health among all non-Africans so it was heavily selected for, esp. among the upper classes in Europe.

[8/30/2011 7:39 PM](#)

#### Anonymous said...

"This begs the question as to why India functions as a nominal democracy "

Nominal is the operational word here. Spend some time in India. The average IQ of Indians is 81 and the general atmosphere of India reflects this: it's a real shithole.

[8/30/2011 7:41 PM](#)

#### J Weinstein said...

\*\*\*Clark's work is fascinating. Wonder if the same can be done for China or Japan. \*\*\*

There is this unpublished paper by former theoretical physicist Ron Unz.

<http://infoproc.blogspot.com/2011/02/sociobiological-implications-of.html>

[8/30/2011 7:51 PM](#)

#### Anonymous said...

"[T]he idea of the fair-skinned aristocracy existed in ancient Greece and Rome too."

Really? In all of Livy we are never told the color of Hannibal, a point that has intrigued classical scholars for at least a couple of centuries. Yet we can be sure that Hannibal was much darker than a Roman.

The Romans themselves were darker than Anglos. We know that from accounts that Anglo slaves, paraded in Rome as booty, covered themselves in clay to prevent sunburn.

[8/31/2011 4:41 AM](#)

#### Anonymous said...

"intermarriage of the rich with those from the lower classes"

The most prominent public example is of course David Cameron, the British Prime Minister, a direct descendant of King William IV, though from the top side of the blanket.

Interesting how Cameron was drawn to politics, some say from an early age.

[8/31/2011 5:37 AM](#)

#### dearieme said...

"Yet we can be sure that Hannibal was much darker than a Roman." How so?

[8/31/2011 7:36 PM](#)

#### Nanonymouse said...

*Yet we can be sure that Hannibal was much darker than a Roman*

Why? Phoenicians are unlikely to be very different from Lebanese and Jews.

[8/31/2011 8:04 PM](#)

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**hbd chick said...**

*"Racial, ethnic and religious differences allow long persisting social stratification through the barriers they create to this intermarriage. Thus for a society to achieve complete social mobility it must achieve cultural homogeneity. **Multiculturalism is the enemy of long run equality.**"*

how refreshing to read such a statement! not so many academics willing to say this. (never mind politicians, think-tankers, media types, etc...!)

[9/01/2011 6:05 PM](#)

**bgc said...**

hbd chick - "how refreshing to read such a statement!"

But then Greg Clark is a genius - or as near to a genius as we have nowadays.

Thanks for posting this Dennis, a real treat!

[9/02/2011 11:26 AM](#)

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