



Spirit Wars: Native North American Religions in the Age of Nation Building

Ronald Niezen

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Spirit Wars is an exploration of the ways in which the destruction of spiritual practices and beliefs of native peoples in North America has led to conditions of collective suffering--a process sometimes referred to as cultural genocide. Ronald Niezen approaches this topic through wide-ranging case studies involving different colonial powers and state governments: the seventeenth-century Spanish occupation of the Southwest, the colonization of the Northeast by the French and British, nineteenth-century westward expansion and nationalism in the swelling United States and Canada, and twentieth-century struggles for native people's spiritual integrity and freedom. Each chapter deals with a specific dimension of the relationship between native peoples and non-native institutions, and together these topics yield a new understanding of the forces directed against the underpinnings of native cultures.

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