The Legacy of Christian Supremacy

Jeannine Hill Fletcher
Professor of Theology
Fordham University
1493 *Inter Caetera*: “discover”/ “take possession”

“the spread of the Christian rule to carry forward your holy and praiseworthy purpose so pleasing to immortal God:”

“to the happiness and glory of all Christendom”
Doctrine of Discovery

The Bible used to argue for expansion of ‘Christendom’

Genesis 1:28 *Be Fruitful and Multiply, Fill the Earth and Subdue it*

“Coloniality”: A White Christian Frame deems land and peoples destined for European-Christian control
This map is the first to document the true names and original locations of most of the documented Native American Nation in what is now the contiguous United States of America. It represents the homelands of Tribal Nations from roughly 1500 through 1850, pre-treaty era period. It seeks to honor all Nations, Tribes, sub-Tribes and bands, etc by including the larger, well-known ones as well as many that did not survive the effects of European arrival. Most of the Tribal names are the correct names used to call themselves in their own languages. The only exception are for those tribes whose languages were never documented. It is a visual reminder of who called this land home for tens of thousands of years before any European set foot, creating a sense of pride for modern-day Native Americans as well as educating the non-Native public. To Native Americans, this land will always be our ancestral homeland.
Deep Cultural Differences

George “Tink” Tinker, *American Indian Liberation: A Theology of Sovereignty*

- **Indigenous Worldview**
  - Human Activity
    - Rhythm v. Progress
  - Land
    - Attachment v. Ownership
  - Social Organization
    - Community v. Individual
  - Place in Creation
    - Interrelation With v. Control Over

- **European Worldview**
Carington Bowles, map of the world 1780
Denis Diderot
French Philosopher
1713-1784

Voltaire
French Writer/Philosopher
1684-1777

David Hume
Scottish Philosopher
Historian/Economist
1711-1776

Immanuel Kant
1724-1805

GWF Hegel
German Philosopher
1684-1777
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Keane (after Linnaeus)</th>
<th>Blumenbach.</th>
<th>Deniker.</th>
<th>Huxley.</th>
<th>Flower (cf. Quatrefages)</th>
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<td>2. Negrito.</td>
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<td>4. Melanesian.</td>
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<td>5. Ethiopian (Abyssinian, etc.).</td>
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<td>6. Australian.</td>
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<td>7. Dravidian.</td>
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<td>8. Assyroid.</td>
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<td>10. Arab (Semite).</td>
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<td>12. Littoral European.</td>
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<td>13. Ibero-Insular.</td>
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<td>15. Adriatic.</td>
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<td>17. Eastern European.</td>
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<td>18. Aino.</td>
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<td>19. Polynesian.</td>
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<td>20. Indonesian.</td>
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<td>23. Central American.</td>
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<td>24. Patagonian.</td>
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<td>25. Eskimo.</td>
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<td>26. Lapp.</td>
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<td>27. Ugrian.</td>
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<td>28. Turco-Tatar.</td>
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\* Includes Nos. 4, 6, 19, 20, and a part of 29.

One feature of the distinet stock is of particular interest in...
1492
Conquest

1550s
Rise of Science

1780s

Modern Philosophy

philosophical defense of colonialism

“The Enlightenment”
“What is the right of the huntsman to the forest of a thousand miles over which he has accidentally ranged in quest of prey? Shall the fields and vallies, which a beneficent God has formed to teem with the life of innumerable multitudes, be condemned to everlasting barrenness?”

(Future) President John Quincy Adams (1802)

“Is one of the fairest portions of the globe to remain in a state of nature, the haunt of a few wretched savages, when it seems destined by the Creator to give support to a large population and to be the seat of civilization, of science and of true religion?”

Governor William Henry Harrison, of Indiana (1810)
“It would seem that the White race alone received the divine command, to subdue and replenish the earth!”

Senator Thomas Hart Benton
May 28, 1846, on the Oregon question

“Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it”

(Genesis 1:28)
Supreme Court Decision
Johnson v. M’Intosh
1823

Christian nations’ right of discovery supersedes indigenous nations’ right of occupancy

Legal Impact of Coloniality and Christendom
“Not only has the practice of all civilized nations been in conformity with this doctrine [of Christian ‘discovery’] but the whole theory of their titles to lands in America rests upon the hypothesis that the Indians had no right of soil as sovereign, independent states. Discovery is the foundation of title in European nations, and this overlooks all proprietary rights in the natives.”
10.7 million enslaved Africans worked over lifetimes to sustain the U.S. economy. Where did the money go?
Immigration to the U.S. in the Late 1800s

- **Asian Immigrants**: 243,900 (China)
- **Latin American Immigrants**: 91,800
- **Canadian Immigrants**: 820,700
- **European Immigrants**: 10,961,700
- **“Old” Immigrants (Northern & Western Europe)**: 1,876,100
- **“New” Immigrants (Southern & Eastern Europe)**: 3,085,600
Chinese Workers on the Transcontinental Railroad

“As a class they are quiet, peaceable, patient, industrious and economical—ready and apt to learn all the different kinds of work required in railroad building, they soon become as efficient as white laborers. More prudent and economical, they are contented with less wages.” (Leland Stanford, President of Central Pacific Railroad, 1865) Included in the Report of the Secretary of the Interior (1865)
“The command of the Scripture is: ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;’ not overwhelm your own family, your own neighborhood, your own nation with the... effects of heathenism. Let the missionary go to China and convert these men from their heathenish practices, wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb, and then, being fit for American citizenship and to become an integral part of our society, let them come as immigrants. Until then, they deteriorate our body-politic and destroy our civilization.” Senator AA Sargent (1878)
Uplift, Civilize and Christianize

Rev. Alexander McKenzie at 1893 World’s Parliament, celebrating the American Christian project: “taking the black material of humanity and building it up into noble men and women; taking the red material wild with every savage instinct, and making it into respectable men.”

Images from the Carlisle Indian School, PA

Jim Crow and Jim Dandy
In 1858, with no treaty established or adequate communications from the Federal Government, the Spokane's defended their families and country as U.S. soldiers marched through their country.
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Conquest

1550s
colonialism

Rise of Science

1780s
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philosophical defense of colonialism

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White Racial Framing

Presumes
White virtuousness and
White superiority

Grounded Christian supremacy

Logic:
God destined this land for us, we must be in the right
Gonzaga 1887

Santa Clara 1851

University of San Francisco 1855

Creighton 1878

Loyola Chicago 1870

Fordham 1841
“The real measure of our Jesuit universities lies in who our students become.”
- Fr. Peter Hans Kolvenbach, former Superior General of the Society of Jesus

The Gonzaga educational experience prepares students to be wholehearted leaders who serve the common good and give glory to God.

For more information about our mission and values, and how you can participate more fully, please check out the links below:
Fr. Cataldo wanted to build a school for the tribes they were serving and decided to look around the area of Spokane Falls "because that would be a central point for our Missions where we could build a large school for Indian children, or even for white, if many should come to the country."
“The Spokane Tribe of Indians ancestors inhabited much of northeastern Washington which consisted of approximately 3 million acres. At times they extended their hunting, fishing, and gathering grounds into Idaho and Montana.”

Prior to the arrival of the US department of war the lived as a “river people, living a semi-nomadic way of life hunting, fishing and gathering all creator had made available to them.”
Fr. Cataldo wanted to build a school for the tribes they were serving and decided to look around the area of Spokane Falls “*because that would be a central point for our Missions where we could build a large school for Indian children, or even for white, if many should come to the country*.”
James Nettle Glover
Banker

Jay Cooke
Northern Pacific Railroad
1862 Homestead Act

Provided that any adult citizen or intended citizen could claim 160 acres of land that was newly acquired by the United States.
FINE LANDS IN THE WEST
IRRIGATED
IRRIGABLE
GRAZING
AGRICULTURAL
DRY FARMING

In 1910 the Department of the Interior sold under sealed bids allotted Indian land as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Average Price per Acre</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Average Price per Acre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>5,211.21</td>
<td>$7.27</td>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>34,664.00</td>
<td>$19.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>17,013.00</td>
<td>24.85</td>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>1,020.00</td>
<td>15.43</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>1,684.50</td>
<td>33.45</td>
<td>South Dakota</td>
<td>120,445.00</td>
<td>16.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>11,034.00</td>
<td>9.86</td>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>4,879.00</td>
<td>41.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>5,641.00</td>
<td>36.65</td>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>1,069.00</td>
<td>17.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Dakota</td>
<td>22,610.70</td>
<td>9.93</td>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>865.00</td>
<td>20.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the year 1911 it is estimated that 350,000 acres will be offered for sale
Soon after Cataldo’s purchase, the settlers in Spokane Falls wrote to Fr. Cataldo, asking him to build them a college that would attract students from all parts of the west, even as far away as California. James Glover, sometimes called the Father of Spokane, gathered fifteen other settlers and sent Cataldo another letter, pledging $2,650 to help build a college. They wanted it built of brick or stone and to be not less than 40 feet wide and eighty feet long and three stories high. The bishop for the Washington territory was also urging Fr. Cataldo to build a college in Spokane Falls.
Genesis 1:28  Be Fruitful and Multiply, Fill the Earth and Subdue It

Revelation 22:2 : The tree of life… “yielded her fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree was for the healing of the nations”
“The Native Tribes of North America and the Catholic Missions” v. 30 (1877): 145-162

between Catholic scholars on ‘races of man’ (100-109) and African slave trade (219)
“The main object of this paper is to arrive at a just appreciation of the immense labours required of those zealous men who spent their live and often shed their blood to Christianize the North American races. It is always an affair of great difficult to convert pagans to Christ; and the task is still more arduous when the pagans to be converted are rude savages, degraded consequently from their primitive state.”
“But a sufficient study of the Red Indian will prove that he was not only a pagan, when the first Catholic missionaries came – not only a degraded savage, but in appearance totally unfit for a *settled* life, either as an agriculturalist, a fisherman, or even as a hunter, the wildest of all the pursuits of inferior tribes....Now, before a pagan can become a thorough Christian he must be made to a certain extent at least, a man of steady habits.” (1877)
“a settled life” “Now, before a pagan can become a thorough Christian he must be made to a certain extent at least, a man of steady habits.”

Human Activity
Rhythm v. Progress

Land
Attachment v. Ownership

Social Organization
Community v. Individual

Place in Creation
Interrelation With v. Control Over

A “river people, living a semi-nomadic way of life hunting, fishing and gathering all creator had made available to them.”

Spokane Tribe of Indians
Genesis 1:28  Be Fruitful and Multiply, Fill the Earth and Subdue It

Revelation 22:2  The tree of life... “yielded her fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree was for the healing of the nations”
Reared in the military because his father was a high ranking officer in the French Army, Gonzaga College President George de la Motte, S.J. wanted to start a Cadet program to train the students in 1899. He asked Captain Gerhard Luhn to head up a Cadet program. Captain Luhn had been a member of the United States Army for 42 years. That first year, 80 Cadets in two companies were enrolled. The War Department supplied the uniforms and guns. However, some of the Cadets were too small to shoulder the guns, so they were given wooden ones. Cadets were required to attend drill twice a week while wearing their uniform. Luhn held this position until he retired in 1905. The program officially ended in 1909.
EYES TO SEE
AN ANTI-RACISM EXAMEN FOR
JESUIT COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

21st century
What have we done to advance anti-racism?

- How have we told our college/university’s racial story? Whose voices were missing in the narrative and how does their absence affect us and the work we are doing?
- How did race play a part in our institution’s founding and early days, whether owning enslaved persons is a part of our history, or not?
- What has been our most significant institutional example of combatting racism? How long ago did it occur? How do we feel about the experience today? Is there something in it on which we can build? What would we change?
- What institutional conversations and decisions related to racial justice have we avoided because they were inconvenient, uncomfortable, or not a priority? What choices do we and others at the college/university need to make, to overcome these obstacles?
- How, specifically, has systemic racism been embedded in our everyday work and practice as a group of colleagues? As a college/university?
- How have we responded, as an institution, to anti-racism demands from students, faculty/staff, or the surrounding community?
As we’re doing anti-racism work, how do we face our histories?

- Land obtained through Settler Colonialism
- Wealth through an Economy of Enslavement
- Embedded in US projects of Expansion & Militarism

Look at our websites:
Do we tell our stories through a White Racial Frame and White Christian virtuousness?
Look at our programming:

Do we honor those who capitalize on U.S. militarism and corporate/capitalist exploitation?
Look at our curricula:

Do we dedicate resources to ensuring ‘our’ histories are told?
Look at our mission/service descriptions:

Do we leverage ‘virtuousness’ to the eclipse of ‘complicity’?
Possibilities of Jesuit Institutions

• Websites: Can we model new ways of telling our history?

• Programming/Curriculum: How do we ensure resources are dedicated to tell the full range of our histories, identities, cultures?

• Mission: How do we leverage our diversity and shared commitment to creating truly anti-racist, multi-cultural institutions?