

A KEY into the
LANGUAGE
OF
AMERICA:

OR,

An help to the *Language* of the *Natives*
in that part of AMERICA, called
NEW-ENGLAND.

Together, with briefe *Observations* of the Cu-
stomes, Manners and Worships, &c. of the
aforesaid *Natives*, in Peace and Warre,
in Life and Death.

On all which are added Spirituall *Observations*,
Generall and Particular by the *Author*, of
chiefe and speciall use (upon all occasions) to
all the *English* Inhabiting those parts;
yet pleasant and profitable to
the view of all men:

BY ROGER WILLIAMS
of Providence in New-England.

LONDON,

Printed by Gregory Dexter, 1643.

RICHARD W. COGLEY

Roger Williams and the Origins of the Native Americans

IN 1650, English Presbyterian minister Thomas Thorowgood published an argument that the Native Americans were the ten lost tribes of Israel, the Hebrew people who disappeared from the biblical record shortly after their subjugation and deportation by the Assyrians in the eighth century B.C.E. Misleadingly titled *Iewes in America*, the work claimed that remnants of the Mosaic law survived in indigenous New World cultures even though the Native Americans had no conscious recollection of their distant Israelite past.¹ In 1651 Sir Hamon l'Estrange, a former Member of Parliament, contended in *Americans No Iewes* that putative Mosaic vestiges among the Native Americans were indigenous practices and not markers of lost Israelite ancestry.² Though focusing on Thorowgood, l'Estrange also attacked Menasseh ben Israel, the Amsterdam-based rabbi whose discussion of the Native Americans in *Esperanza de Israel* (1650) he misconstrued as an argument for the lost tribes ancestry theory.³ Then in 1660, partly in response to l'Estrange's polemic, Thorowgood published *Jews in America*, an entirely new work with the same overall point.⁴

Thorowgood, l'Estrange, and Menasseh were the principal figures in Roger Williams's discussions of the origins of the Native Americans. In 1635, Thorowgood wrote to Williams, then residing in Salem, Massachusetts, to ask "if hee found any thing Judaicall among them [the Native Americans]." The two men had no known previous association: they were from different parts of England, and they attended Cambridge at dif-

ferent times and resided in different colleges. Thorowgood explained that he wrote the letter because Williams was "one of the first, if not the first of our Nation in New England that learned the Language, and so prepared towards the Conversion of the Natives." He probably learned about Williams's early language study by reading William Wood's recent *New Englands Prospect* (1634) and then discovering that Williams was the unidentified minister who "in a speciall good intent of doing good to their soules, hath spent much time in attaining to their Language."⁵

Williams replied in December 1635, several weeks before his banishment from Massachusetts and subsequent flight to the shores of Narragansett Bay.⁶ "Three things make me yet suspect that the poore natives . . . are Jewes or Jewish *quodammodo* ['in a certain measure']," he told Thorowgood, instancing the sequestration of women "in their feminine seasons," a belief in a creator god, and unspecified similarities between the natives' speech and the Hebrew language.⁷ Thorowgood's letter evidently included a question about logistics, an issue because contemporary Europeans assumed that the natives' ancestors originated in the Old World and thus needed to find a route into the Americas.⁸ This request Williams misinterpreted as an inquiry about the Native Americans' point of entry into New England. The local natives, he explained, "constantly affirme that their Ancestors came from the southwest, and thither they all goe dying."⁹

In 1643, while Thorowgood was drafting *Iewes in America*, Williams published *A Key into the Language of America*, his interpretation of the language and culture of the Narragansetts.¹⁰ In the preface to the work,

OPPOSITE: Title-page for *A Key into the Language of America* (London, 1643). RIHS collection, RH1X171410.

Williams returned to the lost tribes theory. Here he identified four Mosaic remnants in local culture (linguistic evidence, again unspecified; monthly sequestration; the use of dowries; and the anointment of heads) and repeated his observation about the importance of the Southwest.¹¹ In the body of the work, he noted two more cultural similarities between the ancient Israelites and the Narragansetts: praying at night and blackening faces during mourning.¹²

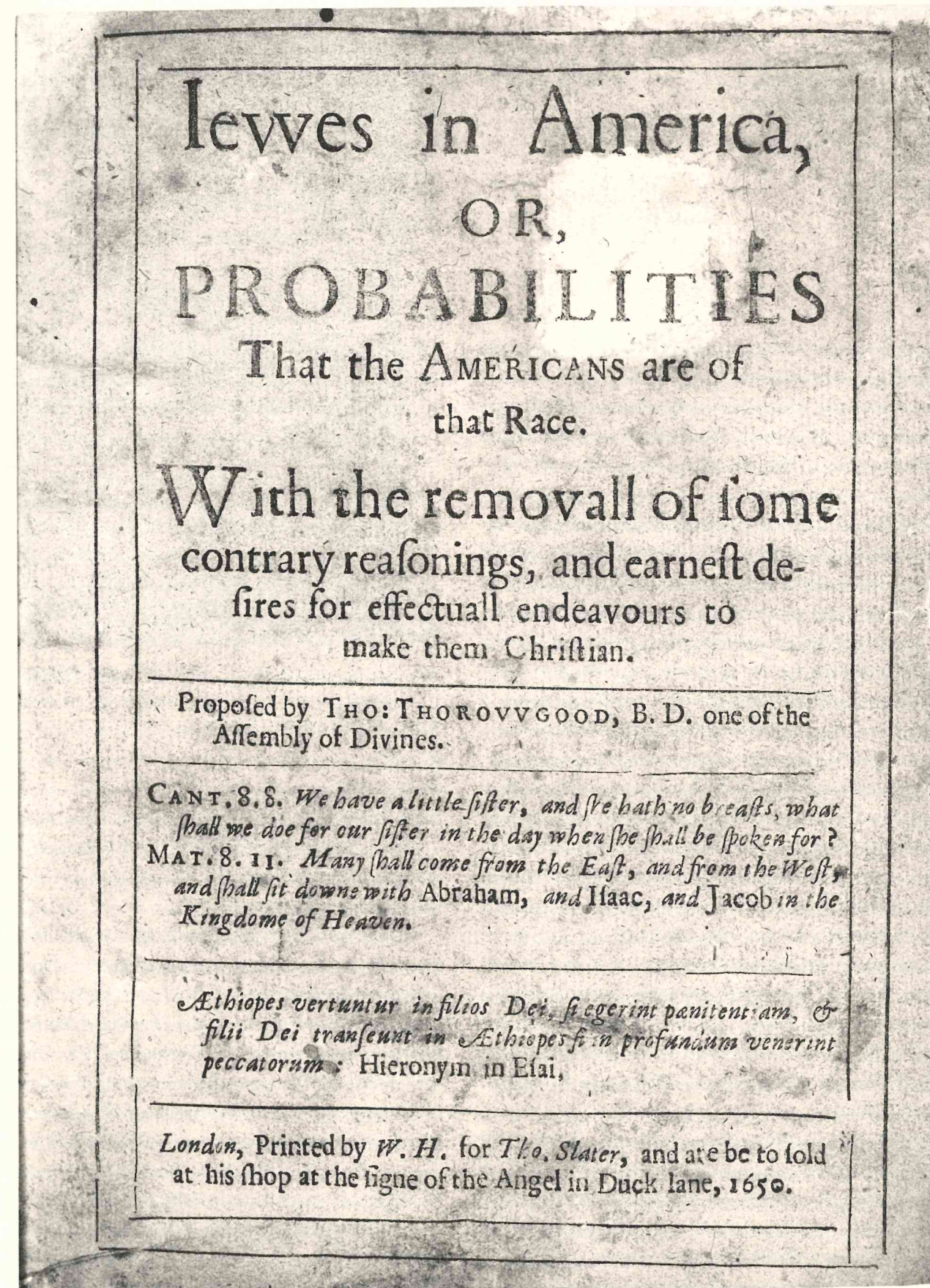
The brevity of this list of examples puzzled Thorowgood, who wondered how a firsthand observer like Williams could identify only six Mosaic vestiges among the Narragansetts. Convinced that something was amiss, Thorowgood went through the body of *Key* and pinpointed various native customs, such as the practice of levirate marriage and the use of a lunar calendar, which Williams had described but failed to characterize as Mosaic in origin. Thorowgood then included these customs in *Jewes in America*. Some ten years later, when preparing *Jews in America* for publication, he sifted through *Key* again and found a few more native practices "savouring of Judaism."¹³

Despite Thorowgood's best efforts to make it into one, Williams's *Key* was no brief for the lost tribes theory. Williams pointedly offered his list of Mosaic vestiges "not [as] mine opinion but my Observations to the judgement of the Wise." Moreover, he no sooner offered this list than he raised two objections to it: the Narragansetts speak a language that more resembles Greek than Hebrew, and they construe the constellation of Ursa Major as a bear, a Greco-Roman rather than a biblical convention.¹⁴ These two counterexamples suggest that he had developed reservations about

Title-page for *Jewes in America* by Thomas Thorowgood (London, 1650). Courtesy of Southern Methodist University, Bridwell Library, Special Collections.

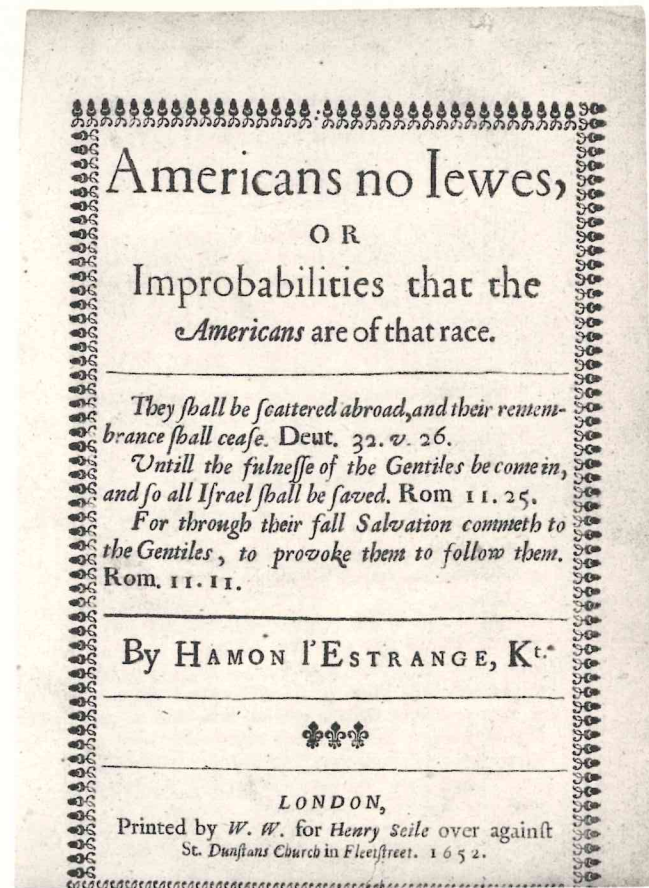
the practice of deducing Israelite ancestry from indigenous cultural evidence. Williams also said that the Narragansetts have a legend about a miracle worker who walked on water, a "broken Resemblance to the Sonne of God." He did not cite this detail as evidence that the apostles had visited the New World, an occasional teaching in the seventeenth century, but as a problem for supporters of the lost tribes theory, who needed to explain how lost Israelites could recollect the ministry of Jesus, an event that took place centuries after their dispersal from the Promised Land.¹⁵ Finally, Williams referred to the natives as "these Gentiles of America," phrasing inconsistent with the Israelite origins view. In early modern English sources, the word "gentiles" meant "non-Jews" or "non-Israelites" rather than "heathens" or "pagans," the normal connotations of the term in ecclesiastical Latin and in the Romance languages. Boston's John Cotton, for example, distinguished between "Pagan Gentiles" and "Christian Gentiles, for such are we."¹⁶

On balance, then, Williams's *Key* more resembled a rejection of the lost tribes theory than an endorsement of it. Williams's post-1643 sources reveal a deepening estrangement from the theory. In 1645 and again in 1652, he included the Native Americans among the gentile peoples.¹⁷ Then in 1655, in a passage that indicates that he misread Menasseh ben Israel's *Hope of Israel* as an argument for the natives' Israelite ancestry, he observed that l'Estrange's book "proving Americans no Jewes" was "another touch" against Menasseh. Williams's statement that l'Estrange had "prov[ed] Americans no Jewes" amounts to an abandonment of the lost tribes theory.¹⁸ This statement



proved to be the last occasion when Williams discussed the Native Americans' ancestry, and he never disclosed where he thought the lost tribes were living now that he had ruled out America.

The erosion of Williams's support for the lost tribes theory raises two interpretive problems. The first is what origins view, if any, he substituted for the Israelite one. His sources contain references to two other ancestry theories in circulation in the early modern European world. One was the Norse. In *Key*'s preface, he noted that the governor of New Netherland, William Kieft, had told him in March 1643 that the natives came from Iceland.¹⁹ Hugo Grotius, whom Williams did not mention, recently had advanced this argument in *De Origine Gentium Americanarum Dissertatio* (Paris, 1642). Grotius, better known for his pioneering contributions to the development of international law, was writing before the Vinland Sagas and other Icelandic sources, the textual basis for inferring that Leif Erikson and others had reached northeastern America around the year 1000, became available in Latin translation.²⁰ Grotius proposed that Norse families had sailed from Iceland to Greenland and from there to extreme northeastern America, and that nearly all Native Americans were descended from these pioneers. The only exceptions were the natives living on the Yucatán peninsula and in Peru. The former were the lapsed descendants of Abyssinian Christians who had been storm tossed across the Atlantic; the latter were the progeny of Chinese voyagers. Williams did not evaluate the Norse theory, but given its unpopularity in the Anglo-American world, he probably rejected it.²¹ No New Englander seemed to have endorsed this



Title-page for *Americans No Iewes* by Sir Hamon l'Estrange (London, 1652). Courtesy of Southern Methodist University, Bridwell Library, Special Collections.

theory until Samuel Mather, Cotton Mather's son, did so in 1773, and he confined the Norse natives to the distant north, a far more modest claim than Grotius's nearly hemispheric one.²²

The other was the Scythian theory, anachronistically termed the "Tartar" theory in early modern English sources.²³ This perspective held that the Native Americans were descended from the Scythians, the seminomadic inhabitants of the ancient Eurasian Steppe and, for Greco-Roman authors, an uncivilized people.²⁴ Unlike the Norse alternative, the Scythian theory attracted many supporters in the Anglo-American world. The earliest English endorsements appeared in the late 1570s in sources written by Michael Lok, a principal investor in Martin Frobisher's three expeditions to Baffin Island in 1576–1578, and by George Best, who accompanied Frobisher on the second and

third voyages.²⁵ Then in the 1610s and 1620s, Edward Brerewood, Nicholas Fuller, Samuel Purchas, and Peter Heylyn embraced the Scythian theory.²⁶ New Englanders Thomas Shepard, John Oxenbridge, and William Hubbard later supported it as well.²⁷ So too did Menasseh.²⁸

The Scythian theory rested on two foundations. The first was the practice of seasonal migration. "The Scythians never had any fixed Place of Settlement or Abode, but changed their Camps as the Season of the Year, Game, Water, or Woods invited them, never staying long in a Place," John Harris, secretary of the Royal Society, explained in 1705. Proponents of the Scythian ancestry theory thought that the Native Americans preserved this ancient way of life. To underscore this point, they often compared the natives to wild beasts, an analogy meant to suggest that native peoples ran wild like untamed animals, not that they were subhuman creatures lacking souls and the faculty of reason.²⁹ The second was the natives' supposed lack of civility. "In their grosse ignorance of letters, and of arts, . . . in their incivilitie, and many barbarous properties," Brerewood wrote, the Native Americans "resemble the olde and rude Tartars, above all the nations of the Earth." Phrasing like Brerewood's appeared in English sources throughout the seventeenth century.³⁰ Supporters of the theory, moreover, believed that the first characteristic explained the second, for only with stability of residence could humans develop the institutions of civilized society (e.g., cities, schools, codes of law, market economies, stable forms of government, systems of currency, and temples, churches, and other edifices for worship) as well

as nurture the literate professional classes needed to manage these institutions. Like the ancient Scythians, or so the English thought, the Native Americans were uncivilized because they were seasonally nomadic.

Williams twice referred to the Scythian theory but did not attribute it to any specific individual or explicitly assess its strengths and weaknesses. In the 1635 letter to Thorowgood, he observed that "some imagine" that the Native Americans were descended from "the Northern barbarous," that is, from the "Tartars," and in the preface to *Key*, he explained that "Wise and Judicious men . . . maintaine their Originall to be Northward from Tartaria."³¹ Williams probably rejected the Scythian theory even though he recognized its contemporary popularity. In *Key*'s preface, he took his two counterexamples to the lost tribes theory from the Greco-Roman world, not the Eurasian one, and in the verse sections of the work, he rejected the cultural foundations of the Scythian theory, Native American mobility and "barbarism." There he likened the English, not the Narragansetts, to wild animals ("The courteous Pagan shall condemne/ Uncourteous Englishmen,/ Who live like Foxes, Beares and Wolves,/ Or Lyon in his Den"); pricked the cultural pride of the colonists ("Boast not proud English, of thy birth & blood,/ Thy brother Indian is by birth as Good"); and, through native *personae*, identified the English as the local barbarians ("We weare no Cloaths, have many Gods,/ And yet our sinnes are lesse:/ You are Barbarians, Pagans wild,/ Your Land's the Wildernesse").³²

The other problem created by Williams's rejection of the lost tribes theory is explaining why he supported

the theory in the 1635 letter to Thorowgood, assuming that he was not simply telling Thorowgood what he wanted to hear. Williams probably intended to give the Native Americans a better identity than as uncouth Scythians, for he pointedly juxtaposed the “Jewes” and the “Northern barbarous” in the 1635 letter (“[t]hree things make me yet suspect that the poore natives . . . are Jewes or Jewish *quodammodo*, and not . . . the Northern barbarous as some imagine”). The higher status of the lost tribes was a function of millennial theology. Like many Puritans of the day, Williams held that the original chosen people, the two tribes of Judah and the ten lost tribes of Israel, would be miraculously converted during the millennium and recover their ancient status as “a people above all the peoples and Nations in the World.”³³

The available evidence thus suggests that, at first, Williams endorsed the lost tribes theory in 1635 because it provided a better identity for Native Americans than the Scythian counterpart. He later retreated from the theory, hesitantly in 1643 when he authored *Key*, and conclusively in 1655 when he observed that l’Estrange’s polemic against Thorowgood and Menasseh had “prov[ed] Americans no Jewes.” Williams rejected the theory because it rested on a dubious use of native cultural evidence; he did not surrender it because he came to think less highly of the Native Americans, as if they somehow had forfeited the right to be respected. He continued to believe in the lost tribes’ preservation, but he did not speculate about where outside America they were living. Once he had left the lost tribes theory behind, he viewed the natives as gentiles without further specification,

except they were not descended from the Norse or from the Scythians.

For Williams there were two nonnegotiable points about the Native Americans’ ancestry. First, the natives were descended from Adam, and after the flood, from Noah.³⁴ Only later in the seventeenth century did New Englanders have to defend these twin biblical truisms from pre-Adamists, that is, from free-thinkers who supposed that the Native Americans, the sub-Saharan Africans, and possibly the East Asians were not descended from Adam and Noah but had been divinely created before Adam and then placed in geographical locations that later escaped the flood.³⁵ Second, the Native Americans, whatever their specific gentile ancestry, would be converted during the millennium, when new apostles, perhaps aided by the gift of speaking in tongues, spread the faith throughout the world.³⁶ Thus Williams wrote in *Key*, paraphrasing Malachi 1:11, that he longed for the day when “these Gentiles of America [would] partake of the mercies of Europe, and then shall bee fulfilled what is written by the Prophet Malachi, from the rising of the Sunne (in Europe) to the going down of the same (in America) my name shall be great among the Gentiles.”³⁷

The case of Roger Williams reveals the weakness of the lost tribes theory as a frame of reference for understanding Puritan opinion about the ancestry of the Native Americans. Some scholars maintain that this theory was the standard perspective in New England. Yet Williams, the Plymouth magistrate Edward Winslow, and the diarist Samuel Sewall were perhaps the only seventeenth-century American Puritan authors who endorsed the theory, and only Sewall did so on multi-

ple occasions.³⁸ In this respect, New England differed little from seventeenth-century England, where there were probably few supporters besides Thorowgood.³⁹ Only in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries did the lost tribes theory permeate the Anglo-American world, attracting support from James Adair, Elias Boudinot, Edward King or Viscount Kingsborough, Israel Worsley, Ethan Smith, William Apess, and others, including (with an important qualification) the author of the *Book of Mormon* (1830), who traced the genealogy of Lehi, a non-scriptural figure who along with his family migrated to America in the sixth century B.C.E., back to an Israelite refugee who had escaped deportation by the Assyrians two centuries earlier by fleeing to Judah.⁴⁰ Other scholars rightly recognize the limited appeal of the lost tribes theory in New England but nevertheless continue to use the theory as a framing device. These scholars have minimal interest in the positive content of alternative views about the Native Americans’ origins. They divide American Puritans into opponents and proponents of the Israelite ancestry theory, and they consider the opponents noteworthy only for rejecting the theory.⁴¹

Williams called attention to two of the non-Israelite ancestry theories, the Norse and the Scythian, that were under evaluation in English sources.⁴² “Other [European] opinions I could number up,” he wrote in

Key.⁴³ But at the same time, he added something to the discussion that few English contemporaries bothered to include, and that was Native-American opinion. He twice observed that the Narragansetts believed that their ancestors came from the Southwest, and that the souls of the dead resided there as well.⁴⁴ He also explained that the Narragansetts venerated the Southwest because “the Court of their great God Cautantowwit” was located there,⁴⁵ and that they believed that Cautantowwit “made one man and woman of a stone, which disliking, he broke them in pieces, and made another man and woman of a Tree, which were the Fountaines of all mankind.”⁴⁶ Moreover, he intimated that the Narragansetts did not hold that they had been born in the Southwest, only that their ancestors had originated there. They “say themselves that they have sprung and growne up in that very place [Narragansett Bay], like the very trees of the wilderness.”⁴⁷

Whether he recognized it or not, Williams was his own best critic. He insisted that the Native Americans’ descent from Adam and then from Noah was a matter of common consent. “From Adam and Noah that they spring, it is granted on all hands,” he wrote in *Key*.⁴⁸ Yet his discussion of the Narragansetts’ views about their origins exposed the inaccuracy of this Eurocentric commonplace.

NOTES

1. Thomas Thorowgood, *Iewes in America, Or Probabilities that the Americans Are of that Race* (London, 1650). Thorowgood did not explain why he called the Native Americans “Jews” instead of “Israelites,” a more biblically accurate term. As the

Congregational minister John Oxenbridge observed, “I could wish that instead of Jews he had said Hebrews, or Israelites, meaning, the Ten tribes, for so he doth . . . pursue it.” Oxenbridge, “A Plea for the Dumb Indian” (1662–1667), Massachusetts Historical

Society, ms. SBd-56, fol. 79. Thorowgood apparently used the term in a religious and not a genealogical sense: "Jews" were people who self-consciously practiced Judaism (the observant Jews of Europe and the Middle East) or who had once self-consciously practiced it (the Native Americans in their distant past). This is an anachronistic usage, for the religion known as "Judaism" emerged centuries after the lost Israelites' disappearance from the Bible.

2. Sir Hamon l'Estrange, *Americans No Iewes, Or Improbabilities that Americans Are of that Race* (London, 1652). Despite the 1652 date on the title page, the work appeared in October 1651.

3. Menasseh ben Israel, *Esperanza de Israel* (Amsterdam, 1650; Latin trans. Amsterdam, 1650; English trans. London, 1650, 1651, 1652). Menasseh argued that the lost tribes survived as unassimilated ethnic minorities in Abyssinia, Persia, Tartary, China, and America. He thought that there were Mosaic cultural elements in Native America, but in contrast to Thorowgood, he did not believe that the natives were descended from lost Israelites, only that they had been culturally influenced by their lost Israelite neighbors. The English translation of Menasseh's *Esperanza de Israel*, as well as the Latin translation from which the English translation was made, distorted a crucial sentence in the original. According to the English translation, Menasseh said that persons who saw the Native Americans as lost Israelites were "not altogether mistaken"; however, he wrote in Spanish that these persons were "clearly wrong" ("erran manifestamente"). Henry Méchoulán and Gérard Nahon, eds., *The Hope of Israel: The English Translation by Moses Wall, 1652*, trans. Richenda George (1979; New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 115n43.

4. Thomas Thorowgood, *Jews in America, or Probabilities that Those Indians Are Judaical, Made More Probable by Some Additions to the Former Conjectures* (London, 1660). For the two editions of Thorowgood's book, see Richard W. Cogley, "The Ancestry of the American Indians: Thomas Thorowgood's *Iewes in America* (1650) and *Jews in America* (1660)," *English Literary Renaissance* 35 (2005): 304-30.

5. Thorowgood, *Iewes in America*, 5-6; William Wood, *New Englands Prospect* (London, 1634), 92. Thorowgood, from Norfolk, studied at St. John's in the early 1610s; Williams, a Londoner, was at Pembroke in the mid-1620s.

6. Williams's reply, dated December 20, 1635, survives only in the excerpts preserved in Thorowgood's *Iewes in America*, 6, and later reprinted in Glenn W. LaFantasie et al., eds., *The Correspondence of Roger Williams* (Providence: Brown University Press for the Rhode Island Historical Society, 1988), 30.

7. One well-publicized linguistic similarity came from John White: "Some conceive, their [the natives'] Predecessors might have had some commerce with the Iewes in times past, by what meanes I know not: Howsoever it bee, it fals out that the name of the place, which our late Colony hath chosen for their seat, prooves to bee perfect Hebrew, being called *Nahum Keike*, by interpretation, *The bosome of consolation*: which it were pittie that those which observed it not, should change into the name of *Salem*." *The Planters Plea* (London, 1630), 13-14.

8. Thorowgood later proposed that the lost tribes had entered America via the Strait of Anián, which was located on Gerardus Mercator's famous sixteenth-century map in the vicinity of the modern Bering Strait. *Iewes in America*, 3, 44.

9. Williams to Thorowgood, December 20, 1635, in Williams, *Correspondence*, 30.

10. For a critical evaluation of the work, see Jennifer Reid, "Roger Williams's *Key*: Ethnography or Mythology?" *Rhode Island History* 56 (1998): 77-86.

11. Roger Williams, *A Key into the Language of America* (London, 1643), sigs. A4v-[A5r].

12. Ibid., 19-20, 193; Reid, "Roger Williams's *Key*," 83, 86nn46-47.

13. Thorowgood, *Iewes in America*, 7-8; Thorowgood, *Jews in America*, 31-32 (separate pagination); Williams, *Key*, 28-29, 40, 66, 120-21, 136, 138-39.

14. Williams, *Key*, sigs. [A4v]-[A5r].

15. Ibid., sig. [A5r]. Several contemporary English authors thought that unidentified apostles had visited America. Thomas Draxe, *The Worlde's Resurrection* (London, 1608), 87-88; Draxe, *An Alarum to the Last Judgement* (London, 1615), 27-28; and Thomas Beard, *Antichrist the Pope of Rome* (London, 1625), 47-48, 243-44.

16. Williams, *Key*, sig. [A7v]; John Cotton, *An Exposition upon the Thirteenth Chapter of the Revelation* (London, 1655), 209.

17. Williams, *Christenings Make Not Christians* (London, 1645), 20;

Williams, *The Bloody Tenent Yet More Bloody* (London, 1652), 218-

19. In these two passages, Williams called the Native Americans "Nations," i.e., pagan gentile peoples.

18. Williams to John Winthrop Jr., ca. February 15, 1655, in Williams, *Correspondence*, 429. The "other touch" against Menasseh was a work that "expound[ed] all which he takes literally, in a Spirituall way," a probable reference to Edward Spencer's *Breife [sic] Epistle to the Learned Manasseh Ben Israel* (London, 1650).

19. Williams, *Key*, sig. [A4v].

20. The Icelandic sources were translated into Latin in the 1660s and into English in 1770. For the textual and archaeological record of Norse exploration of the North Atlantic, including a discussion of the excavated medieval settlement at L'Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland, see Alan G. Macpherson, "Pre-Columbian Discoveries and Exploration of North America," in John Logan Allen, ed., *North American Exploration* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 1:24-61 (especially 25).

21. Herbert F. Wright, "Origin of American Aborigines: A Famous Controversy," *Catholic Historical Review* 3 (1917): 257-75; and Joan-Pau Rubiés, "Hugo Grotius's Dissertation on the Origin of the American Peoples and the Use of the Comparative Method," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 52 (1991): 221-44.

22. [Samuel Mather], *An Attempt to Shew that America Must Be Known to the Ancients* (Boston, 1773), 13-14. Ezra Stiles, Newport minister and Yale president, thought that some Norse adventurers had reached Newfoundland and Labrador, and that these locations were already populated by actual Native Americans. The Norse, however, were soon "absorbed & obliterated among the Aborigines." Stiles to [?], December 14, 1792, *Ezra Stiles Papers*, Yale University, microfilm reel 5, fols. 23, 25-26 (quotation on 23). Cotton Mather hypothesized that the Norse were capable of reaching the New World but stopped short of saying that they had done so. *Biblia Americana: America's First Bible Commentary*, vol. 1: Genesis, ed. Reiner Smolinski (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 826.

23. English authors loosely equated early modern Tartary with classical Scythia. [George Abbot], *A Briefe Description of the Whole Worlde* (London, 1599), sig. B1r; Samuel Purchas, *Purchas His Pilgrimage* (3rd. ed. London, 1617), 315, 446-53; Thomas Coryate, *Thomas Coryate, Traveller* (London, 1616), 14, 51; Peter Heylyn, *Microcosmus* (London, 1625), 659; and Philip L. Barbour, ed., *The Complete Works of Captain John Smith* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1986), 3:191.

24. E.g., Herodotus, *The Histories*, ed. Carolyn Dewald, trans. Robin Waterfield (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 235-82; Diodorus Siculus, "Library of History," vol. 2, ed. and trans. Charles Henry Oldfather (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1935), 27-37; Strabo, *Geography*, ed. and trans. Horace Leonard Jones (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1917-33), 3:195-209, 241-49, 5:245-71; Pliny the Elder, *The Natural History*, vol. 2, bks. 3-7, ed. and trans. Harris Rackham (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942), 179-89, 375-79; and Ammianus Marcellinus, "The Roman History," ed. and trans. John C. Rolfe (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1935-39), 3:381-401.

25. [Michael Lok], "East India by the Northwest," [George Best], "A True Reporte of . . . the Second Voyage of Captayne Frobysher," and [Best], "The Thirde Voyage of Captaine Frobisher" all in Richard Collinson, ed., *The Three Voyages of Martin Frobisher* (London, 1868), 87, 138, 281-82.

26. Edward Brerewood, *Enquiries Touching the Diversity of Languages and Religions* (London, 1614), 95-99; Nicholas Fuller, *Miscellaneorum Theologicorum* (London, 1617), 180-83; Purchas, *Purchas His Pilgrimage*, 904; Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes* (1625; Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, 1905-1907), 1:80-82, 159-66; and Heylyn, *Microcosmus*, 778-79.

27. [Thomas Shepard], *The Day-Breaking . . . of the Gospell with the Indians* (London, 1647), 14; Oxenbridge, "Plea," fols. 78-79; William Hubbard, *A General History of New England* (ca. 1680), in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Collections* 2:5-6 (1815): 26-27.

28. Menasseh, *Esperanza de Israel*, 120. Here Menasseh called the Native Americans "antigos rudos y barbarismos Tartaros," early

modern European phrasing for “Scythians.” The English translation identified the natives’ ancestors simply as “Tartars.” *The Hope of Israel* (London, 1650), 86.

29. John Harris, “Of the Origination of Mankind,” in Harris, *Nav-igantium atque Itinerantium Bibliotheca* (London, 1705), 1: xiii; [Best], “Second Voyage,” 138; Thomas Shepard, *The Clear Sun-shine of the Gospel* (London, 1648), 32; and Oxenbridge, “Plea,” fol. 79. English authors often exaggerated Native American mobility. For a corrective, see Kathleen J. Bragdon, *Native People of Southern New England, 1500–1650* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 31, 37–39, 76–79, 123–29.

30. Brerewood, *Enquiries*, 97; Purchas, *Purchas His Pilgrimage*, 904; Heylyn, *Microcosmus*, 778–79; and Hubbard, *General History*, 27.

31. Williams to Thorowgood, December 20, 1635, in Williams, *Correspondence*, 30; Williams, *Key*, sig. A4v. English authors of the day sometimes called the Tartars the “northern barbarous” because early modern Tartary included modern Siberia.

32. Williams, *Key*, 10, 53, 137.

33. Williams, *The Fourth Paper, Presented by Major Butler* (London, 1652), 18. For a wider discussion of the millennial theology in question, sometimes termed “Judeo-centric millenarianism,” see Andrew Crome, *The Restoration of the Jews: Early Modern Hermeneutics, Eschatology, and National Identity in the Works of Thomas Brightman* (Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Springer, 2014); and Crome, *Christian Zionism and English National Identity, 1600–1850* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave–Macmillan, 2018), chaps. 1–3.

34. Williams, *Key*, sig. A4r.

35. For pre-Adamism, see Richard H. Popkin, *Isaac La Peyrère (1596–1676): His Life, Work and Influence* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill, 1987). For New English challenges to it, see Mather, *Biblia Americana*, 1:369, 501, 651, 825; and Nicholas Noyes, *New-Englands Duty and Interest* (Boston, 1698), 69.

36. For millennial apostles, see Williams, *Christenings*, 20; [Williams], *The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution* (London, 1644), 166–67; Williams, *The Hireling Ministry None of Christs* (London, 1652), 16–17; and Williams, *George Fox Digg’d out of His Burrowes* (Bos-

ton, 1676), 350–51. For tongues, see [Williams], *Bloudy Tenent*, 174; Williams, *George Fox*, 389.

37. Williams, *Key*, sig. [A7v].

38. Constance Post, “Old World Order in the New: John Eliot and ‘Praying Indians’ in Cotton Mather’s *Magnalia Christi Americana*,” *New England Quarterly* 66 (1993): 419–20; David S. Lovejoy, “Satanizing the American Indian,” *New England Quarterly* 67 (1994): 604; Gerald R. McDermott, *Jonathan Edwards Confronts the Gods: Christian Theology, Enlightenment Religion, and Non-Christian Faiths* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 194; Edward Winslow, *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel* (London, 1649), sigs. [A3v–A4r]; and Richard W. Cogley, “Millenarianism in Puritan New England, 1630–1730: The Exceptional Case of Samuel Sewall and the Mexican Millennium,” forthcoming, *Harvard Theological Review*. Post, Lovejoy, and McDermott (and the earlier scholars whom they cite) variously listed the following New England figures as supporters of the Israelite ancestry theory: Williams, Winslow, and Sewall; John Eliot (see n. 42 below); John White, whose discussion in *The Planters Plea* was hardly an endorsement of the theory (see n. 7 above); Henry Whitfield, confused with Edward Winslow (each man edited one or more of the missionary progress reports now known as “the Eliot Tracts”); and John Davenport, mistaken for the non-New Englander John Dury (the “J.D.” of n. 39 below).

39. J[ohn] D[ury], “Appendix” to Winslow, *Glorious Progress*, 22–28; Dury, “Epistolicall Discourse” in Thorowgood, *Iewes in America*, sigs. d3v–e2r; [Edmund Hall], *Lingua Testium* (London, 1651), 8–9; Thomas Gage to Thorowgood, July 26, 1654, in Thorowgood, *Jews in America*, 14–15 (separate pagination), 34–36 (separate pagination); and “Letter of William Penn” (1683), in Albert Cook Myers, ed., *Narratives of Early Pennsylvania, West New Jersey, and Delaware, 1630–1707* (New York: Scribner, 1912), 236–37. Gage supported the Scythian theory in his earlier *The English-American* (London, 1648), 73–74.

40. James Adair, *The History of the American Indians* (1775; Johnson City, TN: Watauga Press, 1930), 11–230; Charles Crawford, *An Essay on the Propagation of the Gospel* (Philadelphia, 1799), 16–35; Elias Boudinot, *A Star in the West* (Trenton, NJ, 1816); Ethan

Smith, *View of the Hebrews* (Poultney, VT., 1823), 81–129; Edward King, Viscount Kingsborough, *Antiquities of Mexico* (London, 1830–1848), vols. 6–7; Israel Worsley, *A View of the American Indians* (London, 1828); Barry O’Connell, ed., *On Our Own Ground: The Complete Writings of William Apess, a Pequot* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), 53, 72–76, 84–86, 92–93, 106, 111–13; Barbara Anne Simon, *The Hope of Israel* (London, 1829); James Finley, *History of the Wyandott Mission* (Cincinnati, 1840), 13–42; and 1 Nephi 5:14–16 in *The Book of Mormon* (1830; Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1974). The qualification is that Lehi was an Israelite (that is, a resident of the northern kingdom of Israel destroyed by the Assyrians) but not a lost Israelite because he escaped the Assyrians and found refuge in the southern kingdom of Judah.

41. Andrew Delbanco, *The Puritan Ordeal* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 109–11; Alden T. Vaughan, *Roots of American Racism: Essays on the Colonial Experience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 50–53; and Reiner Smolinski, introduction to Smolinski, ed., *The Threefold Paradise of Cotton Mather: An Edition of “Trip paradisi”* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995), 23–25.

42. Williams’s contemporary John Oxenbridge, a supporter of the Scythian theory (see n. 27 above), surveyed a broader range of opinion, adding to the mix the Chinese and the Carthaginian alternatives. English authors sometimes called the Carthaginians “Phoenicians” because Carthage was a Phoenician colony. Oxenbridge believed that the Welsh had reached medieval America, but he considered them ethnically distinct from the Native Americans and supposed that they had “sunk and drowned” among the Native Americans. “Plea,” fols. 58 (Welsh), 78 (Chinese), 80 (Carthaginians). Ezra Stiles likewise surmised that the Welsh had settled in medieval America, but in contrast to Oxenbridge, he thought that their descendants still survived, perhaps along the Mississippi and elsewhere in the North American interior. Stiles to [?], December 14, 1792, in *Ezra Stiles Papers*, microfilm reel 5, fols. 23–24, 26–29. Oxenbridge’s survey of opinion omitted Thomas Morton, who thought that the Native Americans were Trojans, and John Eliot, who saw them as Joktanites, a biblical people from a different Hebrew lineage than the twelve tribes.

Morton, *New English Canaan* (Amsterdam, 1637), 19–21; and “The Learned Conjectures of Reverend John Eliot Touching the Americans” (1653), in Thorowgood, *Jews in America*, 1–28 (separate pagination). Eliot also held, but only for a time, that some lost Israelites had settled in America but remained distinct from the Native Americans. “Learned Conjectures,” 1, 18–19; and Eliot to Thorowgood, October 16, 1656, in Thorowgood, *Jews in America*, 34 (separate pagination).

43. Williams, *Key*, sig. [A7v].

44. Notes 9, 11 above.

45. Williams, *Key*, sig. [A5v].

46. Ibid., p. 127. For more on Cautantowwit, see William Scranton Simmons, *Cautantowwit’s House: An Indian Burial Ground on the Island of Conanicut in Narragansett Bay* (Providence: Brown University Press, 1970), especially chap. 4; and Bragdon, *Native People of Southern New England*, 188–89, 194–95.

47. Williams, *Key*, sig. A4r.

48. Ibid.