



impact

South on the ground, in the first file

GOOD-TRIBALISM

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chukware '00 Bellarmine

TERM TRIBE GOOD, IT OPPOSES CAPITALISM AND STATISM AND  
 FUNCTIONS AS AN INCLUSIVE SYMBOL TO COMBAT ALL RACISM

Steve CHARLESTON 1987 (Crosscultural studies, Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary, citizen of Cherokee Nation)  
 (1987 Sojourners Magazine)

AT: ★

tribalism

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term

tribe

good!

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Ah yeah..

- Capitalism

- Statism

- model

to Statism

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- inclusive

symbol

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The alternative of Native America is the alternative of the tribe over against the capitalist state. It can be symbolized as the horizontal against the vertical. Native civilization in North America represented a political, social, and economic system that radiated out from a religious center through the communal network of extended family and kinship.

In contrast, colonial capitalism represents a vertical hierarchy of economic and political privilege exclusive of spiritual values that places men and women in an artificial competition based on race, class, and gender. The choice offered to Native People by capitalism was clear: convert or die. The grim statistics of the American holocaust bear silent tribute to the decision made by generations of Native People.

THE LESSON TO BE learned from the Native experience is that all of us still have a choice. Native America still stands. It has survived the holocaust. It has endured the propaganda. It continues to resist the American Dream state. The religious war goes on, and Native People are in it for the duration. As veterans of the struggle against colonialism, capitalism, and racism, they are still in the field. Though few in number and often without allies, they represent an unbeaten alternative to business-as-usual in the great American technocracy.

When people of color gather to discuss racism, they should consider the men and women who have sacrificed so much to keep this alternative alive. Native People do not share the assumptions and mythologies of their oppressors. They do not simply want a higher place on the pyramid of capitalism; they do not want a bigger piece of the action for themselves; they do not aspire to joining the middle class. They do not want more. As the tribe they want (enough) for all to share equally.

The (tribe as a metaphor for community is dangerous). It is dangerous to colonial capitalism. It is dangerous to racism. It is dangerous because it is a symbol for the strength of the oppressed. It is an inclusive symbol for all men and women who want to wake up from the dream. It says to people of all colors and cultures: There is a better way. Let go of the myths and the images and the empty promises. Join hands in the strong bond of kinship. Become a tribe. Fight back. Let the victims be redeemed and the survivors set free. The struggle will soon be 500 years old. Now is the time to decide.

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