

Ayaan Hirsi Ali on the concept of “Welcome to Country”

Question:

Hi, thank you for sharing the story of your upbringing. I have not lived in the places that you have lived but I know that today we are standing on the Arapaho indigenous land and that unresolved conflict is the reason why you see so many white faces here today.

At the end, you said that people deserve to be able to push towards their own liberation. I am wondering if you could give a concrete example of how a group can do that, towards emancipation without evoking, as you say, victimisation.

Answer:

Thank you for that question.

I want to go back to the opening sentence which is, “unresolved conflict, about the people on whose land we sit”. Actually, that conflict has been resolved. Because, if it were unresolved (this is the kind of truths that we must tell one another), if that conflict were unresolved, we would have a line of the native Americans in front of the people who came here, still fighting one another. This is not the case.

That conflict is resolved! I want you all to ponder that. It is called history; and it should be taught as such.

The history that is (now) being taught, “let us abolish Columbus Day and make it Native American”. It is bullshit!

I am, so sorry to say this to you, but history is not about emotions. It really is not, and therefore the “market for victimhood” is; and causes people to say.

“Yes sure, I’m going to say I speak for the Native Americans, I’m going to go to the United States Government, on whatever level, and I’m going to get whatever funds that the United States Government is going to pay for, speaking on behalf of these people”.

While the Native Americans find themselves in reserves, their children excluded from modernity and from what America has to offer.

These funds are going somewhere, and no-one is questioning that, because anyone who dares question that is being told that “you are in a place where history is not resolved”. It is resolved! It is called history – it is done.

Victimisation / emancipation. I think at some point people find themselves in a situation where they think it is unbearably oppressive and they want to get themselves out of it. I have found myself in that situation and you get yourself out of it, and you make alliances. You understand that you are not the only one, and you get yourself out of it not by wallowing in it, not by being resentful, not by being vengeful. By lifting yourself up and out of it with the help, and I have said to you, you look at the story of slavery or civil rights in this country or the Holocaust or any other, any other narrative of history it hasn’t been only that the people who are oppressed lifted themselves out, but they were also helped by the classes of people who came from the oppressive side.

These are the stories that need to be told and in the end the story is not, “let us go back to the time of the Native Americans”. In the end, the story is “how can we make the best of it now”. How can we help the children and the great, great, great, grandchildren of the Native Americans of today to make the best of what America has today? Not wallow in it.

Thank you.

For the full YouTube go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ADliPyaqyaA>