

Empire, Palestine and Tamil Eelam: The Hermeneutics of Geopolitics

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Empire building, within a politico-historical context, can be defined as monopolisation of power and cultural homogenisation. In the wake of imperial expansion, the geopolitical analysis has increasingly become significant. Western liberal democratic practices which are seen as part of a civilizing mission cannot be separated from imperial geopolitics. In fact, the modern state cannot be defined as democracy, but as monopolization of violence and construction of a hegemonic national culture which justify the occupation of land of the other. Such hegemonic constructs deprive the native other of their right to their homeland (not just individual ownership of land) as it poses a geo-strategic threat to the empire. Even though the oppressive nationalist formations claim that they own the entire territoriality of their state they are part and parcel of the empire. I would like to apply this hermeneutic of imperial geopolitics in problematizing the oppressive identity formations of the Israeli and Sri Lankan states and thereby identify the liberative thrusts emerging from Palestine and Tamil Eelam respectively in resisting the imperial designs in a comparative way. This is done in view of developing a Tamil Eelam liberation theology and building horizontal solidarity between Palestinians and Eelam Tamils.

The two contexts are religiously diverse, one is theistic and the other is non-theistic, but both states are constructed on the altar of an imperial deity who does not see, hear and feel with the cries of the oppressed. The theme of liberation which is common to both Palestine and Tamil Eelam reveals a radically different imagination of the Ultimate Reality who sides with the oppressed. The main aim of this comparative reflection is to develop a theological imagination that is needed for a Tamil Eelam liberation theology in the light of Palestinian liberation theology.

Keywords:

Empire Building, Hegemony, Developing Liberation Theologies.

