

Southern New Hampshire University

From the Doctrine of Discovery to Manifest Destiny

How Religion and Race Formed the Backbone of American Expansion

A Capstone Project Submitted to the College of Online and Continuing Education in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Master of Arts in History

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## Abstract

The history of the United States is marked by racial conflict side-by-side with a sense of providential destiny. This paper shows how these two themes in American history are deeply entwined back to the moment when Christopher Columbus arrived in 1492. Upon returning to Europe with news of his journey, Pope Alexander VI issued a papal bull that came to be known as the Doctrine of Discovery. This decree formed the foundation of all interactions with the original inhabitants of the Americas. In the Americas, Spain and other European powers, embarked on a mission to win the continents for the Church, but also to reclaim the medieval world that was collapsing around them. Unfortunately, Spain's cultural upheavals were fertile ground for the formation of a moral panic around race, and early forays into conquest abroad were occurring at the same time that Jews and Moors were being expelled back home. The religious underpinning of claims of racial inferiority were amplified with the Reformation and the expansion of African slavery. Even as European authorities in the Americas changed hands, religion continued to play a central role in the justification for expansion and conquest, culminating in the sense of destiny for the young United States to stretch from "sea to shining sea," as God's chosen people, which was later to become known as Manifest Destiny. The violent second half of the nineteenth century, driven by a moral panic over race, consolidated both the power of the young Republic on the continent and its sense of exceptionalism, though it was a sense of nationalism that extended explicitly only to whites.

## **Dedication**

For Mïshmaëli Joseph, because it's his future that we fight for.

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## Introduction

In 1823, early in the period traditionally thought to be the era of the push to expand to the West known as Manifest Destiny, the United States Supreme Court invoked in *Johnson v. McIntosh* what then appeared to be an obscure papal decree from 1493 known as the Doctrine of Discovery. Far from being unconnected, Manifest Destiny owed its cultural, religious and racial legacy to the world shaped by the Doctrine. The goal of the work to follow will be to place the Doctrine of Discovery in its broader historical context of late-Medieval Spain and show how, despite the intervening three centuries, Manifest Destiny owed its very existence, its character and its legacy to the Doctrine, and the long-running moral panic about race that it sparked in the Christian world.

That the Doctrine of Discovery was made explicit again in 1823 is perhaps less surprising than it at first appears when it emerges in the *Johnson v. McIntosh* case, in which Native rights to sell their own land, or their lack of it, became a justification for expanding the power of the national government in the still young United States. At issue was a property dispute between two white landowners, one who had obtained the deed from an early colonial land speculator who had obtained rights to the land directly from the indigenous tribes in what is now Illinois, and another who had purchased the land from a later government sale.<sup>1</sup> On its face, one might have expected, from a purely property law perspective that the prior claim of ownership—the transfer of rights from the Native tribes to the speculator as the first, and thus only legal sale, would take precedence, and that the second sale of the land by a party without clear title to the

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<sup>1</sup> Robertson, Lindsay G. *Conquest by Law: How the Discovery of America Dispossessed Indigenous Peoples of Their Lands*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

land would be nullified. After all, as Robert A. Williams reminds us, Americans had an especially peculiar affinity for property rights rooted squarely in the philosophy of John Locke, an attitude that flowed directly from early American and English legal precedent. However, this view of the centrality of property rights was *peculiar* because it was combined with an early capitalist view that uncultivated lands were going to waste.<sup>2</sup> The entire continent upon which the United States sat, particularly areas controlled by Native peoples, were seen as virgin, uncultivated land, due in part to a sudden drop in population because of the ravages of deadly western diseases, and also the inability of Europeans to recognize Native cultivation methods for what they were. Americans, therefore, by this time broadly rejected any argument suggesting Native people controlled their own lands—rejecting further any effort to prevent Europeans from seizing it—whether by the English government prior to the Revolution or by the American government thereafter, including any policy that resisted such seizures. Williams further argues that the McIntosh decision—rejecting Native land rights and siding with the party who purchased the land from the fledgling U.S. government—fundamentally rejected Native people as worthy of consideration under the “public good”.<sup>3</sup>

Lindsay Robertson’s *Conquest by Law* re-examines the McIntosh case from newly rediscovered court documents to show that the efforts to seize Native lands led Chief Justice John Marshall to turn “what might have been a one-paragraph decision into one comprising more than thirty-three pages.”<sup>4</sup> Chief Justice John Marshall, who penned the ruling, later claimed to regret the decision and his inability to overturn the precedent completely. Both of these regrets

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<sup>2</sup> Williams, Robert A., Jr. *The American Indian in Western Legal Thought: The Discourses of Conquest*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Robertson, xi.

stemmed in part from the extremes the Andrew Jackson administration went to to exploit the reasoning in Marshall's ruling (particularly in Georgia and the Indian Removal Acts), and the Jacksonians appointed to the High Court who prevented him from overturning the precedent. Despite the regret of its author who died before he could fully repudiate the Doctrine, the *Johnson v. McIntosh* decision would become the cornerstone of Native land disputes for the centuries to come and would have only its sharpest edges worn off. This was particularly lamentable in the wake of the Trail of Tears and paved the way for Indian removal doctrines and the creation of reservations.<sup>5</sup>

Recent scholarship has tried to draw out the connection between the Doctrine of Discovery and the kind of dehumanizing treatment of non-white races embodied in the *Johnson v. McIntosh* decision. Like Robertson, Blake Watson's book *Buying America from the Indians* also examines the seminal *McIntosh* case and argues forcefully that the Doctrine of Discovery needs to be repudiated, along with the entire ruling in *McIntosh*. Watson's argument was inspired by a series of Native land cases from the late 1980s and early 1990s.<sup>6</sup>

Historians and legal scholars continue to publish articles examining certain aspects of the Doctrine of Discovery, particularly with respect to the *McIntosh* ruling, as well as similar considerations in non-American jurisdictions. Steven Newcomb sees the *McIntosh* ruling as the rise of Christian Nationalism in Federal Indian law (1992), and Ali Freidberg looks at the role of

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Watson, Blake A. *Buying America from the Indians: Johnson v. McIntosh and the History of Native Land Rights*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012.

the Doctrine in Spanish land acquisition in Mexico (1999).<sup>7,8</sup> Both perspectives inform the research that follows.

The perspective of the Newcomb article noted above is the perfect jumping off point for the religious lens addressed in a number of recent books and articles. Indeed, the most important of these books is written by Newcomb himself in 2008, *Pagans in the Promised Land*, in which he extends his argument that the Doctrine of Discovery is a fundamentally religious doctrine, and that by employing it to take indigenous lands, the McIntosh ruling created an impermissible violation of the separation of church and state.<sup>9</sup> Joy Greenburg seems persuaded of the injustice of the Doctrine, in light of court rulings as recent as 2014.<sup>10</sup> Understanding that there were injustices in the past is one thing, but understanding that they continue to the present day had the impact that Newcomb was hoping for.

Other examinations of the impact of Christian missions in the Americas, without specifically addressing the Doctrine of Discovery, connect to Newcomb's work. Both books address areas under Spanish rule. The first of these is *Indians, Missionaries, and Merchants* by Kent Lightfoot (2005), which examines the legacy of European-Native encounters in California. The second is *Manufacturing Otherness*, edited by Sergio Botta (2013), which looks at the impact of missions in Latin America. The Lightfoot book is also particularly interesting because they look at the impact of Russian traders on the Alaska and North American coasts, which

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<sup>7</sup> Newcomb, Steven T. "The Evidence of Christian Nationalism in Federal Indian Law: The Doctrine of Discovery, Johnson v. McIntosh, and Plenary Power." *New York University Review of Law and Social Change* 20 (New York 1992): 303.

<sup>8</sup> Friedberg, Ali. "Reconsidering the Doctrine of Discovery: Spanish Land Acquisition in Mexico (1521-1821)." *Wisconsin International Law Journal* 17 (1999): 87.

<sup>9</sup> Newcomb.

<sup>10</sup> Greenberg, Joy H. "The Doctrine of Discovery as a Doctrine of Domination." *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture*, 2016: 236-244.

provide a striking comparison to how two European powers interacted with the Native people.<sup>11</sup> (For more information on the Russian colonies and their interactions with Natives by Gwenn Miller, *Kodiak Kreol* is informative.<sup>12</sup>)

Botta takes a different tack and is in some ways is something of a throwback. Edited by a European religious scholar living in Europe, the articles in this book are far more forgiving of European missionaries in the Americas and provide a distinct counterpoint to nearly all the modern sources. The general tack taken by the articles is to argue that missionaries did more good than harm, a perspective that directly challenges the arguments of indigenous people.<sup>13</sup> The Botta book reads like “Christian apologetics,” and stands in sharp relief to the perspective of “Benign and Benevolent Conquest?” by Ken Macmillan (2011), who argues that many of the “benign usages” of the Elizabethan Age conquests were intentionally designed to disguise malevolent intent.<sup>14</sup> Despite the theme of the Botta book clearly trying to defend the Doctrine of Discovery’s plain language of conversion, the articles do not appear to mention the Doctrine by name, nor does it appear in the book’s index. So, while he is trying to address critiques of Native scholars, he is not willing to do so directly. That this deviation from the modern perspective is coming from a European, living in Europe, is notable.

Joyce Chaplin began looking at these issues in the context of racial language. Her article “Natural Philosophy and an Early Racial Idiom in North America” traces the language around

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<sup>11</sup> Lightfoot, Kent G. *Indians, Missionaries and Merchants: The Legacy of Colonial Encounters on the California Frontiers*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005.

<sup>12</sup> Miller, Gwenn A. *Kodiak Kreol: Communities of Empire in Early Russian America*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010.

<sup>13</sup> Botta, Sergio, ed. *Manufacturing Otherness: Missions and Indigenous Cultures in Latin America*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013.

<sup>14</sup> MacMillan, Ken. "Benign and Benevolent Conquest? The Ideology of Elizabethan Atlantic Expansion Revisited." *Early American Studies*, Winter 2011.

race from early colonial times and how it relates to ideas of natural philosophy, the immediate precursor to scientific thought. In particular, she claims that the arguments of natural philosophy themselves became the basis for a racial idiom in the Americas that portrayed whites as superior, and all others inferior. We see these arguments explicitly made in defending the institution of slavery during the Civil War, and well into the modern day. Her analysis is particularly interesting in that it also gives us some tools to consider when analyzing the language surrounding mixed-race people.<sup>15</sup> Having built up a way to talk about race and race-mixing from such an early period, it's easy to see why these ideas became embedded explicitly in policy and implicitly in culture, and why it remains so difficult to root out.

As the sixteenth century began, the Reformation got underway, followed soon thereafter by the French beginning to exert their influence on North America. Even before that, though, the Atlantic slave trade began to ramp up, and the early sixteenth century saw the first African slaves transported to the Americas.<sup>16</sup> In the medieval world, from which Europe was only just emerging, Christians had adopted a religious standard for the imposition of slavery: it was banned for Christians, but permitted for pagans and Muslims. That this distinction now represented both a cultural and racial distinction made it all that much easier for the new "purity of the blood" arguments emerging from the Spanish Inquisition to find a foothold.<sup>17</sup>

Thus, we find that the Doctrine of Discovery was just one element in a larger complex of intellectual thought and political maneuvering that were self-reinforcing, and which became a

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<sup>15</sup> Chaplin, Joyce E. "Natural Philosophy and an Early Racial Idiom in North America: Comparing English and Indian Bodies." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 54, no. 1 (January 1997): 229-252.

<sup>16</sup> Black, Jeremy. *The Atlantic Slave Trade in World History*. New York: Routledge, 2015.

<sup>17</sup> Hannaford, Ivan. *Race: The History of an Idea in the West*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.

part of the larger European context. Though Spain was the ostensible subject of the 1493 Doctrine of Discovery, the impact of the Doctrine did not remain with Spain, despite the increasing anti-Catholic sentiment that came to permeate much of English North America. Political rivals reacted to, and sometimes adopted, various provisions of the Doctrine to help support their own claims in the Americas.

Nonetheless, it seems as though the sixteenth century is a long way away from the Doctrine of Discovery. English colonies, all initially Protestant, and a hotbed of anti-Catholic feeling, would not begin arriving in the New World for another century, at the start of the seventeenth century. Moreover, another two centuries passed, punctuated with the American Revolution in the intervening years, before the Doctrine of Discovery reemerged in 1823 before the new American Supreme Court. *Johnson v. McIntosh* was an obscure property rights case.<sup>18</sup> It's reasonable to wonder what this could have to do with fifteenth century Spain, and a religious proclamation of a Church that was officially reviled by most Americans. Laying bare that connection is the goal of this research.

As with the Doctrine of Discovery, the *Johnson v. McIntosh* case did not arise in a vacuum either. The first half or so of the nineteenth century has been characterized by Manifest Destiny, the idea that America was destined by Providence to extend across the continent. At the time, there was not yet a name for this sense of destiny; it would be perhaps another decade or so before term was coined.<sup>19,20</sup> However, the idea of westward expansion was not a new idea in the

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<sup>18</sup> Echo-Hawk, Walter R. *In the Courts of the Conqueror: the 10 Worst Indian Law Cases Ever Decided*. Golden, CO: Fulcrum, 2010.

<sup>19</sup> Pratt, Julius W. "The Origin of "Manifest Destiny"." *The American Historical Review* 32, no. 4 (July 1927): 795-798.

<sup>20</sup> The source of the origin of this term is actually a matter of dispute, as it has been found in another published source of earlier date.

nineteenth century—far from it. Ushered in by the Louisiana Purchase and Lewis and Clarke’s expedition, the period saw the acquisition of Texas, California and the southwest at the close of the war with Mexico, along with the Oregon territories. Officially, Manifest Destiny ends with the Civil War, but power would not be consolidated in the new territories until the Indian Wars had finally wrested control from the last pockets of resistance by the Native population.<sup>21,22</sup>

Manifest Destiny, its implications for the Civil War, its racial overtones, and its sense of progress and technological advancement have been well-covered in the literature, but the religious character and its association with moral panics of the same period have been overlooked.<sup>23,24</sup>

The goal of the present research is to flesh out the religious character of Manifest Destiny and explore the implications of that religious character on the question of race. These relationships can help to make the connection to the Doctrine of Discovery that became so influential for the treatment of the Native population, and specifically with respect to the land rights of Natives, in this period.

It is primarily Native legal scholars that have, in the last several decades, begun to draw the attention of historians to the relationship between Manifest Destiny and the Doctrine of Discovery. Their research has drawn the connection between land seizures that stemmed from the McIntosh case, but also that extended well into the twentieth century, particularly with respect to assimilationist policies: policies that overtly attempted to eradicate Native culture and

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<sup>21</sup> Miller, Robert J. *Native America, Discovered and Conquered: Thomas Jefferson, Lewis and Clark, and Manifest Destiny*. Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 2008.

<sup>22</sup> Banner, Stuart. *How the Indians Lost Their Land: Law and Power on the Frontier*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005.

<sup>23</sup> Morrison, Michael A. *Slavery and the American West: The Eclipse of Manifest Destiny and the Coming of the Civil War*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

<sup>24</sup> Horsman.

convert Native children to Christianity.<sup>25</sup> The argument provided by these scholars has been fundamental: the Doctrine of Discovery's legacy is so deeply rooted in American cultural expectations that the implementation of national policies invokes it without even realizing that the Doctrine is where the ideas originated. Christians, these scholars argue, were not merely attempting to save souls, but use missionary activities as a means of cultural and political conquest. The invocation of images of empty wilderness without acknowledging the residence of any people at all depends on the invisibility of Native people, as well as equating them with the status of wild beasts.<sup>26</sup> This latter notion clearly connects us back to the idea of race and racism in general, which first found its footing in the Inquisition in the suspicions of both Jews and Moors, whether or not they had converted.

The religious perspective, however, is more complex than this. The view of Inquisitors who pursued *conversos* in Spain was not a universal paranoia. Many missionaries professed to defend the rights of converts of all sorts, including the Native people of the Americas, as children of God, and thus supposedly equal in the eyes of the Spanish government and the Church.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, it was the Second Great Awakening that split the Protestant churches along north-south lines on the question of the morality of slavery. Even in a deeply racist America, there were gradations of racism that still found religious arguments against treating people of other

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<sup>25</sup> Newcomb, 303.

<sup>26</sup> Smith, Henry Nash. *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1950.

<sup>27</sup> Seed, Patricia. "'Are These Not Also Men?': The Indians' Humanity and Capacity for Spanish Civilisation." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 25, no. 3 (October 1993): 629-652.

races as no more than beasts of the field.<sup>28</sup> This conflict goes back to the Doctrine itself and was never really absent.<sup>29</sup>

As previously noted, many of the sources that explicitly mention the Doctrine of Discovery in any context other than Christopher Columbus are written by Native American scholars, and principally in the legal context with respect to Native land rights. Nearly all of these can be considered to be influenced by the postcolonial lens. Older sources that deal with this period will be used to provide a contrast to the way in which the ideas embodied by the Doctrine are manifested, but without explicit appeal to the text.<sup>30</sup>

Sources on Manifest Destiny, particularly published prior to World War II and the Civil Rights Movement, focus entirely on the white perspective—and the advantages—of westward expansion. While some do mention the likely impact on the coming Civil War, if they mention the Native population at all, it is only to paint them as savages irrationally resisting the obviously superior culture and technology.<sup>31</sup> The late-nineteenth-century writers did become increasingly aware of race in the context of westward expansion, and extended the period of Manifest Destiny both forward and backward in time.<sup>32</sup> However, despite the overt religiosity of Providential destiny, few sources take the religious aspects of the claims seriously unless they are addressing explicitly religious activities. In part, this appears to be a false objectivity, an “enlightened”

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<sup>28</sup> Najar, Monica. "Meddling with Emancipation": Baptists, Authority, and the Rift over Slavery in the Upper South." *Journal of the Early Republic* 25, no. 2 (Summer 2005): 157-186.

<sup>29</sup> Reséndez, Andrés. *The Other Slavery: The Uncovered Story of Indian Enslavement in America*. New York: Mariner Books, 2017.

<sup>30</sup> Morison.

<sup>31</sup> Hawkins, Dexter A. *The Anglo-Saxon Race Its History Character and Destiny*. New York: Nelson & Phillips, 1875.

<sup>32</sup> Stephanson, Anders. *Manifest Destiny: American Expansion and the Empire of Right*. New York: Hill & Wang, 1995.

perspective, that treated the religious expression of intellectuals as affectations adopted to influence the masses, or as expressions of what the United States Supreme Court described as “ceremonial deism”. Instead, I will treat such religious expressions as genuine expressions of belief, unless there is good reason to think otherwise.

The emphasis of this paper will be on the intellectual and cultural continuity of white Europeans and their descendants in the Americas, and their colonies. As such, the story will be told in some important sense from the perspective of white America. What will be different is that, while the focus will be on the intellectual justifications of white America, the consequences of the arguments and decisions made will be front-and-center, not just those that benefited the cultural elite, but also the normally invisible impacts on those that are non-white. The influence of religious belief on behavior toward racial minorities, rooted in the cultural legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery, will be dominant. Only in this way can the real complexity of religious sentiment toward race be fully and thoroughly examined. Secondary sources that deal explicitly with issues of race in this period will help to provide historical context for the discussion.

Matthew Mason notes that “there was never a time between the Revolution and the Civil War in which slavery went unchallenged.”<sup>33</sup> Even Quakers were slow to adopt an anti-slavery position because wealthy Quaker slaveholders dominated early debates. In the period of the Great Awakening, though, evangelical Protestants found common cause both with Quakers and

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<sup>33</sup> Mason, Matthew. *Slavery & Politics in the Early American Republic*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006, 5.

slaves as fellow persecuted groups. Not everyone came to this position, however, and instead advocated for a more “benevolent” form of slavery.<sup>34</sup>

While some advocated explicitly for the benefits of slavery, most defenses of the institution fell far short of advocating for it, but instead, like Jefferson and Patrick Henry, simply could not see a way around it. Those that did took the affirmative stance, falling back on Biblical defenses of the institution having been ordained by God.<sup>35</sup>

John Marshall ruled that American land rights ultimately rested on a right of conquest going back to the Doctrine of Discovery, and consequently, by right of that conquest, the Native people lost their own rights to the land. Marshall crucially did not question that the right of conquest was itself justified.<sup>36</sup> Once such a principal was established, Marshall could not prevent Jackson from extending the “conquest,” ignoring the Supreme Court’s ruling in *Worcester v. Georgia*, nor from Georgia invoking nullification of sorts to likewise threaten the stability of the nation.<sup>37</sup>

The idea that the Doctrine of Discovery could be related to possession is already deeply problematic. One might argue that Columbus could not have “discovered” the Americas because there were already people living there. But discovery in the sense of acquiring new knowledge, at least from the perspective of anyone in the Europe, is at least viable. One could then, however, assert that it was the people of the Americas who “discovered” white Europeans. But

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 11-2.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>36</sup> Scheckel, Susan. *The Insistence of the Indian: Race and Nationalism in Nineteenth Century American Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998, 17-8.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 121-3.

this sense of knowledge, of scientific discovery, does not entail ownership of that knowledge. When Archimedes discovered the displacement principle, he did not run through the street shouting “Patent-pending!” so that no one else could use it. No, he shouted “Eureka! (I found it!)” because it was knowledge intended to be shared. The sense of “discovery” meant in this context appears to be more akin to the legal use in a salvage case, as if the Americas had been found abandoned and therefore Europeans had exercised their right to claim it, and it is as if the fish objected to their taking it. Such an interpretation would be consistent with the capitalist view of property discussed above that sees empty land (particularly after waves of small-pox had spread through the population) as going to waste.

Robert A. Williams describes the *Johnson v. McIntosh* decision this way:

Marshall’s opinion thus merely formalized the outcome of a political contest that the Founders had fought and resolved among themselves some forty years earlier. The acceptance in *Johnson* of the legal discourse of feudal rights of conquest derived from discovery consecrated the sacrifice of those higher principles that supposedly inhered in the Revolutionary era’s radical, natural-law-inspired vision of America as a land free of the oppression and feudal burdens of a Norman yoke. Long before Marshall’s formal recognition in *Johnson* of the Doctrine of Discovery as the legitimating foundation for the Europeans’ superior rights in the New World, a discourse of conquest, emerging out of a Revolutionary-era vision of the public good that did not include the American Indian, had settled the law of America concerning Indian rights and status.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Williams, 231.

Though Marshall came to regret this ruling and hoped to reverse the worst aspects of the Doctrine of Discovery, his efforts essentially failed.<sup>39</sup> So profoundly influential was the *Johnson* ruling that it was cited in court cases on native land rights in both Canada and Australia.<sup>40</sup>

This paper takes a chronological perspective when examining the history of the Doctrine of Discovery in order to root the Doctrine in its original cultural context in late-Medieval Spain. Thus, in Chapter 1, the collapse of feudalism, the slave trade on the Mediterranean and the Spanish Inquisition will be examined. These cultural themes will be carried into the future in stages, examining the implications of the developing European perspectives on race. In Chapter 2, Spanish conquest in the Americas and its confluence of race and religion will be considered. The most challenging period will be the Reformation, in Chapter 3, where most of the literature centers on Europe, and not the developing culture in the European colonies in North America. However, it is from this period that England finally emerges as a sea power and takes lasting steps to join the land grab in North America. In Chapter 4, the late colonial period and the Founding of the United States will be studied for the seeds of Manifest Destiny, and their attitudes toward race informed by the Enlightenment. In Chapter 5, the paper returns to the nineteenth century to close with perhaps the most destructive moral panic in all of American history: the Indian Wars.

What follows is admittedly a history of elites, specifically white European elites who are almost entirely male. This is a necessity because the powerful in the era who generated and propagated ideas were themselves white European wealthy classist men. Intellectual history can

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 234.

<sup>40</sup> Robertson, 144.

be limited in this way, but the goal along the way will be to keep the focus on the consequences of those ideas on everyone else, including lower class men, woman, enslaved and free people of African descent in the Americas, as well as the indigenous people. The ideas that shaped the behavior of elites, especially those that echo down to the present day can only be challenged properly when the idea and their consequences are fully understood.

Finally, a note on terminology used in this work. Discussions of race can be fraught because of the use of terms that are changing in an effort to be more respectful and race-neutral, so that our language itself is not perpetuating the unspoken presumptions that this work is attempting to lay bare here. For example, this paper will use the Americas rather than the New World to refer collectively to North and South America whenever possible, and Native or indigenous when referring to the people who trace their descent from cultures that developed in the Americas prior to the arrival of Columbus. However, when speaking in the context of older historians, in quotes from documents, the original language used by the authors will remain unchanged.

## **Chapter 1: Spain and the Western Mediterranean in the Late 15<sup>th</sup> Century**

In order to understand the Doctrine of Discovery, it is necessary to understand the world in which the Doctrine was written. It must not be seen as a departure from the practices of late fifteen-century Europe, so much as a continuation of past practice. In many ways, the Doctrine imprinted a medieval stamp upon the Americas and other colonies that remains stuck in time. Therefore, our examination begins in late-medieval Europe to understand the underpinnings of the Doctrine and to better understand those elements that were carried over into the colonies by Spain, and by extension, other European nations, after 1492.

For the vast majority of people living in Europe for many centuries preceding 1492, life was characterized by violence, superstition, disease, poverty, and illiteracy. Serfs were tied to the land owned by great lords, and it was they who farmed the land and produced most of the wealth. Taxes supported their lords and Church, paid for the knights that fought in the kings' wars, and when conscripted, paid for those wars with their lives as well. Punishments for crimes were severe and could involve torture and mutilation. Indeed, the term "medieval torture device" conjures up images of extreme suffering for the sake of suffering even today. Peasants were at the mercy of their masters. Hunting to avoid starvation could result in hands being cut off, the biblical punishment for theft. Talking back could result in a tongue being cut out. Refusing a lord's son's advances could result in rape, or having a nose cut off. The only educated person in town could easily be the local priest. It was routine for the educated to believe that peasants were incapable of handling knowledge and must be protected from it, an attitude that extended back to Classical Greece. But, by the late fifteenth century, this world was coming to an end.

Trade with the east had increased, bringing with it the rise of a middle class that was both educated, comparatively wealthy, and free from ties to the land and lords. To be sure, the landed gentry fought to maintain their hold over the peasants—and in some parts of Europe, such as Russia, managed to succeed well into modern times. In western Europe, however, feudalism was collapsing despite forces that sought to preserve it.<sup>1</sup>

While European nations certainly had cultural differences, they were united in the Catholic Church, through which education, philosophy and culture flowed. The system of European universities was still relatively young, but they had broken free of much of Church control and formed another culturally binding force on the continent though it too, was highly influenced from religiously tinged thinking. For example, one view that permeated much thought at the time was the Great Chain of Being, which viewed the world as a hierarchical structure from God at the top of the chain down to the lowest species at the bottom. While all supernatural creatures lay between man and God, all earthly creatures were below man, thus, at least on Earth, man was the top of the chain. This was an old philosophy, aspects of which were pre-Biblical, but which were incorporated into medieval religious philosophy. Within humanity itself, the hierarchical structure could be imposed by class. During the Enlightenment, this was a structure ripe for exploitation, to place non-whites into the hierarchy at a rung below white Europeans, and in the late nineteenth century some popular interpretations of evolution exploited the Great Chain of Being in a similar fashion to place non-white races as less evolved, and thus lower on the ladder, than white Europeans.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sartore, Melissa. *Outlawry, Governance, and Law in Medieval England*. New York: Peter Lang Inc., 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Lovejoy, Arthur O. *The Great Chain of Being*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1936.

Essential to understanding the rise of racial thought is the place of Jews and Moors in Spanish society in the fifteenth century. Perry and Schweitzer describe how Jewish persecution began in the late-fourteenth century and continued throughout the next, forcing Jews to convert or continue being persecuted. But even after conversion, *conversos* were suspected of being crypto-Jews—not “real” Christians—and thus suspect, leading to the rise of the Spanish Inquisition in 1478.<sup>3</sup> The converted were often condemned as “judaizers” and race-based laws based on the “purity of blood” enshrined a second-class status for converts until they and unconverted Jews were finally expelled from Spain in 1492.<sup>4</sup> According to the historian of race, Ivan Hannaford, the term “race” began to take on the more modern character, beyond just familial lineage, in the heat of the Spanish Inquisition and fears over the reversion of Jewish *conversos*.<sup>5</sup>

Even as Columbus was sailing East across the Atlantic, in 1492, Granada fell, ending Moorish rule in Spain. Those left behind and their descendants, too, fell under the suspicion of the Inquisition. Their bloodlines, it was claimed, made their blood impure, and thus made them unable, in the eyes of some, to become true Christians.<sup>6</sup> The Moors’ defeat at Granada in 1492, initially permitted those that remained in Spain freedom of conscience and a right to worship if they remained loyal to the Spanish crown. However, that situation did not last long. By 1499, the Inquisition pursued the same course of action against the Moors as they had against the Jews:

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<sup>3</sup> Netanyahu, Benzion. *The Origins of the Inquisition in Fifteenth Century Spain*. 2nd. New York: Random House, 1995.

<sup>4</sup> Perry, Marvin, and Frederick M. Schweitzer. *Antisemitism: Myth and Hate from Antiquity to the Present*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, 128-9.

<sup>5</sup> Hannaford, Ivan. *Race: The History of an Idea in the West*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.

<sup>6</sup> The irony that it was Gentiles who were originally thought to not be true Christians without converting to Judaism first was apparently lost on them.

convert or else. In the same year, the Jewish population, those that refused to convert—and many that did—were expelled.<sup>7</sup>

We tend to think of the Inquisition as a feature of Europe, of European religious intolerance that America's religious plurality was meant to overcome; and yet, Spain brought the Inquisition to the Americas with them in their missionary work with the Native populations, and the mind of its own immigrants. Many Jews fled to the Americas in the hopes of escaping the Inquisition, and found that even there, they were not safe from it.<sup>8</sup>

There was class resentment against the Jews to be sure.<sup>9</sup> *Conversos* were not the newly converted but represented generations of ethnically Jewish Christian converts who had, in many cases, even intermarried with Christian families.<sup>10</sup> Ferdinand resisted many of the most racist laws promoted by Pope Alexander VI (who authored the Doctrine of Discovery) and within his own country until his death in 1516.<sup>11</sup> Netanyahu describes the Inquisition as “essentially a child of the racist movement, and in both its thinking and feeling it tended toward the racist point of view.”<sup>12</sup> *Conversos* marrying long-standing Christian families would “contaminate” the Christian bloodlines. Moreover, they believed this contamination would corrupt the “Spanish character.”<sup>13</sup> It's difficult to imagine how the essentialist views of racial contamination among the Jews would not have been applied to the Native population in the Americas and the imported African slaves.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Schama, Simon. *The Story of the Jews: Volume 2: Belonging 1492-1900*. New York: Harper Collins, 2017.

<sup>9</sup> Netanyahu, 326.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 1063.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 1068.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 987.

Purity of the blood arguments that arose in Spain, emphasized the Germanic descent of the nobility in distinguishing them from the Jewish *conversos*. At this same time in Germany, the symbolism of blood was being used against Jews in another way: the blood libel.<sup>14</sup> There was a particular fascination with blood in medieval times. The symbolism of drinking the blood of Christ at communion can hardly be forgotten in this context. The medieval mind was both frightened by and in awe of the power of blood. Blood could be seen as cleansing or polluting in the right situations. Bloodletting was particularly powerful, for the vampire could rob one of life and soul by sucking out the blood, but bloodletting with leeches was a common medieval medical practice thought to remove evil humors from the body. The differences between men and women are also embodied in their different relationship to blood.<sup>15</sup>

The Inquisition itself can be seen as a moral panic. The marriage of a belief in the inherently inferior—and consequently less moral character—of a class of people was not a new one. Women had been seen in this way relative to men since the Indo-European conquest of Europe. Moral panics about the supposed immoral behavior of women, up to and including witchcraft, are well-studied phenomena. It should therefore be unsurprising that the perception of moral inferiority of other races should likewise induce moral panics when the powerful perceive themselves to be under threat. This equating of moral inferiority with racial inferiority begins with the Inquisition and led god-fearing priests to torture Jews into conversion and to turn

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<sup>14</sup> Bildhauer, Bettina. *Medieval Blood*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2006, 13.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

on their friends and family. Fear of that torture induced many to leave their homes and flee for safety.<sup>16</sup>

The last factor to consider before addressing the Doctrine of Discovery itself is that of slavery before 1492. In the ancient and medieval world, slavery was simply a matter of power. However, particularly after the era of the Crusades, slavery became linked to religion, with Christians barred from enslaving other Christians. Because the overwhelming number of Muslims were also non-European, the conflation of race and religion, race and slavery became easier. Interactions with Africa, and then the Americas, initially were met with arguments that the inhabitants of these continents could be converted “to Christ by force because of sin, idolatry, and offenses against the natural law.”<sup>17</sup> Because of the prohibition against enslaving fellow Christians, there was an incentive to prevent conversions in order to exploit them for monetary gain. Because of the association with non-white and non-Christian peoples, and the use of female slaves for sexual acts, slavery became an especially potent fear among higher-class white Europeans.<sup>18</sup>

The Trans-Saharan slave trade during the entire medieval period was dominated by the Islamic merchants that controlled most of northern Africa. There was a desire to improve direct access to the African slave trade that prompted Portuguese sailing voyages in the fourteenth century down the African coast. As Christians attempted to retake the Iberian Peninsula from the Moors, slavery was an important component in Spain and Portugal, despite the decline of the

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<sup>16</sup> Goode, Erich, and Nachman Ben-Yehuda. *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.

<sup>17</sup> Hannaford, 149.

<sup>18</sup> Wright, John. *The Trans-Saharan Slave Trade*. New York: Routledge, 2007, 5.

practice in the rest of Europe. By 1446, thousands of slaves were being traded for domestic labor, and for use in Atlantic sugar fields that within a few decades would become a model for the Atlantic trade of African slaves.<sup>19</sup>

“...[R]ecords suggest that Christians and Muslims alike were willing to bend canon law and sharia law, respectively, both of which forbade forced conversion.”<sup>20</sup> Iberian Christians, in particular, did not necessarily trust conversions of Muslim slaves to Christianity, and frequently they fell under the gaze of the Inquisition to determine if their conversions were true or sham.<sup>21</sup>

Spanish domestic slavery, particularly in Valencia, also employed penal slavery as a form of punishment. The crimes that could subject someone to penal slavery included unauthorized begging, adultery, or abandoning one’s sovereign lord.<sup>22</sup> Note that each of these crimes are particular to women or to peasants, and did not apply to white, wealthy men.

During the fourteenth century, Roman Catholic officials were forced to reconsider the ethics of Christian slavery, after trying to free Orthodox Christian slaves in the wake of the Crusades. While technically not banning the possession of Orthodox slaves, the policies adopted by the Latin West did make them much more difficult to acquire.<sup>23</sup> Another legacy of enslavement in Europe, during the fourteenth century was that masters were expected to see to their slaves’ physical and spiritual well-being, which included encouraging them to convert.

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 42-4.

<sup>20</sup> Hershenzon, Daniel. *The Captive Sea: Slavery, Communication, and Commerce in Early Modern Spain and the Mediterranean*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018, 34.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Blumenthal, Debra. *Enemies and Families: Slavery and Mastery in Fifteen-Century Valencia*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009, 13.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 34-5.

Initially, baptism could confer immediate freedom, but this began to be seen as a threat to the social order, that slaves would embrace Christianity (sincerely or otherwise) to obtain social mobility. This prompted Valencian officials to limit the ability of slaves to receive baptism without their master's consent.<sup>24</sup> This practice would eventually have a profound impact on the Atlantic slave trade.

Another practice of late medieval slavery in Europe that would be modified by the fifteenth century trade in African slaves was the consequences of using female slaves for sex, especially when they bore their master's children. In Valencia, Christians whose slaves bore their children were required by law to make both the mother and the child free. Sexual exploitation of female slaves was particularly common. This law certainly did not protect women whose masters simply denied paternity or sold them to another master before they could give birth, but neither were female slaves above employing the paternalism used to justify their enslavement to sue for protection in the courts on the same grounds.<sup>25</sup>

The very fact of slavery was seen as othering, either as a matter of race or class. Indeed, the term slave itself was derived from the common enslavement of conquered eastern European Slavic people, who made up a significant fraction of the slave trade prior to the ramp-up of the African trade, at least within Europe.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, disgust at Eastern European immigrants was common in the United States in the early part of the twentieth century, and still even occasionally pops up in the present in newscasts on the popularity of Brexit.

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 128.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 174-5.

<sup>26</sup> Black, Jeremy. *The Atlantic Slave Trade in World History*. New York: Routledge, 2015, 11.

The West in the last five centuries are not the only culture to have essentialist ideas about race. A caste system, like that in India, possesses many of the same features.<sup>27</sup> A theory of Climes was advanced by some Muslim thinkers in the fourteenth century to explain the different levels of blackness and civilization in the Old World, that could then be later applied to the “New” one.<sup>28</sup> This sort of thinking laid bare some of the currents of racialized thinking in cultures in contact with the Mediterranean, and through the slave trade, that could be cultivated and transported around the world along with the slaves. That black Africans could see other “blacker” Africans under the lens of race may come as a shock to some, but those familiar with the history of light-skinned blacks within the Black community in America will not be that surprised.

Dominion of non-Christian people predicated on the premise that there was only one true God and therefore only one true Church.<sup>29</sup> This sense of Dominion was built on the myth of being God’s chosen people (as borrowed from the Jewish tradition), and a desire to recreate the height of imperial Roman power. As noted previously, this view was buttressed by such philosophical doctrines as the Great Chain of Being.

The Doctrine of Discovery, though crucial for understanding global colonialism both in the Americas and around the world, these papal bulls giving Spain and Portugal dominion over the non-European world, were not the first of their kind. Throughout the medieval era, Christian kings had been given similar authority to Christianize the pagans on their borders. For example,

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<sup>27</sup> Hall, Bruce S. *A History of Race in Muslim West Africa, 1600-1960*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011, 15.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 49-50.

<sup>29</sup> Echo-Hawk, Walter R. *In the Courts of the Conqueror: the 10 Worst Indian Law Cases Ever Decided*. Golden, CO: Fulcrum, 2010, 17.

in the twelfth century, English kings were given permission to invade and tame the pagan Irish. English courts described the Irish as “wallowing in vice,” “filthy,” and “ignorant.” In other words, they were fit subjects for conquest, enlarging the Church, and in need of being civilized. Once the island was seized, only those Irish that spoke English and lived like English people were granted full protection of the rule of law.<sup>30</sup>

If we consider the Doctrine of Discovery in its own right, the name is the common term for a papal bull promulgated by Pope Alexander VI in 1493 shortly after Christopher Columbus returned from his first voyage to the Americas. The Doctrine purported to make Spain ruler of the new territory—two continents worth—with Columbus as its governor in the West, in much the same way the Church had granted dominion to Portugal for discoveries made to the East. The opinions of the Native populations were irrelevant, but one expectation was clear: the Natives were to be converted to Christianity in order to enlarge the power of the Church.<sup>31</sup> The narrative of Columbus that the natives were childlike suggested this would be all too easy. The unfulfilled dream of the previous millennium of resurrecting the Roman Empire—and exceeding it for the glory of God—was finally possible.

Christopher Columbus’ view of the native people he met in 1492 was deeply ambivalent and sinister and would echo down through the centuries in his intellectual heirs. He admired them in his way, calling them “affectionate” and “agreeable”; although this was apparently the kind of “admiration” one has for the simple life of an illiterate peasant with supposedly no cares in the world. He thought that their temperaments are amenable to conversion to Christianity

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<sup>30</sup> Williams, 137.

<sup>31</sup> Pope Alexander VI. "The Doctrine of Discovery." *History Now*. 1493.  
<https://www.gilderlehrman.org/content/doctrine-discovery-1493> (accessed October 1, 2018).

because of their love of their neighbors. All characteristics, one might note, that good Christian women are supposed to possess. One might read these sentiments as seeing the natives as ripe for exploitation. However, on other occasions he was met with more martial resistance, and of these Natives he describes them as “evil” and as cannibals who eat those they capture.<sup>32</sup>

The comparison of the natives to women, the feminizing of other races, would remain a theme. Since men were accustomed to thinking of women as inferior, it is only natural that they would latch onto the same language and attitudes they used toward women to otherize and diminish any other groups they wish to deem beneath them. As we will see over time, gender and racial inferiority would amplify each other with devastating consequences.

The Doctrine of Discovery was created in a papal bull in 1493, shortly after the return of Columbus from his first trip to the New World.<sup>33</sup> It has shaped European-Native American relations since that time. While sometimes in the background, sometimes in the foreground, it has nonetheless proved to be an influential philosophy whose consequences for Native peoples are still salient today. Despite its influence, the Doctrine of Discovery is not well understood by modern audiences and has not been reflected on deeply in the historical literature until the last several decades. Indeed, for much of the historical literature on early America, when the Doctrine is mentioned at all, it is often in passing, or in the context of the rivalry between the

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<sup>32</sup> Bremer, Thomas S. *Formed From This Soil: An Introduction to the Diverse History of Religion in America*. Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2015, 14-15.

<sup>33</sup> Pope Alexander VI.

European powers vying for control of the Americas, and in Europe.<sup>34</sup> In these cases, its premises were not questioned.

In order to put the discussion that follows into context, I want to quote some (somewhat extensive) passages from the original doctrine, addressed to the rulers of Spain, to underscore the plain language and purpose of the Doctrine. Because until recent decades, the Doctrine was little discussed in the historical literature, its very existence is not widely known. It is for this reason that it is worth using the space to lay out one cornerstone of this paper.

... We therefore are rightly led, and hold it as our duty, to grant you even of our own accord, and in your favor those things whereby with effort each day more hearty you may be enabled for the honor of God himself and the *spread of the Christian rule* to carry forward your holy and praiseworthy purpose had intended to seek out and discover certain islands and mainlands remote and unknown and not hitherto discovered by others, to the end *that you might bring to the worship of our Redeemer and the profession of the Catholic faith their residents and inhabitants...* with the wish to fulfill your desire, chose our beloved son, Christopher Columbus,... to make diligent quest for these remote and unknown mainlands and islands through the sea... and they at length... discovered certain very remote islands and even mainlands that hitherto had not been discovered by others; *wherein dwell very many peoples living in peace, and, as reported, going unclothed, and not eating flesh.* Moreover, as your aforesaid envoys are of opinion, these very peoples living in the said islands and countries believe in one God, the Creator in heaven, and seem sufficiently disposed to *embrace the Catholic faith and be trained in good morals.* And it is hoped that, were they instructed, the name of the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, would easily be introduced into the said countries and islands.... Wherefore, as becomes Catholic kings and princes,... you have purposed with the favor of divine clemency to bring under your sway the said mainlands and islands with their residents and inhabitants and to bring them to the Catholic faith,... you purpose also, as is *your duty, to lead the peoples dwelling in those islands and countries to embrace the Christian religion,...* do by tenor of these presents, should any of said islands

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<sup>34</sup> Morison, Samuel Eliot. *The Great Explorers: The European Discovery of America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.

have been found by your envoys and captains, give, grant, and assign to you and your heirs and successors,..., forever, together with all their appurtenances, all islands and mainlands found and to be found, discovered and to be discovered towards the west and south, by drawing and establishing a line from the Arctic pole, namely to the north, to the Antarctic pole, names to the south, no matter whether the said mainlands and islands are found in the directions of India or towards any other quarter, the said line to be distant one hundred leagues toward the west and south from any of the islands commonly known as the Azores and Cape Verde. With this proviso however that none of the islands and mainlands found and to be found, discovered or to be discovered beyond that said line towards the west and south, *be in the actual possession of any Christian king or prince* [prior to 1493]... and *we make, appoint, and depute you and your said heirs and successors lords of them with full and free power, authority, and jurisdiction of every kind;*... You should appoint to the aforesaid mainlands and islands worthy, God-fearing, learned, skilled and experienced men, in order to instruct the aforesaid inhabitants and residents in the Catholic faith and train them in good morals... *Let no one, therefore, infringe, or with rash boldness contravene this our recommendation, exhortation, requisition, gift, grant, assignment, constitution, deputation, decree, mandate, prohibition, and will. Should anyone presume to attempt this, be known to him that he will incur the wrath of Almighty God...*<sup>35</sup> [*emphasis added*]

The importance of this declaration faded into the background almost immediately. In the immediate aftermath of the Doctrine of Discovery, Christopher Columbus was awarded a Spanish governorship based on the region described, and political intrigues began almost immediately to exploit the Doctrine for themselves. While the plain text of the Doctrine was directed at Spanish rulers, it nonetheless made it clear that if other Christian nations claimed other parts of the Americas and converted the regions' Native populations, that they could stake a claim to the land. This fact would shape the entire colonial period, but explicit references to the Doctrine in historical texts were oblique or absent through the middle of the twentieth

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<sup>35</sup> Pope Alexander VI. "The Doctrine of Discovery." *History Now*. 1493.  
<https://www.gilderlehrman.org/content/doctrine-discovery-1493> (accessed October 1, 2018)

century. Only in comparatively recent decades has the Doctrine of Discovery become an important flashpoint among historians, spurred by Native historians. It thus has become especially important, particularly in view of post-colonial critiques that challenged assumptions made by the descendants of those white Europeans who were in power in the Americas, among legal scholars and historians descended from Native peoples described in the Doctrine, who have begun to take exception to the continued consequences of such a policy, that the way in which the political, religious and cultural assumptions have gone unexamined for so long.

Robert A. Williams, Jr., made clear in his book why separating the legal perspective from the religious perspective is so particularly difficult. Williams places the Doctrine of Discovery in context with rhetoric from the Crusades and more local encounters with those of non-Christian religions, and how the language of missionary activities was used to promote Christian empire, setting the stage for the same kind of language used in the Americas, and in particular, in the Doctrine of Discovery. Further, he traces how Protestant nations like England used the same kind of language to justify actions closer to home, such as the invasion of Ireland, before using it in the American colonies.<sup>36</sup> In a nation premised on the separation of Church and State, the religious underpinnings of the Doctrine are problematic for U.S. legal theories based on it.

Now that we can connect the Doctrine of Discovery to its medieval roots, the next chapter will examine how the Doctrine was applied in practice in the Americas, and how that formed the foundation of what was to become Manifest Destiny.

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<sup>36</sup> Williams.

## Chapter 2: 16th Century French and Spanish Missions in the Western Hemisphere, a Plague and the Atlantic Slave Trade

We have seen that the Doctrine of Discovery was a document of cultural imperialism: the conquest of the Americas in the name of the Church. It was a document designed, fundamentally, to reward the European king pledged to bring new followers—and power—to the Catholic Church, a feature which became especially important as the Reformation unfolded in Europe. It was also designed to reduce conflict among the European powers. Just as they did European peasants, the nobility saw the people of the Americas as nameless, faceless masses, and as a pawn in the struggle for salvation in the afterlife, and as a means to wealth and power in the present one. The institutions that were failing in Europe could be recreated in this “new” land as their earthly reward for serving their king and their god.

James Axtell, in *The European and the Indian*, lays bare the motives of the *conquistadors* and those that followed them:

From its inception, the invasion of North America was launched on waves of pious intent. Nearly all the colonial charters granted by the French and the English monarchs in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries assign the wish to extend the Christian Church and to save savage souls as a principal, if not the principal, motive for colonization.<sup>1</sup>

He begins to get at the dangerous assumptions made that lent itself to the belief that the missionaries would find a receptive audience, noting the odd turns of phrase used to rationalize

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<sup>1</sup> Axtell, James. *The European and the Indian: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981, 43.

their actions, such as “the goal of the English was to ‘reduce’ the Indians from savagery to ‘civility’” having turned Christianity into a weapon for forced labor and subjugation.<sup>2</sup>

The Doctrine of Discovery was not merely a religious document that gave Christopher Columbus a meaningless governorship. The document was put into implementation. Imagine standing on the shore of the Americas and seeing Spaniards get off the ship for the first time, speaking a language you don’t understand, and reading off a proclamation that you and your land are now subjects to the Spanish crown and subject to the will of their “high priest” the Pope.<sup>3</sup> This proclamation was called The Requirement. It reads in part:

[With] the help of God, we shall powerfully enter into your country, and shall make war against you in all ways and shall subject you in all ways and all manners that we can, and shall subject you to the yoke and obedience of the Church and of their Highnesses; we shall take you and your wives and your children, and shall make slaves of them, and as such shall sell and dispose of them as their Highnesses may command; and we shall take away your goods, and shall do all the mischief and damage that we can, as to vassals who do not obey, and refuse to receive their lord and resist and contradict him; and we protest that the deaths and losses which shall accrue from this are your fault...<sup>4</sup>

The Spanish did not hide their intentions, even from themselves: they announced it in every new location in which they appeared. However, they had to have known that their bald-faced warnings could not but go unheeded since they could not speak the native languages. And those that did come to understand Spanish must surely have been struck by the audacity of such claims. The Requirement continued to be read for many decades, and as Vecsey notes, thereby

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 45-56.

<sup>3</sup> Vecsey, Christopher. *On the Padres' Trail*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996, 6.

<sup>4</sup> "The Requirement." *National Humanities Center*. 1510.

<https://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/amerbegin/contact/text7/requirement.pdf> (accessed July 7, 2019).

setting the tone for what was to come.<sup>5</sup> The Requirement should be seen not as a warning to the Native population, who could not have been expected to understand it, but rather for the benefit of the Europeans, to help them justify the deeds they would need to do, to remind them of their religious “duty” to carry out the will of their king and queen, and of their Church. It was to salve their own consciences.

Even when Native tribes did accept conversion, they were not granted “full” Christian status, maintaining them in the eyes of the Church as essentially children: children, like women, were the possessions of their male lords. Once baptized, they were often not permitted communion, which is permitted to European children upon the age of reason, reached around age seven. Some missionaries felt that they were still “too imbued with native paganism to *deserve* such intimate contact with God.”<sup>6</sup> [emphasis added] And except for the chiefs and other natives of sufficient power, most converted Indians were not even granted extreme unction (the sacrament that Catholics believe prepare them for heaven at the time of death).<sup>7</sup> Thus, one could argue that, like *conversos*, they could not become “true” Christians.

The mission system was designed to “civilize” the Native people by creating a “city of God”—essentially a feudal manor—around each mission focused on agriculture and animal husbandry, whether the local Natives had that in their culture or not, and forced them to work the land as laborers.<sup>8</sup> Once baptized, they essentially became wards of the Church, and lost freedom

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<sup>5</sup> Vecsey, 7.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 47.

of movement. The discipline of the Church was enforced with stockades or whips and could be subject to the Inquisition (until 1575).<sup>9</sup>

Cortez, despite his debauchery and greed believed he was on a religious crusade in the Americas, “God’s appointed agent” to rescue the Natives from the Devil.<sup>10</sup> The foundation of their conversion efforts was to destroy symbols of Native religion.<sup>11</sup>

Spain rewarded its generals and governors in the Americas with a revival of the feudal system. The *encomiendas*, owners of the land received the “right” to Indian labor on the land in exchange for military service. Children would be stolen from parents and enslaved at a young age, even when the missionaries in the territory voiced objections.<sup>12</sup>

Within the Catholic Church, some intellectuals, including those in the priesthood, rejected the Pope’s claim to dominion over the Americas and the Discovery Doctrine, and recognized the Native people’s rights to control of the land upon which they lived. Some argued from the standpoint of Thomistic humanism for the rights of the inhabitants.<sup>13</sup> All these arguments succeeded in doing was to perhaps shave the edge off the worst excesses. Those modifications would then eventually become a model in other parts of the Americas when official slavery was abolished there, but European descendants continued wanting to exploit the non-European populations.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>12</sup> Bremer, Thomas S. *Formed From This Soil: An Introduction to the Diverse History of Religion in America*. Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2015, 93.

<sup>13</sup> Williams.

While most modern scholars of the period have acquired more sympathy for the Native population of the Americas than previous generations, some like Sergio Botta describe the Native peoples as “vanquished” and adopting a posture defensive of acts of the Church.<sup>14</sup>

Hannaford discusses early Spanish writers’ struggle with understanding how the presence of the Native population in the Americas could be explained in light of Biblical accounts of Noah’s flood. Some writers identified them with lost tribes of Israel or the descendants of Ham.<sup>15</sup>

Reuter lays bare in one passage, his and his times’ cultural assumptions about Native people and people of color of all types: that they are inherently inferior, and the inclusion of white blood is a blessing; the crude use of terms like “half-breed”, and the sexualization of Native women, that to the modern ear sounds more like a rationalization of rape rather than a genuine understanding of what the Native women were thinking. However, the passage also highlights the sometimes-ambivalent reaction toward the mixing of races and miscegenation: a practice that was sometimes banned, and sometimes encouraged depending on which of the equally misguided notions of “purity” or “improvement” held sway at the moment.<sup>16</sup>

Missionaries would go from town to town burning wood carvings and other native displays they deemed to be “works of the devil.”<sup>17</sup> The history of Christianity in Europe was

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<sup>14</sup> Botta.

<sup>15</sup> Hannaford, 168-73.

<sup>16</sup> Farber, Paul Lawrence. *Mixing Races: From Scientific Racism to Modern Evolutionary Ideas*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011.

<sup>17</sup> Milanich, Jerald T. *Laboring in the Fields of the Lord: Spanish Missions and Southeastern Indians*. Miami: University of Florida Press, 2006, 119.

replayed in the Americas, and justified on the basis of rooting out heresy in the newly converted, but which also functioned to obliterate Native culture.

One of the few sources specially on mixed-race people outside the United States was published early in the twentieth century. Edward Reuter sought to compare the status of mixed-race people in the United States to racial mixing around the world, but particularly, in other parts of the British Empire. Within the United States, he focused primarily on racial mixing between Europeans and Africans, and between Europeans and Native Americans, the former in the context of slavery. The attitude of the author toward the mixed-race people of all kinds can be easily encapsulated by his discussion of the descendants of native “Eskimos” and Danes in Greenland:

In comparison with the native Eskimo, the mixed-bloods are in reality superior men. They are an improvement, especially in appearance over the native stock. Socially, the status of the mixed-blood man is superior to that of the native... ‘The native women prefer the worst Dane to the best Greenlander, and the half-breeds are the more eligible for their strain of white blood; illicit relations with white men are rather a glory than a disgrace.’ The young native women... gains considerable prestige... as a result of having been so honored.’<sup>18</sup>

The relationship of Christians (Catholics in the earliest periods) to slavery was complex. Sometimes, it could seem genuinely sincere in a desire to save the souls of pagans for an eternal afterlife; while at other times, it fell back on purity of the blood arguments to deny those same bodies Christian charity in this life.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Reuter, Edward Byron. *The Mulatto in the United States: Including a Study of the Role of Mixed-Blood Races Throughout the World*. Boston: The Gorham Press, 1918, 32-33.

<sup>19</sup> Bennet, Herman L. *African Kings and Black Slaves: Sovereignty and Dispossession in the Early Modern Atlantic*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019.

The African slave trade came to the Americas as early as the first or second decade of the sixteenth century. This was due in part to the incredible number of Natives that died from imported diseases in these early decades. The susceptibility of the Natives to diseases made them seem less fit for forced labor, and so settlers turned to importing Africans who had had more experience with European diseases and showed greater resistance to dying from them.<sup>20</sup>

The arguments against slavery could take the form of both moral corruption and corruption of purity. The moral corruption could be argued from taking those in one's charge as sexual partners, exploiting them for sinful acts essentially without their free consent, but also because the resulting mixed-race children would become the literal property of their fathers. These kinds of complex relationships that perverted familial bonds were seen as the threat to Christian moral values.<sup>21</sup> However, the production of mixed-race children could also be seen as corrupting the blood by bringing "pure" European blood into contact with the polluting blood of an inferior race. Thus, the use of such terms could be taken in both moral terms to advocate for the end of slavery, and in racial terms, to provide justification for its continuance.

Epidemics of European-brought diseases would periodically sweep through Native communities as well as Spanish settlements. This threatened the labor supply for the Spanish, who routinely relied on forced labor from the Natives.<sup>22</sup> Both mining and farming operations could be threatened if small-pox—or any of a dozen other diseases—spread through workers.

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<sup>20</sup> Black, Jeremy. *The Atlantic Slave Trade in World History*. New York: Routledge, 2015, 24.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>22</sup> Milanich, 157.

European colonies led to many changes in Native life. Besides the cost of disease, and exposure to the advanced technology of the Spanish, a market developed for Indian slaves, a market that would be satisfied by Native and Spanish slavers alike, similar to the dynamic seen in Africa around the African slave trade.<sup>23</sup>

Jesuit missionaries described villages transforming into hospitals, conveying some of the immensity of the devastation wrought from European diseases. When people became sick, the Jesuits concentrated on baptizing the sick rather than try to relieve the suffering of the living.<sup>24</sup> They fell back on justifications such as seeing God's plan, or punishment of the wicked. Indeed, when Native medicine succeeded in curing illness, the priests worried that the source of the cure was demonic rather than godly.<sup>25</sup>

Thus, we can see that even before the French and English appeared on the scene, several prominent features of the colonial world in the Americas were already deeply entrenched, including exploitation of the Native population for labor and for sex. Diseases spread through the land, reducing the Native population by as much as 90% or more.<sup>26</sup> A system of feudal slavery was in place, and African slaves were already being imported. All those that came after would have to compete with the system they found there already. While the French and eventually the English would take slightly different tacks with the Native population, nonetheless, they would be heavily influenced by what Spain had already put in place.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid. 30.

<sup>24</sup> Greer, Allan, ed. *The Jesuit Relations: Natives and Missionaries in Seventeenth-Century North America*. New York: Bedford/St. Martins, 2000, 70.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 71-2.

<sup>26</sup> Mann, Charles C. *1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus*. 2nd. New York: Vintage Books, 2011.

### Chapter 3: The Reformation and the English Come to America, Colonial Period to 1750

The Americas in the sixteenth century were dominated by Spanish conquests, especially in the lands bordering the Caribbean. In the northern parts of the North American continent, the French took a slightly different tack than the Spanish. They emphasized trade, especially the fur trade, and paired it with their proselytizing efforts, in the hopes of winning allies against the Spanish (and souls for the Church). The French were far more benign in their relationships with the Natives than were the English or Spanish. They did try to get Native tribes to recognize the French king as their sovereign but remained largely unsuccessful with this tactic. French deeds even recognized Indian land claims in their territory. However, very little of the written records of these treaties remain, and the territories occupied by the French remained primarily for trade and sparsely populated with Europeans.<sup>1</sup> Back home in Europe, though, the Reformation broke out, and the situation remained much the same for nearly a century. The English Reformation delayed England's entry into the overseas colonial game. While there were some early efforts, as soon as 1497, nothing came of it until the seventeenth century.<sup>2</sup> Nonetheless, this early date of engagement puts them squarely in the era of the Doctrine of Discovery. Papal bulls, like the Doctrine of Discovery, came to be seen, after the Reformation, as instruments of Catholic tyranny. Despite this alleged symbolism, they formed the basis, the "ideological foundation" of all European colonial political power. Papal bulls had little real authority by this time, except as conveyed by individual monarchs; however, they

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<sup>1</sup> Wilkins, David E., and K. Tsianina Lomawaima. *Uneven Ground: American Indian Sovereignty and Federal Law*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Williams.

could be powerful mythical messages that held greater weight in popular culture and as a basis of intellectual argumentation.<sup>3</sup>

The defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 proved to be a turning point for English introduction into the Americas since they were now the dominant power on the seas. The long reign of Queen Elizabeth made it possible for the English to turn their eyes away from religious upheaval for a time and turn to the Americas for conquest and profit.

Winthrop Jordan, in describing Elizabethan England's view of Africans, says, "Undertones of sexuality run throughout many English accounts of West Africa. To liken Africans—any human beings—to beasts was to stress the animal within the man. Indeed, sexual connotations [were] embodied in the terms...."<sup>4</sup> The connection between Blacks and strong sexuality would remain pervasive in the centuries that followed.

By the seventeenth century, the English view of the non-English could already be described as deeply racist. All non-English, including Scots and Irish were looked down upon. Indeed, any differences between the English and the non-English caused the English to single them out for degradation.<sup>5</sup>

England's forays into the New World initially lacked promise. Settlements on the mainland were attacked by Natives, or settlers died in the harsh winters of starvation because they were unfamiliar with which plants were safe to eat, and crops frequently died. In the Caribbean, Barbados was found to be uninhabited, the tribes who had been living there having

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<sup>3</sup> Bennet, 81-82.

<sup>4</sup> Jordan, Winthrop D. *The White Man's Burden: Historical Origins of Racism in the United States*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1974, 18.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 46-50.

left, either due to disease or to set up on a more defensible position on another island. It took decades for the plantations to hit upon sugar as their ideal cash crop, and then the value of the land shot up to become among the most prized in the British Empire. But English indentured servants were quickly replaced with cheaper slave labor, primarily from Africa, though a few Natives were imported from elsewhere in the Caribbean. Slaves were universally treated harshly, and Barbados would go on to become one of the most notorious slave colonies in the Americas, where slaves were replaced by new stock at a rapid clip because they were worked to literally to death.<sup>6</sup>

Even though Blacks and Natives were both enslaved, their treatment did differ. Black slaves typically worked in the fields, while Indian slaves were used for local intelligence, fishing and for household labor. In addition to having more desirable work, the Indians were considered “special” and received privileges the African slaves did not. There were very few on the island, however, particularly after the large-scale import of African slaves picked up steam, and so this distinction had little impact on the long-term development of slave culture on the island.<sup>7</sup>

British colonies tended to have a common religious culture, and shared slave culture. The particular type of slave culture found in the American South was in many ways imported from Caribbean islands of the British Empire, including the sugar plantations of Barbados which

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<sup>6</sup> Ligon, Richard. *A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados*. Edited by Karen Ordahl Kupperman. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2011.

<sup>7</sup> Beckles, Hilary McD. *A History of Barbados: From Amerindian Settlement to Caribbean Single Market*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006,20-1.

became well-known for the brutality of the treatment of their slaves. It was not until the American Revolution that those religious and cultural ties were formally cut.<sup>8</sup>

Beckles describes “Acts of extreme cruelty to enslaved black women by white women” as sometimes shocking those who would have expected more empathy from other victims of the white male power structure. White women most hated the sexual exploitation of female slaves by their own sex partners, perhaps as an insult and a threat to their own positions of relative power. White women were among those that benefited from slavery, even as their own freedoms were limited by those men in power around them.<sup>9</sup>

English slave societies, particularly those based on the Barbadian model, were built around the idea of white supremacy.<sup>10</sup> Gerald Horne observes:

In North America the colonialism implanted bloodily involved radicalization, which meant the denial of the right to have rights, making millions—Africans particularly—denizens of a society but not of it, this is, permanent aliens, a status that has not entirely dissipated to this day, indicating its profundity. Ultimately, this is a description of what “race” means, a pernicious concept that emerged forcefully, coincidentally enough, in the seventeenth century as colonialism was gaining traction.<sup>11</sup>

European colonialism was characterized by a search for whiteness, in order to help the conquerors hold power over the imported African slaves and the native population. Even Jews

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<sup>8</sup> Beasley, Nicholas M. *Christian Ritual and the Creation of British Slave Societies, 1650-1780*. Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 2009.

<sup>9</sup> Beckles, 84.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Horne, Gerald. *The Apocalypse of Settler Colonialism: The Roots of Slavery, White Supremacy and Capitalism in Seventeenth-Century North America and the Caribbean*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 2018, 17.

generally received more favorable treatment in the Americas than in Europe in a search to better police the white vs. non-white boundary.<sup>12</sup> “It was in the 1690s that the term ‘white’ began to replace ‘Christian’ and free....”<sup>13</sup> It’s possible that this change of terminology was connected to anti-Catholic sentiment, since Protestants did not see them as true Christians, but it’s also likely to be connected to the unwillingness of masters to permit their slaves to be baptized in the earlier part of this period, as noted in the previous chapter.

All Native people were lumped into two groups by most European whites. The first group was the so-called “noble savage”, who was seen as living in an idealized state of nature. The second group was the so-called “ignoble savage”, who was seen as a savage barbarian living in depravity, who was violent, and fundamentally evil. Both were seen by white “civilization” as deficient morally, technologically and racially. If whites believed that Natives could be saved, then it tried to do so by eradicating their culture and “civilizing” them. When whites concluded they could not be saved, such as when they resisted European religion, European rule, and European seizure of their lands, then they turned to a swifter and more permanent kind of eradication.<sup>14</sup> This viewpoint was bolstered by the Great Chain of Being, with white Europeans on the rung of the ladder just below the angels, and all other humans and animals below them, over which God had granted them dominance. Moreover, the Linnaean classification system which appeared in 1758, while revolutionary for classifying species, tended to focus on physical

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 148.

<sup>14</sup> Rubin, Julius H. *Perishing Heathens: Stories of Protestant Missionaries and Christian Indians in Antebellum America*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2017, 48-9.

characteristics to classify species,<sup>15</sup> thus reinforcing the idea that the physical characteristics of “race” were important and controlling factors for classifying humans as well.

Puritan settlers to New England had an explicitly religious view of their struggles with the Native population of the Americas. Some like Hubbard viewed the conflict with Natives in more local terms, but still viewed it through the lens of a supernatural plot instigated by the Devil. Increase Mather, a prominent preacher in New England, saw the same conflict in universal terms, as a sign of the Last Days. Both saw the outcome of battles as directly caused by the hand of God.<sup>16</sup>

Religion played a role in justifying slavery, and race was used as an excuse by both the defenders of slavery and its proponents. Some defenders claimed slavery by race was Biblically based on the story of Noah’s son Ham, who was cursed by his father for seeing him drunk and naked, claiming that the curse made Ham’s descendants black.<sup>17</sup> Although, this is almost certainly based on an misunderstanding of the Talmud, it finds echoes in the Mormon religion, which claimed that the dark-skinned races of the world, particularly those in the Americas, were dark-skinned due to a curse by God for their sins.<sup>18</sup> If race is seen as an inherent mark of punishment from God, it becomes harder to justify abolishing slavery in the eyes of some; more than that, it soothes the consciences of those who promote and propagate it. Moreover, the Calvinist theology of predestination, and that God might reward the chosen on Earth and mark

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<sup>15</sup> Jordan, 216-9.

<sup>16</sup> Winship, Michael P. *Seers of God: Puritan Providentialism in the Restoration and Early Enlightenment*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, 24-5.

<sup>17</sup> Perry, Marvin, and Frederick M. Schweitzer. *Antisemitism: Myth and Hate from Antiquity to the Present*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, 247.

<sup>18</sup> Abanes, R. (2003). *One Nation Under Gods: A History of the Mormon Church*. New York: Thunder's Mouth Press.

the wicked for punishment in this life can also be used readily to justify the enslavement of others, for surely if God allowed someone to become enslaved in this life, then it must be because they deserved it for having sinned against the Almighty.

Another tactic was to argue for a separate creation for non-white races, making them not fallen humans, but non-human. It was not only white settlers that appealed to polygenesis to explain Native and European differences; Natives, too, sometimes appealed to this idea, though probably not for the same racist reasons.<sup>19</sup>

The reaction of the English to the exposure to other races that did not look European may have been because England was geographically more isolated than those nations along the Mediterranean. More than that, when British colonialism was getting underway, England was undergoing a great deal of turmoil in the throes of the Reformation, breaking from the Catholic Church (and back again, and out again), Puritans and political upheaval. When colonies were created in the New World, various acts of violence undermined the efforts at conversion, and produced acts of violent retribution by the Natives, retribution that would eventually lead to the perception of violence and savagery.<sup>20</sup>

English settlers saw the Native population as unassimilable savages and required them to interact with English colonists on the terms of the English, and not on their own terms, unlike the French who approached such interactions more diplomatically. Security and control were the most important factors. Those that chose to assimilate were rewarded with second-class,

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<sup>19</sup> Rubin, 163.

<sup>20</sup> Nash, Gary B., and Richard Weiss. *The Great Fear: Nine Historians Probe the Historical Origins of White Racial Attitudes and Their Effect on Today's Racial Crisis*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1970, 6.

dependent status. Those that refused to assimilate were expected to get out of the way, or their status as savages would be used as a pretext for forcibly removing them.<sup>21</sup>

Conversions of Indians and slaves by Anglican missionaries was largely unsuccessful, though for different reasons. Native people had their own religions, and even those that expressed interest were often unable to conform their behavior within their own culture to the demands of conservative Anglican preachers. Among slaves, the biggest resistance was that of the white masters, who thought missionaries stirred up trouble among the slaves; though, they, too, may have had their own reasons for resisting, since Sunday was the only day they were able to tend to their own gardens and did not have to work for the master, which they would not be able to do if they were forced to attend church.<sup>22</sup>

Edward Andrews argues, "...the line between altruistic beneficence and condescending pity was extremely thin in the eighteenth century, especially in missionary discourses. As much as Native preachers saw the Iroquois and other Indians as their 'brethren,' they also recognized that their unique position as indigenous evangelists had elevated them in English eyes."<sup>23</sup> "[The missionaries'] extinction trope also dovetailed with missionary discourses concerning the land: civilized Christians were destined to spread light into places of darkness while uncivilized indigenous peoples were destined to retreat before it."<sup>24</sup> The spread of small-pox that obliterated

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>22</sup> Bonomi, Patricia U. *Under the Cope of Heaven: Religion, Society and Politics in Colonial America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003, 119-21.

<sup>23</sup> Martinez, 177.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 179.

native tribes and left villages standing empty for oncoming waves of colonists certainly did not help.<sup>25</sup>

One can see in these reflections the birthing of the idea of Manifest Destiny. If the Americas were populated with pagan beliefs, then the Christians were destined by God to force the forces of darkness and the Devil into retreat. Thus, pushing Natives out of their land was an act of piety, and the diseases that ravaged Native populations were an act of God on the behalf of white European conquerors.

Gary Nash, in his work *Red, White and Black: The Peoples of Early North America*, makes it quite clear to the reader that white men marrying Native women and having a general acceptance of the mixed-race children on both sides was fairly standard early in the colonial period. Cultural adoption often determined which culture the children were most accepted by, especially in subsequent generations. The introduction of slavery of imported Africans changed this dynamic gradually, but irreversibly. A three-way dynamic developed. The key divergence lay with the power dynamic between whites and enslaved black women, and whites and free but alien Native women. Exploitation of black women from frequent acts of sexual violence acted out the symbol of white superiority. Meanwhile, Native women were seen as perhaps sinful in their willingness for sex but participated more often freely for mutual benefit.<sup>26</sup> Though, these differences would fall away more and more in the wake of the increasing pressure of westward expansion.

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<sup>25</sup> Mann, Charles C. *1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus*. 2nd. New York: Vintage Books, 2011.

<sup>26</sup> Nash.

Late seventeenth century also saw the arrival of the French in New Orleans with military and trade coupled with Christian missions hoping for converts. As seen elsewhere in French colonies, intermarriage with the Natives was relatively common, often using marriage within tribes much the same way that marriage was used by noble families in Europe: to cement relationships with familial ties.<sup>27</sup>

The combination of the Natives' non-Christian attitudes toward sex, and the attraction of Indian women to men with power to provide them comforts and protect their offspring often resulted in Jesuit missionaries throwing off their vows of celibacy and, along with the soldiers, engaging in multiple liaisons with Native women. That the perceptions of sexual promiscuity were misinterpretations of Native culture and that some relationships may have been coerced does not alter the fact that many mixed-blood children were produced.<sup>28</sup>

The language of race evolved, including the development of racial classification systems dealing with both "pure blood" people and those of mixed race: terms like mulatto, etc.<sup>29</sup> The language of race such as "pure blood" harkens directly back to fifteenth-century Spain. Hashaw examines the myth of racial purity and the various ways mixed-race Americans responded to pressures on their lives, including by forming communities of their own, and developing origin myths that helped them fight the racism around them.<sup>30</sup> In *The Baptism of Early Virginia*, Goetz looks at early initial conflicts among Christian whites to show that Europeans believed non-white

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<sup>27</sup> Giraud, Marcel. *A History of French Louisiana, Volume 1: The Reign of Louis XIV, 1698-1715*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1953.

<sup>28</sup> Starr, Kevin. *Continental Ambitions: Roman Catholics in North America*. San Francisco: Ignatius, 2016, 131.

<sup>29</sup> Forbes, Jack D. *Africans and Native Americans: The Language of Race and the Evolution of Red-Black Peoples*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993.

<sup>30</sup> Hashaw, Tim. *Children of Perdition: Melungeons and the Struggle of Mixed America*. Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2006.

populations could be properly civilized through conversion to Christianity, while still questioning whether they could become true Christians at all. This seems to be a clear echo of the same argument used about Jewish (and Moorish) *conversos* at the time of the Spanish Inquisition. Eventually, violence between whites and non-whites led to the majority of whites in Virginia adopting the later view. However, the former view did not disappear, and led eventually to the rise of the abolitionist movement that would precede the Civil War.<sup>31</sup>

David Nichols explains how mixed-race people paved the way for Indian removals and the rise of the South. In that time, many of the chiefs of the tribes were of mixed race, and so the interaction of these chiefs with their own tribes, and with the American political establishment can shed light on one particular sort of mixed-race people, and form a baseline for how other white-Native peoples in later decades were treated as the frontiers moved westward.<sup>32</sup>

How the English and evangelists saw the Native population was often mutually contradictory. On the one hand, they wanted to bring the natives to Christ (to bring about the millennium), but on the other hand, saw the Natives as “savage” Others. Intermarriage between white women and Indian men was especially frowned upon, though, curiously, the culture did not express so much concern about white men and Indian women. They advocated for forced acculturation, a “gentle extinction,” seeing the indigenous population as inferior and worthy of discrimination.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Goetz, Rebecca Anne. *The Baptism of Early Virginia: How Christianity Created Race*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012.

<sup>32</sup> Nichols, David Andrew. *Red Gentlemen & White Savages: Indians, Federalists, and the Search for Order on the American Frontier*. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2008.

<sup>33</sup> Rubin, 115.

Linford Fisher tries to trace a history that is largely unwritten, and pieces together early Christian conversions of Native people, and how these Christianized Indians. Fisher concludes his analysis by saying:

[S]uch a change was never complete, and in other ways, Natives in 1820 operated with pragmatic, community-centered frames of reference similar to those of their ancestors in 1700 or even 1600. Native understanding of the world ran deep, so deep, in fact, that two hundred years of colonialization could only reshape, not obliterate, their communities and cultures, as in evidenced by the religious and cultural diversity and the vitality exhibited by these same Native groups today.<sup>34</sup>

This makes for an interesting comparison between the way early natives were treated, as compared with later Indian encounters on the frontier, and illuminates how the ways Americans interacted with the Native populations changed over time.

The mixture of religion and sexuality was especially toxic. It was the foundation of moral panics around witch hunts in Europe historically as well as in the same time period as these events in the Americas. Add to the brew that converted tribes frequently retained many of their old beliefs—as converted Jews and Muslims had done in Spain, and pagans in Europe before them—leaving them open to charges of heresy and backsliding. Given the Church's view, based in the Doctrine of Discovery, that conversion is conquest, and that this was the basis for all claims of colonial governments in the Americas, converted tribes, and by extension unconverted tribes, were subject to the will of white authorities, formal or informal. The stage was set for increasing levels of violence against non-Europeans.

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<sup>34</sup>Fisher, Linford D. 2012. *The Indian Great Awakening: Religion and the Shaping of Native Cultures in Early America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 223.

Consider that, in ejecting the Dutch from the Americas, the English doubled down on their colonizing discourse toward the Natives. They denied the right of the Indians to sell land. They claimed the Natives were essentially in violation of the law for residing on lands that the English now claimed to be theirs as “destined by Providence.”<sup>35</sup>

Natives and free Blacks were not permitted to purchase Christians as servants in Virginia. No such prohibition existed for whites, essentially allowing only Europeans to keep indentured servants. The allowable treatment for non-white slaves compared to indentured servants was striking. Goetz notes, “[Whippings of a hundred lashes] would have been considered ‘unchristian’ when directed at an indentured servant but was acceptable when directed at a non-Christian African slave. The degree of violence masters employed to maintain the social order defined and enacted religious and racial categories.”<sup>36</sup>

African slaves came to the English colonies starting in 1619. While in English law, indentured servitude and slavery had not yet fully diverged in North America, it would be a mistake, as Frank W. Sweet does, to claim that non-whites were not seen as racially inferior.<sup>37</sup> Not only was class a major mark of inferiority among the English, but the racial lines of servants and slaves in British colonies would rapidly diverge.<sup>38,39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Williams, Robert A., Jr. *The American Indian in Western Legal Thought: The Discourses of Conquest*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, 221.

<sup>36</sup> Goetz, 119.

<sup>37</sup> Sweet, Frank W. *Legal History of the Color Line: The Notion of Invisible Blackness*. Palm Coast, Florida: Backintyme, 2005, 118.

<sup>38</sup> Malthus, T.R. *An Essay on the Principle of Population*. Edited by Geoffrey Gilbert. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

<sup>39</sup> Sweet.

Baptism had been a well-established road to freedom in the English world. In Virginia in 1667 a law was passed to codify this fact. To maintain the slave population that worked their fields, slaveholders chose instead to modify their religious principles rather than follow the long-standing aims of their faith of converting non-Christians. Instead, they argued that their African slaves and Natives could not be converted. They thus controlled access to baptism to prevent non-whites from accessing it, and thus closed off a path to freedom.<sup>40</sup>

Stuart Banner describes a shift that had occurred since the colonial period. Early on it was the British government that advocated for taking Native lands through right of conquest, and it was colonists that took pains to purchase the land. As the press of colonists increased, the ability of either the colonial or young American government, to stem the press of settler demands for new land could not be stopped. Instead, the settlers seized the land from the Natives by asserting squatters rights or other means, and the governments sought to purchase land or using other methods only ineffectually held back the encroachments on tribal lands.<sup>41</sup>

Colonial courts were dominated and controlled by white, male Protestants. When the defendant was a clergy member, they could be remanded to the Church for a lighter punishment. Women were rarely in court except as witnesses. Natives and slaves only appeared in court as defendants, and neither women nor people of color enjoyed the full rights of the courts. Even free Blacks could only testify against other Blacks.<sup>42</sup> This arrangement was designed so that white men, especially of high rank, were indemnified against crimes committed against women

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<sup>40</sup> Goetz, 86-7.

<sup>41</sup> Banner, 35.

<sup>42</sup> Banks, Christopher P., ed. *The State and Federal Courts: A Complete Guide to History, Powers and Controversy*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2017, 21-3.

and Blacks, free or slave, unless another white man of similar rank was willing to testify against them.

Decrees from the king in Spain had attempted to mitigate the abuse of Natives in the colonies, but the enforcement of such edicts depended very much on the willingness of appointed enforcers to follow orders once they were thousands of miles away. As Spain increasingly lost power at home and abroad, the ability to enforce such edicts in any form gradually waned. Conversion, for instance, could win a Native twenty years of freedom from forced labor, but by the eighteenth century, this was more in word than in practice.<sup>43</sup>

The indigenous people experienced a variety of forms of forced labor, including systems that were essentially feudal, debt peonage, and outright slavery.<sup>44</sup> All these schemes would eventually be adopted by English settlers to the West, copied from the Spanish as they withdrew from the territories. These tactics would also thrive after the Civil War as a means to maintain white control after slavery was officially abolished.

The color line was invented, and perpetuated, as a “divide and conquer” tactic.<sup>45</sup> Unlike the Catholic Church, and other religious groups in the Americas, the local church in Virginia when the color line was imposed in Virginia law not only did not protest or attempt to undermine the goals of the law, but instead embraced it.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Starr, Kevin. *Continental Ambitions: Roman Catholics in North America*. San Francisco: Ignatius, 2016, 182-3.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

<sup>45</sup> Sweet, 135.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 147.

By the eighteenth century, some writers began to lament the loss of Native tribal cultures, who began to focus on those features of Native cultures that they saw as worthy of admiration.<sup>47</sup> Spain began to feel a new threat on their western flank in the early eighteenth century: Russians, although it was not to amount to much in the long term despite competing for primarily fur trading. The Russian case is interesting because they were coming from Russia's eastern shore across the Pacific to the west coast of North America. Their attitudes about race were more similar to the early French, and back home, they used intermarriage with conquered populations to cement national ties. Their presence, however, was not very influential.<sup>48</sup>

Catholic missions on the frontier in this period faced many challenges. Priests might come into conflict with Protestant missions or local settlers. They could clash with both over the question of slavery with Catholics being more opposed to outright slavery than the Protestant missionaries. On the frontier, far from home and the control of the Church, a missionary might also find himself subject to temptations such as women and drink.<sup>49</sup> The religious revival of the period, the First Great Awakening, swept up Protestants and Catholics alike, and sometimes brought them into cooperation, and sometimes into competition, but in a fashion that differed from the Protestant-dominated East. Many of the Catholic priests in the area were French, and they not only targeted other Protestants for conversion, but especially the "heathens".<sup>50</sup> Unable to confront the justifications for slavery directly, some southern preachers chose to vilify the North instead as infidels and atheists, rather than admit that it was their own religious beliefs that

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<sup>47</sup> Nash, 10.

<sup>48</sup> Starr, 261.

<sup>49</sup> Dichtl, John R. *Frontiers of Faith: Bringing Catholicism to the West in the Early Republic*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2008.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

had become a new source of conflict over race, as it would again in the early part of the nineteenth century.<sup>51</sup>

By the middle of the eighteenth century, several factors set the stage for the next step in the development of both race and religion in what would become the United States. A new religious zeal brought about by the First Great Awakening would send a new wave of missionaries into the continental interior and push the boundaries of European expansion. The Enlightenment was sweeping through Europe and would come to dominate the intellectual life of America as well. Reason would be used to both justify and challenge the existing social order, even as colonists strove to throw off the yoke of European control.

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<sup>51</sup> Witham, Larry. *A City Upon a Hill: How Sermons Change the Course of American History*. New York: HarperCollins, 2007, 132.

## Chapter 4: The Founding Generation and Justification of Racism Separate from Religion

It was argued in the last chapter that racism was deeply connected to and justified by a connection to the Christian religion, both Protestant and Catholic, in sometimes complex ways. As the Enlightenment emerged in Europe, and by extension in European colonies, there were efforts to understand racial differences like other differences in the natural world, and often, to use those differences to justify racist beliefs without relying directly on religion. The Enlightenment was sandwiched between the First and Second Great Awakening. This mixture of religion and reason had a profound influence on the decades examined in this chapter.

Theda Perdue focuses on the South, and conceptions of race, particularly along the frontier, where white men and Native women frequently married. Native people lacked notions of race, and were matrilineal, while Europeans were patrilineal. Mixed-blood children were often able to take advantage of both sides, having status in the tribes gained from their mothers, while interacting with the white world using social status gained from their fathers. Their changing ideas of loyalty as expansion progressed proved to be sources of confusion to whites. Perdue also considers the relatively rarer Native-Black offspring and their place in Indian culture, and the efforts of white Europeans to prevent an alliance between them.<sup>1</sup>

The American narrative often focuses on the search for religious freedom apart from the religious conflicts in Europe as a prime justification for settlement. And while there was some of that up and down the east coast of North America, and Jewish immigrants throughout the

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<sup>1</sup> Perdue, Theda. *Mixed Blood Indians: Racial Construction in the Early South*. Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 2003.

Americas, including in Spanish holdings, it was not the dominant motive for migration and settlement.<sup>2</sup>

Missionaries were not above the use of stereotypes of the Natives even as they sought to convert them. The Indians were routinely described as savages and barbarians in their journals. As settlers moved in and massacres on both sides increased, colonists and missionaries alike concluded that they were only safe if the Indian was eliminated from the territory.<sup>3</sup> In these massacres, we see the rising threat of the moral panic, as Europeans sought to protect themselves from the deviance (non-Europeanness) of the Native population. The violent opposition to seizure of Native lands was surely capable of stoking concerns about Europeans, especially European women, “going native” and abandoning Christianity for greater personal freedom.

The very existence of Native Americans was seen as a threat to the one true religion: Christianity. Much effort was expended on incorporating them into their Biblical understanding of the world.<sup>4</sup> It can be argued that when that project failed, the only alternative was to exterminate the threat to the faith. The Native population proved to be a far riper target than the threat to Christianity posed by Enlightenment Deism.

The threat was confronted in both official and non-official ways. The English Proclamation of 1763 tried to restrict the ability of the English colonists to purchase land directly from the Indian tribes, but instead, required them to go through the imperial crown government,

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<sup>2</sup> Bryce, Benjamin, and Alexander Freund, . *Entangling Migration History: Borderlands and Transnationalism in the United States and Canada*. Miami, University Press of Florida, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Roeber, A.G., ed. *Ethnographies and Exchanges: Native Americans, Moravians and Catholics in Early North America*. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid..

under the theory of the Doctrine of Discovery, a tactic that will be revisited in John Marshall's opinion in *Johnson v. McIntosh*. Americans, including George Washington, defied the proclamation, insisting, somewhat ironically, that Indians had the right to sell their own land.<sup>5</sup>

Jefferson hoped Indians would civilize.<sup>6</sup> In other words, hoped they would abandon their traditional cultures and become European in everything but body. Jefferson and Adams, though, both were deeply concerned by the Bible societies that hoped to spread the faith. Jefferson compared them to the hated Jesuits in a typical Protestant display of anti-Catholicism. Adams felt they would spread corruption, a typical concern of Europeans that was encountered in previous chapters.<sup>7</sup>

The Enlightenment began as early as the middle of the seventeenth century in Europe, but it would come crashing to an end at the end of eighteenth with the French Revolution. Like other intellectual movements, it existed at the same time as other countervailing movements like the Great Awakening. The late colonial period and the American Revolution are very much a product of the Enlightenment. Several themes prominent in the Enlightenment proved to be crucial underpinnings to the American democratic spirit and provided energy to several impulses developing over the past century-and-a-half or longer by providing new philosophical justifications. One of those key themes was the idea of progress.

“Both [Pascal and Fontenelle] had been explicit in stating that there was nothing automatic or unconditional about progress, and that men learn from experience only on condition

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<sup>5</sup> Williams, 229-30.

<sup>6</sup> Roeber.

<sup>7</sup> Haselby, Sam. *The Origins of American Religious Nationalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015, 241.

that they possess an appropriate method.”<sup>8</sup> By this, Pascal meant the scientific method. Rousseau is sometimes seen as having a theory of historical “regress” rather than progress, and, it is claimed, rejecting the idea of the perfectibility of man. This could be seen as consistent with a Christian worldview that saw the perfectibility of man in the Garden of Eden, and which was set on a path of decline ever since. He also separated the idea of scientific progress from moral or social progress, by observing that science and its analytic methods had not been applied to morality.<sup>9</sup> This view was rejected by Voltaire and D’Alembert.<sup>10</sup> Frankel’s analysis lays bare the conflict inherent in the French Enlightenment. In the bloody Haitian Revolution, one sees the seeds of these conflicts: liberty, equality and fraternity were for whites only, and not their mixed offspring, nor their slaves.

A prominent defender of the Enlightenment, a governor of the largest of the original states, the first Secretary of State, Vice President, and the third President of the United States, Thomas Jefferson throughout his life engaged in dialogue with European Enlightenment thinkers, especially in France. French Enlightenment thinkers were influential, particularly with respect to the developing ideas of progress and race. In particular, Buffon challenged American perceptions of their own progress by claiming that not only were the Natives of America inferior to Europeans, but that America was inherently regressive.<sup>11</sup> Jefferson’s *Notes on the State of Virginia* was a direct response to these claims.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Frankel, Charles. *The Faith of Reason: The Idea of Progress in the French Enlightenment*. New York: King's Crown Press, 1948, 69.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 76-77.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.

<sup>11</sup> Buffon, G. L. (1797). *Buffon's Natural History: History of the Brute Creation; of the Degeneration of Animals*. (J. Barr, Trans.) New York: H. D. Symonds.

<sup>12</sup> Jefferson, T. (1787). *Notes on the State of Virginia: Complete Illustrated Edition*. United States of America.

Nisbet summarizes the role of progress in the American Revolution and subsequent dialogue with mainland Europe between Buffon and Jefferson:

So went the argument of Buffon and others against the idea of real progress.... [T]he Americans quickly demonstrated that America was in every respect youthful and strong, capable of furnishing more resources necessary to the progress of civilization than any European country. Franklin... in 1755 used America's fast-developing population as a principle argument in behalf of his prediction that America would become a great and powerful civilization. As late as 1785 Jefferson was still replying.... He declared that Americans, including the native Indians, were at least equal and probably superior to European physical types. He did not hesitate to utilize America's victory over the English and other European troops in the Revolutionary War as evidence for the fact that not only were Americans physically superior but that such defeat of the English argued their own degeneration of body and mind.<sup>13</sup>

Jefferson's conception of progress in America did not end there. He was one of the first advocates of what would become known as Manifest Destiny, the idea that America should spread across the continent all the way to the Pacific, although there was not yet a name for this concept. The expedition of Lewis and Clarke, which he helped bring about, and which was the result of the Louisiana Purchase, was the culmination of a long-term goal to make that dream a reality. "The affirmations of progress we find in America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are rarely if ever separable from the profound conviction that American was not only a destined nation, but a redeeming nation...."<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Nisbet, R. (1970). *History of the Idea of Progress*. New York: Basic Books, 194.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 197.

Jefferson was hardly alone in his assessment of American progress. Franklin's scientific advancements were well-known in Europe. Revolutions spread across the world inspired by America's success. Nisbet notes:

Needless to say, there were abundant assessments of this kind in America. The greatest of the Founding Fathers were emphatic in their conviction of past progress over vast lengths of time for humanity, and of progress, with America in the vanguard, through a long future. ...[T]he stately affirmations of the progress of civilizations which we ... see in Jefferson, John Adams, Franklin, Paine and others of their time,<sup>15</sup>

were more important and prominent than occasional forays into other classical theories of history. For Americans, progress became a dominant theme in accounts of their history. It seemed to be a confirmation of the theory of human improvement.

Many Americans of the era saw themselves as missionaries but of a different kind, instead of purveyors of religion, they were purveyors of culture, civilization and scientific reasoning.

Silvia Sebastiani describes some of the philosophical arguments happening in the latter half of the eighteenth century surrounding race, focusing on the arguments of Buffon, Voltaire and Kames. "Races/species were defined on the basis of common sense, by both immediate and discernible physical characteristics and by equally evident inclinations and temperaments, which gave rise to particular manners and habits. National characters thus became racial characters."<sup>16</sup> This is an idea that followed directly from Linnaean classification. These views were in direct

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 194-5.

<sup>16</sup> Sebastiani, S. (2013). *The Scottish Enlightenment: Race, Gender and the Limits of Progress*. (J. Carden, Trans.) New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 73.

opposition to some previous anthropological models that simply saw other races as occupying less advanced states of civilization, and through exposure to Western civilization, could be brought up to the more advanced state that Europeans were thought to occupy. In this light, the reaction of the French to the revolt in Haiti makes more sense. It would appear, based on these arguments, that the very fact of their slavery proved that they should remain slaves.

Some Enlightenment philosophers advocated for a kind of enlightened despotism that could be employed to justify civilizing and enslaving Natives and Blacks respectively. Frankel describes the basic framework of this view as one where “...political progress took place from the top down and was the organization of society in the light of principles in the possession of a few enlightened men.”<sup>17</sup> This conception of how to order the world was hardly new and was just a reconceptualization of the Platonic ideal of philosopher kings, which was just as driven by caste and perceptions of inherent inferiority and superiority.

Samuel Hopkins argued “enslaving Africans in order to Christianize them was a ‘direct and gross violation of the laws of Christ.’”<sup>18</sup> But there were those who argued that Christianizing Africans once enslaved was nonetheless “righteous Recompence” for their enslavement, and, yes, that God works in mysterious ways.<sup>19</sup>

Alexander Hamilton was one of the few Founders to reject conceptions of racial inferiority.<sup>20</sup> However, Hamilton’s economic policies led to increased westward expansion

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<sup>17</sup> Frankel, 61.

<sup>18</sup> Martinez, Juan Francisco. *Sea la Luz: The Making of Mexican Protestantism in the American Southwest, 1829-1900*. Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2006, 196.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Hamilton, Alexander. *The Essential Hamilton: Letters and Other Writings*. Edited by Joanne B. Freeman. New York: Random House, 2017.

through the sale of lands and building of internal improvements to aid commerce with the frontier.<sup>21</sup> The policy of Jefferson and Knox in the Washington administration recognized a right of occupancy for the Native tribes, but not necessarily the right of ownership.<sup>22</sup> This combination of factors contributed to the decision in *Johnson v. McIntosh* that was still decades away.

Tribal delegations coming to Washington to negotiate treaties were entertained by the Indian Office, which in turn assumed “the paternalistic mantle that theoretically belonged to the Great Father, the president.”<sup>23</sup> One could see the quasi-religious nature of such paternalism in a Christian culture that viewed God as God the Father. European Americans were certainly willing to exploit such an implication.

During the Continental Congress, John Adams expressed a vision of the new America that would spread over a quarter of the globe, and thus well beyond “sea to shining sea.” Frank Dodge describes the sentiment of the time as:

A vision as a “chosen” colony in New England founded by Puritans had been magnified into a country of destiny with the same property of being special in God’s eyes, so above others. For the Indians, the meaning was clear. An early frontier motto recorded in the journal of Major James Norris in 1789 specified that message, which was “Civilization or death to all American savages.”<sup>24</sup>

America, and Americans alike, took advantage of the weakness of not only their own government, but also that of imperial governments around them. Americans took to squatting on

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Prucha, Francis Paul. *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*. abridged edition. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984, 21-2.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>24</sup> Dodge, Robert V. *Which Chosen People? Manifest Destiny Meets the Sioux: As Seen by Frank Fiske, Frontier Photographer*. New York: Algora Publishing, 2013, 12.

Native lands, or those claimed by the Spanish, and basically dared anyone to get rid of them. On Native lands, if attacked by those whose land they had stolen, they would react violently, supposedly in self-defense but as the violence of these exchanges escalated, the behavior of settlers began to look more like the irrationality of a moral panic than genuine defense. In Spanish territory, the Spanish were desperate to maintain control over the Natives as well, and their population was fairly small, and so welcomed the help of their fellow Europeans in the beginning. Though the new American government passed laws to prevent such settlement, they largely went unenforced, in part due to the weakness of the new government, and in part because these squatters were doing the expansionist work American politicians preferred—something other than all-out war—as other than imperial conquest. All along the frontier, this slow-motion conquest rolled on with hardly any impediment at all.<sup>25</sup>

Conroy-Krutz notes that westward expansion, Manifest Destiny, was inherent in the goals of early missionary societies shortly after the Founding.<sup>26</sup> Jefferson’s “empire of liberty” was explicitly imperial, and freedom was not open to either African Americans or Native people. Westward expansion would both extend slavery and dispossess natives of their land.<sup>27</sup>

Displacement of Native people on the frontier of the new United States was so profound, that the existence of the Second Amendment is a testament not to the need to defend America

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<sup>25</sup> Joy, Mark S. *American Expansionism, 1783-1860*. New York: Pearson Longman, 2003.

<sup>26</sup> Conroy-Krutz, Emily. *Christian Imperialism: Converting the World in the Early American Republic*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2015, 1.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 8-9.

from the British, but to defend the frontier from the Native tribes whose land Europeans, and their fellow Americans, were taking.<sup>28</sup>

The Doctrine of Discovery explicitly gave Spain control of both American continents, not merely along the coasts, but all the way to the Pacific Ocean. That sense of ownership of the entire continent remained the goal of the American frontier. What control European powers had gained on the margins in two centuries, would now accelerate with the Louisiana Purchase. The claim to the land therein was directly possible under the terms of the Doctrine of Discovery because it had been territory originally claimed by Spain but had been won by Napoleon as a concession in war.

At the time of the Founding, both before and after the Articles of Confederation, the Congress debated the rights of Native tribes with respect to the land they lived on. Now that British imperialism was no longer “oppressing” the colonists, they had new motivation to reject natural law claims of the natives to their own land. They asserted a right of preemption, which is to say that Natives were free to sell their own lands, but not to just anyone: only to the United States, precisely the standard that would become the basis for the *Johnson v. McIntosh* decision. Treaties with the Natives that did not have such a provision were rejected for ratification, and naturally, the Native tribes would not sign a treaty that contained it. It would be just a matter of time before such land issues became a context for war.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Blanchfield, Patrick. "The Brutal Origins of Gun Rights." *The New Republic*. December 11, 2011. <https://newrepublic.com/article/146190/brutal-origins-gun-rights> (accessed August 25, 2020).

<sup>29</sup> Watson, Blake A. *Buying America from the Indians: Johnson v. McIntosh and the History of Native Land Rights*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012, 154-5.

Within the Southern United States, even far from the borderlands, fear of slave rebellion marked most slaveholders. In the American South, slaves could be more numerous than whites in some counties. The fear of a slave rebellion, much like attacks from Native tribes on the frontier, was at times acute, leading Southern slaveholders to put down even the slightest hint of rebellion with excessive brutality. This feeling became especially acute after the Haitian Revolution in which escaped slaves rebelled against their white masters and eventually massacred them.<sup>30</sup>

Jefferson was deeply troubled by slavery and felt the weight of the moral reckoning to come, especially after the Haitian Revolution. Despite feeling that Blacks were inferior to whites—he was, of course, a Southern gentleman with all the requisite options of his own superiority as an elite—he saw slavery as violating basic human rights, and disliked what it did to the morality of the owners, perhaps including himself. He felt financially trapped, however, and freed few slaves, even though he repeatedly talked and wrote about it. He felt that God would judge slaveholders and feared a general slave rebellion that would give white men the justice they deserved.<sup>31</sup> His inability to see a way out of the trap of slaveholding suggests that there was something else, perhaps his own standing as a gentleman, that he valued more than justice.

Jefferson's speculations on race with Buffon set off a host of replies, refuting him on several fronts. Some defended the intellect and morality of Blacks, by blaming their condition on their enslavement. Indeed, their arguments were similar to Jefferson's own arguments in

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<sup>30</sup> Jordan, 62.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 170-5.

support of the native American tribes.<sup>32</sup> Despite this, his perspective on the relative redeemability of Natives and the irredeemability of Blacks did not change.

Condorcet was one of the “movers and shakers” in the French Revolution, and also a prominent French Enlightenment thinker. Frankel notes, “Condorcet’s view of progress as a battle between opposing forces was the immediate result of practical efforts against clerical domination.”<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, Condorcet’s view of progress proved to be a lasting one.

Chambliss notes, “The idea that history is the story of man’s progress from superstition and barbarism to reason and enlightenment” is described in Condorcet’s book, in 1793.<sup>34</sup> This move away from superstition is reflected in the strong anticlerical spirit of the French Revolution.

It is easy to see how the French Revolution could be seen as a kind of progress “trap” as described by Wright. Equality is a fine ideal, but arresting and executing aristocrats in order to achieve that equality could be seen as the kind of extreme exercise of “progress” that actually leads to regress, since certainly such violence cannot be considered civilized. At the same time, equality did not extend to slaves, and this attitude proved to have a direct impact on the situation in Haiti. One has to consider why equality did not extend to slavery, and it seems clear that the developing arguments about race from the likes of Buffon contributed.

One might also consider the continuation of slavery as a kind of progress trap. After the invention of the cotton gin in 1793, the profitability of slave-based labor in the South skyrocketed, making that much more appealing to preserve and expand for white southerners.

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 174-80.

<sup>33</sup> Frankel, 141.

<sup>34</sup> Chambliss, J. (Ed.). (1971). *Enlightenment and Social Progress: Education in the 19th Century*. Minneapolis: Burgess Publishing, 1.

For Southerners to advocate forcefully for the goodness of slavery drove northern abolitionists who had been moving in the direction of ending slavery for decades to greater levels of concern, particularly in the wake the Second Great Awakening.<sup>35</sup> The continued efforts at expansion of slavery into the western territories further rubbed salt in this open wound.

William Bentley was a preacher from 1783 to 1819 who responded to the Enlightenment, not by reflexively rejecting it, but by embracing as much of it as he could—like Jefferson—and he pushed his faith as far as he could toward the Enlightenment ideal of rationalism, while still calling his faith Christian. That he was a pastor in Salem, Massachusetts provides an especially interesting backdrop to his efforts.<sup>36</sup> The Enlightenment helped contribute to a lot of odd blends of perfectibility and racial inferiority that became prominent in this period. Jefferson, of course, expressed his often-conflicting opinions on race himself, and was likewise rooted in Enlightenment thought.<sup>37</sup> However, unlike Bentley, Jefferson was a holder of slaves, and so comparing their conflicting views rooted in similar intellectual frameworks is especially informative.

With the Lewis and Clarke expedition, Jefferson continued the age-old tradition of using exploration to establish land claims, such as those of Cartier and Champlain for the French in the sixteenth century. Jefferson, like those explorers, hoped to find a water route to the Pacific. His goal in sending Lewis and Clarke was explicit: to claim control of the Louisiana Territory, to map it, in order to claim it, such a claim that would only possible under the framework of the

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<sup>35</sup> Black, Jeremy. *The Atlantic Slave Trade in World History*. New York: Routledge, 2015, 121.

<sup>36</sup> Ruffin, J. R. (2008). *A Paradise of Reason: William Bentley and Enlightenment Christianity in the Early Republic*. New York: Oxford University Press.

<sup>37</sup> Jefferson, T. (1787). *Notes on the State of Virginia: Complete Illustrated Edition*. United States of America.

Doctrine of Discovery.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, we see here the direct action of Manifest Destiny, long before the phrase existed.

After the Revolutionary War, the former colonies saw an expansion of the franchise, although the extent of this expansion varied from state to state. An important sign of progress began to occur in New England, where the abolition of slavery was getting a foothold. The Quakers in 1774 banned their member from owning slaves, and then the Methodists in 1780—they later kicked out members that refused to free their slaves.<sup>39</sup> The Constitution written in 1787 embodied toleration and secularism (no religious test for office, failure to mention the divine), employed Enlightenment theories of government and balance of powers, and enshrined representative government as an embodiment of the ideal of social progress. While progress occurred slowly in some areas, particularly with respect to slavery, women, and the Native populations on the frontier, nonetheless, this represented an important step forward. Some scholars debate whether the American revolution was a revolution at all, but there does not seem to be prominent scholars arguing that the American revolution was strongly regressive.<sup>40</sup>

The Doctrine of Discovery is central for the development of the American West in the post-colonial period. Miller describes the American implications of the Doctrine of Discovery, and its intellectual child, Manifest Destiny, on the American West. He examines the role of the Doctrine on interactions of Europeans with Native populations both before and after the McIntosh decision. His writing makes clear that the McIntosh decision was not written in a

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<sup>38</sup> Bauman, Arthur R. *Expansion into Connecticut Western Reserve*. Bloomington: Author House, 2006.

<sup>39</sup> Frankel.

<sup>40</sup> Palmer, R. (2014). *The Age of the Democratic Revolution: A Political History of Europe and America, 1760-1800*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 141.

vacuum: Thomas Jefferson used it to justify taking control of the Louisiana Territory after purchasing the land from Napoleon,<sup>41</sup> and he notes how, after the Doctrine became legal precedent, the appeal to the ideas accelerated, and were quoted in the popular press, including in the article that (allegedly) created the term “Manifest Destiny”, where John O’Sullivan argued that America already had the legal title to the Oregon territory.<sup>42,43</sup>

Slavery by race was justified both by religious and quasi-scientific grounds. Arguments from Biblical origins were one thing, suggesting that blacks were the result of sin or a curse from God. However, such arguments allowed African slaves to remain within the family of humanity. On the other hand, some natural philosophers chose to explain the very existence of Blacks as being a different species, usually without even attempting to justify such claims with evidence.<sup>44</sup>

It was around 1800, the year Thomas Jefferson was elected President, that the color line, and its fine boundaries, became even more important in the law.<sup>45</sup> Abolitionists had initial success in banning slavery in the Northwest Ordinances. Ohio’s abolition of slavery in the new state set a precedent that halted the spread of slavery in Northern colonies.<sup>46</sup> Abolitionists saw it as a victory, but it eventually led the nation down the road to the Civil War by introducing regional divisions in the treatment of slaves. It also did not signal an end to racism in the state.

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<sup>41</sup> Miller, Robert J.. *Native America, Discovered and Conquered: Thomas Jefferson, Lewis and Clark, and Manifest Destiny*. Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 2008.

<sup>42</sup> Miller, Robert J. "American Indians, the Doctrine of Discovery, and Manifest Destiny." *Wyoming Law Review* 11 (2011): 329.

<sup>43</sup> There is one source I am aware of that found a usage of the term Manifest Destiny that predates O’Sullivan’s usage, however, O’Sullivan is widely considered the father of the phrase. While that attestation may be incorrect, the source mentioned here itself predates the article questioning that attestation.

<sup>44</sup> Black, 95-6.

<sup>45</sup> Sweet, Frank W. *Legal History of the Color Line: The Notion of Invisible Blackness*. Palm Coast, Florida: Backintyme, 2005, 170.

<sup>46</sup> Middleton, Stephen. *The Black Laws: Race and the Legal Process in Early Ohio*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2005, 17.

Ohio's Black Laws were oppressive and designed to prevent immigration of Blacks into the state: thus they were both racist and xenophobic. Not only were Blacks legally subordinate, but they were also required to obtain \$500 surety from white property owners within three weeks of arriving in the state. The laws were designed to enshrine in the legal codes "appropriate" restrictions on an inferior race.<sup>47</sup>

It was not only Blacks that were affected by territorial and state laws. The National Land Ordinances and Northwest Ordinances imposed a grid structure on the territories, ignoring Native land claims, and those of squatters alike. DeRogatis says, "The practice of viewing land as 'a tabula rasa' is a common feature of those who conquer and colonize indigenous people, who often are remapped and renamed in the process."<sup>48</sup> "From the Euro-American cartographic perspective, the Natives did not exist."<sup>49</sup> The settlers that preceded the surveying, the squatters and Natives were seen as physically and morally disordered. By imposing a rigid grid system on the land, order—religious and political—was imposed upon nature and the people.<sup>50</sup> These views are, unfortunately, typical of Enlightenment-era reasoning.

John Quincy Adams, who became President shortly after the McIntosh ruling, lamented that the Natives refused to assimilate and accept U.S. control. Henry Clay, another contender for the Presidency in this same period, claimed the Natives were inferior to whites and "not worth

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<sup>47</sup> Middleton, Stephen. *The Black Laws: Race and the Legal Process in Early Ohio*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2005, 74-5.

<sup>48</sup> DeRogatis, Amy. *Moral Geography: Maps, Missionaries and the American Frontier*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003, 22.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

preserving,” further claiming that their deaths would be “no great loss to the world.”<sup>51</sup> These attitudes, even among men like John Quincy Adams who became a staunch abolitionist, underscore the complexity, and even confusion, of race in this period. To Adams and Clay, Natives deserved no compassion or autonomy, even when they were willing to give some to those of African descent.

In an early American court ruling in 1823, the famous *Johnson v. McIntosh* case, the Doctrine of Discovery was enshrined into American legal precedent.<sup>52,53</sup> As was noted in the introduction, this case was a dispute between two whites but was settled on the ability of Natives to sell rights to their own land. Modern legal arguments have drawn attention to its religious origins, given the separation of church and state in the United States, in an effort to finally get the precedent fully overturned.<sup>54</sup>

The Doctrine of Discovery was transformed historically from one that was initially “mythic and religious” to something which, over time, became “racism and legalism”.<sup>55</sup> Fitzpatrick traces the document as one of mission, to one that, by 1823, became a product of legal justification used to cement the racism into law that had developed in the time since the Doctrine was first promulgated.

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<sup>51</sup> Echo-Hawk, Walter R. *In the Courts of the Conqueror: the 10 Worst Indian Law Cases Ever Decided*. Golden, CO: Fulcrum, 2010, 96-7.

<sup>52</sup> A note about the spelling: Some sources use the spelling M’Intosh rather than McIntosh in the documents, reflecting a fairly common spelling practice at the time of court case. However, I have adopted the modern spelling convention, which is used in some of the sources.

<sup>53</sup> Robertson, Lindsay G. *Conquest by Law: How the Discovery of America Dispossessed Indigenous Peoples of Their Lands*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

<sup>54</sup> Newcomb, Steven T. "The Evidence of Christian Nationalism in Federal Indian Law: The Doctrine of Discovery, *Johnson v. McIntosh*, and Plenary Power." *New York University Review of Law and Social Change* 20 (New York 1992): 303

<sup>55</sup> Goldberg, David Theo, and John Solomos, . *A Companion to Racial and Ethnic Studies*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002, 25.

In this same period, we can see the position on race undergoing a change toward this calcification. Two forces seemed to play an important role in this regard, as they had done since the founding of the early colonies: slavery, and the relationship with Indians on the frontier. During the Second Great Awakening, we begin to see splits in religious thinking among Northern evangelicals and Southern evangelicals, splits that remain within churches to the present day. These splits were triggered by some churches advocating for the abolition of slavery, while others moved to defend the institution regardless of what other intellectual and moral consequences there were. Early colonists strove to convert the Indians (with varying degrees of “success”), but as the frontier pushed further West, conversion efforts and peaceful coexistence were replaced with a series of Indian wars that would dominate most of the rest of the century as Indians resistance to encroachment of whites increased. Intriguingly, the doctrines of Mormonism on race are both salient here, and reflective of the larger cultural view on race at the time of its inception.

Mixed-race relationships in this period remained common despite increasingly entrenched race-based laws. Bernie Jones looks at mixed-race children of slave masters with their slaves in the Antebellum South, especially those slaveholders that treated their children especially well, acknowledging them as their own. The wills that acknowledged mixed-race children, or even freed them from bondage upon their father’s death, were often contested by white relatives, and so many of the sources here are legal rulings in the equivalent of probate court. The theme of miscegenation and mixed-race relationships continues to the modern day: Strom Thurmond’s mixed-race relationship was revealed to the media shortly after his death. Through these relationships with their white fathers and white relatives, we get a portrait of how

the children of mixed-race, and free people of color, were treated by a legal system designed to protect the property rights of whites.<sup>56</sup>

Perdue's examination of mixed-race people particularly in the South helps to set the stage for the Civil War, and the changing relationships of race after the war. Combining her perspective with that of Coleman's examination of racial purity, we can make better sense of the consequences that Reconstruction and Jim Crow had for other people of color in the South. Perdue's work can also shed light on the complex notions of race that the Native people, originally from the South but who were forced to migrate westward to reservations, have toward mixed-race descendants who were able to pass as white and blend into the larger culture. Elizabeth Warren's mixed racial heritage and the various misunderstandings it has generated among whites and Native peoples can be better understood in light of this text.<sup>57</sup>

Race was undeniably a central dynamic to the Civil War. In the leadup to the Civil War, the perception of race became increasingly binary, and so people of mixed-race became increasingly marginalized. The desire for "purity" meant that race-mixing became both banned and not acknowledged. Race-mixing also represented a danger to that purity, since those who managed to "pass" and blend into white culture could "taint" the purity of those with whom they came in contact, a theme one recalls from earlier chapters. The sexualization of race is reflected still in modern culture. The tactics of challenging the wills of white fathers who left property to mixed-race children are mirrored in the more recent tactics of straight families of gay men challenging wills that left property to long-term partners or adopted children. The racial issues at

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<sup>56</sup> Jones, Bernie D. *Fathers of Conscience: Mixed-Race Inheritance in the Antebellum South*. Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 2009.

<sup>57</sup> Perdue.

play in the South during Reconstruction were modeled on the treatment of mixed-race people in the newly acquired Mexican territories and would echo into the future with the acquisition of Alaska and Hawaii, and the Indian Wars that would continue for most of what remained of the nineteenth century.

## Chapter 5: Manifest Destiny, Western Expansion, Indian Wars

Manifest Destiny is, in many ways, more of an idea than a historical event, but it forms a thread through much of American history. It is the idea that America has a divinely-inspired right—a destiny—to spread across the continent from the Atlantic coast to the Pacific coast, regardless of the continent had already been inhabited. The idea itself is as old as America. Elements of it can be found in many of the earliest settlements; elements of it persist into the modern day in twentieth- and twenty-first-century imperialist tendencies. However, this chapter will focus on the era in which the term “Manifest Destiny” was coined: roughly the nineteenth-century westward expansion, rooted geographically in the acquisition of the Louisiana Purchase during the Jefferson administration, through the era just before the Civil War (roughly 1860) for which westward expansion proved to be a crucial catalyst, and closing out with the Indian Wars that consolidated control over the West.

Conroy-Krutz defines Manifest Destiny as “the divine right of the United States to possess an expansive territory that could be acquired through war and the conquest of the Native American and Mexican people.”<sup>1</sup> She further describes American ambitions in the West as “Christian imperialism.”<sup>2</sup> We can see through the lens of the preceding chapters how this definition directly connects Manifest Destiny in spirit to the Doctrine of Discovery.

Providentialism, a doctrine of Protestantism that God controls all events on Earth, shaped the idea of westward expansion. Combined with the existing views of race, gender and politics,

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<sup>1</sup> Conroy-Krutz, Emily. *Christian Imperialism: Converting the World in the Early American Republic*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2015, 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 207.

this formed the basis for believing that the United States and its imperial empire spanning the continent was for, specifically, white men. This contributed to the wars of extermination of the Natives that would take place in the West, as well as for the failure to annex all of Mexico: white racists feared they would lose supremacy if they incorporated such a large non-white population.<sup>3</sup>

The term “manifest destiny” itself is often claimed to have originated in the editorials of John O’Sullivan.<sup>4</sup>

She comes within the dear and sacred designation of Our Country... other nations have undertaken to intrude themselves ... in a spirit of hostile interference against us, for the avowed object of thwarting our policy and hampering our power, limiting our greatness and checking the fulfillment of our *manifest destiny* to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions,” (emphasis added).<sup>5,6</sup>

But, as noted above, he simply articulated in a catchier way, a sentiment already deeply rooted in the American mind. Americans were spurred on by the religious sentiments of the Second Great Awakening (roughly 1790 to 1820), and by the sense of progress invoked by the Enlightenment.<sup>7</sup> Democratic-Republican Party<sup>8</sup> ideals of expanding democratic institutions and idealization of an

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<sup>3</sup> Bremer, Thomas S. *Formed From This Soil: An Introduction to the Diverse History of Religion in America*. Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2015, 234, 257.

<sup>4</sup> Pratt, Julius W. 1927. "The Origin of "Manifest Destiny"." *The American Historical Review* 32 (4): 795-798.

<sup>5</sup> O’Sullivan, John. 1845. "Annexation." *The United States Magazine and Democratic Review* 17: 5-6, 9-10.

<sup>6</sup> As it turns out, the term “Manifest Destiny” appears to predate O’Sullivan, as noted later in this paper. However, the attestation to O’Sullivan is so commonly cited (via Pratt) that I will leave this claim here and address it later with a reference that cites the predated source.

<sup>7</sup> Morgan, Robert. 2012. *Lions of the West: Heroes and Villains of the Westward Expansion*. New York: Shannon Ravenel.

<sup>8</sup> The Democratic Republican Party in this era, which eventually became the Democratic Party.

agrarian electorate further contributed to the appeal of westward expansion, and promoted Manifest Destiny in support of these goals.

Manifest Destiny has these sometimes-conflicting elements as its source, leading historians to focus on these disparate aspects. Moreover, while Manifest Destiny was certainly supported by politicians with particular ambitions, it was driven as much by public sentiment as it was by political ambition.<sup>9</sup> It was cultural and from the grassroots, and not merely an elitist contrivance. Westward expansion has been examined from the perspective of “great men” who promoted and benefited from it.<sup>10</sup> In more recent decades, it has been viewed from the perspective of the Americans who were the physical means of America’s westward movement: the largely white settlers who formed the wagon trains to the west coast, in both general and specific terms, such as the Donner Party.<sup>11</sup> In some cases, the perspective of the settlers was seen as inherently racialized in accounts compiled after the Civil Rights era. Historians have also recently considered the perspective of less privileged elements of American society to examine the impact on and role of slaves, women, Mexican Americans and Native Americans on Manifest Destiny. These perspectives are often, from the standpoint of these groups, as passive victims of westward expansion and American imperialism. In the twenty-first century, these perspectives have expanded to include Native American history in its own right, as imperial powers, and promoters of democratic ideals, not merely as victims, but as active agents trying to stand in the way of true American imperialism, in direct contrast to the view of earlier historians

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<sup>9</sup> Wrobel, David M. 2014. *Global West, American Frontier: Travel, Empire, and Exceptionalism from Manifest Destiny to the Great Depression*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press

<sup>10</sup> Morgan, Robert. 2012. *Lions of the West: Heroes and Villains of the Westward Expansion*. New York: Shannon Ravenel.

<sup>11</sup> Wallis, Michael. 2017. *The Best Land Under Heaven: The Donner Party in the Age of Manifest Destiny*. New York: Liveright.

that the Native population was essentially an inert obstacle to America's destiny, or else as a dangerous threat that was America's duty to subdue.

Congress made no secret of their designs on possessing the entire continent.

Congressman William F. Giles stated in 1847, "We must march from ocean to ocean... It is the destiny of the white race."<sup>12</sup>

While Dexter Arnoll Hawkins did not address Manifest Destiny directly in his speech to Syracuse University in 1875, he provides some perspective on the racialized views of the place of white Americans in history in the period as this history unfolded: "...it is now called the Anglo-Saxon [race]. Our own country is perhaps the most promising and vigorous representative."<sup>13</sup> He concludes his speech by saying, "If the race is true to itself, if it fulfills the high destiny to which the Divine hand seems to have marked out for it, then when its cycle shall have been completed and its record made up, future races will look back upon its period as the brightest in human history."<sup>14</sup> Hawkins expressed a common public sentiment that perceived America as essentially white, and specifically of Germanic origins and uniquely destined for greatness. Indeed, that anything America does is great because it is Americans doing it. It is worth noting that this elevation of Germanic blood can be traced back directly to the purity of blood arguments made by the Spanish in support of the Inquisition against Jews.

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<sup>12</sup> Dodge, Robert V. *Which Chosen People? Manifest Destiny Meets the Sioux: As Seen by Frank Fiske, Frontier Photographer*. New York: Algora Publishing, 2013, 23.

<sup>13</sup> Hawkins, Dexter A. 1875. *The Anglo-Saxon Race Its History Character and Destiny*. New York: Nelson & Phillips, 4.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

John Fiske continues the theme of Hawkins, though he rejects the term “Anglo-Saxon” in favor of the “English” race.<sup>15</sup> Nonetheless, he argues in the same vein that: “After the survey of universal history which we have just now taken, however, I am fully prepared to show that the conquest of the North American continent by men of English race was unquestionably the most prodigious event in the political history of mankind.”<sup>16</sup> There is no sense of caution or compromise to be found even in an intellectual analysis of events. Westward expansion was a right of white men and a triumph of freedom and liberty. The benefit to white “English” Americans is his sole focus. He even describes the freeing of slaves after the Civil War as “an incidental result.”<sup>17</sup> His views of Manifest Destiny are sweeping:

...the work which the English race began when it colonized North America is destined to go on until every land on the earth’s surface that is not already the seat of an old civilization shall become English in its language, in its political habits and traditions, and to a predominant extent in the blood of its people.... The race thus spread over both hemispheres, and from the rising to the setting sun, will not fail to keep that sovereignty of the sea and the commercial supremacy which it began to acquire when England first stretched its arm across the Atlantic to the shores of Virginia and Massachusetts.<sup>18</sup>

Though he seems to conflate British imperialism with American imperialism as being part of a whole, he exposes the seeds that became American global imperialism into the twentieth century. Fiske goes even further and explicitly predicts that the United States will stretch “from pole to pole,”<sup>19</sup> seeing those outside the “English” domain as “Barbarians” and only properly conquered

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<sup>15</sup> Fiske, John, and John Spencer Clark. 1885. *American Political Ideas Viewed from the Standpoint of Universal History*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 104-105.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 125.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 135.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 143.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 151.

by “Civilization”.<sup>20</sup> Thus he thoroughly entangles his view of American history with Enlightenment notions of progress, and argues that they are one and the same.

Reginald Horsman directly critiqued the racial—and specifically Anglo-Saxon-centered—blindness of earlier historians like Fiske, citing primary sources such as volumes of published papers of key political figures, as well as the *Congressional Record*. Horsman weaves together several of the themes encountered in previous chapters including the influence of Enlightenment thinkers, and early anthropological thought on racialist claims. Arising from a mixture of Enlightenment sentiments for progress merged with a pre-existing Christian notion of the Great Chain of Being, and further combined with a non-Christian polygeneticist view that directly contradicted monogeneticist views that supported notions of human equality.<sup>21,22</sup> The polygeneticist views became more popular as the threat of being charged with heresy decreased.<sup>23</sup> Modern readers tend to think of science as evidence-based and objective, but our modern perspective is only after nearly two centuries (or more) of weeding out human biases of individual scientists embedded in the biased cultures into which they were born. Early scientific efforts frequently began by defending biases in the culture and only later were these views rejected based on careful examination and additional evidence.

Horsman also addressed the religious underpinnings of racial prejudice in this era (and deliberate downplaying of the rights of Native peoples). “As American settlements advanced outward, the Puritans not only saw God’s kingdom moving to the West, but thought of America

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 153.

<sup>21</sup> Polygenesis = multiple origins

<sup>22</sup> Monogenesis = one origin

<sup>23</sup> Horsman, Reginald. 1981. *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 48.

as the place from which the renovation of the world would begin.”<sup>24</sup> He goes on to assert that the American Revolution provided proof that they were blessed by Providence.<sup>25</sup>

Horsman’s treatment of the “Indian question” stands out from earlier works in that it addresses the question at all, and sympathetically. He observed the conflict with Indians along the border and frontiersmen, and observed “that the Indians were fighting to protect their lands and families.”<sup>26</sup> Americans often saw “civilizing” the Native population as doing them—and mankind—a favor. Many early Americans admired aspects of native societies, but not enough to grant them any sort of autonomy when they came in conflict with white Americans.<sup>27</sup> The Indians fared perhaps somewhat better in the abstract than the racial views Americans adopted toward Blacks, and particularly Black slaves. Those of African descent were seen as particularly debased and irredeemable. Religious leaders pushed back in some cases against Black inferiority because they were nominally Christianized and thus children of God, a factor the Native people often did not have in their favor.<sup>28</sup> Earlier authors implied there was a unified view of American racial politics and expansionist sentiments, and tended to downplay or ignore conflicts within American culture over the fate of Native peoples. While abolitionist sentiment eventually prevailed in the Civil War, no such breakthrough occurred for the indigenous population, making the conflicts easier to ignore or attribute to individual mountain men, and thus not reflective of a general American policy.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 83.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 84.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 106.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 107-109.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 157.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 201-5.

Horsman notes, “In the South, the new ideas permeated all types of periodicals—literary, political, agricultural—at the earliest date and assumed the strongest form. The eagerness with which the South wished to justify its slave system by proving that the Negroes were innately incapable of benefiting from freedom helped the theories about general racial distinctions gain wide acceptance.”<sup>30</sup> Horsman makes important observations like this one on how these early scientific ideas spread particularly in slave-states, and the sometimes-contradictory ideas about where Native populations resided on the “inferiority” scale.<sup>31</sup> Horsman’s focus on scientific racial concepts is on the early nineteenth century, prior to the release of *the Origin of Species*, and on the influence of scientific ideas on public ideas.

Horsman, adds a third racial group to consideration in the nineteenth century: the perspective of the Mexican Americans added to the Union with its Western territories. Mexican Americans were described by some as “mongrels”.<sup>32</sup> Their identification as a mixed race permitted them to avoid some of the worst depredations of racial atrocities, but neither did they escape deep-seated prejudice from the whites in power owing to their lack of “purity.”

Laura Gomez points out the Mexican-American experience began with 115,000 Mexicans that became American citizens at the end of the Mexican War. She says, “This book views Manifest Destiny quite differently—as a cluster of ideas that relies on racism to justify a war of aggression against Mexico.”<sup>33</sup> To compound the otherness of Mexican Americans, they were mostly Catholic in a largely Protestant nation with deep-seated anti-Catholic sentiment.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 141.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 142.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 261.

<sup>33</sup> Gomez, Laura E. 2007. *Manifest Destinies: The Making of the Mexican American Race*. New York: New York University Press, 3.

What American military leaders were unprepared for was the level of anti-American sentiment in the conquered New Mexico territory.<sup>34</sup> Retaliation on both sides resulted in escalating violence between both Mexicans and Indians, and their American conquerors.<sup>35</sup> Uprisings sometimes resulted in charges of treason. It did not help that key provisions of the post-war treaty were cut out or modified by the Senate to weaken protections for formerly Mexican citizens in the ceded territories.<sup>36</sup> Race remained prominent in the debate over statehood for New Mexico.<sup>37</sup> Racial identity remained problematic as they were in some cases treated legally like whites, but socially as non-whites.<sup>38</sup> Thus, while still suffering injustices, they escaped some of the extreme treatments experienced by Blacks and Indians; even to the point of holding Indian slaves themselves.<sup>39</sup>

Steven Woodworth describes Manifest Destiny in the context of being a precursor to the Civil War. He also examines the role of Mormonism, focusing particularly on the Presidential election cycles of 1844 and 1848. The consequences for the spread of slavery to the new territories exacerbated existing tensions between the anti-slavery North, and the pro-slavery South:

“And yet the settlement of 1850 was a mirage.... When the decade of the 1840s had started, [slavery] was one issue among many in American national politics.... [but] the very surge of expansion that led to the realization of the long-held American dream of a continent-wide empire of liberty also served to intensify and

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 71.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 83.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 105-6.

focus the national disagreement over slavery, to the point that none of the old political methods sufficed to contain it anymore.”<sup>40</sup>

One thing that can be easy to forget is that expansion in the young United States was not only westward, but also southward into Georgia and Florida. Laurel Clark Shire focuses her work on two distinct aspects of Manifest Destiny: the expansion in the East into Florida, and gender. She describes women as playing two vital roles: the first was that their labor helped to build farms and tame the frontier, at a time when women were not expected to perform physical labor; the second role was racialized as well as gendered: the threat of untamed non-white men and the danger they presented to white women on the frontier. One intriguing point she makes that directly contradicts many other historical sources is the attribution of the term “manifest destiny”. She says, “If anything, the colonization of Florida and Missouri led the way, as both were already American territories by the time Cora Montgomery coined the term ‘manifest destiny’ in the *United States Magazine and Democratic Review* in 1839.”<sup>41</sup> John O’Sullivan is usually claimed to have originated the term in 1845 in the same paper.<sup>42</sup> Shire’s discussion of the situation in Florida opens up questions of other territorial expansions closer to the original colonies than Texas and California.

As a child of the Enlightenment, the nineteenth century boasted a strong interest in science. There may be a stereotype of provinciality the further west one goes, being further from the established centers of power and elite education. A sample of state legislative records can

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<sup>40</sup>Woodworth, Steven E. 2010. *Manifest Destinies: American's Westward Expansion and the Road to the Civil War*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 355-6.

<sup>41</sup> Shire, Laurel Clark. 2016. *The Threshold of Manifest Destiny: Gender and National Expansion in Florida*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 13.

<sup>42</sup> Pratt, Julius W. 1927. "The Origin of "Manifest Destiny"." *The American Historical Review* 32 (4): 795-798.

also be included to provide an overview of the progression of ideas, and whether pre-scientific, pseudo-scientific or philosophical notions of race are being communicated in the expanding American population. Even many small towns invited regular touring lecture shows, such as those put on by Robert Ingersoll which served to further decimate scientific, religious, political and pseudoscientific ideas. In many frontier territories intent upon statehood, like Ohio, setting up local universities would be an early priority.

There were legal implications of the rising tide of racism, supported by scientific-sounding ideas in legal judgments. Since judges made up an educated elite, they are more likely to have been exposed to early scientific perspectives.

The far west also provides one possible additional source of data that can serve as a contrast to the Western (European) context: Russia. Russia had both traders and settlers on the Pacific coast, including mixed race populations.<sup>43</sup> Russia was less affected by the culture of Western Europe and so showed different patterns of interaction with Native people. While intermarriage did exist, it was used to connect ethnically distinct groups without, apparently, the fine gradations of hierarchy we see in Western cultures.

De Tocqueville's observations on Blacks and Native peoples in America noted differences between them. He claimed that "The servility of the one [Africans] dooms him to slavery," and "the pride of the other [Native Americans] to death."<sup>44</sup> Here, he is only stating widely held beliefs that justified the status quo.

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<sup>43</sup> Miller, Gwenn A. 2010. *Kodiak Kreol: Communities of Empire in Early Russian America*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

<sup>44</sup> Gossett, Thomas F. *Race: The History of an Idea in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997, 238.

Early scientific thought was explicitly religious, even supernatural, in its arguments. Early scientific arguments sought to explain religious doctrine through scientific reasoning and evidence. Only slowly, as the weight of difficult or contradictory evidence arose, did science begin to explicitly differentiate itself from philosophical speculation and supernatural causation. This separation was only just underway when *The Origin of Species* was published in 1859. Before that, scientific arguments were infused with religious thought, and religious or quasi-religious justifications for scientific observations. As natural philosophers attempted to understand race, they imposed on their framework pre-existing views, and it would be nearly a century before they could escape this early misstep.<sup>45</sup>

Seeing Americans as God's chosen people was a widespread belief, particularly after the Revolution. Jefferson implied in both his inaugurals that America had the divine seal of approval. Blended with Anglo-Saxon racial superiority, Thomas Hart Benton expected whites to march across the continent and from there to conquer even Asia.<sup>46</sup> The very grandiosity of such claims could only be possible with a certain religious fervor behind them.

Race is a difficult topic to examine in a period in which racialized attitudes were both virulent and transforming. Examinations of sources from the period can paint a horrifying picture, and yet any examination of attitudes on the frontier finds that opinions can be strongly mixed: part fear and revulsion, and part admiration. Examining the full complexity of race in this period is challenging. Moreover, the transformation of the Enlightenment and ideas of progress (which may take the form of a so-called "benign" racism) into a more virulent strain

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<sup>45</sup> Smedley, Audrey, and Brian D. Smedley. *Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a Worldview*. New York: Westview Press, 2012, 214-6.

<sup>46</sup> Gossett, 179.

that emerged in the wake of the Civil War proves that the impact of science on the culture does not prevent the culture from influencing and even distorting the science.

Theodore Roosevelt wrote about colonial policies and colonial practices. Assumptions from the Doctrine itself are stated as givens when he says: “The native population in most of these territories was either sparse or unwarlike and easily dominated.”<sup>47</sup> While Roosevelt does go on to question some of the myths that had arisen from territorial expansion in the West, he does not anywhere question the basic assumption that westward expansion was inevitable and appropriate.

Speaking of the Ohio valley in the middle of the eighteenth century: “Ahead of them lay a wide continent, blessed with God’s bounties, and, as law and restraint caught up with them, all that was necessary was to move further westward to seemingly endless lands and natural resources—and freedom.”<sup>48</sup> The endless, empty and uncultivated lands are an essential component of the myths about the Americas went unchallenged until the late twentieth century. Indeed, the summary of the conflicts with the Native populations focuses almost entirely on the machinations of the European powers and considers the Natives as little more than sparsely populated pawns, worth little more consideration than wild bears might be given.

Morrison mentions the doctrine only slightly more explicitly by referring directly to the papal bull of 1493, but not by that name or the Doctrine of Discovery. He mentions specific

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>48</sup> Lindley, Harlow, and Norris F. Schneider. *History of the Ordinance of 1787 and the Old Northwest Territory*. Marietta, OH: Northwest Territory Celebration Commission, 1937, 11.

conditions from the Doctrine that demarcated the Spanish possessions from those of Portuguese.<sup>49</sup> Later, he refers to the religious purpose of colonizing the Americas:

Fashions in 1493 required women to be heavily clothed from head to foot, so that a community where the natives wore less than a bikini for full dress was new indeed, besides suggesting a state of innocence before Adam's fall. And as Europe had an uneasy conscience at letting Christianity fall back before the Turks, this opportunity to gain souls and redress the balance aroused agreeable anticipation.<sup>50</sup>

We see the combination of the political rivalries and religious mission in these passages, and moreover, the cultural imperialism that accompanies religious missionary efforts. The assumption that the Native populations were not warlike inevitably contributed to a perception that conquest would be easy, which surely helped encourage both colonists and conquerors, and would help to salve the conscience of later generations. The ease of conquest and conversion was hyped to encourage colonists and missionaries alike.<sup>51</sup> No doubt that these supposedly docile people would eventually resist them certainly could have contributed to the violence of the reaction against that resistance.

Rubin looks at events circa 1800 and 1830, roughly coinciding with the Second Great Awakening, and efforts on the frontiers to convert the native populations. A number of different factors impacted the success or failure of these missionary efforts: everything from disease, resistance by the native people, inter-tribal war, and displacement of tribes from lands taken over

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<sup>49</sup> Morrison, 433.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 434.

<sup>51</sup> MacMillan, Ken. "Benign and Benevolent Conquest? The Ideology of Elizabethan Atlantic Expansion Revisited." *Early American Studies*, Winter 2011.

by white Americans. The theological positions held by these missionaries connected to the larger religious culture.<sup>52</sup>

Attitudes of religious believers toward race change as the missionary culture is replaced by settlers. Missionary work to the Natives continued in one form or another, but could differ from the approach nominally Christian settlers took to those same groups. He notes of one missionary:

He made a compelling argument for the capacity of the Cherokees to adopt Christianity and ‘civilized’ laws, constitutional governance, agriculture, language and literacy, schooling, and evangelical religion. Arguing against the prevailing attitude that Natives were racially inferior, Brown asserts their ‘natural capabilities for moral cultivations’ made them ‘susceptible to mental as well as religious improvement as much as any people on the Globe.’<sup>53</sup>

Mormonism is, in so many ways, the fundamental frontier religion. Founded in the middle of the Second Great Awakening, it is impossible to consider Mormonism without considering the subject of race since Mormon claims about the native population in the Americas, and dark-skinned peoples in general, are central to the claims of the faith. Their origin story from their founding in New York and passing through Ohio, Illinois, Missouri and eventually into Utah under the weight of persecution is fundamental to their identity even today.<sup>54</sup> The relationship of Mormonism to race is complex and distinct in some ways from race in more mainstream religions of the period, but common themes do appear. All Mormons were

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<sup>52</sup> Rubin.

<sup>53</sup> Rubin, J. H. (2017). *Perishing Heathens: Stories of Protestant Missionaries and Christian Indians in Antebellum America*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 138.

<sup>54</sup> Abanes, R. (2003). *One Nation Under Gods: A History of the Mormon Church*. New York: Thunder's Mouth Press.

explicitly white (that only changed as recently as the late 1970s) and so directly reflect the racial attitudes of a significant chunk of white settlers. Mormons were generally scorned for their religious views, and not their racial views. While later Mormons would argue for their racial beliefs on Joseph Smith's teaching, his own attitudes about race are more likely to be rooted in the New England culture of his birth.<sup>55</sup>

Phrenology was a popular pseudo-scientific belief in the nineteenth century that was fundamentally racist (as well as sexist). Phrenology claimed that the shape of the head could reveal information about the brain encased inside the skull, and various depressions would indicate missing or diminished sections of the brain, while protuberances indicated that the brain was well-endowed in that area. Not surprisingly, to the extent that there was any consistency at all, African and Native skulls were claimed to reveal less intelligence and less moral character, while whites were supposed to have greater levels. It has, by now, long been established that phrenology has no basis in reality.<sup>56</sup>

Haller's discussion of the period just after Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859) is particularly interesting as he highlights racial arguments that are familiar, as well as those that are poorly known. Some Progressives advocated a deliberate and selective interbreeding of the races to erase racial lines, while others turned to Social Darwinism to justify the elimination of members of "inferior" races that could not adapt to the technology and structure of white

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Davies, John D. *Phrenology Fad and Science: A 19th-Century American Crusade*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1955.

society.<sup>57</sup> One particularly disturbing argument that appears repeatedly in reference to both Native populations in the Americas as well as free Blacks is the notion of “natural extinction”:

The evidence of all these works seemed to imply that the psychic nature of the black race had ‘never been enlarged and refined by selection in response to a progressive environment’, and thus remained ‘inferior...’. Since the black race was unable to harmonize its hereditary instincts... the ‘magic of education’ could do little to change centuries of savage culture.’<sup>58</sup>

The sense that Blacks and American Indians would inevitably be wiped out by evolutionary forces of natural selection laid a fatalist pall over efforts to stop violence against these communities or to do anything to alleviate the crimes committed against them as a group. Blame for white actions was assigned to natural forces and minorities’ own “flawed” nature. That this coincided with Calvinist thought that those blessed by God would be blessed in this world, and those shunned by God would suffer in this world, remains a strain in modern political thinking about race, particularly in the South, and whether minorities or whites are responsible for racial suffering.

As the far West was erupting in the racial violence of the Indian Wars, in the South, Reconstruction was being transformed in the so-called Redemption, when whites used violence to roll back the tide of racial progress in the wake of the Civil War. While the origins of the Indian Wars and the Redemption are superficially distinct, both are rooted in a moral panic of the supposed corruption and inferiority of race being beyond the control of the allegedly morally

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<sup>57</sup> Haller, John S. Jr. *Outcasts from Evolution: Scientific Attitudes of Racial Inferiority 1859-1900*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1971.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 204-205.

superior white race. The use of the term “Redemption” itself invokes a religious idiom as justification for the violence of white Southerners.

Horsman notes, “In the South, the new ideas permeated all types of periodicals—literary, political, agricultural—at the earliest date and assumed the strongest form. The eagerness with which the South wished to justify its slave system by proving that the Negroes were innately incapable of benefiting from freedom helped the theories about general racial distinctions gain wide acceptance.”<sup>59</sup> Horsman makes important observations like this one on how these early scientific ideas spread particularly in slave-states, and later in the same chapter, the sometimes-contradictory ideas about where Native populations resided on the ‘inferiority’ scale.<sup>60</sup>

That the West contained “virgin lands” is a common theme among the westward expansionist crowd. Newcomb connects the Doctrine of Discovery back to the Old Testament “promised land,” which jives with some early Puritan views of their American colonies.<sup>61</sup> Henry Nash Smith addresses another topic on the image of America as a great utopia of open and free land.<sup>62</sup> These lands were “free” for the taking if only the settlers could fight off its original owners. By doing so, settlers abandoned the Jeffersonian belief that Native populations could be civilized if only they adopted European culture.

Philip Borden writes in “Found Cumbering the Soil” that:

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<sup>59</sup> Horsman, 141.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 142.

<sup>61</sup> Newcomb, Steven T. *Pagans in the Promised Land: Decoding the Doctrine of Christian Discovery*. Golden, CO: Fulcrum, 2008.

<sup>62</sup> Smith, Henry Nash. *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1950.

The negative image of the Indian and growing white self-confidence implied to many that the Indian, like the frontier itself, must be cleared in order to extend American values. Similarly, many believed that the progress of American civilization itself cured social ills. Unable to expand without confronting Indians, Americans rationalized their removal to remote places. Unable to cope with the complexities of reconciliation between the white and red races or to understand the physical needs and cultural qualities of the civilizations they opposed, Americans preferred to trust to the progress of time to solve the problem, or to hope that the problem would simply disappear.

The arguments justifying Indian removal were not based upon avarice alone. A few eastern congressmen and intellectuals wished to remove Indians from the presence of whites in order to preserve the integrity of the more primitive Indian culture. The paradoxical combination of self-interest and humanitarian support for the policy of removal reflected a tension in the American mind between the virtues of the frontier wilderness and those of civilization—a tension which was being resolved in favor of civilization. Despite the veneration of Indian culture and dislike of frontier opportunism by sympathetic easterners, so long as they regarded purging savagery as a precondition for the triumph of civilization, their ideology made the Indian expendable and aided speculators, homesteaders, and expansionists. The image of uncivilized, aggressive Indians obscured the thin line between interest and ideology.<sup>63</sup>

This passage reveals a certain amount of magical thinking. There is the assumption that American domination of the continent was simply a given, and therefore, God would make their success inevitable. Therefore, as long as white settlers remained in good standing with their God, they did not need to consider the consequences of their actions to those they displaced. Opposing their movement westward made them, by definition, the enemies of Providence.

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<sup>63</sup> Nash, Gary B., and Richard Weiss. *The Great Fear: Nine Historians Probe the Historical Origins of White Racial Attitudes and Their Effect on Today's Racial Crisis*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1970, 80.

By the 1830s the abolitionist movement gained steam in Ohio in the wake of the Fugitive Slave Law. But the Black Laws in Ohio that essentially made blacks in the state outside the protection of the laws made that position difficult to maintain. If slavery was to be condemned, so too would racist laws need to be abolished. A real movement to repeal those laws, perhaps the first racially liberal movements in the country, was underway.<sup>64</sup> Free blacks may have voted in the 1802 constitutional convention vote, as well as in 1850. The language was general enough (all male citizens residing in the state for a year) that this is plausible.<sup>65</sup>

The repeal of the Black Laws in Ohio was not to be a victory for very long, however. By 1859, Ohio again began restricting the rights of its citizens according to race. The laws included methods for determining whether citizens were “white enough” to participate in such things as public schools.<sup>66</sup> Nonetheless, Ohio became the home of anti-slavery activity, including hosting sites on the Underground Railroad.<sup>67</sup>

The Northwest Ordinances which organized the territory that would become Ohio gave nominal lip service to respect for Indian lands. It would not last, as military and militia groups would eventually exchange massacres with the Natives as white settlers increasingly encroached on Indian lands despite treaty obligations.<sup>68</sup> This pattern would play out multiple times as the frontier moved westward.

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<sup>64</sup> Middleton, Stephen. *The Black Laws: Race and the Legal Process in Early Ohio*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2005, 97.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> Lupold, Harry F., and Gladys Haddad, . *Ohio's Western Reserve: A Regional Reader*. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1988.

<sup>68</sup> Kern, Kevin F., and Gregory S. Wilson. *Ohio: A History of the Buckeye State*. Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2014.

After the war with Mexico, Mexican citizens in the ceded territory were granted U.S. citizenship. Juan Martinez observes, “This created a dilemma for Anglo-American Protestants. While some were fully convinced that non-Anglos could never be useful U.S. citizens. Others saw [they] could eventually be made good citizens, but only with a great deal of work.”<sup>69</sup> Some of this sentiment could be blamed on anti-Catholicism—there was a push to deny Catholic Mexican Americans the right to vote—much of the discomfort was based on race. Whiter, wealthier Mexican Americans were considered more Spanish, and therefore, whiter, whereas the darker-skinned poor, with more indigenous bloodlines, were considered colored along with free blacks.<sup>70</sup> Perceived whiteness among Mexican Americans often followed class lines.

Once incorporated in the United States, the civilization of the Southwest was seen by Protestants as “freed” as it were from the “papal power” of Catholic Mexico. Nonetheless, the Mexican Americans were seen as backwards, only slightly above the status of natives and slaves and were in need of saving—saving their souls and their culture—to bring them to the “higher” Anglo culture.<sup>71</sup>

In the fight over slavery, even Indians were divided over the question. Berkhofer writes:

“[M]issionaries observed a widening cleavage between the English-speaking and native-speaking Indians. This tendency had gone so far in the Cherokee Nation that the two language groups were settling in different areas. The English-speaking Cherokees eagerly adopted white civilization, owned most of the slaves, and dominated the government and the school system. The other Indians resisted

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<sup>69</sup> Martinez, 19.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 20-1.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 44.

white innovations and opposed changes in the government that looked to a more modern state.<sup>72</sup>

Missionary schools in the nineteenth century often involved a strong religious curriculum for the Native students, as well music, on the theory that it could soothe the “savage mind.”<sup>73</sup> Such schools sought to separate the children from their native cultures by giving them white names to use at school. Mixed-blood students were especially targeted for the schools. When the instruction was not focused on religion, it was designed to teach the children manual labor, in other words, how to succeed as a second-class citizen in a white world.<sup>74</sup>

Missionary work was interrupted by the policy of Indian removal, initially in the East with Andrew Jackson, but the practice would continue in the West well into the century. Both assimilated and unassimilated groups were forcibly moved further westward to make room for the advance of white settlers. Missionaries sometimes advocated against the removal process, but for their own reasons: moving along with the tribes was costly in monetary terms, and in terms of trust with the Native population. By the 1830s, removal appeared to be preferable in white eyes to “civilizing” the Indians.<sup>75</sup> This change in attitude coincides with increasing violence on the frontier, and calcification of notions of race.

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<sup>72</sup> Berkhofer, Robert F. Jr. *Salvation and the Savage: An Analysis of Protestant Missions and American Indian Response, 1787-1862*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1965, 142.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> Higham, C.L. *Nobel, Wretched & Redeemable: Protestant Missionaries to the Indians in Canada and the United States, 1820-1900*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000, 39-40.

Missions frequently assumed Indian behavior was childlike when they were not viewing them as wretched or savage.<sup>76</sup> When missionaries returned to civilization, they would go on tour to help raise money. As Higham notes, “In addition to impressing audiences, . . .missionaries also helped to reinforce ideas of racial superiority,” and they reinforced the idea that whites had “their own inevitable conquering destiny.”<sup>77</sup>

The burgeoning American nationalism cut both ways. While it was often couched in terms of whiteness—i.e. white nationalism—there were national arguments made on the inclusive side. The battle over the Missouri constitution that sought to prohibit Blacks from the state fell on both sides of this divide. On the one hand, barring Blacks from the state, and therefore as citizens of the state, focused on the “unifying” whiteness of America, but those that fought against it argued on the basis of Black soldiers who had fought for the Revolution being also excluded, that it would break up the Union, and citizenship should be based on birth alone, a precursor to the arguments for the Fourteenth Amendment.<sup>78</sup>

Manifest Destiny was itself the subject of some conflict over the racial identity of America. Caleb Cushing argued in the *Democratic Review* in June 1846, “Race is the key to much that seems obscure in the history of nations. Throughout the world, the spectacle is everywhere the same, of the whiter race ruling the less white, through all gradations of color.”<sup>79</sup> And yet, at the same time, others worried that continued expansion into Native and formerly

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 67-8.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 142.

<sup>78</sup> Levine, Robert S. *Dislocating Race and Nation: Episodes in Nineteenth-Century American Literary Nationalism*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008, 76-7.

<sup>79</sup> Cushing, Caleb. "Caleb Cushing Papers, *Democratic Review*." *Library of Congress*. June 1846. <https://www.loc.gov/item/mm78017509/> (accessed July 7, 2019).

Spanish lands would ultimately destroy the white race, as already so much mixing with African slaves and eastern Native people that it was already next to impossible to tell who was really “white”.<sup>80</sup> Popular literature contributed to the growing (white) nationalism. Writers such as Nathaniel Hawthorne promoted the idea of American exceptionalism in the context of American nationalism.<sup>81</sup>

Manifest Destiny was seen as an opportunity to prove the racial supremacy of whites, specifically Anglo-Saxon whites. Using demeaning depictions of all other people, missionaries derided non-whites as ignorant, childlike, sub-human, demonic or uncivilized, notions that persisted in religious thought from the early Spanish days. Religious expression became both a means and an end of extending American nationalism into the West and abroad.<sup>82</sup>

The use of violence after the Civil War, and before it, to control black slaves and freedmen was merely a continuation of a centuries-old tradition inaugurated with the Requirement to control the bodies and minds of people of color regardless of their origins.<sup>83</sup> As was noted in Chapter 2, defiance of one master was worthy of punishment, and so all those that defied their Christian masters, it was claimed, shouldered the blame for their own harsh treatment.

Radical ministers combatted the racism of the age by emphasizing the unity of the children of God. They attacked both Biblical interpretations and early scientific theories that fed

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<sup>80</sup> Levine, Robert S. *Dislocating Race and Nation: Episodes in Nineteenth-Century American Literary Nationalism*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008, 127.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 123.

<sup>82</sup> Blum, Edward J. *Reforging the White Republic: Race, Religion and American Nationalism, 1865-1898*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005, 212.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

into racial prejudice, and lionized politicians that spoke of egalitarianism, like Lincoln, even if politically they meant it with less than full-throated enthusiasm.<sup>84</sup> Primers designed for freedman's education firmly emphasized the "one blood" or common origins of all people, and human brotherhood.<sup>85</sup> These ideals were true in the abstract, but often waivered under the weight of racial prejudice when confronted with the reality of African slavery. After decades of being broken under the lash, free Blacks were seen by many Northern missionaries in the South as people who were inherently simple, ignorant, unreliable and lazy.<sup>86</sup> They saw what they had been conditioned to see by their culture.

The racism of the era blended with deep-seated misogyny. White men expressing their sexuality with Black or Native women was frowned upon by both racists and white women, at least in part, because these relationships were almost always extra-marital; however, though discouraged, it was nonetheless quite common. White women expressing their sexuality with non-white men was a different matter altogether. A relationship of this sort was seen as an assault on the virility of white men, but also as a threat to female chastity and purity. Since both non-whites and women could be seen as hypersexualized tempters, the combination was surely potent and a threat to the entire power structure. There were exceptions to this rule, but this is precisely the kind of excuse used to justify many lynchings in the Jim Crow South. Those that advocated for interracial marriage were seen as sanctioning both a racial and religious transgression.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 74-6.

A yellow fever outbreak hit the nation in 1878, and many whites saw this occurrence as an opportunity to set aside the animosity of the war and bring the nation together. Of course, what they meant was the white nation. Few resources were used to help freedman, and there were complaints that the blacks weren't doing enough to help their white "brothers," even though the reality was that it was the whites who did little to help their black "brothers." Some whites hoped the epidemic would rid the nation of its racial problem by eliminating non-whites.<sup>88</sup>

In an era of deep religious expression, where it was dangerous to express non-belief in a deity of some sort, it was considered more dangerous in the South to oppose slavery than it was to profess atheism.<sup>89</sup>

The discovery of gold in Indian lands underscored the reality of westward expansion throughout the nineteenth century. It was not only California in 1849, but even earlier in 1828 in Cherokee lands that this discovery spurred greater efforts to dispossess the Indians from their ancestral lands.<sup>90</sup> Indeed, feminization of the Indian was another arrow in the quiver of racists to imply their weakness and inferiority.<sup>91</sup> Because women were not able to hold property, this, too, became an argument for denying property rights to Native people.

Kentucky was born for slavery. Originally a part of Virginia, so strong was the pro-slavery sentiment that the state constitution barred clergy from serving in the legislature because

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 164-8.

<sup>89</sup> Park, Benjamin E. *American Nationalisms: Imagining Union in the Age of Revolutions, 1783-1833*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018, 164.

<sup>90</sup> Scheckel, Susan. *The Insistence of the Indian: Race and Nationalism in Nineteenth Century American Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998, 60.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

some local ministers preached against slavery.<sup>92</sup> According to Haselby, “Like most frontier settlers, frontier revivalists tended to see the Native Americans as savages.”<sup>93</sup> Kentucky saw both forces at play: forcing out the indigenous population, and then bringing in slaves to work the new fields. This was particularly important for Southern planters since the type of farming done by slave plantations tended to use up the soil, and so the push westward for fresh lands to plant was a constant pressure.

American colonization efforts, especially after the Civil War, were liberating for freed Blacks in setting up a homeland much like the United States, only with themselves as the constituency. Unfortunately, they brought many of their cultural prejudices with them, looking down on the local indigenous population in Liberia, and denying them rights under their new Constitution. The freed slaves in Liberia became the new top caste. They described the natives in much the same terms as had been used against them: savage, uncivilized, barbaric.<sup>94</sup>

Larry Tise notes that the proslavery argument was racial, colonial and fear-based:

Acutely aware of the danger of servile insurrection and the effect of the St. Domingo rebellion on other plantation island, Brougham argued that West Indian slaves “must be held in obedience” and that colonial policy required the restoration of slavery throughout the European colonies in the West Indies. He did not believe that free labor was a viable alternative since he was convinced that only Negroes could be used in hot climates and because he considered Negroes unfit “for becoming the subject[s] of a peaceable and regular community.” He, therefore, viewed emancipation as a scheme of “zealots” based on “inexcusable thoughtlessness,” which would bring disaster to the entire colonial system....Brougham claimed the “distinction of race,” a “radical difference of

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<sup>92</sup> Haselby, Sam. *The Origins of American Religious Nationalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015, 172.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 191.

<sup>94</sup> Burin, Eric. *Slavery and the Peculiar Institution: A History of the American Colonization Society*. Miami: University Press of Florida, 2005, 155-6.

manner and character” between blacks and whites, and a “perpetual opposition of interest, as well as prejudices” as the leading grounds for racial slavery as opposed to free labor.<sup>95</sup>

Defenders of slavery and abolitionists alike shared similar concerns about the aftermath of freedom of Black slaves. Both groups in the main believed that the white race was pure and virtuous, blessed with superior talent, while the black race was incurably inferior and incapable of enjoying freedom or putting it to its best use.<sup>96</sup>

Conservative, pro-slavery leadership took advantage of the decentralized nature of the American church, to take it over and use it as a means of spreading their ideological positions, which was particularly effective in the midst of the Second Great Awakening. Moreover, the advancing Jeffersonian “Benevolent Empire” offered them the ability to advance their views in the guise of nationalism and westward expansion.<sup>97</sup>

Southerners rejected social contract theory (on which the American republican form of government was based) on the grounds that it was unbiblical.<sup>98</sup> For to accept social contract theory risked allowing slaves a say in their own governance and their right, as argued in the Declaration of Independence, to overthrow their oppressors.

Advocates of a middle ground or compromise position between pro-slavery and abolitionism often expressed the greatest concern for the abolitionists, complaining of their

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<sup>95</sup> Tise, Larry E. *Proslavery: A History of the Defense of Slavery in America, 1701-1840*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1987, 85-7.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 247.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 224.

<sup>98</sup> Hampton, Monte Harrell. *Storm of Words: Science, Religion and Evolution in the Civil War Era*. Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2014, 48-9.

absolutism, moral certainty and emotionalism in attempting to blame them, not the violence of the pro-slavery side for the increasing conflicts leading up to the Civil War.<sup>99</sup>

It was Marshall's ruling in the case between Georgia and the Cherokee that made the native Indian tribes dependent nations rather than fully sovereign, describing them as wards of the state, "in a state of pupilage."<sup>100</sup> This attitude continued the treatment of non-whites as perpetual children.

The Board of Indian Commissioners appointed in 1875 claimed to represent various Protestant churches around the United States and chided past Indian agents as standing in the way of the Natives achieving "civilization." Their proposed solution was to abandon the treaty system entirely, abolish subsidies paid for land seized by the government, and setting up schools to teach English and Christianity, washing away their Indianness. They, too, advanced the idea that Natives were merely wards of the state, and therefore should be indoctrinated into western culture with or without their full consent.<sup>101</sup>

Military facing the Natives in the west often expressed admiration for their tactics, and even acknowledged the double standard describing the same skills among whites as strategy or tactics, but among natives as treachery. Unable to combat the Natives logistically all over the West, the military instead adopted tactics of "total war" by attacking villages and winter encampments without immediate justification, massacring women and children along with the

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<sup>99</sup> McKivigan, John E., and Mitchell Snay. *Religion and the Antebellum Debate over Slavery*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1998, 228-9.

<sup>100</sup> Prucha, Francis Paul. *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*. abridged edition. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984, 76.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 159-60.

warriors.<sup>102</sup> The massacres were often instigated by private militias, deputized by the state, to “protect” white settlements. However, they often became excuses for racialized violence, and took on many of the characteristics of a moral panic. Like many moral panics, once sanctioned by the state, the violence they spawned only grew.

Indian removal and colonization of free black slaves came from the same ideological place, even if they ended up being enacted in different ways. Nichols notes Lincoln’s advocacy for black colonization and obtaining funds from Congress for several failed colonization attempts at a time when Indian removals were going on west of the Mississippi. Both policies grew out of a concern that whites and non-whites could not interact with each other without violence and bloodshed. Thus, segregating the races from each other—removing blacks back to Africa, and removing Indians to reservations—was the only safe way to “protect” both blacks and natives.<sup>103</sup>

Lincoln’s vision for the West was inevitably linked to the idea of progress for white civilization. The transcontinental railroad and the Homestead Act necessarily led to greater contact between white settlers and Native peoples.<sup>104</sup> It is difficult to see how these policies are compatible with keeping the races separated to avoid conflict, and how this could not but be seen as an implicit endorsement of continuing theft of Native lands. The influx of Asian immigrants to lay the tracks further complicated the racial picture in the West.

When the English first arrived in the Americas, they found it populated by Catholic missionaries and among the Natives as they pressed westward, more converts to Catholicism.

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 175-6.

<sup>103</sup> Nichols, David A. *Lincoln and the Indians: Civil War Policy and Politics*. St. Paul: The Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2012, 190-2.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 193-5.

Deeply anti-Catholic after the upheavals in England over the Reformation, Protestants' views of some Native Christian populations may have been complicated by their conversion to the Catholic faith. By the nineteenth century, as westward expansion pressed into areas previously controlled by the Spanish filled with Catholics. Irish Catholics were flooding into the country escaping the potato famine. The Natives of the West who had converted to Catholicism could expect little sympathy from settlers threatened by even white Catholic immigrants.<sup>105</sup>

Catholics only inconsistently opposed slavery. They did not approve of the way slavery was practiced in America, but few Catholic publications outright advocated for abolition.<sup>106</sup> It can be difficult to tell if this was real ambivalence, or just caution in view of their own tenuous position.

White pastors in the South clothed their racism in religious garments. Not surprisingly, Blacks found them unpalatable. David Butler clothed the triumph of Jim Crow as a “Christian triumph” and found the elevation of blacks out of slavery and even into the legislature as “unnatural” due to his “inferiority,” and “morally wrong.”<sup>107</sup> Another Southern, H.H. Tucker justified the separation of the races, and even keeping them apart with violence, and the Biblically sanctioned view of Black inferiority by perverting marriage vows: “What God has put

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<sup>105</sup> Farrelly, Maura Jane. *Anti-Catholicism in America 1620-1860*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018, 174-5.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 170.

<sup>107</sup> Wills, Gregory A. *Democratic Religion: Freedom, Authority and Church Discipline in the Baptist South 1785-1900*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997, 71.

asunder, let not man join together.”<sup>108</sup> These arguments would hold sway in the South until the Loving decision. Racial mixing was seen as worse than sodomy.<sup>109</sup>

Mormonism is the quintessential expression of religious racism during this period. While modern Mormons have attempted to obscure racist Mormon doctrines, the history of the church is actually quite clear and based in explicit Mormon doctrine. The Book of Mormon considered dark skin a sign of being cursed by God (compare with the view that Blacks or Native people were descended from Ham discussed in an earlier chapter). They went so far as to consider mixed-race marriages worthy of death.<sup>110</sup> As Joseph Smith was from New York, this provides some evidence that religiously based views of racial inferiority were not merely confined to the deep South. While both Natives and those of African descent were seen as inferior, because Mormons considered Natives descended from the Lost Tribes of Israel, intermarriage between Mormons and Native women was encouraged, suggesting that Mormons did not see them as equally inferior. Mormon views on both races were consistent with popular speculation about the origins of Native people popular at the time. In some ways, Mormons were similar to other millennial sects of the period that did not survive. They saw the Civil War in prophecy and believed the relocation of Natives to reservations was a sign of the coming millennium. They likewise saw the Americas as an Edenic paradise and claimed that the literal Garden of Eden could be found on the continent.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 70.

<sup>109</sup> Kidd, Thomas S. *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007, 77-8.

<sup>110</sup> Abanes, Richard. *One Nation Under Gods: A History of the Mormon Church*. New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 2003.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

The language men used to describe the inferiority of non-white races mirrored the language used for the inferiority of women. As noted by Westerkamp:

In similar fashion, women were made dependents within the republic. Just as wives enjoyed no legal identity under coverture, but had their being subsumed under their husband's, so women had no political personhood apart from men who represented them. As in the case of African Americans, this was explained in terms of women's natural mental and emotional unfitness to participate in government.<sup>112</sup>

Though, to be clear, the attitudes about racial inferiority were based on existing models of women's inferiority. Attitudes about both sorts of inferiority were codified in religion. This was the era that gave us the Dred Scot decision, in which the Supreme Court declared that slaves had "no rights that the white man was bound to respect."<sup>113</sup>

Colorado vigilantes lynched those they considered murderers and horse thieves (which were often Indians). Freed blacks after the Civil War were frequently denied the right to vote. The Mexican Americans in the state were largely confined to agricultural labor.<sup>114</sup> The treatment of Mexican Americans in Colorado adopted many tactics of the Spanish overlords toward their Native farm hands.

Racism in California in the latter half of the nineteenth century was not primarily focused on blacks, though they used similar tactics as Southern racists. Instead, the primary targets there

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<sup>112</sup> Westerkamp, Marilyn J. *Women and Religion in Early America, 1600-1850: The Puritan and Evangelical Traditions*. New York: Routledge, 1999, 120.

<sup>113</sup> Banks, Christopher P., ed. *The State and Federal Courts: A Complete Guide to History, Powers and Controversy*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2017.

<sup>114</sup> Abbott, Carl, Stephen J. Leonard, and Thomas J. Noel. *Colorado: A History of the Centennial State*. 5th. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2013.

were Mexican Americans, Natives, and Chinese immigrants, including one lynching that killed twenty-eight Chinese in 1885.<sup>115</sup>

After the Civil War, the military moved westward to combat the Natives that continued to resist American expansion. The Indian Wars were often instigated by state militias for which the Congress later refunded the states. But as the so-called Redemption fought back the racial advances of Reconstruction, virulent racism exploded in parts of the country that had previously more benign relationships with race. As the nineteenth century closed out the violence of the Indian Wars, violence simply migrated to a new form. As the twentieth century got underway, institutionalized racism remained even as America applauded itself for advancing equality for its white citizens.

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<sup>115</sup> Roediger, David R. *How Race Survived U.S. History: From Settlement and Slavery to the Obama Phenomenon*. New York: Verso Books, 2008, 123.

## Conclusion

Some aspects of colonialism can be seen as the result of imperial weakness. The loss of power by the Catholic Church led to missionary efforts in a desperate attempt to regain power. Exercising royal power across an ocean that could take weeks or months to cross was next to impossible. The loss of power by the English kings in the seventeenth century meant that they were unable to control their citizens or agents abroad. The fracturing of the Protestant movement further decentralized power. And the government of the early United States was deliberately decentralized and decidedly weak, particularly on its frontiers.

Race served to replace the caste system that collapsed with medieval feudalism.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, much of the events of the colonial period can be seen as trying to recapture a lost past that no longer existed.

*Johnson v. McIntosh*, though it proved to be controversial even for the author of the ruling, John Marshall, provided a devastating foundation for Indian removals from Georgia to California in the century that followed.<sup>2</sup> California is still struggling to confront its history of racial violence. In 2019, the Governor of California, Gavin Newsom issued an official apology for the state's war of extermination against the Native population of the state in the nineteenth

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<sup>1</sup> Sweet, 134.

<sup>2</sup> Watson, Blake A. *Buying America from the Indians: Johnson v. McIntoch and the History of Native Land Rights*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012.

century. The Native population, of course, hopes for a lot more including the return of their ancestral lands.<sup>3</sup>

This research is worthwhile for a number of distinct reasons. A significant value comes from connecting the dots over these three centuries and more of the intellectual heritage that led to westward expansion and our ongoing struggle with race. Racial ideas developed over many centuries, so it should not be surprising for modern scholars continuing to deal with racial issues that took so long to root in the culture, that it would be just as difficult to root out.

Acknowledging these issues around race allows us to challenge institutions built on these assumptions. Moreover, by addressing the issue of religion and its relationship with these issues directly, scholars will have more tools for combatting racial biases by better understanding the origins of these beliefs and the religious ideas that undergird and support them. The first step to counter implicit bias is to acknowledge that they exist and identifying the beliefs that support and bolster them.

As with other moral panics, such as those associated with female sexuality, when people are confronted with a moral hazard that could not be eradicated, the desire to tightly control the source of their fear and terror, even though it may require violence, was strong. Since non-white races were seen as inherently corrupt, the need to control the actions and movements of other races was seen as the means to that end, if they could not be expelled from society entirely. Thus, the colonization of Black slaves back to Africa, Indian reservations and segregation are all expressions of a need to maintain the moral purity of the white race. However, by resorting to

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<sup>3</sup> Levin, Sam. "This is all stolen land: Native Americans want more than California's apology." *The Guardian*. June 21, 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/jun/20/california-native-americans-governor-apology-reparations> (accessed June 21, 2019).

violence to maintain that separation, it is white Europeans who are themselves fundamentally corrupted.

The perspective on the religious character of westward expansion—and the challenge to it—is new in the literature. Religion is often acknowledged as a factor, but outside of religious scholarship, the specific views that support political actions are not thoroughly examined. Historians sometimes adopt a false sense of objectivity by acknowledging things that are said, but in true Enlightenment fashion, not really taking religious claims seriously. Perhaps because they assume that it is pre-modern to think that religious people acted on their beliefs in a supposedly secular nation. However, Native scholars examining the Doctrine of Discovery have called on historians to take these religious aspects seriously, and to assume that such beliefs motivate action. If historians do so, they are forced to question the entire colonial structure that remains in American law and Supreme Court precedent that operate on the same assumptions. Previous research may also shy away from the religious claims lest they be seen as blaming religion for racial oppression.

Fully understanding all aspects of how the United States, and the Americas broadly, came to be is the only way we can hope to understand our place, and what steps need to be taken to correct past, and especially present, injustices. If one's conception of racial inferiority is tied to religious or moral positions, then in order to challenge those views on race, one must confront those religious and moral views directly, on those terms.

Wilbur Zelinsky directly confronts the idea of American nationalism as a kind of civil religion. He claims with great justification that the religious aspects of American nationalism throughout its history are not accidental or of minor importance. Indeed, he argues, “The

theological and ecclesiastical terms used at various points in earlier passages have not been more figures of speech. One of my central theses is simply that civil religion has become the dominant faith of the contemporary world, and further, that we cannot dissociate this notation from the latter-day ascendancy of nationalism and statism.”<sup>4</sup> Nationalism thus becomes a kind of substitute for religion—which we see echoes of in modern claims of ceremonial deism—invoking the emotions, myth and the imagination in much the same way religion does. Public ceremonies are required, and a kind of blasphemy and sacrilege accrues to particular symbols of national importance, even when national “deities” might be referred to with familiar terms.<sup>5</sup> We can see the public ceremonies like various national holidays such as laying a wreath at the tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the reactions to burning the flag, and the offense taken by questioning American exceptionalism in the modern era. Relevant to the current examination, Manifest Destiny clearly checks many of these same boxes.

Zelinsky sees Manifest Destiny as a logical outgrowth of the evangelizing of the Second Great Awakening, coupled with Enlightenment ideals of progress and reason, blending God’s plans for universal salvation with enthusiasm for the new scientific and technological ideas, and spicing it with political idealism and capitalism. He calls it a “heady brew”.<sup>6</sup> It is somewhat contradictory that a public culture with so much hybridization going on was so intolerant of ethnic intermixing.

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<sup>4</sup> Zelinsky, Wilbur. *Nation into State: The Shifting Symbolic Foundations of American Nationalism*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988, 232.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 233-4.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 237-8.

Reconciling slavery and a just God was not possible for some slaves, who found no comfort in religion, let alone Christian religion.<sup>7</sup> Ethnic theology hoped to justify American slavery with Biblical explanations.<sup>8</sup> Efforts at “civilizing” the Native population, such as through the introduction of agriculture and education, were seen as necessary precursors to Christian conversion, the argument being that conversion would not take while they remained “untamed.”<sup>9</sup> Even when slaves received Christian instruction, specific Biblical verses were emphasized so as not to disturb the minds of the slaves or encourage rebellion, but rather to get them to accept their lot in life and hope for the afterlife.<sup>10</sup>

Many historians view Manifest Destiny as a “secular ideology” that is divorced from religion in some fashion, despite the explicitly religious language use to defend and describe this expansionist impulse.<sup>11</sup> Rubin notes that “the conflation of religious and political ideals represented by the plan of civilization, an ideology that served as an antecedent for Manifest Destiny...championed missions as an agency to promote nationalism, expansion and the Redeemer’s Kingdom in America.”<sup>12</sup> Such a connection between Manifest Destiny and explicitly religious aims belies the idea that it was every really merely secular. The pessimism expressed by evangelists at the unwillingness of the Natives across the continent to fall before Christian proselytizing is somewhat surprising. Considering that it took a solid thousand years to convert all of Europe to Christianity, that they would grow discouraged after only a few centuries

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<sup>7</sup> Raboteau, Albert J. *Slave Religion: The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004, 313.

<sup>8</sup> Glasson, Travis. *Mastering Christianity: Missionary Anglicanism and Slavery in the Atlantic World*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012, 63.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 107-9.

<sup>11</sup> Rubin, 47.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 187.

given the wider cultural divide and greater geography speaks to the missions' unrealistic expectations. David Roberts describes the consequences of Manifest Destiny. "...[T]here is no escaping the fact that the Americanizing of the West was at the same time an unprecedented cultural tragedy."<sup>13</sup>

Kit Carson is often seen as being the ideal "mountain man" of the frontier. Skilled with trapping and tracking, knowledgeable about Indians and their languages, married to a Native woman. But accounts of Kit Carson overlook important aspects of mountain man culture that was deeply racist and brutal. Despite knowledge of Indians and their ways, they did not, by and large, respect them as equals. Thus, Kit Carson's later participation in Indian removals in the West seems far more incongruent than perhaps it ought to be.<sup>14</sup>

The Second Great Awakening focuses theologically on salvation, and that led many evangelicals to abandon Calvinism and embrace abolition.<sup>15</sup> This is not to say they stopped being racists, but for the good of their own souls, they could no longer allow themselves to enslave others. Teleological views of evolution saw white men as the purpose of the Earth, and if evolution was true, its goal or endpoint. Thus, Anglo-Saxons were the apex of the Great Chain of Being, the purpose of the Tree of Life; and all others, both men and beasts, were there to serve them, and it was God's ordained plan that they do so.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Roberts, David. *A Newer World: Kit Carson, John C. Fremont, and the Claiming of the American West*. New York: Touchstone, 2000, 19.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 77-80.

<sup>15</sup> Caldwell, Robert W., III. *Theologies of the American Revivalists: From Whitefield to Finney*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2017.

<sup>16</sup> Peterfreund, Stuart. *Turning Points in Natural Theology from Bacon to Darwin: The Way of the Argument from Design*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

Racism worked as a divide and conquer tactic, not only against lower-class whites, but also pitting races against each other.<sup>17</sup> The color line was invented, and perpetuated, in the same vein.<sup>18</sup> It remains useful for this purpose to the present day. Conservative political strategy still employs it using “wedge issues” centered on race, gender and religion.

The Doctrine of Discovery, though initially directed at the Americans, governed native land rights in nearly all English-speaking colonies, and *Johnson v. McIntosh* has been cited in those nations in court cases, including Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Not all European nations treated the Doctrine as the basis of their interactions with the Native people. The Dutch and Swedes were among those that rejected it.<sup>19</sup>

Modern tribes are in something of a bind when it comes to defending their land rights. The Doctrine of Discovery, as originally ruled in *Johnson v. McIntosh*, leaves them with few legal rights as essentially conquered people. Later cases reduced the rights of the federal government to preemptive purchase rights. There is a debate, then, between repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery in any form, and those who would use the reformulated preemptive doctrine that recognizes some Native rights, as a means to regaining more of their stolen land and some recognition of their sovereignty.<sup>20</sup> The consequences of full repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery on American legal precedent remains largely unknown.

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<sup>17</sup> Roediger, 97.

<sup>18</sup> Sweet, 135.

<sup>19</sup> Watson, Blake A. *Buying America from the Indians: Johnson v. McIntosh and the History of Native Land Rights*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012.

<sup>20</sup> Wilkins, David E., and K. Tsianina Lomawaima. *Uneven Ground: American Indian Sovereignty and Federal Law*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001.

Philosophers, in a pre-scientific way, tried to make sense of the differences between Africans and Englishmen, and other races. Such speculation led some to claim that the lighter the complexion, the more perfected a person was. It was thus the white man's burden to Christianize, civilize, and if not those, rule, the inferior races of the Earth.<sup>21</sup>

Indeed, as noted by Morrison, "Politicians argued the African Americans, indentured, enslaved or identified with slavery, were incapable of independence and therefore not entitled to full citizenship. In this regard, they were classified with women and children whose dependence disqualified them from citizenship...."<sup>22</sup>

Both Reséndez and Echo-Hawk emphasize the United Nations Conventions on Genocide to frame their work on the impact of white settlement on Native peoples. Genocides are acts committed with intent to destroy a group on national, racial, ethnic or religious characteristics, and include killing, but also serious bodily harm, inflicting conditions that reduce survival chances, prevention of births or stealing of children. Academics further classify genocide into utilitarian (economic), retributive (punishment), latent (disease), ethnocide (forced assimilation), and so forth.<sup>23,24</sup> The treatment of Native peoples in North America can be seen to have checked all these boxes. It was based rhetorically on racial and religious doctrines. It included violence including enslavement, forced assimilation, disease propagation (both intentional and

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<sup>21</sup> Jordan, 109.

<sup>22</sup> Morrison, , 67.

<sup>23</sup> Reséndez, Andrés. *The Other Slavery: The Uncovered Story of Indian Enslavement in America*. New York: Mariner Books, 2017.

<sup>24</sup> Echo-Hawk, 403.

unintentional), and theft of children, for economic gain, and as punishment for resistance up to and including forced relocation and a war of extermination.

The United States continues to struggle with the consequences of its racist past (and present). In order to understand how to move forward, it is necessary to understand how the U.S. got to this point. Given the history, it should not be surprising that anti-Semitism and racism so often go hand-in-hand, or that misogyny and racism make so many of the same claims and assumptions. When it comes to our cultural heritage, it is a little like going “nose-blind”: we have become so accustomed to the assumptions of our culture that until they confront us in an inconvenient way, we simply cease to know they are there at all.

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