

The Bible in Folklore Worldwide

Handbooks of the Bible and Its Reception

Volume 1.2

The Bible in Folklore Worldwide



Volume 2

A Handbook of Biblical Reception in Folklores of Africa,
Asia, Oceania, and the Americas

Edited by

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Style and Transliteration

As a general though not absolute rule, this *Handbook's* present second volume, like the first volume, follows the guidelines in the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th edn. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010; hereafter *CMS*) and *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Biblical Studies and Related Disciplines*, 2nd edn. (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2014; hereafter *SBLHS*), which itself follows *CMS* on many points. Thus, for example, all abbreviations used for the titles of books, gospels, and letters/epistles from the Bible, and of apocryphal, deuterocanonic, talmudic, and (Christian) patristic texts, are those recommended by *SBLHS*. Notably, Q in this volume is the siglum for Qur'an, not for Qumran (as it is in *SBLHS*).

Generally, when neither *CMS* nor *SBLHS* offers guidance on points of style, this *Handbook* adheres to the rules applied in the *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009): for example, not capitalizing the “p” when referring to any of the Hebrew Prophets, Muḥammad, or Joseph Smith Jr. as “the prophet”; or typically referring to Jesus of Nazareth as Jesus from his birth to his death, and as Christ when referring to him as a resurrected being or in various otherworldly, extra-scriptural, and/or contemporary folk contexts.

In most albeit not as an absolutely hard and fast rule, the conventions of the United Nations have been followed with respect for the names of geographic regions: “Western Asia” instead of “the Middle East,” “Eastern Asia” instead of “East Asia,” “Western Africa” instead of “West Africa,” and so forth.

Unless otherwise indicated, English renderings of biblical quotations are, as in *EBR*, drawn from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

With the sole exception of Ancient Greek, the letters and characters of all languages that use non-Roman alphabets—e.g., Hebrew, Sanskrit, Urdu, Chinese, Japanese—have been transliterated/romanized; in the case of Chinese in essay 4, the romanizations are followed by the original Chinese characters.

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Abbreviations

ABCFM	American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions
AG	<i>The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ: The Philosophic and Practical Basis of the Religion of the Aquarian Age of the World and of the Church Universal</i> . “Transcribed from the Book of God’s Remembrances, known as the Akashic Records.” Los Angeles, CA: Leo W. Dowling/London: L. N. Fowler, 1908. Paperback edition. Twenty-sixth printing. Camarillo, CA: DeVorss. Includes “Introduction” by Eva S. Dowling.
A.J.	<i>Antiquitates judaicae (Jewish Antiquities)</i> by Josephus
ANT	J. K. Elliott. <i>The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation</i> . Oxford: Clarendon, 1993. Repr. 2009.
AP	Apocrypha
Apoc. El. (C)	Coptic Apocalypse of Elijah [OT pseudepigraphon]
(Arab.) Gosp. Inf.	Arabic Gospel of the Infancy [NT apocryphal/pseudepigraphic text]
ATU	Aarne–Thompson–Uther classification system Hans-Jörg Uther. <i>The Types of International Folktales: A Classification and Bibliography Based on the System of Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson</i> . 3 vols. Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2004 = FFC 284–86.
Ber.	Berakot [talmudic tractate]
BFW 1	<i>The Bible in Folklore Worldwide</i> . [Vol. 1:] <i>A Handbook of Biblical Reception in Jewish, European Christian, and Islamic Folklores</i> . Ed. Eric Ziolkowski. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017.
CCCAS	Congregational Christian Church of American Samoa
CCCS	Congregational Christian Church of Samoa
CJCLdS	<i>The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints</i> [website]. URL: https://www.lds.org/ .
D&C	<i>Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of the Latter Day Saints: Carefully Selected from the Revelations of God and Compiled by Joseph Smith, Junior, Oliver Cowdery, Sidney Rigdon, Frederick G. Williams</i> . Kirtland, OH: F. G. Williams, 1835. Repr. Independence, MO: Herald House, 1971.
EBR	<i>Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception</i> . Ed. Hans-Josef Klauck et al. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009–. [22 volumes published to date.]
–Ed.	Editor of the present volume = Eric Ziolkowski
EFKS	Ekālesia Fa’apotopotoga Kerisiano Sāmoa = Congregational Christian Church of Samoa
El ²	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> . 12 vols. 2nd edn. Leiden: Brill, 1955–2005.
El ³	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> . 3rd edn. Ed. Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Everett Rowson. Leiden: Brill, 2007–
EIC	East India Company
1 En.	1 Enoch (Ethiopic Apocalypse) [OT pseudepigraphon]
EncJud	<i>Encyclopaedia Judaica</i> . 22 vols. 2nd edn. Ed. Fred Skolnik and Michael Berenbaum. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007.
EOR	<i>Encyclopedia of Religion</i> . 15 vols. 2nd edn. Ed. Lindsay Jones. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005.
FFC	Folklore Fellows Communications. 1910–. [Publication series]
G.R.	William of Malmesbury. <i>Gesta regum Anglorum</i>
HB	Hebrew Bible

<i>Hist.</i>	<i>Historiae (Histories)</i> , by Herodotus
Hist. Jos. Carp.	History of Joseph the Carpenter [NT apocryphal/pseudepigraphic text]
Inf. Gosp. Thom.	Infancy Gospel of Thomas [NT apocryphal/pseudepigraphic text]
ISV	International Standard Version [of the Bible]
<i>JE</i>	<i>The Jewish Encyclopedia</i> . 12 vols. Ed. Isidore Singer. New York/London: Funk and Wagnalls, 1901–1906.
JPS	Jewish Publication Society [three-volume translation of the Tanakh] Vol. 1: <i>The Torah = The Five Books of Moses. A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures according to the Masoretic Text: First Section</i> . Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1962. 2nd edn., 7th impression. 1974. Vol. 2: <i>The Prophets = Nevi'im. A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures according to the Masoretic Text: Second Section</i> . Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1978. Vol. 3: <i>Writings = Kethubim. A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures according to the Masoretic Text: Third section</i> . Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1982.
JS–H	The History of Joseph Smith, the Prophet (in <i>The Pearl of Great Price: A Selection from the Revelations, Translations, and Narrations of Joseph Smith [Jr.]</i>)
JST	Joseph Smith Translation [of the Bible]
KJV	King James Version, aka Authorized Version [of the Bible] (1611)
LAB	Liber antiquitatum biblicarum (Pseudo-Philo)
<i>LJ</i>	Louis Ginsberg. <i>The Legends of the Jews</i> . 7 vols. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1909–1938.
LDS	[Church of Jesus Christ of] Latter-day Saints [aka, formerly, “Mormons”]
LMS	London Missionary Society
LXX	Septuagint
1 Macc	1 Maccabees [deuterocanonical work]
MCIF	Methodist Church in Fiji
MIFL	Stith Thompson. <i>Motif-Index of Folk-Literature</i> [1932–36]. 6 vols. Rev., enlarged edn. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1955–58.
MT	Masoretic Text
<i>MWD</i>	<i>Merriam Webster’s Dictionary = Merriam-Webster.com</i> . URL: https://www.merriam-webster.com/
<i>Nat.</i>	<i>Naturalis historia</i> (Natural History) by Pliny the Elder.
NOAB	<i>The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books</i> . Ed. Bruce M. Metzger and Roland E. Murphy. New Revised Standard Version. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.
NT	New Testament
<i>OED</i>	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i> . 3rd edn. 2019. URL: https://www.oed.com/ .
<i>OLD</i>	<i>Oxford Latin Dictionary</i> . Ed. P. G. W. Glare. Oxford/New York: Clarendon Press, 1982. Repr. 1990.
<i>OnED</i>	<i>Online Etymology Dictionary</i> . URL: https://www.etymonline.com/
OT	Old Testament
<i>Pan.</i>	<i>Panarion (Adversus haereses)</i> by Epiphanius [of Salamis].
Ps.-Mt.	Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew
Q	Qur’ān
Sanh.	Sanhedrin [talmudic tractate]
SBL	Society for Biblical Literature

SBLHS	<i>The SBL Handbook of Style: For Biblical Studies and Related Disciplines</i> . 2nd edn. Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2014.
UN	The United Nations
VfM	<i>Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World</i> . Ed. R. S. [Rasiah S.] Sugirtharajah. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 1st edn., 1991; 2nd, “new” edn. 1995; 3rd edn., “rev. and expanded,” 2006. “25th Anniversary Edition,” with new “Afterword” by editor, 2016.
YHWH	Yahweh or Yahveh [YHVH] = Jehovah

Eric Ziolkowski

Introduction

This second volume of the two-volume handbook, *The Bible in Folklore Worldwide*, picks up where the first volume left off. In this sense the present volume is a *sequel*, a term that generally denotes a literary, cinematic, or televised work that continues a narrative begun in another (usually but not always earlier) such work (see *MWD* and *OED*, s.v. “sequel”). This *Handbook*’s first volume examined biblical reception within the particular range of religious, cultural, and linguistic contexts indicated by that volume’s subtitle: *Jewish*, including Mizrahi (Jewish communities in the East [*Kehillot ha-Mizrah*]), Sephardi, and Ashkenazi; *European Christian*, including Romance-language-based (French and Romanian), German, Nordic/Scandinavian, British and Irish, and East, West, and South Slavic; and mostly Arabic-based *Islamic*. As the map that heads that volume (*BFW* 1:x) illustrates, geographically these religious-cultural-linguistic spheres encompass, roughly speaking, Western Asia (aka the Middle East), Northern Africa, and various subregions of Europe, including also western Russia. These regional and subregional designations accord for the most part with those used by the United Nations (UN) Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, and the UN Geospatial Division (see websites of each; cf. Beck 2020), and the same is true of those other regions and subregions around the globe that are considered in this present second volume, subtitled *A Handbook of Biblical Reception in Folklores of Africa, Asia, Oceania, and the Americas*.

This subtitle indicates a major shift in geographic range from the first volume. In all the regions whose folkloric reception of the Bible this second volume considers, the forces of colonization and missionizing by peoples of European descent tended to figure crucially in the Indigenous peoples’ encounters with and responses to the Bible. For this reason, considerable attention is paid in our next section to defining those geographical regions and their parameters, and to examining how those regions were initially construed by those who brought the Bible to them. Readers less interested in these matters are advised to skip over this next section to one after it, on “The Bible as Unstable and Suspicious, and Bible-related Folklore as Non-parasitic.”

Geographic Parameters of Focus, and Definitional Considerations

The religious, cultural, linguistic, and folkloric scope of this *Handbook*’s first volume (again, as its subtitle specified), . . . *Jewish, European Christian, and Islamic* . . . , was

defined through the nomenclature of those three “Abrahamic”¹ monotheisms, although the second one, *Christian*, was delimited by the geographic and cultural qualifier, *European*. Here some further words are in order about the importance of the notion of geographic *region*, denoting “a limited spatial system and the expression of organizational unity” that “represents the product of the territorial differentiation of the world” (Vujadinović/Šabić 2017, 196), as an underlying organizational principle of this *Handbook*, especially since folklores tend to be identified with their regional provenances, whether explicitly or implicitly. Just as the three main Jewish ethnic groups to which three of the essays were devoted—the Mizrahi, Sephardi, and Ashkenazi—are each historically associated with a different geographical region (see “Introduction,” *BFW* 1:31–33), the qualifier *European* affixed to *Christian* in the first volume’s subtitle indicated that the Christian cultures and linguistic groups on which seven of the other essays focused were confined to a selection within the boundaries of *Europe* (extending into western Russia), the western portion of the Eurasian landmass, situated “north of the Mediterranean and Black Seas, north-west of the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea, and west of the Ural Mountains” (*OED*, s.v. “Europe”). Occurring in English as a place name, from Old English (*Europa*, *Europe*) through Middle English (*Europa*, *Europe*, *Europ*) onwards, the appellation derived from an undetermined origin through the Greek Εὐρώπη and Latin *Europa*. As far as the Greek term goes, while Εὐρώπη was the name of the mythic princess of Tyre abducted by Zeus in the form of a bull, the application of that name to the landmass has been variously explained by a derivation (dismissed as a later folk etymology) from the ancient Greek εὐρὺς (wide, broad; from εὐρύς + ὤψ, ὤψ eye, face); and as having derived from a Semitic origin, with the name connoting “the Region of the Setting Sun” (*ibid.*).

In any case, as Jonathan Z. Smith (2004, 262) points out, for most of Western history, up to what Westerners generally call the Age of Exploration (or of Discovery; 15th–18th centuries), “If there was one cosmographical element that could be taken for granted . . . , it was that the inhabitable world, the *oikoumenē*, was divided into three unequal parts,” landmasses, or “lobes”:² Europe, Asia, and Libya/Africa, and the synthesized speculations

1 The conceptual problems with the expression “Abrahamic religions [or faiths],” despite its current popularity, are discussed by Aaron W. Hughes (2012). As he observes, the term “is an interfaith term meant to show historical commonality and imply future reconciliation,” but “it does not follow from this that it ought to be employed as either a historical or a heuristic category By invoking the adjective ‘Abrahamic,’ . . . we level or flatten difference for the sake of an overarching unity or sameness” (*ibid.*, 17–18). For a variant view, see Carol Bakhos (2014, 7), who “share[s] many of the concerns of Hughes and others who question the validity and usefulness of ‘Abrahamic,’ but . . . [has] reluctantly come to accept its inclusion in everyday parlance.”

2 Smith 2004, 288n. 84: “It is important to avoid the anachronism of imposing our insular notion of ‘continent’ on this tripartition. I have not been able to locate a history of the term, but it would appear that it referred to a contiguous (*continens*) landmass.” According to the *OED*, it was in the mid-16th century that the noun “continent” came to denote a “continuous land, a mainland” in the sense of “connected or continuous tract of land” (s.v. “continent, n.”), consistent with the adjectival sense that

of the ancient Greco-Roman geographers—Pliny the Elder (23/24–79 CE) in particular—and Genesis 10 provided “all that was necessary for both anthropological and geographical theorizing” (ibid.): “. . . the three lobes of the world-island became identified with the three sons of Noah who repopulated the *oikoumenē* after the Flood” (ibid.; see also Hutzli et al. 2023). So unified were those three constituent landmasses in this conceptualization of the *oikouμένη*, or the inhabited world, that Herodotus (ca. 480–ca. 425 BCE), the conceptualization’s pioneering formulator (though predating its incorporation of the Noahic genealogy), dismissed as nonsensical the world maps drawn by all previous cartographers (*Hist.* 4.36). Herodotus acknowledged his bewilderment as to “why the earth—which is, after all, single—has three separate names (each of which is the name of a woman),”—i.e., Εὐρώπη (Europa), the above-mentioned Phoenician princess; Λιβύη (Libya), a native of that land named for her; Ἀσία (Asia), Prometheus’s wife³—“or why the boundaries have been set as the Nile in Egypt and the Phasis in Colchis . . . , nor can I find out the names of those who decided upon these boundaries” (*Hist.* 4.45, in Herodotus 1998, 249–50). Writing half a millennium later, Pliny maintains a remarkably similar, tripartite vision of the world: “The whole circuit of the earth [*Terrarum orbis universus*] is divided into three parts, Europe, Asia and Africa. The starting point is in the west, at the Straits of Gibraltar, where the Atlantic Ocean bursts in and spreads out into the inland seas. On the right as you enter from the ocean is Africa and on the left Europe, with Asia between them [i.e., to the east]; the boundaries are the river Don [or Tanais, Τάναϊς]—rather than the Phasis (Φᾶσις), as it was for Herodotus—“and the river Nile” (*Nat.* 3.1.3, in Pliny 1938–63, 2 [1942]: 5).

This tripartite conceptualization of the inhabited world was appropriated by Isidore of Seville (ca. 560–636), who represents the conduit of that classical Greco-Roman schema into the Christian tradition, where theologians and other thinkers innovated by attributing the three landmasses to three categories of human beings in accord with a biblical genealogy, that of Noah’s sons: Asia was the territory of Shem or Sem, hence the Semites; Africa, of Sham or Ham; and Europe, of Iapheth or Japheth (see, e.g., Francaviglia 2015, 6). The same three-part schematization is visualizable on the so-called “T-O” (aka “T and O” or “T in O”) type of map, or *mappa mundi* (map of the world), where the O represents the world’s perimeter, consisting of a surrounding ocean. The O contains the three landmasses or, for us, continents. On this map, these landmasses, the number of which is symbolically evocative of the Trinity, are divided by the T, which symbolizes the cross of Jesus’s crucifixion while also representing a trio of actual bodies of water—another trinitarian evocation: the T’s vertical stem is the Mediterranean Sea, and the T’s crossbar is, to the stem’s right, the Nile River (or

“continent” had already acquired, by 1530, of “Holding or hanging together in space [cf. the Latin intransitive verb *continere*]” (s.v. “continent, adj.”).

³ *Hist.* 4.45, in Herodotus 1998, 250: “However, the Lydians lay claim to the name too; they say that Asia is not named after Prometheus’ Asia, but after Asies the son of Cotys and grandson of Manes.”

Red Sea), and to the stem's left, the Don River (or Caspian Sea; see Williams 1997, 13; and Francaviglia 2015, 6–7).⁴

This present volume leaves Europe mostly behind, except as the geographical epicenter of the Western imperialist and colonialist enterprises that played far-reaching roles in the worldwide dissemination and reception of—and, in some times and places, the resistance to or reaction against—the Bible through the influence of the Christian missionizing and “scriptural imperialism” (Sugirtharajah 2001, 45–46, 52, 56–57, 60) that went hand in hand with those enterprises, as the essays in this volume amply discuss. As the saying goes, uttered from the perspective of Indigenous peoples who have been colonized and missionized by Christian Europeans or Euro-Americans: “When they arrived they had only the Book and we had the land; now we have the Book and they have the land” (Deloria 1988, 101; quoted by Long 1999, 112–13). This adage, rehearsed here by the Standing Rock Lakota scholar and champion of Indigenous peoples’ rights, Vine Deloria Jr. (1933–2005), has itself become a specimen of international postcolonial folk wisdom of uncertain origin and not tied exclusively to any one Indigenous people. The same adage has elsewhere been ascribed to the anti-colonial, African nationalist leader and Kenya’s first prime minister (1963–64) and then first president (1964–78), Jomo Kenyatta (b. Kamau Ngengi, ca. 1891/94–1978; see Lucas 2009; Gold 2009; “Corrections editor” 2009); and to the South African Anglican bishop and theologian Desmond Tutu (1931–2021; see Sandercock 2021).

The first two of the four grand regions that define this volume’s geographic parameters are those two other landmasses or lobes of the ancient *oikoumenē*’s tripartition: Libya/Africa and Asia. The Greeks used the term Λιβύη to refer to the northern portion of Africa, west of and bordering Egypt (cf. today’s nation of Libya), and sometimes to all of what they knew of Africa, which they called in Latin *Africa terra* (African land; from the adjective *Africus*, from *Afer*, “[an] African,” a term of unknown origin). In turn, the name *Africa* was used first for the Carthaginian territory, later for the Roman province of Africa, and eventually for the entire known landmass (see *OED*, s.v. “Libya” and “African”; *OnED*, s.v. “Africa”). The Greek term Ἀσία, of uncertain origin,⁵ was used to denote the landmass constituting the eastern portion of the known world, or what would later be called Asia Minor, while the Latin word *Asia* designated the Roman province of Asia (constituting the western portion of Asia Minor) or, for Pliny, the entire known landmass (see *OED*, s.v. “Asian”; *OnED*, s.v. “Asia”). Of course, lacking the hard-earned insights gleaned by the modern science of paleoanthropology and other related disciplines (through the discovery and analysis

⁴ See, e.g., the map of this “T in O” sort reproduced in Francaviglia 2015, 7, fig. 1.2 from the first printed edition of Isidore’s *Etymologiae*—the edition printed by Günther Zainer (Guntherus Ziner) at Augsburg in 1472.

⁵ The term is conjectured to have been possibly related the Hittite *Aššuwā*, the name of an eastern Anatolian league of states, or, though doubtfully, to the Akkadian *ašū*, “to go out,” “to rise,” in allusion to the sun—hence, “the land of the sunrise” (see *OED*, s.v. “Asian”; *OnED*, s.v. “Asia”).

of fossils and remains), the Greeks and Romans would have had no idea that, as it is generally assumed today, the first hominids or protohumans originated in Central Eastern Africa over seven million years ago, and that only considerably later, between about 1.9 and 1 million BCE, did the newly evolved people now known as *homo erectus*—very different from, and yet resembling our own species in some important respects—forge their initial migration routes southward to the Kalahari Desert, northwestward across the Sahara Desert to the northwestern region that meets the Mediterranean Sea, and also eastward out of Africa. The first *homo erectus* to leave Africa did so, it is believed (though not uncontroversially), just under two million years ago, heading across the northern portion of the Arabian Peninsula and then splitting, with some of the species heading northward between the Black Sea and Caspian Sea, and others across Western and Central Asia and South Asia to Eastern Asia as far north as today's Beijing, and also down through South East Asia as far as Sumatra and Java (see King 2007, 16–17).

Unlike *Africa* and *Asia*, the third and fourth geographical-regional names in this volume's subtitle, *Oceania* and *the Americas*, are not Latin loanwords in English. As Charles H. Long observed, the voyages of exploration beginning with Christopher Columbus that led to “conquest and cultural contact” in those regions were understood by Columbus and other European explorers as “continuing the older religious traditions of the religious pilgrimage” (Long 1999, 109). The resulting “discoveries” had fatefully contrasting effects on the “discoverers” and the “discovered”: while the “contact” with new lands and peoples “challenged . . . traditional European assumptions about geography, theology, history, and the nature of man” (ibid., 110, quoting J. H. Elliot), that same contact and the ensuing conquests “had a tragic effect upon all non-European cultures” (Long 1999, 110).

America, or *the Americas*, was the European designation for the continuous landmass consisting of the two continents, North and South America, which are connected by the Isthmus of Panama (*Isthmo de Panamá*; as per *OED*, s.v. “America”) separating the Caribbean Sea of the Atlantic Ocean from the Panamanian Gulf of the Pacific Ocean. The German cartographer Martin Waldseemüller (1470–1520) coined the name in his *Cosmographiae introductio* of 1507,⁶ from the feminine Latinization of the given name of the Italian navigator Amerigo Vespucci (1451–1512; see Waldseemüller 1507, C [chap. 7]; see also Ciii, verso [chap. 9]), famous for his exploration of the eastern coastline of what is now known as South America—or, specifically, the coast of today's Brazil. The Flemish cartographer Gerardus Mercator (1512–94) later adopted the term on his 1538 world map to designate the entire “New World,” including both North and South America.

Waldseemüller suggested that *America*, named for its European “discoverer,” Vespucci, constituted a hitherto unknown “fourth part of the world” (*quarta orbis pars*;

6 J. Z. Smith (2004, 296n. 138) notes that many authorities ascribe the *Introductio* to Waldseemüller's collaborator, Matthias Ringmann (1482–1511), rather than to Waldseemüller himself. See also Lester 2009.

ibid., C [chap. 7])—"fourth," in addition to the three landmasses that constituted the previously "known" world or *oikoumenē*: Europe, Asia, and Libya/Africa. Waldseemüller's neologism thus complemented, and later would gradually but never fully replace, the earlier designation for the Americas: *novus orbis* (new world), a term the Italian historian Peter Martyr d'Anghiera (1457–1526) had introduced in a letter of November 1493 (to Cardinal Sforza) to describe the land "discovered" by Columbus (epistle 138 in Martyr 1966, 360; quoted by J. Z. Smith 2004, 268). Nonetheless, as Smith suggests, this celebrated coinage by Martyr, like Martyr's closely akin, earlier phrase, *novo terrarum hemispherio* (the new hemisphere of the earth), connoted for him "newly discovered parts of the familiar globe," *not*

a new geographic entity in the sense we are familiar with when we capitalize the 'New World' as the Americas in contradistinction to the 'Old World.' Martyr's *novus orbis* is neither Columbus's *otro mundus* [another world] (which he understands . . . to be terrestrial paradise), nor Vespucci's *mundus novus* [new world] (which he understands to be a previously unknown extension of Asia), but like these terms, it does not challenge the old world-view. This will not occur in explicit fashion until [Waldseemüller's] *Cosmographiae Introductio* of [1507] with its declaration that Vespucci had discovered a previously unsuspected "fourth part of the world." (J. Z. Smith 2004, 268)⁷

Eventually, under the nomenclature of *America*, the totality of this "fourth part of the world" as a cartographic unit was subdivided into multiple parts or subcontinents: *North America* and *South America*, and also *Central America* (by the 1820s), designating the isthmus that connects North and South America (*OED*, s.v. "Central American");⁸ as well as *Latin America*, an English adaptation (by the late 19th century) of the term *America latine*, introduced by the Columbian poet José María Torres Caicedo (1830–89) in 1856 and by the Chilean writer Francisco Bilbao (1823–65), designating all of the Americas south of the Rio Grande, where Spanish or (in Brazil) Portuguese are the dominant languages (*OED*, s.v. "Latin American"; cf. the competing terms *Spanish America*, *Ibero America*, *Andean America*, *Southern Cone*; see also E. Ziolkowski 2017). Meanwhile, the term *Mesoamerica*, from the Spanish *Mesoamérica* (putatively coined by Kirchhoff 1943; from *meso*, middle + *América*), began to be used (by 1948) to designate—as Kerry Hull defines it in his essay in this volume—"pre-Columbian regions from central Mexico into El Salvador."

7 In this passage Smith erroneously gives 1508 as the year of the *Cosmographiae Introductio*'s publication. For references to discussions relevant to the lingering controversy over the origin and derivation of the name "America," and to the process of experimentation through which the figure of "America" as a "fourth" entity developed, see J. Z. Smith 2004, 286n. 75.

8 *MWD*, s.v. "Central America," defines it as "extending from the Isthmus of Tehuantepec to the Isthmus of Panama," encompassing "the republics of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, and Belize." Another term that was used as early as 1841, mainly by some North American anthropologists, but that seems now all but obsolete, was *Middle America*, in reference to Central America, Mexico, and the Antilles. See Kirchhoff 1943, 92; and *OED*, s.v. "Middle America."

From the perspective unique to the Book of Mormon, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' sacred scriptural supplement to the Bible, the first immigrants from the "Old World" to the "New World" long predated Columbus, Vespucci, and the other European navigators who are generally credited with "discovering" and exploring lands in the western hemisphere from the late 15th century on. The Book of Mormon tells of several migrations from Western Asia to America long before the Common Era. The first migration, that of the Jaredites, occurred shortly prior to the confusion of languages that followed the tower of Babel debacle (ca. 2200 BCE;⁹ cf. Gen 11; in the Book of Mormon, see Ether 6). (All citations hereafter in this paragraph are of books in the Book of Mormon.) The next migration, the one of greatest consequence, occurred shortly before the Babylonian conquest and destruction of Jerusalem (587/586 BCE), when Zedekiah ruled Judah: Lehi, a Hebrew prophet, under divine guidance fled Jerusalem ca. 600 BCE with his family and other followers, and journeyed in a boat across the ocean (1 Nephi 1–22; 2 Nephi 1–5) to what the text alternately refers to as "the land of promise" (1 Nephi 2:20; 4:14; 5:5, 22; etc.) and "the promised land" (1 Nephi 13:12; 14:2; 17:13–14; 18:18; etc.)—that is, the ancient Americas. Although the text later refers to a portion of this land as "Bountiful" (Alma 22:29, 31; 22:32–33; 27:22; etc.), the Latter-day Saints' official ecclesial policy is to refrain from specifying the location of it or any other geographic site in the New World that is mentioned in the Book of Mormon.¹⁰ A third migration, led by Mulek, a son of King Zedekiah, occurred ca. 587 BCE (see Omni 1:14–21).

The fourth of the geographical regions this *Handbook* considers is *Oceania*, the world of the Pacific Ocean (*Mare Pacifico*, calm or pacific sea), reputedly so named by the Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan (Fernão Magalhães, 1480–1521) from his impression

9 In this paragraph, the years I provide for events told of in the Book of Mormon are those given in "The Book of Mormon Timeline" on *CJCLdS*, URL: <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/2011/10/book-of-mormon-time-line?lang=eng> (accessed May 30, 2023).

10 According to the official Church website (<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org>), s.v. "Book of Mormon Geography": "Since the publication of the Book of Mormon in 1830, members and leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have expressed numerous opinions about the specific locations of the events discussed in the book. Some believe that the history depicted in the Book of Mormon—with the exception of the events in the Near East—occurred in North America, while others believe that it occurred in Central America or South America. Although Church members continue to discuss such theories today, the Church's only position is that the events the Book of Mormon describes took place in the ancient Americas." What the Book of Mormon affirms unambiguously, however, is that Lehi's followers, the Lehites, eventually split into two factions irreconcilably antagonistic toward each other, the Nephites and the Lamanites, and that they continuously warred with each other until the Lamanites vanquished the Nephites in a final battle around 385 CE in "the land of Cumorah, by a hill which was called Cumorah" (Moroni 6:2; see also Mormon 8:2; and D&C 128:20). But this did not occur before one of the Nephites, the prophet Mormon, hid in that hill his people's record (Mormon 6:6; cf. Ether 15:11), inscribed on the sacred plates of Nephi. Mormon's son Moroni would return centuries later as an angel to lead young Joseph Smith Jr. to uncover these plates from that same hill, not far from his home in Palmyra, New York, and to translate as the Book of Mormon.

of it when he and his crew first sailed into that ocean on November 28, 1520 becoming the first Europeans to reach it (see, e.g., Pérez Mallaina), although the first European to *glimpse* that vast ocean had been Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, from the Isthmus of Panama seven years earlier, on September 25, 1513 (see, e.g., Fischer 2002, 82; Smith 2004, 256; Pérez Mallaina). Gordon Brotherston (1992) sought to revive the early modern cartographical understanding of America as the Fourth World (following Asia as the First World, and Europe and Africa as the Second and Third World), and some Indigenous peoples of North America (e.g., Navajo) and Mesoamerica (e.g., Aztec) in their cosmogony posit the “Fifth World” or “Fifth Sun” as a *temporal* conceptualization of the present age in which they live (see, e.g., Stookey 2004, 9, 20, 27, 59, 80, 177, 181, 192–93). Nonetheless, no one to my knowledge has ever proposed to conceptualize Oceania as the Fifth World.

More than 20,000 islands—eighty percent of the world’s total—are found in the Pacific Ocean. This “water continent” is the earth’s “largest geographical feature,” with a proportion of 130 sq. ki. / 50.2 sq. mi of water for every one sq. ki. / .39 square mi of land—about 1,300,000 sq. ki. / 501,933 sq. mi. total (Fischer 2002, xvi). In a Eurocentric sense, if construed in relation to the augmented *mappa mundi* to which the Americas were added as the Fourth World, the vast home region of the Pacific Islanders might be imagined as the Fifth—a region or “world” of which the European awareness can be retraced to no earlier than Balboa’s initial glimpsing of the Pacific, or the first moments when the accounts were heard of the one surviving ship from the original fleet of five ships that comprised the 1519–22 Magellan expedition (see Smith 2004, 265).¹¹ After Magellan was killed in the Philippines and three of the other ships were lost and one deserted, the single ship that completed the first circumnavigation of the globe and returned to Spain did so under the captainship of Juan Sebastián Elcano.

Modeled after the French term *Océanie* (1813), the term Oceania (*ocean* + *-ia*) entered currency in English about 1845, having been preceded as early as 1822 by the term “Oceanica” (from the French *océanique*), which “Oceania” replaced (see *OED*, s.v. “Oceania,” “Oceanian,” and “Oceanica”). Jerusha Matsen Neal, in her essay in this volume, points out that Oceania’s “watery borders stretch over one-third of the Pacific Ocean, or roughly one-fifth of the earth’s surface.” Yet, as another source explains, the “outlines” of the region, which encompasses twenty-nine countries and territories, “are not strictly defined. They are roughly the area limited to the archipelagos between Asia, Australia and the US West Coast” (*WorldData.info*), that is, “the islands and island-groups of the Pacific Ocean and its adjacent seas” (*OED*, s.v. “Oceania”).

The conventionally held theory today (see, e.g., King 2007, 40–41) is that the populating of Oceania by human beings commenced after the migration of Asian people from China to Taiwan, and then, about 2000 BCE, to the Philippines. These people, who spoke what is now called Proto-Oceanic, continued eastward to New Guinea, where they are assumed to have encountered settled populations, distant relatives of

11 J. Z. Smith inexplicably dates the Magellan expedition 1517–21.

Australian Aborigines. The newcomers gradually developed a culture now known as Lapita, which flourished around 1300 BCE in the environs of New Guinea and spread over the next four hundred years from the Bismark Islands to the Mariana Islands in the north, and as far east as Samoa and Tonga. Around 1000 BCE, however, the Lapita culture ceased to spread and began to dissipate, and a distinctively Polynesian culture emerged that reached Tahiti around 300 BCE, and from there, explored northward, reaching Hawai'i by 400 CE; further eastward, reaching Easter Island around that same time; and southwestward, colonizing New Zealand about 900 CE.

From the Book of Mormon a very different theory, again unique to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, emerged of how Oceania came to be populated. A speculation some Latter-day Saints entertained, and others rejected, is that a number of ancient Israelites, from among those who the Book of Mormon claims had arrived in the New World centuries earlier, departed westward across the Pacific from America around 55 BCE under the command of a ship-builder named Hagoth, “an exceedingly curious man” (see, in the Book of Mormon, Alma 63:4–9; quote at v. 5), and proceeded to populate Hawai'i, New Zealand, Samoa, Tahiti, Tonga, and other Pacific Islands: “Indeed in 1843 Mormon missionaries were sent to labour among the Polyne-sians in the belief that they were of ‘Israelitish origin and descendants of the people of whom *The Book of Mormon* is a history” (Parfitt 2003, 108, quoting Anon. 1907, 146).¹² Reciprocally, less than four decades later, in March of 1881, Pāora Te Pōtangaroa (d. 1881), a Māori prophet and Rangatira (chief) of the Ngāti Kahungunu tribe in the Wairarapa region of the North Island of New Zealand, reportedly foretold the arrival of Latter-day Saints missionaries, specifying that they would “travel in pairs . . . from the rising sun.” Several months afterwards, Pōtangaroa died, and, in fact, Latter-day Saints “in pairs” came to his people “from the ‘rising sun’” (see Cowley 1950, 697 = idem 1954, 201–202).¹³ (As Eric Eliason notes in his essay in the volume, “many versions” of this tale circulate in Latter-day Saint missionary lore, each of them set on “a never-before-visited-island,” not necessarily New Zealand.)

The Indigenous inhabitants of Oceania are recognized as “the last people on Earth to encounter Europeans,”—and were ipso facto among the last people to encounter the Bible the Europeans brought with them—“in some places nearly 500, in others only 50 years ago” (Fischer 2002, xvi). Oceanians often go by the collective name *Pasifika*, derived from the name of an Oceanic language. A borrowing of the English name for the Pacific Ocean (cf. Samoan *Pasefika*, Niuean *Pasifika*, Fijian *Pasifika*, etc.

¹² See Parsons 1992 for an extensive review of the Church’s traditional beliefs regarding the Polynesian people, and an explanation of the prophet Joseph Smith Jr.’s early interest in these Pacific Islands. For arguments against the theory based on Alma 63:4–9 that Hagoth’s ships sailed out into the Pacific Ocean, see Coon 2008.

¹³ Cowley (1950, 756 = idem 1954, 205) claims that “Potangaroa was only one of several native prophets who foretold the coming of Latter-day Saint missionaries to the Maori people,” though Cowley does not identify any of those other prophets.

denoting the Pacific Ocean and its inhabitants; see *OED*, s.v. “Pasifika”), the name Pasifika has been in use since the 1970s and been popularized more recently by the native pastor of the Methodist Church in Tonga, and scholar, Jione Havea (b. 1965).

The Oceanic “islands and island-groups” divide into several major subregions (see p. 182, Map 5). To the northwest lies *Micronesia*,¹⁴ to the southeast, *Polynesia*,¹⁵ due west of Polynesia is *Melanesia*,¹⁶ and to the south of Melanesia lies the fourth Oceanic subregion, which includes Australia and (according to some) New Zealand, in addition to several smaller islands.¹⁷ Like the term Oceania, the terms Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia are European, not Indigenous; they are, as Steven Roger Fischer (2002, 24) points out, “useful distinctions which hold instructive, if limited value.” “While each region displays distinct cultural, linguistic, and ethnic characteristics,” Neal elaborates, referencing Brij V. Lal and Kate Fortune, “each has been marked by centuries of ocean migration and cultural blending . . . While the population of the region may seem small—only about 10.6 million people—its diversity is vast.” The differences between Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia

are ethnic, linguistic and cultural, encompassing Pacific Islands’ three most salient human features, which also happen to be geographical in the main. Melanesia now claims more than 1000 Papuan and Austronesian languages within widely diverse cultural groups sharing only broad features in common. Micronesia has a large number of Austronesian subgroups in three major cultural divisions. And Polynesia, geographically the largest of the three regions, is culturally and linguistically the most homogeneous. (Fischer 2002, 24)

Within the four global regions just discussed (Africa, Asia, the Americas, and Oceania/Pacific Islands), eleven of the present volume’s essays consider folkloric reception of the Bible in the following subregions and religious cultures: Sub-Saharan Africa, including several specific geographic areas in the Western, Southern, and Central-Eastern portions of the continent; Southern Asia, with a focus on India; Eastern Asia, with focuses on China and Japan; Oceania, with focuses on Fiji, in Melanesia, and Samoa, in Polynesia; and the Americas, with focuses on Indigenous peoples of the Americas generally, Mesoamericans particularly, as well as African Americans and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, also known as Mormons,¹⁸ in North America.

¹⁴ Micronesia encompasses Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, United States Minor Outlying Islands.

¹⁵ Polynesia encompasses American Samoa, Cook Islands, French Polynesia, Niue, Pitcairn, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Wallis and Futuna Islands. Some authorities (e.g., Fischer 2002, 35; and Neal), add Easter Island (Rap Nui) and New Zealand.

¹⁶ Melanesia encompasses Fiji, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu.

¹⁷ I.e., Christmas Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Heard Island and McDonald Islands, and Norfolk Island. In contrast to *UN: Statistics Division*, Fischer (2002, 35) and Neal construe New Zealand and Easter Island (Rap Nui) as parts of Polynesia.

¹⁸ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, according to its current “Style Guide” (accessible on *CJCLdS* at: <https://newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/style-guide>) discourages the use of the nick-

There follows an essay that examines the perpetuation of biblically-derived or Bible-related folklore through the international medium of film, especially in the United States, Europe, Russia, and Israel. The volume then closes with an essay that considers the worldwide folkloric wanderings and appearances of three central biblical figures, namely, Elijah, Jesus, and the Virgin Mary, and also of fourth, notoriously Bible-related but non-biblical figure, the Wandering Jew.

The Bible as Unstable and Suspicious, and Bible-related Folklore as Non-parasitic

While this second volume of our *Handbook* is a sequel to the first volume in picking up where the latter left off geographically, and in extending our exploration of the Bible's folkloric reception beyond Western Asia, Europe, and Russia to other regions of the world, the notion of *sequel* is germane here in another, additional sense. The word entered English in the 15th century via the Old French term *sequelle* (=séquelle in modern French); from the Latin *sequella* (or *sequela*), denoting a follower or attendant, or a secondary or accessory condition or situation, or a consequence or corollary; from, in turn, the verb *sequor*, meaning to go after or behind, to follow, or to chase (see *OLD*, s.v. “sequella [-ēla]” and “sequor” [January 28, 2022]; and *OED*, s.v. “sequel”). Folklore, especially verbal folklore of the sort with which these two volumes are mainly albeit not exclusively concerned, *follows* or *follows upon* the Bible. Such folklore emerges from, is inspired by, reacts against, or elaborates upon biblical stories, characters, ideas, teachings, themes, motifs, images, or other scriptural contents, regardless of whether the immediate transmission of those contents occurred orally or via some written version or translation of the Bible. Yet in following (upon) any one such biblical or Bible-related phenomenon, or any combination of such phenomena, Bible-related folklore tends to be hardly parasitic in its relation to the biblical *text*. That is, it does not simply feed off or draw its content from the Bible. Quite the contrary proves to be the case, particularly in the regions considered in this volume, and for more than one reason.

To begin with, no stable concept of the “Bible” can be assumed. What the Bible *is*, or *means*, or *signifies*, can vary dramatically between the different regions of the world with which this volume is concerned, and from one people or group to another

name “Mormon” or the abbreviation “LDS” in referring to the Church or to its members, and prefers instead the formulations “members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,” “Latter-day Saints,” “members of the Church of Jesus Christ,” and “members of the restored Church of Jesus Christ.” As a non-member of the Church, I defer to these preferences *as author* of this “Introduction” and in my essay in this volume, but, *as editor*, I defer to the terminological choices made by Eric Eliason, a member of the Church, in his own essay in this volume.

in any one of those regions: “As the land shifts,” comments Neal about the impact of political, ethnic, social, and ecclesial fomentation on biblical reception in Oceania, “the scriptures shift as well.” Such conceptual instability regarding the Bible is nothing new. As we discussed in the “Introduction” to our *Handbook*’s first volume, the modern notion of “Bible” traces its origins through a host of shifting and evolving denotations and connotations associated with the Greek terms βύβλος, βίβλος, βιβλίον, and the latter’s plural form βιβλία, which was adapted as a loanword into Medieval Latin, *biblia* (see *BFW* 1:1–3). The instability was permanentized through the formation of structurally and linguistically contrasting canons, most notably of the Hebrew Scriptures, the rabbis’ *kitvei ha-qodesh* (holy scriptures or scriptures of the temple), or the Jews’ Tanakh (*torah-nevi’im-ketuvim*, i.e., teaching [guidance or law]–prophets–writings, aka TNK); the Septuagint or LXX (ca. 250 BCE), the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures; and the varying Christian compilations of the rearranged “Old Testament” texts conjoined with the New Testament in the Roman Catholic canon, the (Eastern) Orthodox canon, or the Protestant canon (see lists of these canons’ books and structures in *SBLHS* 261–68, Appendix A).¹⁹ Over time, differing construals have been offered of what the Bible constitutes: an encyclopedia? an anatomy? a library? and so forth (see *BFW* 1:3–8). The resultant instability of the notion of the Bible is compounded, practically beyond measure, when the ways the Bible has been viewed and read in different regions of what used to be called the Third World are taken into consideration. Gerald O. West (2016), for example, finds the Bible to have assumed some fifty different forms and functions as it evolved in colonial and postcolonial Africa from a “tool of imperialism” to an “African icon,” ranging from the “Folk Bible,” “Re-tributive Bible,” “Bartered Bible,” and “Unsettled Bible,” to the “Trustworthy Bible,” “HIV and AIDS Bible,” and the “Football Fans’ Bible”—to name but a few.

The term *Tiers Monde* or *3^e Monde* (Third World), echoing the notion of *le Tiers-État* (the Third Estate) in France at the time of the French Revolution, was coined in 1952, about five years into the Cold War period, by the French anthropologist and demographer Alfred Sauvy (1898–1990), to denote the aggregate of the “underdeveloped,” poorer nations of the world (*les pays sous-développés*),²⁰ unaligned with either the Communist bloc or the non-Communist bloc: Africa, the preponderance of Asia, and Latin America (Sauvy 1986, 81; see also, e.g., *OED* and *MWD*, s.v. “Third World”). Summing up the countries and regions of the Third World as realms “ignored, exploited, and misunderstood,” Sauvy (1986, 83) captured the notion of both their exclusion and their aspiration (see Sugirtharajah 2001, 1). In the early 1970s, the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party under Mao Zedong (1893–1976) offered its own formulation of the “Three Worlds Theory” (*Sān gè Shìjiè de Lìlùn*), positing the United States and the Union

19 For further discussion, see *EBR*’s entries on “New Testament” (vol. 21 [2023], cols. 324–56); “Old Testament” (forthcoming); and “Septuagint” (forthcoming).

20 Sauvy avowedly adapted the phrase from United Nations terminology.

of Soviet Socialist Republics as the “imperialist,” “plundering,” and “bullying” first world; the developing countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Pacific, as the third world; and the nations between those two as the second world: the industrialized, developed European countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact (see Anon. 1974; and Sugirtharajah 2001, 2). Notions of “the Third World,” setting aside questions of the merits or demerits of Maoist and all other political ideologies affiliated with those notions, proved useful at the time in replacing such patronizing and, in some usages, racist expressions as “underdeveloped,” “least developed,” and “low income group nations.” These latter terms themselves had generally displaced such earlier, mostly derogatory terms as “primitives,” “depraved races,” “savages,” “inferior,” “tribal,” and “nonliterate,” which had enjoyed currency in Western social-scientific parlance “when Europeans were carving up the continents” of “other” peoples in other hemispheres (Sugirtharajah 2001, 2; see also Alles 2023).

However, a perceived inadequacy of the term Third World was already implied by the emergence, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, of the expression “Fourth World” to capture a variety of meanings: a confederation of unsovereign territorial or political units, or of sovereign nations, especially in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, deemed to be the most impoverished and least developed of the Third World (to synthesize *OED*’s defs. 2 and 3, and *MWD*’s def., s.v. “Fourth World”); or “people living in a relatively wealthy nation, yet in conditions of extreme deprivation or poverty, *esp.* an urban underclass; the phenomenon of poverty in wealthy nations” (*OED*, def. 4 s.v. “Fourth World”); or, in the broadest of all the definitions, “the poorest and the excluded . . . across every continent, . . . a universal reality which has existed in all times and places [*une réalité universelle dans l’espace et dans le temps*]” (Wresinski 2007 [1980], 173–74 / *idem.* 2011, 1); or, finally, in a revival of the 16th-century addition of the Americas as the “fourth world” to the medieval tripartite *mappa mundi*, the term has been applied to the native inhabitants of the Americas—i.e., pre-Columbian inhabitants, and those inhabitants today with pre-Columbian roots. In the revised, post-Columbian cartographical scheme, within the surrounding ocean, Asia constituted the First World, and the greatest, in the upper eastern half circle; Europe and Africa, the Second and Third Worlds, to the west below; and America (or the Americas), added now as the fourth, final, *quarta orbis pars* (fourth part of the world; see, e.g., Brotherston 1992, 1, as cited earlier).

Around the turn of the millennium, R. S. Sugirtharajah (2001, 3) pronounced the term Third World “still serviceable because it encapsulates a particular way of existence and experience.” He therefore retained the term in the subtitle of the 2006 third edition and the 2016 “25th Anniversary Edition” of his influential *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World* (*VfM*). Nonetheless, the term since then has become almost obsolete;²¹ *pace* the benevolent intentions behind its original coin-

21 Google Ngram data for the lexemes “Tiers Monde,” with uppercase “T” and “M” in French, and “Third World” with uppercase “T” and “W” in both American and British English, as of July 2022,

age, the term now is branded as offensive by some (see, e.g., Silver 2021, among many others, readily googleable, expressing the same opinion).

A concept with an important bearing on the notion of the Third World, and also of the Fourth World, is *Indigeneity*, when invoked in reference to an Indigenous people, a people “native to a particular land” (from the Latin, *indigenus*, literally born in a country). Quite oppositely of the term Third World, use of the expression *Indigenous people(s)* has increased steadily since the mid-1980s.²² Gregory D. Alles (2023, 1)²³ observes that the idea in religious studies and other disciplines that some peoples should be construed as Indigenous reflects the intersection of “two broad political, economic, social, and cultural currents.” The first current was the European colonialist impulse from the 15th century on to distinguish “civilized” peoples who adhere to religions such as Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, from “others” encountered in Africa, Asia, the Americas, and elsewhere (although the application of the term “Indigenous” to them today was preceded up through the time of the Second World War by the tendency to use the derogatory sorts of terms enumerated above). Intersecting with that impulse in the post-war era was the emergence of a vibrant, postcolonial international movement of Indigenous peoples. In this regard, with the concerns of our present volume in mind, it is worth responding to Jacob K. Olupona’s (2004, xiv) expression of legitimate concern almost two decades ago that “[r]outinely, indigenous religions are restricted to anthropology or folklore.” This *Handbook*’s primary concern is not with religions per se, Indigenous or otherwise, but rather with Bible-related folklore—a term whose coinage, etymology, development, and meanings, together with its German equivalents (*Volkskunde* and *Völkerkunde*) and the development of the study of folklore (aka folkloristics), we explored in our “Introduction” to this volume’s prequel (see *BFW* 1:9–20). And although the Indigenous peoples of various geographical regions figure to varying degrees in the discussions in some of the volume’s essays, in none of them is there any effort or intent to pigeonhole these peoples

yielded markedly similar results, graphing in each case like an inverted “V”—i.e., showing the use of “Tiers Monde” in French to have increased steeply from almost nonuse in the early 1950s, peaked in 1980–84, and then dropped just as steeply to almost total nonuse in 2019, the last year measured; and showing the use of “Third World” in English to have increased steeply from almost nonuse in the early 1960s (*sic*), peaked in 1986–87, and then dropped steeply to very light use from 2010 through the remainder of that decade (with 2019 being, again, the last year measured). The data for use of the same lexemes in French and English with all lowercase letters yield parallel results, though with the peak of the inverted “V” considerably lower in the case of “tiers monde,” and the inverted “V” flattened to a gentle curve in the case of “third world.”

²² This increase is attested by the *Google Ngram* data as of July 2022 for the lexeme “indigenous people”—all lowercase, all uppercase, and then with a capitalized “I” but lowercase “p”—covering through 2019, the last year measured. A decrease from 2005 to 2012 in the use of this lexeme in all lowercase is surely the result of the increased preference during that period for capitalizing the initial “I” in Indigenous.

²³ Alles’s (2023) article offers an excellent, up-to-date overview of the various problems and debates connected with the notions and traditions of, and the major topics and contemporary issues in, the study of Indigenous religions.

or their religious or narrative traditions, or any others, within the confines of “anthropology or folklore.” It simply happens that this *Handbook*’s concern is with these peoples’ folkloric use of, or reactions to, the Bible and its contents, as was likewise the case with our first volume’s consideration of the Bible in Mizrahi, Sephardi, Ashkenazi, European Christian, and Muslim folklores.

Here, we are brought back to the question not only of the instability of the Bible but also of the suspicion that often surrounds it within the spheres of its folkloric reception among peoples colonized, enslaved, or missionized by Bible-bearing Europeans or European Americans. Not infrequently, as some of the authors of essays in this volume make clear, the Bible itself as a material object became *unstable* in the most literal sense of being “apt to move or be moved about” (*OED*, s.v., “unstable”) in ways, and for reasons, that might seem highly unorthodox from “mainstream” European Christian perspectives. For example, Jerusha Matsen Neal, quoting Havea, notes that contemporary Pasifika still bury the Bible in their land, as they regard the Bible, like the land, as “not property to mark and claim, or a container to unpack, but a deep fluid body with many currents.” Eric Nii Bortey Anum discusses the use of the Bible as “a magical object” in African folklore.

Meanwhile Isabel Mukonyora, writing of the convenings of the Johane Masowe Apostles Church she observed in the northern suburbs of Harare, Zimbabwe, in the 1990s, noticed that the Bible as a printed book was forbidden among them, as its presence would serve to recall its use “by European missionaries to claim authority for their own interpretation of western orthodoxy.” Although the Bible is elsewhere said to have “become the very centre of Masowe ritual and they regard it as their own” as “not something dead” (Dillon-Malone 1978, 133; see also x, 4), the Bible’s proscription among the Masowe Apostles observed by Mukonyora was consistent with the teaching of their movement’s founder from whom they took their name, the Shona prophet Johane Masowe, “John of the Wilderness” (b. Shoniwa Masedza Tandi Moyo, 1914–73; on his birth name see Dillon-Malone 1978, 14). To be sure, before his conversion to prophethood, Shoniwa had avowedly studied the Bible “continuously” in a translation “in the native language” which he claimed to have purchased in a shop in Salisbury (*ibid.*, 12; see also 48, 52, 58; and 138, §5 [Appendix A]) but which he reportedly was given by a Catholic priest there (*ibid.*, 14). Later, when proclaiming his gospel as a converted prophet, he wore a white robe adorned with a large red cross, and carried a staff topped with a cross, *and a Bible* (*ibid.*, 15, 55, 57, 74; and 148–49, §§51, 54–55; 161, §64 [Appendix B]). Accordingly, his followers “express[ed] the strength and vitality of a creative response to the Judaeo-Christian Bible as they . . . understood it and . . . appropriated it in their own lives in a relevant and meaningful way” (*ibid.*, 44). However, early in his prophetic career, Johane urged that the Bible should be burned and destroyed because of its association with white people, and on the rationale that his and his native African followers’ forebears did not have such books, and that such books were purchased with money (see *ibid.*, 17, 58–59, and 139, §6 [Appendix A]; and Engelke 2007, 5). After all, the Bible had become obsolete for Africans because Ma-

sowe was for them what Jesus was for whites (see Dillon-Malone 1978, 50, 61, 69, 133). Masowe “himself *was* the word of God for Africa and, by listening to him, African peoples would learn what God wanted them to do” (ibid., 59, italics in text; see also 107). When eventually the pragmatic need to use the Bible arose as Masowe appointed preachers to assist him, he allowed use of the Bible only reluctantly at their persuasion, and he “himself carefully selected those passages which, he insisted, were meant for Africa,” and eventually the Apostles identified the Bible with Masowe, accepting it “as the word of Johane Masowe who himself is the word of God for Africa” (ibid., 59).

The Masowe Apostles’ banning of the Bible from their midst marks a terminus ad quem of the suspicion, wariness, or even disdain that is often directed toward the Bible from within non-white, non-Western Indigenous communities. Such communities have often experienced the intercultural sleight of hand alluded to in the aforementioned adage about peoples of European descent showing up with the Bible in the land of a people of color who then find themselves holding the Bible while realizing that the whites have seized possession of the land: “Christianity, or European influence, advances with sword or paper treaties in one hand, and the Bible or a case of gin in the other—as it appears to the native mind” (A. S. White, quoted by Sugirtharajah 2001, 45). Not only did colonialists appropriate the land, but the Christian Bible they brought with them, “the colonial Book” (Sugirtharajah 2001, 161), acted as a kind of theological, conceptual thief, as the Bible itself has an oft-overlooked “colonialist character The New Testament writings are a striking example of persistent seizure of other peoples’ gods and theological tenets” (Sugirtharajah 2016, 136–37). The editors of *The Africana Bible: Reading Israel’s Scriptures from Africa and the African Diaspora* (2010) point to the “complex relationship” peoples of African descent have had with the Christian Bible. When not kept hidden from Blacks (e.g., see Oosthuizen 1968, 92), or when not censored and refashioned into a misleading form (e.g., the notorious “Slave Bible”),²⁴ the Bible lent itself to Africana peoples as “an invaluable resource in struggles for freedom” (Page et al. 2010, xxv). Yet the Bible has also been “a political tool of subjugation” (Engelke 2007, 5), “a source of disruption and instability” and “a tool of oppression” in Africana people’s lives (Page et al. 2010, xxv–xxvi). As Allan Dwight Callahan puts it, making a point Harriiss elaborates in his essay, “African Americans found the Bible to be both healing balm and poison book. They could not

24 Displayed at the Museum of the Bible in Washington, DC, “The Slave Bible, as it would become known, is a missionary book. It was originally published in London in 1807 on behalf of the Society for the Conversion of Negro Slaves, an organization dedicated to improving the lives of enslaved Africans toiling in Britain’s lucrative Caribbean colonies. They used the Slave Bible to teach enslaved Africans how to read while at the same time introducing them to the Christian faith. Unlike other missionary Bibles, however, the Slave Bible contained only ‘select parts’ of the biblical text. Its publishers deliberately removed portions of the biblical text, such as the exodus story, that could inspire hope for liberation. Instead, the publishers emphasized portions that justified and fortified the system of slavery that was so vital to the British Empire” (“The Slave Bible”).

lay claim to the balm without braving the poison. The same book was both medicine and malediction” (Callahan 2006, 40), and hence was experienced by Africana peoples as both a “good book” (ibid., 41–48 [chap. 3]) and a pernicious “poison book” (ibid., 21–40 [chap. 2]), the latter phrase being a quotation taken from the Nation of Islam leader, Elijah Muhammad (b. Elijah Poole, 1897–1975). The Mexican feminist liberation theologian and biblical scholar Elsa Tamez (b. 1950) speaks of “the trauma of Indigenous people with regard to the Bible” (Tamez 2016, 15), as Indigenous Christians struggle, in the words of the late Chilean priest and liberation theologian Pablo Richard Guzmán (1939–2021), to acculturate a holy book “so distant in time and space, and so culturally alienating because of Western colonial interpretation” (quoted in ibid., 16).

To pick back up now on our earlier point, another reason Bible-related folklore is not parasitic on the Bible is that such folklore tends to provide for its listeners or readers narrative elements or whole stories that might seem to be missing from the scriptural narratives themselves, a tendency in our “Introduction” to this *Handbook*’s first volume (see *BFW* 1:24–25). In her essay in the present volume, Christal Whelan calls this the “ellipsis factor”:

Common to folklore worldwide, it is the tendency to fill in gaps of all sorts. Silences will grow into stories. Or a word ill understood may trigger an association that will serve to justify it . . . [W]hen a key piece is missing from a story received (especially from an alien source), there is a cognitive compulsion to fill in the blank(s) with something (or anything) in order to attain satisfactory closure.

As far as the New Testament goes, the scriptural “gaps” Whelan references here correspond to the “yawning gaps” (*klaffende Lücke*) that Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965) pointed to in the canonic Gospels’ accounts of Jesus’s life: “How are these gaps to be filled? At the worst with phrases [*Phrasen*], at the best with historical imagination [*historischer Phantasie*]” (Schweitzer 1906, 7 / idem., 2005, 7). It is through “imagination,” though perhaps not so much “historical” as experiential, that verbal folklore steps in. As the US anthropologist James W. Fernandez (1964, 283) observed of the adherents of the Bwiti religion in Gabon, Central Africa, Jesus’s life “tends to be filled in by the Banzie according to the personal experiences of their own cult leaders. Likewise, other details of Jesus’ life are amplified out of local folklore. Jesus is said to have had the ability to disappear at will, or to assume a kind of ‘everyman’ appearance that made Him indistinguishable from all others, or made all others appear like Himself.”

Such exemplifications of the ellipsis factor are plentiful in this volume’s essays. For instance, in my essay, aside from considering various legends, folkic narratives, and other accounts that emerged in Asia and elsewhere to account for Jesus’s “lost years” in the canonic Gospels, I note that the whole long, complex, and globally dispersed folkloric traditions of the Wandering Jew find their points of origin filling gaps amid some of the already extra-scriptural embellishments of the Gospels’ passion narratives. Another example is Kerry Hull’s observation that the “widespread tradition of the apple getting stuck in Adam’s throat” typifies Francis Lee Utley’s (1907–74) notion of “The

Bible of the Folk”: “While the lodging of the apple in Adam’s throat detail”—a detail linked to the coinage, *Adam’s apple*—“is not found in the biblical text (indeed, nor is the apple itself), it has become part of ‘folk elaboration on biblical narrative’ whereby it becomes accepted as ‘part of culture’” (Hull, in his essay, quoting Marion Bowman).

Hull broaches a related matter that has far-reaching implications for the essays of this volume. Regarding a tale he collected in 2002 among the Ch’orti’ Maya of southern Guatemala (see p. 252, Map 7), “Jesus and the Rooster,” he notes that it was clear that his “native consultant was fully aware that what he [i.e., the consultant] was telling contained extra-biblical elements. Indeed, *there is a clear meta-awareness at times that some details in these Indigenous tales grounded in biblical stories do not appear in the Bible itself*” (emphasis mine). Questions about whether or not or to what extent such a “meta-awareness” figures in the mind of the teller might arise with regard to just about any Bible-related folktale ever told. The answer to that question will often if not usually be more difficult to determine than in the cases of the rehearsals of the many legends about the alleged journeys of Jesus to, and his supposed sojourns and “studies” in, various locations around the globe, far beyond Judea. Many such legends are considered in this volume, as in the essays by Herman Tull (about Jesus in India), Christal Whelan (about Jesus in Japan), and me (about Jesus in India, Japan, and elsewhere). Often these legends or their tellers betray a meta-awareness that they are filling in narrative gaps in the canonic Gospels either regarding the some eighteen unaccounted-for years in the life of Jesus between his colloquy as a twelve-year-old with the elders in the Temple (Luke 2:43–51) and his baptism as an adult by John the Baptist (Matt 3:13–17; Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:21–22; John 1:29–34), or regarding the possible activities and whereabouts of Jesus after, contrary to the canonic Gospels, he is alleged in some accounts to have survived the crucifixion or escaped it altogether.

A significant variant form of meta-awareness seems evident, we might add, whenever orally-transmitted Bible-related folklore that has arisen among a particular group or people eventually engenders actual new sacred scriptures that will serve for them a function comparable to the Bible or the Gospels. Here, let three examples from essays in this volume suffice to illustrate the point. One example is the “Bible” of the Hidden Christians of Japan, *The Beginning of Heaven and Earth (Tenchi hajimari no koto)*, which Christal Whelan, its translator into English (Whelan 1996), discusses in her essay. This scripture, which, as she explains, was likely compiled piece by piece “from oral tales and sermons while the missionaries were still in the country,” retells the stories of creation, the fall, and the flood, and then offers its own account of the lives of Maruya and Zezusu (Mary and Jesus), with Maruya emerging as the central figure—a reflection “of the Marian culture introduced by the 16th-century missionaries, but it would also seem to reflect the symbolic power of the feminine in Japanese religious traditions as well.” A comparable meta-awareness of the production of a Bible-like scripture out of Indigenous oral accounts is detectable in the compilation of lore about Johane Masowe that was preserved by his followers and transcribed by Clive M. Dillon-Malone (1978, 140–51, §§1–71 [Appendix B]; see also 50–51) under the

gospel-like heading “The Good News of Johane Masowe” (aka the *Gospel of God*; see Dillon-Malone 1987; and also, e.g., Mukonyora 1998). In culling these accounts, Dillon-Malone infers that the intention of the Masowe Apostles was “to recreate a body of material around the person of their founder which would correspond (for blacks) to that which has grown up around Jesus (for whites)” (Dillon-Malone 1978, 51).

A third, most obvious example of the sort of meta-awareness we are discussing is the Book of Mormon. Avowedly unearthed and translated by the prophet Joseph Smith Jr. (1805–44), the Book of Mormon is the Ur-source of what Eric A. Eliason in his essay calls “LDS folk reception of the Bible.” If Latter-day Saints themselves are, as Eliason characterizes them, “directly a product of Bible reception,” their reverence for the Book of Mormon as an extension of, or supplement to, the Bible, flows from the Book of Mormon’s own inscribed meta-awareness of itself in its relationship to the Bible, as when, in 2 Nephi 3, the “seer” Joseph, the firstborn son of Jacob’s wife Rachel in Genesis, sees the Nephites in a vision, and prophesies the Latter-day Saints’ own “seer,” Joseph Smith Jr.—to the point of even noting that this latter-day seer will be the biblical Joseph’s namesake, as well as the namesake of the latter-day seer’s father, Joseph Smith Sr. (1771–1840; see 2 Nephi 3:15; cf. JS–H 1:3).

Not only is Bible-related folklore typically to a large extent *non-biblical* in its content because it comprises what is *not* in the Bible (on account of the ellipsis factor defined by Whelan), but once such folklore becomes manifest through verbal narration it takes on a proverbial life of its own and tends to wander or migrate limitlessly afield, driven by forces beyond the control of its original tellers. As Schweitzer (1906, 290 / 2005, 291) put it, “Who knows the laws of the formation of legend [*Tradition*]? Who can follow the course of the wind which carries the seed[s] [*die Samenkörner*] over land and sea?” Eventually such narrative seeds make their way *worldwide*, to lands far beyond the Bible’s own geographic epicenter in ancient West Asia—Ereẓ Yisrael, the Land of Israel, the “holy land” that lost its spatial axis mundi, the Second Temple, with the Romans’ destruction of it in 70 CE.

Consistent with Schweitzer’s metaphor of the migrating “legend” as transported “seed,” although we will later have reason to qualify this metaphor’s aptness, the worldwide dissemination of the Bible, and with it, the worldwide cropping up of Bible-related folklore, has mirrored what might be called *the centrifugal, global movements* that seem almost narratively hardwired into canonic scriptures of both Jews and Christians. Explicitly illustrative of this point, the tanakhic prophecy that “instruction *shall come forth from Zion* [or, *out of Zion shall go forth the law*], / The word of the Lord *from Jerusalem*. / Thus He will judge *among the nations*” (Isa 2:3b–4a, JPS; RSV alternative phrasing in brackets; emphases mine), finds its New Testament counterpart in the injunction by Jesus, “Go therefore and make disciples *of all nations*” (Matt 28:19, emphasis mine), at the heart of his traditionally-labeled Great Commission (Matt 28:18–20)—the spirit of which the Latter-day Saints sought early in their own history to capture through the symbolism of the “angel weathervanes” they placed atop the Church’s religious build-

ings: each such vane featured an angel bearing a book and a herald's trumpet to evoke the Matthean proclamation to the four corners of the earth.²⁵

If the Tanakh and the Christian Bible alike were self-programed, so to speak, for centrifugal dispersal beyond their regions of origin in West Asia and the Eastern Mediterranean (viz. John of Patmos's composition of Revelation), their historical dissemination coincided with the historical occurrences and events that determined the worldwide spreading of Jews as a people and of Christianity as a religion. On the one hand, there was the *galut* (the Hebrew term for exile) or διασπορά (the Hellenistic term for dispersion, or a group of dispersed people, from διασπείρειν, to scatter about, throw about) of the Jewish people outward from their homeland and eventually around the globe. And on the other hand, there was the ultimately global enterprise of Christian missionizing that began with Jesus's original apostles and Paul of Tarsus. In this connection, the immeasurable importance of migration, that dynamic and kinetic constant in human history, cannot be overemphasized: “. . . *every Christian migrant is a potential missionary!* . . . the church in every age has been decisively shaped by the movement and experience of migrants” (Hanciles 2021, 1, 2, italics in text).

Still, there is more to say regarding two of the most basic but underappreciated qualities of the holy scriptures themselves: the incessant dynamism and kineticism, both physical and spiritual, with which the scriptures seem almost inscribed, and which render them especially mobile and hence suitable for folkloric reception and adaptation in disparate regions and cultures worldwide.

The Dynamic, Kinetic, and Mobile Bible

The worldwide dispersion of the “Bible,” whether we are speaking of the Tanakh, the Septuagint, or the Christian Bible in any of its denominational forms, might be viewed as a natural corollary to, and fulfilment of, the fact that the Bible itself comes across as a highly dynamic, kinetic, and mobile document. Consider the divinity who is the central driver behind the Bible “as a whole.” If Reza Aslan is correct in his theory that it was with the invention of writing that “the compulsion to humanize the divine—a compulsion rooted in our cognitive processes and crudely expressed at Göbekli Tepe—became *actualized*” (Aslan 2017, 73, italics in text), the Bible embodies a monumental epic display of how limitlessly kinetic, dynamic, and sometimes shapeshifting an anthropomorphized God can be. Indeed, from Aslan's comparative-religionist, diffusionist perspective, the evolving notion of God(s), before it introduced itself in the

²⁵ I have adopted this explanation of the symbolism of the Latter-day Saints' weathervanes from the plaque accompanying the displayed replica, in the Historic Nauvoo Visitors' Center, Nauvoo, Illinois (visited by me in July 2023), of the no-longer-extant original weather vane of the Latter-day Saints' Nauvoo Temple. The replica is based on the original vane's 1843 design.

Bible, was already well-traveled in the earlier myths of the Sumerians and Akkadians, as reflected in such recovered texts as the *Enuma Elesh* and *Epic of Gilgamesh*, and that same evolving notion

quickly grew shoots in Europe and North Africa. They blossomed across the Caucasus mountains and over the Aegean Sea. They flowered in the religious systems of the Egyptians and the Greeks, the Indians and the Persians. They fully bloomed in the pages of the Bible and the Quran, where the Sumerian word *ilu* ["god," or literally "lofty person"] became transliterated as *Elohim* in Hebrew and *Allah* in Arabic. (Ibid., 74)

Whatever might be speculated about the "human history" or movements of God(s) prior to the Bible, in the Bible's opening account of creation (Gen 1:1–2:4a), it is a manifestly hyperactive God, Elohim, who labors prodigiously for six days straight, albeit pausing at the end of each day, but taking a full, temporary break only on the seventh day. As if this Priestly cosmogony did not make his unceasingly dynamic, Type-A-like character clear enough, the very different, second, Yahwistic account that confers upon him another appellation, the Tetragrammaton, YHWH or YHVH (vocalized as Yahweh or Yahveh, or Jehovah), seems to compress into a single day his creation of the earth, the heavens, "man," and "man's" initial habitat, Eden (Gen 2:4b–8). Later, after YHWH's additional making of "woman" (Gen 2:22) and the ensuing drama of her and man's disobedience of YHWH's injunction that they never eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, our first glimpse of YHWH—or, more precisely, our first *hearing* about him—is of his "walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze" (Gen 3:8a), which may seem to anticipate the later disclosure that "Enoch walked with God . . . three hundred years" (Gen 5:22a, cf. v. 24a). The Septuagint's translators evidently deemed this kinetic habit, *walking* with God for 300 years, to have been so pleasing to God that they translated "walked with" as "pleased": "and Enoch pleased God [εὐηρέστησε δὲ Ἐνὼχ τῷ Θεῷ] . . ." The same occurs with Noah. Read literally, the Hebrew text records Noah's kinetic habit as a righteous man who "walked with God" (*'et ha' elohim hithalek Noah*; Gen 6:9b), which the Septuagint interprets as "Noah pleased God" (τῷ Θεῷ εὐηρέστησε Νῶε).²⁶ Henceforth, God's presence, whenever it becomes manifest or is alluded to, tends to assume dramatically kinetic, dynamic, and mobile forms, such as a "pillar of cloud" and "of fire" (Exod 13:21, 22), "lightning" and "whirlwinds" (Zech 9:14), "the whirlwind" (Job 38:1; see also Miles 1995, 311–18, 321, 322, etc.), "a storm on the day of the whirlwind" (Amos 1:14), or "chariots like a whirlwind" (Isa 66:15; Jer. 4:13), among other images. Such divine kineticism and mobility persist in the New Testament, where the Holy Spirit becomes manifest through "the rush of a violent wind" and the appearance of "[d]ivided tongues, as of fire" (Acts 2:2, 3).

²⁶ The later disaster with Noah's son Ham (and Ham's son Canaan; see Gen 9:22–27) occurred in an instance when Noah conspicuously *ceased* to move, after he become inebriated from wine consumption and "uncovered himself within his tent" (Gen 9:21b JPS, KJV)—with the implication, drawn out by an insertion made in the RSV, NRSV, NIV, and some other English versions, that Noah "lay" there, i.e., *motionlessly*.

To boot, in surveying the Tanakh from front to end as the extended “biography” of God, Jack Miles finds God’s image hardly to remain static. On the contrary, the tanakhic God emerges as an “amalgam of several personalities” (Miles 1995, 6; see also 162, 197, 217, 398, 407). In the course of the Masoretic canon his roles shift constantly and dynamically, ranging in succession from creator, destroyer, and family friend (Genesis), liberator and lawgiver (Exodus), liege (Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy); through conqueror (Joshua, Judges), father (Samuel), arbiter (Kings), executioner (Isaiah 1–39), Holy One ([Second and Third] Isaiah 40–66), and wife (Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi); to counselor (Psalms), guarantor (Proverbs), fiend (Job), sleeper (Song of Songs), bystander (Ruth), recluse (Lamentations), puzzle (Ecclesiastes), absence (Esther), Ancient of Days (Daniel), scroll (Ezra and Nehemiah), and perpetual musical round (Chronicles). In the New Testament, from the time of its formation to the present day, analogous principles of dynamism play out, as I show in my essay in this volume, not only in the inner-textual representation of Jesus as a personage constantly on the go, but also in the way images and portrayals of him in extra-textual folklore have continually shifted and widely varied from one period to the next, and from place to place around the world.

Trembling, Shuckling, Quaking, Dancing, and Swaying in Response

The dynamism and kineticism of the Bible are often manifest on the most granular, micro-linguistic level of an idiomatic expression or figure of speech. Consider the paradigmatic phrasing “fear and trembling [or staggering or reeling]” which not only can capture an awestruck or terrified human response to the power of God (Mic 7:17b; Phil 2:12; cf. Ezek 12:18b; 2 Esd 15:37) or of Jesus (e.g., Mark 5:33; 1 Cor 2:3) but also crops up in other variations and varied contexts within both biblical Testaments (e.g., Judg 7:3a; Ps 55:5a; Jdt 15:12; 2 Cor 7:15; see also 2 Esd 15:33; 4 Macc 4:10; cf. 1 Macc 13:2). This pulsating—*trembling!*—expression has been reduced almost to a cliché or meme in the modern cultural imagination through the impact and popularity of Søren Kierkegaard’s (1813–55) book to which the phrasing lent itself as the Danish title, *Frygt og Bæven*, published in 1843 under the pseudonym Johannes de Silentio.²⁷ Pertinent to our concern with the Bible’s dynamism, kineticism, and mobility are two aspects of the biblical pericope on which Kierkegaard’s *Fear and Trembling* offers an extended philosophical-theological meditation (subtitled, *Dialectical Lyric* [*Dialektisk Lyrik*]), the celebrated “binding [*akedah* or ‘*aqedah*] of Isaac” or “sacrifice [or test] of Abraham” (Gen 22:1–19). First, the episode itself constitutes a miniature journey narrative—from the land of the Philistines (Gen 21:34b) to the land of Moriah (22:2a, 9a),

27 On the reduction of certain categories from Kierkegaard’s writings to memes in Richard Dawkins’s sense of the term, see Ziolkowski 2023.

and back to Beer-sheba (22:19). And second, *Fear and Trembling's* opening “Exordium” (“Stemning,” lit. tuning) proffers what amount to four different folktale-like retellings of the biblical narrative (Kierkegaard 1997, 107–111 / idem 1983, 10–14), each of which exploits the scriptural “ellipsis factor” (Whelan; see above) by reading into the minds of Abraham, Isaac, and even Sarah different psychological nuances unmentioned in the sparse biblical narrative, characterized by Erich Auerbach as “mysterious and ‘fraught with background’” (quoted by Ziolkowski 2011, 112; and idem, “Introduction,” *BFW* 1:24).

Atheists from Epicurus (341–271 BCE) to Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) found human fear to be the origin of religious faith. Yet the emphatic association of such fear with its impulsive expression in physical trembling, staggering, or reeling is a distinctly biblical tendency. This point finds prototypical illustration when the Israelites at Sinai, terrified by the thunder, lightning, horn blowing, and smoke from the mountain associated with God’s admonitions, *physically* “fell back” (Exod 20:15 JPS) or “removed” (=20:18 KJV) or “trembled” (RSV, NRSV). The same point extends to the prophetic image of YHWH’s punitive “cup of reeling [*kos hatar‘elah*]” (Isa 51:22a JPS; var. “cup of staggering,” RSV, NRSV; “cup of trembling,” KJV; cf. Jer 25:15–16) and “bowl of reeling [*saf-ra‘al*]” (Zech 12:2a JPS; var. “cup of reeling,” RSV, NRSV; “cup of trembling,” KJV) from which the guilty must drink even while suffering retribution (cf. Erickson 2012, col. 1162).

In view of the inscribed dynamics and kineticism of the Tanakh and the tanakhic representation of God, it is unsurprising that those qualities are also found in the New Testament, which relates itself typologically to the “Old Testament.” Nor is it surprising that God the Father, Jesus the Son (qua Christ), and the Holy Spirit have often transferred themselves outwardly from the Christian Bible to be replicated within and matched by the dynamic, kinetic responses of its listeners or readers. A fundamental example of this sort of transferal of dynamism and kineticism from the biblical text to the text’s receivers is the physical swaying or “shuckling” (*shokeling*, from Yiddish: *shoklen*, to shake; see also Jacobs/Eisenstein 1905; and Shurpin [n.d.]) for which the Jews have been known from as far back as the Andalusian philosopher, scholar, and poet Judah Halevi, who lived from before 1075²⁸ to 1141. In his famous treatise known as the *Kuzari*,²⁹ much of which consists of a lengthy conversation between a rabbi and the king of the Khazars—a Central Asian people whose leaders con-

²⁸ Slonimsky (in Judah Halevi 1964, 17) dates Halevi’s birth “ca. 1080.”

²⁹ Judah Halevi composed this work in Arabic under the title *Kitāb al-Ḥujja waal-Dalīl fī Naṣr al-Dīn al-Dhalīl* (The book of argument and proof in defense of the despised faith). Slonimsky places the composition of this work “between 1130–1140” (“Introduction” to Judah Halevi 1964, 23). According to Schweid 1971, col. 363, Halevi worked on this book “for 20 years, completing its final draft shortly before his departure for Erez Israel [i.e., in 1140].” The Arabic original was translated to Hebrew by Judah ibn Tibbon under the title *Sefer ha-Hokhahah ve-ha-Re’ayah le-Hagganat ha-Dat ha-Bezuyah*. Golden (2010, 28) dates this Hebrew translation 1167, and Schweid (1971, col. 362), “in the middle of the 12th century.” This Hebrew translation later came to be popularly known as *Sefer ha-Kuzari* (Book of the Kuzari [Khazars]); see Schweid 1971, cols. 362–63) or, more simply, the *Kuzari*.

verted to Judaism in the 8th century—about the rabbi’s religion, the king at one point asked why Jews move back and forth when reading the Bible, and the rabbi responded with a purely practical explanation. While the swaying was reputedly done “to arouse natural heat,” the rabbi averred, it was actually done out of necessity resulting from the scarcity of books, whereby ten or more persons—a minyan—had to read at the same time from the same large, shared volume which lay on the table or the ground before them: each person had to bend down in his turn to read a passage, and then straighten back up, over and over; the practice persisted through time, and remained a habit, even when books were more plentiful (*Kuzari* 2.79–80, Judah Halevi 1964, 128). However, in the *Zohar*, the central text of Kabbalah, the bulk of which was putatively composed in the late 13th century, Rabbi Jose asks Rabbi Abba why the Jews alone, of all nations, sway when they study Torah. To which R. Abba responds that this practice illustrates the excellence of their souls. Aside from citing Psalms 83:2a MT (=83:1 RSV, NRSV, etc.) and Isaiah 62:6b, which together he reads as enjoining “[there is] no stillness for you,” he quotes Proverbs 20:27a, suggesting that this verse’s metaphorization of the human being’s “soul” (or lifebreath or spirit) as YHWH’s lamp or candle alludes to the Jews: “As soon as they cling to words of Torah, the light is kindled—they cannot keep still; they sway back and forth and in all directions like the light of a lamp” (*Zohar* 3.218b–219a, in Matt et al. 2003–2017, 9:531–32, quotes on 532; see also Matt’s annotation in *ibid.*, 531n93–32).

Another paradigmatic transference of kineticism and dynamism from tanakhic text to tanakhic receivers occurs through the dancing—*literal* dancing with the Torah scroll, which itself becomes thus a kinetic object—that many Orthodox Jews and Ḥasidim engage in when celebrating Simḥat Torah (rejoicing of the Torah), the festival that marks both the completion of the past year’s reading of the Torah scroll, and the commencement of the next year’s, a cyclical annual process that is itself inherently and ceaselessly kinetic and dynamic (see Rothkoff/Sabar 2007). If YHWH’s presence in the ark could inspire King David to dance and leap before it (2 Sam 6:14, 16), it might seem only natural for the presence of the scroll inscribed with YHWH’s words to trigger the Ḥasidim to dance. This practice inspired the sixth rebbe of the Lubavitcher Ḥasidim, Yosef Yitchak Schneersohn (1880–1950), to liken the Jew to “the feet of a *Sefer Torah*” (Metzger 2002, 121). On Simḥat Torah, he explained, “The Torah desires to circle the *bimah* (the table on which the Torah is read), and since the Torah does not possess feet, the Jew serves as its feet, carrying it around the *bimah*, just as feet walk and bear the head of a person to his destination” (*ibid.*, 120).

Of course, the Jews are not the only people who incorporate dance in their liturgical use of the Bible. M. Luafata Simanu-Klutz, in her essay in this volume, observes that the best understanding of the biblical traditions of Sāmoa is to be found in dance, together with the island’s other performing arts, including oratory, song, and poetry. Aside from numerous other connections, both Christian and Jewish, between the Bible and dance that are explored in *EBR*’s extensive entry, “Dance” (6 [2013]: cols. 63–84), yet other classic example of the transference of the inner-textual dynamism and kineticism

of the Bible to its extra-textual receivers were the Protestant Christian denomination, the Religious Society of Friends, that emerged in mid-17th-century England, and the African American churches. To the Friends, who were branded “Quakers” (originally in disparagement) as early as 1651, that appellation was reportedly applied to them the previous year by Justice Bennett at Derby, England, from the exhortation by the group’s leader George Fox (1624–91) that they “tremble at the Word of the Lord” (see s.v. “Quaker” in *OED* and *OnED*). As for African American Protestants, the following account by the novelist Richard Wright attends granularly and subtly to a Black Church congregation’s dynamic, kinetic responses, both bodily and physical, to orally delivered sermons saturated with biblical language, ideas, stories, and images in a Sunday church service:

Our hearts and bodies, reciprocally acting upon each other, *swing out into* the meaning of the story the preacher is unfolding. Our eyes *become absorbed* in a vision And the preacher’s voice is sweet to us, *caressing and lashing*, conveying to us *a heightening* of consciousness . . . , *filling* us with a sense of hope As the sermon progresses, . . . we, in tune and sympathy with his sweeping story, *sway* in our seats until we have lost all notion of time and *have begun to float* on a tide of passion and we *are lifted* far beyond the boundaries of our daily lives, upward and outward (Wright 1941, 68, 73, emphases mine)

Zigzagging Narrative

Instructive in connection with our discussion of the Bible as a dynamic, kinetic, and mobile book is Northrop Frye’s (1912–91) reading of the Bible à la William Blake’s (1982, 274) reference to it as “the Great Code of Art” (see Frye 1982; idem 1990).³⁰ For Frye (1982, 169), “the entire Bible” is viewable as “a ‘divine comedy,’ . . . contained within a U-shaped story . . . , one in which man . . . loses the tree and water of life at the beginning of Genesis and gets them back at the end of Revelation.” By “the entire Bible” Frye means the *Christian Bible*, although his explanation of the U-shape applies to the Hebrew Scriptures/Tanakh as well. The story of humankind, and of Israel in particular, as he sums up the Hebrew Scriptures’ telling of it, unfolds as a sequence of “roughly U-shaped” myths and narratives, whereby a series of metaphorical “high points” connoting independence and contentment are each followed by descents or “falls” into equally metaphorical “low points,” each of them precipitated by calamity and connoting domination by heathen power.

Following the kinetic, dynamic zigzagging line that runs from left to right on his page, the schema by which Frye (1982, 171) traces a series of seven of the Bible’s major

³⁰ My appeal here to Frye is for a purpose related to this *Handbook*’s specific concerns with biblical reception in various folkloric traditions of around the world, and therefore may not accord with whatever Frye’s own intentions may have been. For my own critique of Frye’s application of Blake’s expression, “the Great Code of Art,” to understanding the relationship of the Bible to subsequent literature, see Ziolkowski 2014.

U-shaped movements of this sort—i.e., the successive *mythoi* of ascents and descents in the fortunes of humankind, the Israelites, and the Jews, extending from Genesis up through Revelation—proceeds as follows. The *primal high point* of Eden ends with (Adam and Eve's) banishment and fall, the *initial descent* into wilderness and sea (i.e., Noahic flood), and the City of Cain, followed by *ascent 1*, the calling of Abram/Abraham out of Ur to the promised land 1 (in the west), associated with the pastoral era of the patriarchs (through the end of Genesis). This leads to *descent 2*, enslavement in Egypt, and then another passage through sea and wilderness (in Exodus); followed by *ascent 2*, the arrival under Moses and Joshua at the promised land 2 (smaller than the first), this time predominantly agricultural; followed by *descent 3*, involving a series of invasions (by the Philistines et al. in Judges) and subjugations (after the vanquishment and death of Saul and Jonathan. *Ascent 3*, characterized by urban imagery, begins with David and continues with Solomon and his building of the Temple, but is interrupted by the disasters of *descent 4*, the dividing of the kingdom and the consequent destruction of the northern kingdom by Assyria, and, later, of the southern kingdom by Nebuchadnezzar, and the ensuing Babylonian exile. *Ascent 4* occurs through the Jews' return to Jerusalem, as permitted or encouraged by the Persian emperor Cyrus, to rebuild the Temple, but is followed by *descent 5*, betokened by the Seleucid king Antiochus Epiphanes's persecution of non-Hellenized Jews, leading to *ascent 5* through the revolt under the Maccabees, bringing about independence for Judea, purification of the Temple, and a royal dynasty. *Descent 6*, the Roman conquest (under Pompey in 63 BCE) initiates the Roman hegemony throughout the New Testament period, which ends with a divergence of Jewish and Christian expectations of Israel's sixth deliverance: "For Christianity, Jesus achieved a definitive deliverance for all mankind with his revelation that the ideal kingdom of Israel was a spiritual kingdom. For Judaism, the expulsion from their homeland by [the Roman emperor Hadrian's edict of 135 CE] began a renewed exile which in many respects still endures [*pace* the modern State of Israel, 1948–]" (ibid., 171).

Before we proceed, some words are in order to anticipate the connection between Bible-related folklore and such dynamic tendencies as those of exodus, exile, diaspora, peregrination, and wandering, especially as they come into play in the texts and contexts of the Tanakh, the Septuagint, Christian Bible, or, for that matter, the deuterocanonical works, Old Testament pseudepigrapha, or New Testament apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, most of which have exerted influences upon, and found expression through, the development and ever expanding forms of what has been called the Bible of the Folk (Francis Lee Utley) or the Folk Bible (Florentina Badalanova Geller). These latter terms refer to the ever-expanding, limitlessly polyglot, oral, vernacular supplement and extension of the canonic Jewish and Christian *written* texts or scriptures (discussed in Ziolkowski, "Introduction," *BFW* 1:23–25, 35–37; see also Badalanova Geller 2017).

Global Diffusionism and Regional Polygenesis

Bible-related legends and folktales are distinguishable by an ambivalence whereby they often wander or “migrate” from region to region in seeming accord with theories of “diffusion,” but just as often crop up in different places and regions independently of each other, while still resembling each other, in accord with theories of “polygenesis.”³¹

Diffusional Motifs of Exile, Diaspora, Exodus, and the Ten Lost Tribes

With respect to the diffusional, migratory tendency of Bible-related verbal folklore (reflected, e.g., in the lore about Elijah, Jesus, the Virgin Mary, and the Wandering Jew that I discuss in my essay in this volume), one cannot fail to note the thematic kinship of that tendency not only to the sorts of inherently kinetic and dynamic aspects of the Bible already discussed (e.g., its advocacy of “trembling” among the appropriate human responses to God, its narrative of humankind’s and Israel’s zigzagging fortunes and misfortunes, and so forth), but also to the Bible’s recurrent themes and motifs of exile, diaspora, exodus, and wandering that indelibly condition much of the very psychology of the Jewish and Christian traditions that grow out of the Bible. Thus, while lending themselves as the *fourth* of the seven *descents* in humankind’s and the Israelites’ zigzagging fortunes as traced by Northrop Frye (see above), the historical experiences of deportation to Assyria after Israel’s fall (722/721 BCE; 2 Kgs 17:6; 18:11; see, e.g., Malamat 2007), and to Babylonia after Judah’s fall (587/586 BCE; 2 Kgs 24:13–25:21; see, e.g., Porten 2007; and also *EBR*’s articles s.v. “Exile”), reinforce a thematic pattern that harks back to the archetypal banishment of Adam and Eve from Eden (Frye’s *descent 1*) while also foreshadowing the destruction of the Second Temple and the sacking of Jerusalem in 70 CE.

That catastrophe, reportedly predicted by Jesus (Luke 21:5–24), and notoriously commemorated by the bas-relief representing the spoils of Jerusalem on the Arch of Titus on Rome’s Via Sacra, might seem “a watershed: loss of the homeland engendered the scattering of Jews around the Mediterranean,” and that event’s “reverberations . . . determined the diasporic consciousness of Jews throughout the centuries to follows” (Gruen 2002, vii, 2). Yet this perception, as Erich S. Gruen points out, is mistaken, for the diasporic experience was anything but new to the Jews and their cultural memory at the time. Their dispersal had begun with the Assyrian and Babylonian Captivities of the 8th and 6th centuries BCE, and the fact is that waves of forced dislocations and relocations, voluntary migrations, and other wanderings throughout antiquity had resulted in the spreading of Jews, and in the establishment of Jewish communities, both near and far: in Egypt, Phoenicia, Syria, Greece (including the islands of Euboea, Cy-

31 For references concerning the theories of polygenesis and diffusion, see my essay in this volume.

prus, and Crete), Italy, as well as in “lands beyond the Euphrates” (ibid., 2–3; the quoted phrase echoes Josephus). All the while, “Jewish consciousness” was “haunted” (Gruen 2002, 1) by the symbolism of exile embedded in their scriptural mythology, a symbolism of which the primal human couple’s removal from paradise marks only the start. There followed a long sequence of exilic events: the curse of Cain, which doomed him to ceaseless roaming about the earth (Gen 4:11–16); the presumably long-distance floating of Noah and his family in the ark, from wherever they boarded it, to its eventual landing, many months later, “on the mountains of Ararat” (Gen 6–9; quote at 8:4b); the migration of Abram/Abraham from Ur of the Chaldeans to the “promised” land of Canaan, then to Egypt, and back to Canaan (Gen 11–25); Joseph’s compulsory relocation to Egypt (Gen 39–41); the wanderings required of the Israelites in the wilderness prior to their return from bondage in Egypt (from Exod 13:17 through the remainder of the Torah/Pentateuch, through the book of Joshua).

Together with exile, and even allowing that world history has had no shortage of other diasporic peoples (Armenians, Greeks, Italians, Africans, Indigenous American peoples, including the Aztecs, etc.; see Kenny 2013; Smithers 2015, 8), diaspora thus constitutes “the defining characteristic of Jewish experience” and “remains quintessentially associated with Jews,” who hence occupy “the role of the outcast par excellence” (Gruen 2002, 1). This proved so much the case through the Middle Ages that exile (*galut*) and the effort to end it emerged as a primary theme of Kabbalah, traditionally conceived as “the esoteric teachings of Judaism and for Jewish mysticism” (Scholem/Garb/Idel 2007, 587). With exile and its undoing as “a pivotal axis upon which Kabbalah turns,” Kabbalists conceptualized exile as the existential condition of the human being (a divine soul trapped in the body), the Jewish people’s predicament and mission (exiled from Erez Yisrael), and the current state of God and the cosmos, ever since the original human sin effected the first rupture within God (see Flatto 2021, quote on 73). It is therefore unsurprising, as Rhonda Burnette-Bletsch shows in her essay in this volume, that the Israeli filmmaker Amos Gitai (b. 1950) would portray “the exilic human condition . . . in an age of globalization” in a trilogy of films produced in the early 1990s by adapting the golem legend—a legend biblically inflected albeit not biblically based—that grew out of the Jewish Diaspora and flourished in Kabbalah.

Meanwhile, in the New Testament, Peter analogously addresses his fellow followers of Christ as “aliens and exiles” (παροικοὶ καὶ παρεπίδημοι; 1 Pet 2:11), and Christians from early on developed their own cosmic-exilic consciousness, imagining—in the words of Cyprian of Carthage (d. 258)—that “we have renounced the world, and are in the meantime living here as guests and strangers [*renuntiassse nos mundo, et tamquam hospites et peregrinos istic interim degree*]” (Cyprian 1844, col. 601A / idem 1886, 475). The theme of the soul’s wandering (*peregrinatio animae*) from God is given one of its most influential Christian formulations by Augustine of Hippo (354–430), reflecting also his absorption of Plotinus’s *Enneads*, in which the “fall” of the “soul”—“very much a cosmic, archetypal soul”—“forms the shadowy background of the human condi-

tion” (Brown 1969, 169). As Peter Brown points out, Augustine personalized and Christianized the Plotinian notion of the soul’s fall (*ibid.*; see also Knauer 1957). In his *Confessions* (397–401), reflecting upon his life prior to his conversion, he repeatedly laments his past “erratic ways” (or “wanderings,” *errores*, which Augustine represents as the spiritual counterparts of the “wanderings,” *errores*, of Virgil’s Aeneas), and how in his childhood and youth he “wandered away from [God]” (*a te, deus meus, ibam foras*); “turned away from [God]” (*ab uno te aversus*) and “strayed still farther from [God]” (*ibam longius a te*); “wandered away, too far from [God]” (*defluxi abs te ego et erravi*); and hence, without knowing it, “was in exile” (*nesciens exulabam*) from God (*Conf.* 1.13.20; 1.18.28; 2.1.1; 2.2.2; 2.10.18; 4.15.26, in Augustine 2000, 1:10, 13, 17, 22, 43 / *idem* 1961, 33, 38, 43, 87). Over a millennium later, at the time of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, this exilic consciousness persisted among Christian thinkers as otherwise different in their religious and spiritual orientations as John Calvin (1509–64), who contrasted “heaven . . . our homeland” with “earth . . . our place of exile” (*Nam si caelū patria est, quid aliud terra quàm exilium?*) (*Institutio* 3.9.4, in Calvin 1569, 446 / *idem* 1960, 1:716), and Teresa of Ávila (1515–82), who praised God for communicating with souls “even in our exile [*aun en este destierro*]” (*Vida* 18.3, in Teresa of Ávila 1961, 97 / *idem* 1995, 158).

In the previous paragraph, all references aside from the Petrine citation were to sources from the dominant patristic, mystical, and Reform traditions of Western Christianity. What is remarkable is how demonstrably pervasive and sustained was the sway that various forms of biblically-derived exilic and diasporic consciousness, encompassing such related biblical motifs as those of “exodus” and “lost tribes,” exerted upon the Bible’s spread to the various regions of the world whose folkloric receptions of the Bible this volume surveys.

Consider first the last of these themes, the legend of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel’s northern kingdom (i.e., Israel’s twelve tribes minus Judah and Benjamin, the two constituent tribes of the southern kingdom, Judah; see Rabinowitz 2007b [esp.], and Benjamin 2001; Parfitt 2003, 1–27; Malamat 2007, 607–608; Oded/Freedman 2007, 140; and *EBR*’s forthcoming entry, “Ten Lost Tribes”). The Bible says little about the fate of these ten tribes: once vanquished by the Assyrians in 722/721 BCE, they were carried away to “Halah, on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes” (2 Kgs 17:6; 18:11). Prophets such as Isaiah (11:11), Jeremiah (31:8), and Ezekiel (37:19–24) sustained the hope that these ten exiled tribes had persisted as an identifiable, independent group “to this day” (1 Chr 5:26b) and would someday be rejoined—through the anticipated “ingathering of exiles” (*kibbutz galuyyot*)—with the descendants of the two other tribes, returned from their own Babylonian exile (see Rabinowitz 2007a; 2007b: 639; and “Ingathering of Exiles,” in *EBR* 12 [2016]: cols. 1152–59). Some eight centuries after the Assyrian deportation, Josephus (ca. 37–after 100 CE) still stated categorically that “the ten tribes are beyond the Euphrates till now, and are an immense multitude and not to be estimated in numbers” (*A.J.* 11.133, quoted by Rabinowitz 2007b,

639). Yet, it is generally fair to say that those ten tribes “disappeared from the stage of history,” and

Their place in history . . . is substituted by legend, and the legend of the Ten Lost Tribes is one of the most fascinating and persistent in Judaism and beyond it Various theories, one more farfetched than the other, have been adduced, on the flimsiest of evidence, to identify different peoples with the ten lost tribes. There is hardly a people, from the Japanese to the British, and from the Red Indians to the Afghans, who have not been suggested, and hardly a place, among them Africa, India, China, Persia, Kurdistan, Caucasia, the U.S., . . . Great Britain[, . . and] the West Indies. (Rabinowitz 2007b, 639, 640)

Well over a century before the rabbi and historian Louis Isaac Rabinowitz (1906–84) made this observation, the physician and British Israelite or Anglo-Israelite—i.e., an advocate of the theory or belief that the Anglo-Saxon “race” descended from the ten lost tribes—George Moore (1803–80) likewise observed:

Traces of the Lost Tribes have been supposed to be found in Mexico and in Malabar, in England and in Japan. The Afghans claim to be the very people, and their claims are sustained by many intelligent witnesses. Abyssinia is also said to possess some of them, and even Central Africa is not without evidence of their presence. In short, the learned have discovered Israelitish influence in every land, “from China to Peru.” (Moore 1861, 7–8)³²

Many of this volume’s essays afford examples of the worldwide encompassment of theories, legends, folklore, and beliefs identifying peoples of various regions around the globe with Israel’s lost tribes, as well as with such related biblical themes as exodus, exile, and diaspora. Tull notes Moore’s own conjecture that the Indian Buddhists were survivors of the lost Israelite tribes (see Moore 1861, esp. 349, 379), and also the recollection by a 19th-century English folklorist, Charles Edward Gover (1835/6–1872), of having heard a song among the Badaga people of the Nilgiri Hills in southern India that evoked “the grand pictures of the Mosaic Exodus,” an association that led Gover also to recall the perception by more than one observer of “physical and facial peculiarities [of the Badaga] so strongly reminding of the Jew, that he has not hesitated to proclaim that here at last are found those lost tribes which so strangely disappeared from the world’s history 2,500 years ago” (Gover 1871, 77). In the East Asian context, John T. P. Lai touches upon a biblical drama by the early-Republican Chinese Catholic playwright, Fei Jinbiao, that adapts the deuterocanonical book of Tobit about its devout and righteous eponymous Israelite hero’s exilic experience of deportation to Ninevah in 722/721 BCE. At the same time, Whelan, aside from pointing out a Jesuit

³² Among the footnotes Moore includes to document this statement, one regarding Africa opens: “There are multitudes of Jews, in every variety of condition, in the north of Africa; but there are probably more of the Hebrew race far within the interior, about Timbuctoo and the Lake Tsad, and still further to the south. To the latter we should look for traces of their connexion with the Lost Tribes. It is well known that the Ghá and other Negro tribes have *numerous well-marked Jewish characters* in their religious observances” (Moore 1861, 8fn., italics in text).

missionary's belief that the Chinese descended from the Israel's lost tribes, surveys speculations among 19th-century Western missionaries that the Japanese—or at least a “holy class” among them, i.e., the Samurai—were descended from the lost tribes, and that Jesus and his mother Mary themselves ended up in Japan, living out their later lives as holy-land expats after he allegedly escaped crucifixion in Jerusalem and the two of them fled eastward (on this last theory, see also my essay in this volume).

Jerusha Matsen Neal, in her essay focusing upon Oceania, specifically the Melanesian island nation of Fiji, considers how the *iTaukei* or Fijians in the late 20th century, through an interplay of their Christian church practices and institutions (*lotu*) on the one hand, and their land, Indigenous cultural traditions and people (*vanua*) on the other, circumscribed their distinct “*iTaukei* identity through biblical interpretations and narrative traditions that connected Fijian tribal peoples with a lost tribe of Israel.” Linked with older Fijian lore about a migration of Jews to Fiji centuries before the missionaries came there, the *iTaukei*'s self-image as a “holy people” with a genealogy extending back through Moses to Noah gained sufficient traction in Fijian political discourse of the 1980s to evoke—in Lynda Newland's words quoted by Neal—the “emotional pull of Exodus, [and] a people whose land has been taken away from them (a threat many Fijians thought they were facing at the time).” This political history resulted in the selection of “The New Exodus” as the theme of the Methodist Church of Fiji's Jubilee in 2014, marking a half century of ecclesial autonomy, and anticipating a “promised land” interpretable in various ways, as Neal shows through her analysis of the rhetoric different preachers have used to explain this image: a promised land that reclaims the *vanua* of the past? A reformed *vanua* of the future? Or some combination of the two?

Mukonyora, taking account of the attraction of Africans to the Mosaic exodus story about “the creator God whose children wandered in the wilderness,” writes of the concern Johane Masowe became for the South African apartheid government when authorities realized that he was an African church leader heading “a biblical-styled Exodus of blacks from neighboring Rhodesia.” Masowe's movement resonated with his followers' experience of displacement resulting from colonialist hegemony, urbanization, and “people running away from places of birth to live on the margins of society in an African diaspora.” The Bible's exodus story still resonates in the Masowe Apostles' symbolic habits of “walking to and from the margins of society, traveling from one place to another, and removing shoes on holy ground.” In a passage Mukonyora quotes, Richard P. Werbner explains that the Masowe Church, constituting a “disharmonic image” which he calls the Wilderness Church, concentrates on “indefinite space instead of either permanently or temporarily defined place. God's chosen people,” Masowe's African followers, “are in exile. They are migrating towards the Promised Land, and wherever a congregation meets, it is the Wilderness. Bereft of any enclosure, the usual space for ritual is not marked apart in any way, and it is boundless. God has no earth-bound house of substance” (Werbner 1985, 254–55). Masowe was, as Mukonyora describes him

elsewhere, a latter-day “Moses acting as the leader of the people of God—victims of oppression who wander in the wilderness in Exodus” (Mukonyora 1998, 271).

In North America, the Mosaic exodus narrative first insinuated itself into the religious and folkloric imagination as an enduring subtext putatively through the impact of the Puritan John Winthrop’s (1588–1649) discourse, “Christian Charity, A Model Hereof,” which Winthrop composed in April 1630 before departing from England and read as a sermon on board the *Arabella* enroute across the Atlantic to the New World. Without using the term, Winthrop evokes the biblical exodus throughout, claiming “the God of Israel” to be “among” him and his fellow pilgrims. The pilgrims, Winthrop stressed as his central theme, were bound to God by a “covenant” (a term Winthrop uses three times; cf. Exod 2:24; 6:4–5; 16:34; 19:5; etc.), and as they voyaged from England (cf. Egypt) their thoughts were to focus on “the good land whither [they were] going,” the *promised land*, New England, “whither we pass over this vast sea [cf. the wilderness] to possess it,” as the Israelites ultimately possessed Canaan, as exhorted by Moses, whom Winthrop quotes by name from the lawgiver’s farewell speech (Deut 30:15; Winthrop [1630] 2004, 169–70).

For Indigenous peoples of the Americas, African Americans, and Latter-day Saints, to whom respectively the essays by John Bierhorst, M. Cooper Harriss, and Eric A. Eliason in this volume are devoted, the Mosaic exodus has likewise held great import, but for obviously different reasons in each case. Indigenous peoples, having been initially declared Israel’s ten lost tribes by Christian missionaries (see Deloria 1988, 6; and Parfitt 2003, 91–114), suffered tragically epochal experiences of diaspora forced upon them by the US federal government, the most notorious of which came about through the Indian Removal Act passed by Congress and signed into law by President Andrew Jackson on May 28, 1830. The subsequent decade’s “Trail of Tears,” the coerced displacement and relocation of the so-called Five Civilized Tribes—Cherokee, Creek, Chickasaw, Seminole, and Choctaw—from their ancestral lands in the Southeast, westward beyond the Mississippi River, to the designated “Indian Territory” in today’s Oklahoma, resulted in the deaths of some four thousand Cherokee alone from starvation, disease, exposure, poisoned drinking water, and exhaustion (see Smithers 2015, esp. 104–114, 247–56; Hämäläinen 2022, 386–408). All told, by the mid-19th century, almost 100,000 Indians had been forcibly expelled to the west, from east of the Mississippi (see *ibid.*, 408). Writing over a century later, at the dawn of the American Indian Movement (AIM; 1968–), Deloria pointed out the parallels Indigenous peoples of North America perceived between themselves and the biblical Israelites in Egypt, just prior to the exodus:

Indians often consider the history of the Jews in Egypt. For four hundred years [see Exod 12:40; Acts 7:6; and also Gen 15:13] these people were subjected to cultural and economic oppression. They were treated as slaves without rights and property although the original promise of the Pharaoh to Joseph, like the Indian treaties, spelled out Hebrew rights. Like the Great White Father, the Pharaoh [*sic*] turned his back on his former allies and began official oppression and destruction of rights. Yet the Hebrews survived. (Deloria 1988, 31–32)

To be sure, in a Cheyenne folk variant Bierhorst recounts of the biblical exodus narrative, which tells of the escape by the Cheyenne from the threat of enslavement by a more populous enemy “many thousands of years ago,” the story’s Moses figure, a Cheyenne medicine man, outdoes his biblical counterpart in effect: when the escaping people arrived at a “great body of water” that obstructed their way, it was through an act of his own magic rather than with divine intervention that the native medicine man caused the waters to separate and hence enabled his people to walk through them “on dry ground” with “the water was all around them,” and then into “a beautiful country.” However, there is a self-evident discrepancy between the Israelites’ pre-exodus predicament and the American Indians’ plight: the Mosaic exodus was the Israelites’ journey of escape from captivity in an alien land to a divinely “promised” homeland elsewhere, whereas the removal of the Indians was an ethnic cleansing perpetrated by an alien government that displaced them from their ancestral land to far-off “reservations.” This discrepancy between the Indian and Jewish experiences of “exodus” carries over to the two peoples’ experiences of “diaspora.” As Deloria further elaborates, no movement, people, government, or religion that lacks “a land area of its own” can persist and thrive:

The Jews have managed to sustain themselves in the Diaspora for over two thousand years, but in the expectation of their homeland’s restoration. So-called *power* movements are primarily the urge of peoples to find their homeland and to channel their psychic energies through their land into social and economic reality. Without land and a homeland no movement can survive. (Deloria 1988, 179, italics in text)

Although the term diaspora did not come to be widely used to characterize African migrations until the 1960s (Kenny 2013, 9), the eleven to twelve million Africans who from the early 16th century through the mid-19th century were forcibly shipped from Africa as slaves to the New World constitute together with their descendants the world’s “third most widely recognized diaspora, alongside the Jewish and the Armenian” (ibid., 8; see also Palmer 1998).³³ Because African Americans “were cut off entirely from their

³³ As the historian Colin A. Palmer (1944–2019) emphasized, there has been “no single [African] diasporic movement or monolithic [African] diasporic community” over time, but rather, at least “five major African diasporic streams that occurred at different times and for different reasons” (Palmer 1998). Of these five streams, the one that involved the Atlantic slave trade was the *fourth*. (Because this fourth African diaspora included for Palmer not only the millions of enslaved Africans taken to the Americas but also the up to 200,000 “delivered . . . to various European societies,” Palmer dated that stream from the 15th century on, when the shipments of enslaved Africans to several southern European countries began—i.e., even prior to the shipments of slave to the Americas, beginning in the next century.) The initial three *African* diasporas were: *first*, early humankind’s primal diaspora—the specifics of which are still controversial—that “began about 100,000 years ago,” and “constitutes a necessary starting point for any study of the dispersal and settlement of African peoples”; *second*, the diaspora that “began about 3000 B.C.E. with the movement of the Bantu-speaking peoples from the region that is now the contemporary nations of Nigeria and Cameroon to other parts of the African continent and to the Indian Ocean”; and *third*, “a trading diaspora,” which “involved the movement of