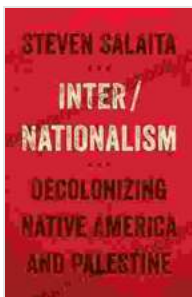


Decolonizing Native America and Palestine: Indigeneity in the Era of Global Resistance

The Indigenous peoples of Native America and Palestine have endured centuries of colonial oppression, land dispossession, and cultural erasure. Despite these shared experiences, the struggles of these two communities are often examined in isolation, overlooking the profound parallels and intersections between their experiences.



Inter/Nationalism: Decolonizing Native America and Palestine (Indigenous Americas) by David L. Lightner

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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This article aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of decolonization in Native America and Palestine, highlighting the historical and contemporary connections between these Indigenous communities. Through a comparative examination, it will shed light on the systemic oppression, land dispossession, and cultural erasure faced by both groups. The article will also explore the strategies and movements employed by Indigenous

peoples in these regions to resist colonial powers and reclaim their sovereignty.

Historical Context: Conquest, Colonization, and Resistance

The Indigenous peoples of Native America and Palestine have a long history of self-governance and cultural autonomy. However, their lives were forever altered with the arrival of European colonizers. In the case of Native America, European conquest and colonization began in the 15th century, with the arrival of Christopher Columbus. The subsequent centuries witnessed the systematic dispossession of Indigenous lands, the forced removal of tribes from their ancestral territories, and the suppression of Indigenous cultures and languages.

Similarly, in Palestine, the arrival of European powers in the 19th century marked the beginning of a new era of colonial rule. The British Mandate of Palestine, which lasted from 1920 to 1948, paved the way for the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. This event led to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their homes and the fragmentation of their land. The Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which began in 1967, has further entrenched the colonial system in Palestine and subjected Palestinians to ongoing oppression and human rights violations.

Despite the overwhelming odds, Indigenous peoples in both Native America and Palestine have never ceased to resist colonial domination. Throughout history, they have fought wars, organized protests, and engaged in other forms of resistance to defend their lands, cultures, and self-determination.

Land Dispossession and Settler Colonialism

Land dispossession has been a central pillar of colonial policies in both Native America and Palestine. Colonizers have used a variety of strategies to seize Indigenous lands, including military conquest, forced treaties, and legal manipulation. In the United States, the Indian Removal Act of 1830 authorized the forced relocation of Native American tribes from their ancestral lands in the Southeast to what is now Oklahoma.

In Palestine, the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 resulted in the mass dispossession of Palestinian land. The Israeli government has continued to expropriate Palestinian land for settlements, military purposes, and other projects. As a result, Palestinians have lost control over more than 80% of their historical homeland.

The dispossession of Indigenous lands has had devastating consequences for both Native American and Palestinian communities. It has disrupted their traditional ways of life, impoverished their economies, and undermined their cultural identity. Furthermore, settler colonialism has led to the displacement of millions of Indigenous peoples, creating a refugee crisis that continues to this day.

Cultural Erasure and Assimilation

In addition to land dispossession, Indigenous peoples in Native America and Palestine have faced systematic cultural erasure and assimilation policies. Colonizers have attempted to suppress Indigenous languages, traditions, and beliefs, and to force them to adopt the dominant culture. In the United States, American Indian boarding schools were established in the late 19th and early 20th centuries with the express purpose of assimilating Native American children into white society.

In Palestine, the Israeli government has implemented various policies aimed at suppressing Palestinian culture and identity. These policies have included the censorship of Palestinian media, the destruction of Palestinian cultural sites, and the imposition of Israeli curricula in Palestinian schools. The Israeli government has also promoted the Judaization of Palestinian land, including the construction of Jewish settlements and the demolition of Palestinian homes.

Cultural erasure and assimilation policies have had a profound impact on Indigenous communities in both Native America and Palestine. They have led to the loss of Indigenous languages, the erosion of traditional customs, and the fragmentation of Indigenous societies.

Strategies and Movements for Decolonization

Despite the challenges they face, Indigenous peoples in Native America and Palestine have continued to resist colonial oppression and pursue decolonization. Their strategies and movements have taken a variety of forms, including

- Armed resistance and uprisings
- Land reclamation and sovereignty movements
- Cultural preservation and revitalization initiatives
- Indigenous rights advocacy and activism
- International solidarity and networking

In recent years, there has been a growing convergence between decolonization movements in Native America and Palestine. Indigenous

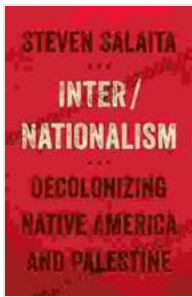
leaders from both communities have come together to share strategies, build alliances, and support each other's struggles. This solidarity has been especially evident in the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement, which aims to pressure Israel to end its occupation of Palestine and respect Palestinian rights.

The struggles for decolonization in Native America and Palestine are ongoing, and the challenges faced by these Indigenous communities remain immense. However, their resilience, determination, and unwavering commitment to self-determination provide hope for a future in which they can live with dignity, justice, and freedom.

By recognizing the shared experiences and interconnectedness of Indigenous struggles around the world, we can contribute to a more just and equitable global order. Decolonization is not just about restoring Indigenous lands and sovereignty, but also about recognizing the inherent value of Indigenous cultures and ways of life. It is about acknowledging the historical and ongoing injustices against Indigenous peoples and working towards a future in which their rights are respected and their voices are heard.

Further Reading

- Decolonizing Palestine: A Conversation with Indigenous Activists from the Americas
- Native American Rights Fund: Decolonization
- Amnesty International: Israel-Palestine:



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