

***Strangers in Yemen: Travel and Cultural Encounter among Jews, Christians and Muslims in the Colonial Era.* By David Malkiel. München; Wien: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2020. xix + 349 pp. \$114.99 hardcover.**

Gift-giving is an integral part of making first impressions and a way to express affection for friends and family. In *Strangers in Yemen*, David Malkiel explores the symbolism and significance of gift-giving between travelers and local Yemenis during the nineteenth century. The “Strangers” were mostly Europeans traveling to Yemen as missionaries, to seek economic opportunities, or to explore for scientific or artistic benefit. The nature of the gifts changed depending on those offering and receiving. Gifts, as defined by Malkiel, did not need to be physical objects of great value but could consist of a transfer of knowledge in medicine, religion, or notions of modernity. Even an inspirational story from Jerusalem could be considered a gift.

Nineteenth-century gift-giving, however, was not unidirectional. As Malkiel argues, while foreigners brought physical gifts and medicine to Yemenis, the locals in return gifted knowledge and hospitality to foreign travelers. Yemeni Jewish leaders, for example, lectured their European coreligionists on the authenticity of Yemeni customs while expressing disdain for foreign customs. In highlighting the multidirectional transfer of gifts and knowledge, Malkiel intends to challenge Edward Said’s *Orientalist* stereotype of foreign travelers to the Middle East during the colonial era. Using published accounts penned by Christians, Jews, and Muslims who traveled from Europe and the Ottoman Empire to Yemen during the nineteenth century, Malkiel demonstrates that no two experiences and perceptions are alike, problematizing Said’s wholesale generalizations.

Instances of stranger–host interactions are highlighted from among a selection of travelogue case studies and are loosely connected to the central argument that nineteenth-century foreign travel to Yemen was not a monolithic experience. The argument itself is not particularly nuanced and most of the published travel accounts analyzed in the book are already well known. The inclusion of understudied case studies, such as those recorded by New England merchants to Yemen during the first half of the nineteenth century, could have further enhanced the breadth of Malkiel’s work. Nevertheless, *Strangers in Yemen* constitutes a useful analysis of nineteenth century Yemen travelogues consolidated within this single volume.

Among the case studies included are the travelogues of Joseph Halevy, a representative for the Paris-based Jewish philanthropy *Alliance Israelite*, and his Yemenite Jewish guide Hayyim Hibshush, which embody many of the stranger–host complexities explored by Malkiel. What makes Halevy’s and Hibshush’s simultaneously written travelogues unique is that they are the only ones that provide a record of the same episodes, albeit from opposing stranger and host perspectives. Found within their published travelogues is also an ongoing effort by each author to establish himself as the source of knowledge and the other as the recipient of that knowledge, further challenging Said’s *Orientalist* stereotypes.

Malkiel’s other travel accounts provide the perspective only of the foreigners encountering Yemeni society and recording their personal interactions with the local population. The published memoirs of European missionaries, such as Joseph Wolff and Henry Aaron Stern, were unique because during the nineteenth century there were

very few missionaries who ventured into Yemen or to the Arabian Peninsula generally. What colored the experiences of Wolff and Stern is that both were Jewish converts to Christianity who traveled to Yemen on a proselytizing mission targeting the country's Jewish rather than Muslim population. This led to tense interactions with Yemeni Jews who were initially misled as to the religious identity of their foreign visitors.

The tensions of the Wolff (1836) and Stern (1856) visits to the Jewish community in Yemen were in direct contrast to the 1859 visit of Jacob Sapir, a member of Palestinian rabbinical leadership who traveled to Yemen and other eastern Jewish communities as part of a global fundraising effort. Sapir was greeted with open and warm hospitality and in return he shared the gift of stories about Jerusalem and holy Jewish sites in Palestine. Similar to Halevy and Hibshush, there was an exchange of religious knowledge between Sapir and his Yemeni Jewish hosts.

The Jewish identity of the travelers, however, did not ensure mutually respected exchanges. David Samuel Carasso, a Jewish merchant from Thessaloniki, an important Ottoman seaport, settled in Yemen from 1874 to 1880 with the intention of publishing a travel account of his Yemen odyssey. Carasso's interaction with Yemenis was far more Orientalist as he took every opportunity to instill his European values into Yemen's society, believing that he was on a civilizing mission. At times this involved intervening with local rulers on behalf of the Jewish population, something he could accomplish because of his Turkish identity during a period of Yemen's history when the country was part of Ottoman imperial territory. This complicated relationship between Yemen and the Ottoman Empire was further explored as part of the accounts from two soldiers: Hristo Stambolski, a Bulgarian military doctor who served in a Turkish military hospital during the late 1870s, and Sa'id Ibn Muhammad Al-Suwaysi, a Turkish soldier from Palestine during the 1890s. Malkiel traces multinational and multireligious tensions between the Christian and Muslim soldiers and the groups of Muslims and Jews they encountered over the course of their service in Yemen.

Malkiel explains that it was not uncommon for the gifts of a stranger to be rejected. This rejection applied to political gifts, such as Carasso's unwanted interventions, and was also noted regarding exchanges of alcoholic beverages, which was taboo among Yemen's Muslim population. Alcohol was often explicitly requested as a potential gift by Muslim hosts, placing the foreigner into a conundrum. Declining to offer the gift would offend the host, while offering the gift might create legal trouble with Muslim religious authorities. The same was true for Yemeni requests of medical care, whether the foreigner was familiar with the medical profession or not. Failing to offer a medicinal cure for the ailment of a Yemeni leader was nearly as awful as killing the patient with a harmful remedy.

Perhaps the most surprising travel account was that of Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi, the famous French sculptor who was most well known for designing the Statue of Liberty. Bartholdi's 1856 visit to Yemen is captured not in the form of written accounts but rather as drawn and photographed images of his experience in Yemen. Malkiel includes more than sixty reprints of Bartholdi's images, which reflect a prototypical Orientalist perspective, providing a critical analysis of each image.

The varied travel experiences analyzed by Malkiel each add layers of complexity to the nineteenth-century stranger-host narrative. This book contributes to the broader discussion of material culture in Yemen and should be read alongside Nancy Um's analysis of the Dutch and English East India Company records on the eighteenth-century exchange of gifts and commercial goods in Yemen (Um, *Shipped but Not*

Sold: Material Culture and the Social Order of Trade during Yemen's Age of Coffee [Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2017]).

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***Lost Tribes Found: Israelite Indians and Religious Nationalism in Early America.* By Matthew W. Dougherty. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2021. xi + 234 pp. \$39.95 hardcover; \$29.95 e-book.**

In *Lost Tribes Found*, Matthew W. Dougherty examines the rhetorical uses of “Israelite Indian stories” by varied groups in the early Republic to bolster theological and nationalistic claims. Although speculation that the indigenous people of the Americas originated from a “Lost Tribe” of Israelites dated back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, these stories took on a new life after the American Revolution as evangelical Protestants, Mormons, American Jews, and Indigenous people like the Cherokee found them useful when asserting nationalist and racial claims for their respective communities. The evolution of these stories and their uses supports Dougherty’s argument that nationalism and “manifest destiny” were neither fixed nor uniform concepts during the period of early US expansion. Instead, a close study of these stories, and the contexts in which communities employed them, reflect multiple competing nationalisms and strategies pursued by individuals and groups in the emerging racial and imperial hierarchies of a growing United States. The emergence of an expansionist nation that prioritized the rights of white men was not a necessary conclusion within the early United States, and Dougherty’s exploration of multiple alternatives sheds light on the nationalist frameworks that these groups proposed instead.

Throughout five chapters devoted to each group, Dougherty documents the evolving uses that individuals and communities found in these stories. For evangelical Protestants, these stories inspired missionaries to build on what they believed to be a bedrock Israelite religion in native cultures. This conception of indigenous history also aligned with a providentialist outlook on early United States history that inspired sympathy and kinship for contemporary Native Americans, while also affirming territorial expansion by encouraging indigenous people to convert to Christianity and willingly move westward. For early Mormons, Lamanite stories that sought to fill in the history of the indigenous diaspora in the Americas served to help create a sense of community distinct from mainline Protestantism. These stories also inspired a shared sense of suffering as Mormons faced similar removals and exiles; yet Dougherty asserts that these feelings of kinship did not extend to political alliances with indigenous people.

For American Jews, a shared ancestry with Indians helped bolster claims for racial parity and land sovereignty in an increasingly hostile and expansionist United States. A comparison of the uses of these stories by famous Jewish editor Mordecai Noah and Pequot minister William Apess serves as the focal point for this chapter. Dougherty then devotes a chapter to the Cherokee and the ways that individuals utilized