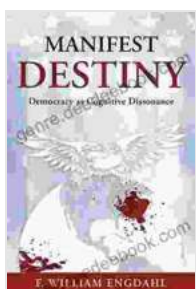


Manifest Destiny Democracy: Cognitive Dissonance in American Expansion

The concept of Manifest Destiny is deeply intertwined with the history of American democracy. The belief that the United States was destined to expand westward and dominate the North American continent was used to justify a range of actions, from the displacement of Native Americans to the acquisition of new territories. However, this expansionist ideology was often at odds with the democratic principles that the United States claimed to embody. This cognitive dissonance between Manifest Destiny and democracy has had a lasting impact on American politics and society.

The Origins of Manifest Destiny

The idea of Manifest Destiny emerged in the early 19th century, as the United States began to rapidly expand westward. This expansion was driven by a number of factors, including the desire for new land, the need for resources, and the belief in the superiority of American civilization. By the 1840s, Manifest Destiny had become a widely held belief among Americans, and it was used to justify the annexation of Texas, the Mexican-American War, and the acquisition of Oregon and California.



Manifest Destiny: Democracy as Cognitive Dissonance

by F. William Engdahl

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
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The proponents of Manifest Destiny argued that the United States had a divine right to expand westward. They believed that the United States was a superior civilization, and that it was destined to spread its values and institutions across the continent. This sense of superiority was often expressed in racist terms, as many Americans believed that Native Americans and other non-white peoples were inferior to whites.

The Impact of Manifest Destiny on Democracy

The expansionist ideology of Manifest Destiny had a profound impact on American democracy. The desire for new land and resources led the United States to annex vast territories, often without the consent of the people who lived there. This led to a number of conflicts with Native Americans, who were forced to cede their land and move to reservations.

The Mexican-American War was another example of the negative impact of Manifest Destiny on democracy. The war was fought over the annexation of Texas, which had been a part of Mexico. The war resulted in the United States gaining control of a vast territory, but it also led to the deaths of thousands of Mexicans and the displacement of many more.

The acquisition of Oregon and California also had a negative impact on democracy. These territories were home to a large population of Native

Americans, who were forced to cede their land to the United States. The United States also imposed a number of restrictions on these Native Americans, including the prohibition of hunting and fishing on their traditional lands.

The Cognitive Dissonance of Manifest Destiny Democracy

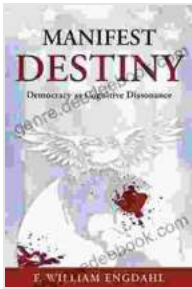
The belief in Manifest Destiny led to a number of actions that were at odds with the democratic principles that the United States claimed to embody. The annexation of territories without the consent of the people who lived there violated the principle of self-determination. The displacement of Native Americans and the imposition of restrictions on their land rights violated the principles of equality and freedom.

This cognitive dissonance between Manifest Destiny and democracy has had a lasting impact on American politics and society. The belief in American superiority and the desire for expansionism have continued to shape American foreign policy, often leading to conflicts with other countries. The legacy of Manifest Destiny also continues to affect Native Americans, who continue to struggle for justice and equality.

The concept of Manifest Destiny is a complex and controversial one. It has been used to justify a range of actions, both good and bad. However, the cognitive dissonance between Manifest Destiny and democracy has had a lasting impact on American politics and society. This dissonance has led to a number of conflicts, both foreign and domestic, and it continues to shape American attitudes towards other countries and towards Native Americans.

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