

Review

Reviewed Work(s): *Inter/Nationalism: Decolonizing Native America and Palestine* by Steven Salaita

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essential for scholars, postgraduates and students working on the history of contemporary Iran; the non-academic reader who is interested in Iranian politics and institutions will also find it illuminating and helpful. ✎

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STEVEN SALAITA. *Inter/Nationalism: Decolonizing Native America and Palestine* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2016). Pp. 207. \$22.95 paper. ISBN 9781517901424.

In Steven Salaita's eighth book, *Inter/Nationalism: Decolonizing Native America and Palestine*, he explores the theory of "inter/nationalism," a form of decolonization based on "solidarity, transnationalism, intersectionality, kinship, or intercommunalism" (ix). According to Salaita, inter/nationalism explores geographical borders and political boundaries while looking beyond the nation-state. According to him, the term inter/nationalism is differentiated from internationalism in that it looks at decolonization narratives "across cultures and colonial borders" (xv) – taking a comparative approach to analyzing discourse and power patterns around decolonization, but not necessarily including transnational political discussions about this subject. By focusing on theories of decolonization, the author is "prioritizing matters of liberation rather than merely assessing the mechanics of colonization" (xi). The book is composed of five chapters and an introduction and covers a wide range of topics, wherein the author critiques contested terms, concepts of indigeneity, and state-sanctioned violence. Salaita highlights the similarities and parallels between Native American and Palestinian struggles through the analysis of historical events, political movements, and literary critiques to present a cohesive collection of chapters that could stand as individual essays. The inclusion of the scholarship of Robert Warrior and Edward Said speaks to the idea of the sociopolitical implications of his inter/national arguments. Salaita also compares American Indian and Palestinian societies to explore norms of the solidarity movement and explore the "possibilities and implications of intercommunal scholarship" (x). By critiquing imperialism through the lens of de-colonial discourses, Salaita moves beyond the paradigm of colonial and post-colonial discursive language.

Palestine is explored as a global rather than regional issue in Chapter One, “How Palestine Became Important to American Indian Studies.” Salaita compares Israel’s settlement policy to the development of settler discourses in American history (11). When asking the question, “what does it mean to be indigenous?”, arguments for and against Israeli and Palestinian claims to indigeneity arise (14-15). Both Zionists and Palestinians claim an association with the dispossession of Native Americans, and Salaita acknowledges that Palestinian dispossession seen today mirrors historic Jewish dispossession.

In Chapter Two, “Boycott Israel as Native Nationalism,” Salaita explores the ramifications of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement for Israeli universities. Here, Salaita outlines the obligations and consequences entailed by supporting Palestine as an academic, and how this commitment may affect scholarship. The author claims it is not necessarily BDS that provokes a backlash from fellow academics; instead, “criticism of Israel is controversial” (42). He also refers to BDS as “an articulation of Native nationalism the moment it left Palestinian civil society and entered into the vocabulary of global decolonization” (70) and references Judith Butler’s argument that BDS is an important alliance for the rights of the dispossessed (67). However, one may reasonably question Salaita’s conception of the end goal of BDS or whether Native solidarity with Palestine would ultimately have a significant impact on the field.

Salaita moves from the present BDS movement to past nation-building practices in the United States and Israel, specifically looking at the writings of President Andrew Jackson on the Indian Removal Act (1830) and the Trail of Tears (1838-1839) and the influence of the writing of Ze’ev Vladimir Jabotinsky on the 1948 Nakba in Israel. His analysis of Jackson’s “Annual Messages” and the Indian Removal Act, as well as Jabotinsky’s most famous work, “The Iron Wall” (1923), in Chapter Three, underscore the similarities between removal and settlement policies in the United States and Israel. Although Jabotinsky died in 1940, eight years before 700,000 Palestinians were expelled from their homes during the Nakba, he was considered a “military strategist and theorist of Zionism” (71). Salaita acknowledges that no evidence exists to suggest that Jabotinsky was familiar with Jackson’s writing or policies, but he finds fertile analytic ground in comparing how they both viewed violence as central to accomplishing their resettlement aims (72).

According to Salaita, the major difference between Jackson and Jabotinsky laid in the fact that Jackson viewed the Natives as incapable of assimilating into the modern U.S. nation-state, whereas Jabotinsky viewed native Palestinians “as competitors with the Yishuv (pre-1948 Jewish settler

community in Palestine) in a race to independent statehood” (82). Although the comparison between Jabotinsky and Jackson is compelling, an analysis of the policies directly leading to the Nakba would help to solidify the comparison.

The leap from comparing nation-building settlement projects in Chapter Three to comparing native poetry in Chapter Four may seem incongruent, but Salaita argues that literary criticism plays an important role in decolonization narratives for both Native Americans and Palestinians (103). This chapter examines the place of Palestine in poetry written by indigenous peoples in North America, in particular by Lee Maracle, Erica Violet Lee, John Trudell, Carter Revard, Edgar Gabriel Silex, and Russell Means. In the works of these poets, Palestine appears as a place of great suffering and in need of empathy and decolonization. Salaita also discusses the interaction between the work of Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish and that of Russell Means. The poem “The ‘Red Indian’s’ Penultimate Speech to the White Man” by Darwish is followed by Mean’s “The Song of the Palestinian” to illustrate overlapping themes of colonization and the importance of cultural memory.

At the time of *Inter/Nationalism’s* 2016 publication, Salaita was the Edward W. Said Chair of American Studies at the American University in Beirut. Two years prior he had made international news after his hiring and subsequent firing from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign following a series of controversial tweets he posted during the 2014 Israeli assault on Gaza. In the Fifth Chapter, “Why American Indian Studies Should be Important to Palestine Solidarity,” Salaita discusses this personal history to illustrate what he believes is the “vexing relationship between American Indian Studies and the corporate academy, especially as those vexed relations can be enacted through the specter of Palestine” (137). Salaita believes this is related to “age-old narratives of the need for oversight of Native communities” (137). The chapter focuses on the colonial legacy that Salaita sees in the university and calls for more solidarity between American Indian studies and Palestine.

Salaita concludes his book by describing the history of the 1995 board game *Settlers of Catan* and its 2010 spin-offs, *Settlers of Canaan* and *Settlers of America*. He uses the game, and its global popularity, to illustrate how conquest and settlement is normalized and the power of myth and colonizing logic take hold. *Inter/nationalism’s* focus on academia, literature, history, and activism, offers a transnational theory on

decolonizing methods for those interested in exploring the parallels between American Indian Studies and Palestinian Studies. ✂

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BELGIN SAN-AKCA. *States in Disguise: Causes of State Support for Rebel Groups* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016). Pp. 320. \$36.95 paper. ISBN 9780190250904.

In *States in Disguise*, San-Akca examines the determinants of cooperation between states and rebel groups in the period after the Second World War. The book is closely related to previous work in political science that has highlighted the transnational dimensions of civil wars and identified the determinants of external state support for rebel groups fighting civil wars against other states. San-Akca's book builds on this body of work and advances our understanding of the relations between states and rebel groups on conceptual, theoretical, and empirical grounds with great success.

On the conceptual side, San-Akca distinguishes between states' intentional and de facto support for rebel groups. Intentional support covers cases in which states deliberately support rebels as a method of pursuing their own foreign policy objectives, whereas de facto support covers cases in which rebels select a state unilaterally for operations and resource acquisition without necessarily securing the knowledge and approval of that state. The former category is well known to scholars of conflict, especially in the form of proxy wars. However, San-Akca convincingly demonstrates that in several examples of armed conflict, rebel groups have behaved autonomously and operated in states without their approval. To give a current example, the ISIS presence in Europe is a case of de facto support by European countries, according to San-Akca's conceptual distinction.

Having made this distinction, *States in Disguise* provides a novel theoretical framework that focuses on the triadic interaction between the rebel group, its supporter state, and the target state. Within this interaction, three types of factors determine both the onset and the level of intentional and de facto state support for rebel groups: a) states' material interests, b) ideational affinity between target and supporter states as well as between supporter states and rebel groups, and c) supporters' domestic incentives. More specifically, San-Akca's key hypotheses are that states are more likely to support rebel groups that target an adversary state if there are ideational