

“White Tribism, Lost Tribes, and the Multiple Migration Displacement Scenario”

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Much of my work deals with how Indigenous peoples in the Americas have been conceptualized by Western writers and scholars. My work involves the history of ideas, and a lot of those ideas are what we would now call bad ideas. They are theories about humanity and history, about race and migration. I deal with the evolution of ideas in anthropology, archaeology, ethnology, and history, which include theories that have been discarded because of their flaws and prejudices. Their authors are no longer on reading lists because they tell us the wrong things. We are only aware of them when scholars write works of historiography that explain how ideas evolved and were discarded. It is vital that our knowledge of bad ideas not be allowed to die, and that students and practicing scholars be more aware of them than they might be.

I want to deal with three intertwined ideas here today. I'm mainly going to address a phenomenon I call White Tribism. I'm also going to talk about how an obscure mid-seventeenth century debate over the fate of the Lost Tribes of Israel provided the foundation for the dominant view of America's past in nineteenth-century scientific

archaeology. And because there was no term for this view, either, I've called it the multiple migration displacement scenario. Finally, I'm going to address the role of an idea of northern European white supremacy called Gothicism that has thrived since the late seventeenth century. I want to show how those ideas continue to thrive today. Most of all I want to show how these ideas have done so much harm to Indigenous peoples.

In the first Decade of *De Orbe Novo*, the Milanese poet, humanist scholar, and Spanish court figure, Pietro di Martire, related a report he had gathered from Christopher Columbus of Indigenous peoples in present-day Venezuela. Although the people the Genoese explorer encountered on his third voyage in 1498 lived at the same latitude as Africans, they were strikingly different. As Martire reported: "The Ethiopians are black and have curly, woolly hair, while these natives are on the contrary white, and have long, straight, blond hair."¹ Martire supposed the reason for the blond hair and white skin was environmental, "due to the conditions of the earth rather than to those of the sky,"² but ever since that observation was printed, travelers, antiquaries, scholars, and popular writers have traded in similar accounts of Indigenous peoples in the Americas that form the phenomenon I call White Tribism.³ Euro-American tales of strangely familiar people in a strange land and related theories of human migration have contended that, long before Columbus stumbled upon the Bahamas in October 1492, the Americas had been colonized by Europeans, or by peoples of classical or Biblical antiquity from whom Europeans claimed a biological and cultural inheritance. In most cases, White Tribism is built on an assumption of the innate inferiority of Indigenous people. Its theories often depend on the appropriation of Indigenous evidence, including Indigenous bodies, and

the erasure of a true Indigenous past. White Tribism routinely has been leveraged in efforts to disenfranchise Indigenous people from their lands.

I define White Tribism according to three strains. The first strain proposes the original Native Americans were migrants from Europe or were descendants of the Lost Tribes of Israel or some other Asiatic-Oriental-Mediterranean (i.e. Old World) people of antiquity with whom self-identifying whites aligned themselves, culturally and biologically.⁴ This is White Tribism in its most inclusive form, as it represented in Europe's early modern period an effort to make Native Americans members in full standing of humanity, albeit a version that often was said to have degenerated culturally or biologically. The second strain, involving white isolates, proposes biologically distinct descendants of Europeans (or Jews descended from the Lost Tribes) endured in the Americas as intact communities, surrounded by Indigenous savagery. The third strain imagines a comingling of newcomers and savages, resulting in enigmatic Indian tribes, sometimes called White Indians, which have been improved in every possible way by contact with European strangers. These White Indians are noticeably superior to their Indigenous neighbours—more civilized in their manners, politics, social organization, culture, and technology, and more physically handsome according to Eurocentric standards.

I want to underscore what I am not concerned with in this talk. Some reports of non-Indigenous peoples gathered by explorers may have been accounts circulating through the Indigenous world of truly alien peoples. Nor am I concerned with actual cases of ethnogenesis or otherwise mixed populations of Indigenous peoples and Europeans. My concern is with writers and theorists largely trading in *imagined* infusions

of White or European blood. Of greatest interest to me are the second and third strains of White Tribism, involving white isolates and interbreeding. They are symptomatic of a colonialist perspective that has sought to define Indigenous peoples as inferior in every sense, except where European genes and know-how could be summoned as the only explanation of their purported exceptionalities. Native Americans otherwise routinely have been labeled as lazy, ignorant, and ugly, and incapable of improvement.

The alleged white-infused improvements have furthered the colonizing argument that “pure” Indigenous peoples, as encountered by European visitors (including the pesky *skraelings* of the Vinland sagas), were innately inferior, and that their displacement by white newcomers was (and is) inevitable and just. While White Tribism was part of mainstream discourse well into the twentieth century, it endures foremost in pseudohistorical theories that assert a suppressed white past in ancient America. The best-known example is the controversy over the 9,400-year-old remains of Kennewick Man in Washington State, which were erroneously described as “Caucasoid” when discovered in 1996.⁵ Like the pseudo-evidence for Old World civilizations of Ancient America advocates, Caucasian Kennewick man was seized as proof that whites enjoy as much of a claim to the Americas as Indigenous people, if not a greater one.

White Tribism employs five categories of evidence. The first category is physiological. Observations of racial typology—light hair and skin, blue eyes, physical beauty by European standards—suggest interbreeding or European isolates.

The second category is linguistic. Before studies of Indigenous languages made a leap forward in the early nineteenth century by recognizing polysynthetic structures and unique grammars, White Tribism theorists advanced their cases by “word-hunting.”

Using crude lexicons based on phonetic renderings of Indigenous words, they cherry-picked examples to argue Indigenous people either retained the languages of their Old World forbearers or had absorbed foreign words, especially place names, of ancient visitors.

The third category is semiotic or pictographic. Indigenous glyphs, chiefly in rock art, were used to show that Indigenous people were familiar with Old World concepts (including Freemasonry). Alternately, glyphs have been interpreted as entirely Old World in origin to argue the presence of ancient visitors.

The fourth category concerns material culture. Indigenous grave goods and other archaeological finds, including so-called Copper Culture artifacts, have been interpreted either as Old World in origin or as proof that Indigenous peoples had through interbreeding and the inspiring presence of strangers adapted Old World technologies. We can include the entire mound complexes of the Hopewell, Adena and other cultures in this category. A subcategory of material culture is fraudulent archaeological finds like the Grave Creek stone and the Michigan relics of the nineteenth century.⁶ In the case of the Grave Creek stone, a fake inscription of Old World gibberish was allegedly unearthed from within a genuine, ancient Indigenous mound burial in 1838, and fooled the likes of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft.⁷

The fifth category is anecdotal. Writers and explorers claimed to have gathered from Indigenous informants stories of peoples that did not sound Indigenous, or were said to be like the newcomers. Included in this anecdotal category is negative evidence. If Indigenous peoples could not satisfactorily explain who had constructed a particular burial mound, then theorists were free to conclude that Indigenous ancestors had nothing

to do with such archaeological relics. This is in part how nineteenth century American archaeology came up with the Mound Builders, a superior ancient people of the Ohio and Mississippi valleys who were said to have been everyone from transpacific Malays to wandering Bronze Age Europeans. In the culminating expression of what I have described as the Multiple Migration Displacement Scenario, the predominant theory of nineteenth century American archaeology and ethnology contended the Mound Builders were shoved aside or wiped out by the brutish “Tartar” ancestors of living Indigenous peoples that swept into the Americas across the Bering Strait.

To understand how we ended up with this Multiple Migration Displacement Scenario in the 19th century, we have to consider one of those “white isolates” arguments that are a part of White Tribism. And we have to go back to the mid-seventeenth century, to a debate no-one probably would expect to be connected to the rise of scientific archaeology in the United States.

In 1650, two books were published. Thomas Thorowgood, an English Anglican, published *Jewes in America*. Menasseh Ben Israël of Amsterdam’s Jewish community published *Miqveh Yisrael*, which was translated into English as *The Hope of Israel* in 1652. Both books were concerned with origins of Indigenous peoples of the Americas and reflected a fresh millenarian interest in Lost Tribes theories for Native Americans. Since 1567, European intellectuals had been speculating that Native Americans might be the remnants of the 10 Lost Tribes of Israel, which disappeared after the conquest of the northern Kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians around 722 B.C. One of the books of the Apocrypha, 2 Esdras, describes the lost tribes working their way eastward after their capture. So maybe they worked their way clear to North and South America. Remember

that the essential human story was then as now thought to be migratory. But where today we talk about Out of Africa and hundreds of thousands of years, we used to talk about Out of the Old Testament and a few hundred years. The very idea of a Bering Strait or Beringian migration dates back to the sixteenth century, when it was rooted in Biblical explanations for the repopulating of the world after the Flood. If all people in the world were fully human, including the Indigenous people of the Americas, then they must have descended from one of the three sons of Noah, the choke point of humanity, who overspread the world after the flood waters receded. Europeans were thought to be descended from one of Noah's favored sons, Japhet, while the Israelites descended from Shem. The lesser races came from Ham, through his cursed son, Canaan.

Thorowgood thought that Native Americans were descended from Shem, and were the 10 Lost Tribes; his book may have been the first original English-language work to embrace the Lost Tribes theory for Native Americans. Thorowgood suspected all the Lost Tribes ended up in the Americas, probably by crossing the Strait of Anian. This was the speculative strait that turned out in the mid-eighteenth century to be the Bering Strait. A single colonizing migration made the Lost Tribes the ancestors of Native Americans.

Menassah however rejected the Lost Tribes origin theory. He concluded some of the Lost Tribes indeed had been the first people to populate the Americas, proceeding from Tartary to China. Some might have sailed across the strait of Anian; alternately he wondered if there had been a land bridge that after the Lost Tribes passed across it was inundated, perhaps intentionally by God. Most important, unlike Thorowgood, Menassah made Native Americans a later arrival, casting them as "persecuting Tartars." Menassah recounted reports of bearded white men, and a story brought to Amsterdam in 1644 by a

marrano, Antonio de Montezinos, of having met members of the tribe of Reuben who still followed Judaic customs in the Andes. Menasseh argued the Tartar-derived Indians had forced the Hebrews into South American refuges, where they continued to exhibit their Judaic culture.

Why was the Lost Tribes theory so important in the mid 1650s? Because millenarians were anticipating the second coming, they believed that Native Americans and Jews had to be converted to Christianity to bring it on. Some believed that a prophecy of a conversion of Jews was already under way by 1650. But there was an important question of whether Native Americans had to be converted before the Jews were. John Eliot, a missionary in New England, endorsed the Lost Tribes origin theory. Basically Indians were Jews, and they could be made Christians at the same time that all Jews were. On that basis, his missionary work could continue. A second edition of Thorowgood's book was published in 1660 to drum up financial support for Eliot's mission.

Menasseh's reasons for writing *The Hope of Israel* were more complicated, and had to do with arguing for Cromwellian England to readmit Jews. All this can seem really esoteric, and also really wrong where ethnology is concerned. But Menasseh's book is important for a reason that has nothing to do with Lost Tribes and millenarian fervor. For one thing, Menasseh managed to articulate the theories of a Beringian land bridge and a Beringian ocean crossing in one short volume, long before they became staples of scientific scenarios. Most important though, Menasseh made the foundational proposal of a multiple-migration displacement scenario to explain the origins of Native Americans. According to this scenario, a more sophisticated people arrived in the Americas first, only

to be followed by a barbaric Tartarian horde that swept into the Americas from eastern Asia, across the Bering Strait. The superior, earlier migrants were eradicated or driven southward, while the Tartarian hordes became the ancestors of native Americans encountered by settlers. In the 19th century, this displacement scenario became the standard explanation for the so-called Mound Builders. American scientific archaeology concluded that the Mound Builders (who in fact were many different cultures spanning centuries) were a superior people who were no relation to living Native Americans.

Within American manifest destiny, Native Americans were labeled the descendants of violent usurpers of the lands of a superior people, and they were now resisting the arrival of another superior people: northern European protestant whites, the children of Japhet. It was the turn of Native Americans to move aside, in a removal that was thus considered just by American politicians like president Andrew Jackson who relied on the lessons of archaeology in arguing for his forced removal policy that killed 4,000 Cherokee alone on the Trail of Tears in 1838.

The influence of Menasseh's scenario on the development of migration theory is difficult to judge, as the Protestant millenarian movement was fading by the 1670s and the emerging natural sciences of the eighteenth century avoided the scriptural hermeneutics that propelled Lost Tribes theories. Still, *Miqveh Yisrael* was one of the most widely distributed books in modern Jewish history, with around three dozen editions and translations in Spanish, Latin, English, Dutch, Yiddish, Hebrew and French. Menasseh's work clearly remained known for more than a century among New England Protestant scholars pondering Native American origins. Fresh English editions of *The Hope of Israel* were published in 1792, 1850, and 1901. One of Menasseh's readers was

Ezra Stiles, a Congregationalist minister and president of Yale College in the late eighteenth century. A lot of the crucial theorizing on multiple migrations out of Asia swirled around Stiles and his contacts in the 1780s as the idea began to gel of the superior vanished Mound Builders and the inferior Tartar hordes who were ancestors of Native Americans. In his celebrated Election Sermon, delivered to the Connecticut assembly in 1783, Stiles sketched out a long history of multiple migrations to America, but the multiple migrants most of interest to him weren't out of Asia, across the Bering strait. His multiple migrants were a succession of white northern European colonizers, including the Norsemen of the Vinland sagas and Prince Madoc's Welshmen of 1170, and culminated in the arrival of the Mayflower in 1620.

Stiles had constructed what amounted to transatlantic Gothicism. Under Gothicism, which was a prototypic form of Aryanism, Scandinavia was considered the homeland of humanity's most refined race and culture, which was broadly conceived in the eighteenth century as Celtic. These hardy, freedom-loving northern Europeans were descended from Noah's favoured son, Japhet, and after conquering northern Europe were overspreading the world, as God intended. The Gothicist notion was first proposed by Sweden's Olf Rudbeks in the late seventeenth century, and was further developed in the eighteenth century by Paul-Henri Mallet and the baron de Montesquieu. I don't think it's a coincidence that Linnaeus, who came up with *Homo sapiens* and defined racial subcategories that made Europeanus the most advanced human form, was a protege of Olf Rudbeks' son. In the early nineteenth century, New Englanders fervently embraced this Gothicist heritage as their own, through the Norman conquest of England in 1066 and their own ancestors' migration to America. The new republic as Ezra Stiles put it was

God's American Israel. Just as Joshua had driven the Canaanites out of the Promised Land, so now White Northern Europeans were moving aside the savage Indians, who some thought might have been descended from the Canaanites cursed by God but otherwise were the Tartar hordes who had driven off or destroyed the Mound Builders.

One year after Ezra Stiles delivered his election sermon, Thomas Pennant, a Welsh naturalist and travel writer, published the first volume of *Arctic Zoology*. It's almost forgotten now, but it was a major work in its time and it firmly established the idea that the Americas had been settled originally by multiple migrations out of Asia across the Bering Strait. Pennant described eastern Asia as a living factory, just as Europe once was. Pennant was tapping into Gothicist ideas of the outmigration of humanity's supreme form from northern Europe. By the first decades of the nineteenth century, these two factories of humanity were being recognized in scholarly literature. One factory was in eastern Asia, which produced the multiple migrations that included the ancestors of Native Americans. The other was in northern Europe, which produced the ancestors of colonizers. The output of both factories was now colliding in the Americas. There was no doubt in the minds of theorists about which of these factories had the right to prevail.

The concept of whiteness as a scientific racial category was also beginning to gel in the mid to late eighteenth century in the work of Linnaeus, Christoph Meiners and Johann Blumenbach. White Tribism really began to fluoresce in the nineteenth century in partnership with this idea of clashing factories of humanity, as Anglo-Americans who embraced the Vikings as Gothicist kin were keen to have the Vinland of the sagas located right where they lived. They got their wish through one of the most important historical works of the nineteenth century, *Antiquitates Americanae* (1837). Published by the Royal

Society of Northern Antiquaries in Copenhagen, *Antiquitates Americanae* made the first comprehensive case that the Vinland sagas contained historical truths, and moreover that Vinland was in southern New England. In making that case, its chief author, Carl Christian Rafn, leveraged every available tool of White Tribism, appropriating Indigenous cultural materials, languages, and bodies.

The Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius had proposed in 1642 that all Native Americans north of Panama were descended from Norwegians.⁸ But the idea some Native Americans were of mixed descent from Norsemen of the Vinland sagas was of a different order of theorizing, and had been proposed as early as 1796 by Christoph Girtanner, a writer on natural sciences at Göttingen.⁹ Rafn constructed an explicitly Gothicist version of American history. He turned a well-known Indigenous petroglyph, Dighton Rock in southern Massachusetts, into a runic inscription by Thorfinn Karlsefni of the sagas. Dighton Rock by then had been erroneously assigned to any number of Old World cultures, with Phoenicians the most popular choice.¹⁰ Rafn also argued the Norse had remained in the country for centuries, interbreeding with and improving the local Indigenous people. A typical Indigenous burial of the seventeenth century, unearthed near Dighton Rock at Fall River, became a bronze-age European.¹¹ (Harvard's Jared Sparks, a leading historian of his generation, argued in 1836 that the remains, along with the Dighton Rock inscription, were Phoenician.¹²) The Harvard professor and poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, smitten with the Gothicist romance of Scandinavia, turned the Fall River burial into the grave of a Norseman in his poem, "The Skeleton in Armor."¹³

Rafn developed an idea that the Indigenous tradition of the giant Maushop was the result of Thorvall the Hunter of the Vinland sagas taking a Wampanoag spouse.¹⁴

Rafn also deployed the already discredited antiquarian tool of word-hunting to assert Scandinavian sources for Indigenous words and place names. In a letter in 1839, for example, Rafn explained Mashpee, a Wampanoag community, was originally Másby, “from Más, the name of a man...and byr, by, a town or farm.”¹⁵ As Rafn elaborated in 1840, “these local names furnish a proof that the ancient Northmen have during several centuries inhabited your district.”¹⁶ In 1841 he assured the American antiquarian Thomas Webb that all Indigenous rock art in North America arose from interbreeding with the Norse: “it becomes easy to explain how skill in the cutting and delineating of inscriptions was transmitted from this race to the other tribes and thus diffused over North America, assuming as we may do, that the pure Indian races acquired the art from that which was mixed with the Scandinavians.”¹⁷

The idea that Norsemen interbred with Indigenous people endured into the twentieth century, with sometimes not so subtle overtones of Indigenous improvement and European degeneration. Fridtjof Nansen in *In Northern Mists* (1911) proposed the “lost” Greenland colony, isolated and outnumbered, had been absorbed by the Inuit, “and must by degrees have become Eskimo both physically and mentally.”¹⁸ Vilhjalmur Stefansson, the Canadian arctic explorer/adventurer, claimed in 1912 to have found “blond Eskimos,” which earned him a scholarly rebuttal from anthropologist Diamond Jenness, and he subsequently retracted his claims.¹⁹ The British Scandinavianist Geoffrey Malcolm Gathorne-Hardy investigated coastal sites in Labrador that the Inuit ascribed to an ancient people they called the Tunnit, and he proposed in 1921 they fit the Nansen model of the fate of the lost Greenland colony.²⁰ The Tunnit are now considered to have been the Dorset, a predecessor culture displaced by the Inuit’s ancestors, the Thule, but

the idea they represented an ancient European presence has persisted. The celebrated author Farley Mowat in 1998 turned the Tunnit into an Orkney Island culture of his own devising called the Albans; the subtitle of the UK edition of his book was “In search of a lost tribe.”²¹ The Norwegian lawyer and adventurer Helge Ingstad, who found the Norse site at L’Anse Aux Meadows in northern Newfoundland in 1960, speculated about past interbreeding between Norsemen and Indigenous women in *In Search of Vinland* (1969). “Many Eskimo and Indian women are very attractive,” he explained. It’s not clear if he meant Norsemen would have been attracted to them, or if the women are attractive today because their ancestors interbred with the Norse. Nansen had already contended “the Eskimo women were probably no less attractive to the Northerners of that time than they are to those of the present day.”²²

In the 1920s, an American eugenicist, O.G. Marsh, persuaded himself that albino members of a tribal people in the Darien region of Panama were proof of ancient interbreeding with the Norse. He brought two children home with him to show to scientists. According to an unpublished Marsh manuscript at the Smithsonian, Marsh found a sympathetic audience in archaeologist Arthur C. Parker. Parker was of Seneca descent and had been a leading figure in the Society of American Indians, but in the early 1920s Parker veered abruptly into expressing eugenicist ideas of white supremacy. According to Marsh’s manuscript, Parker believed the Norse had visited the Haudenosaunee, and it was this ancient Nordic influence that accounted for their system of government and superior ways.

Carl Christian Rafn’s case that Dighton Rock bore a Norse inscription did not endure, but that only left this Indigenous petroglyph available for other White Tribism

theories in support of European voyages. In 1919, Edmund Burke Delabarre, a psychology professor at Brown University, began crafting an enduring interpretation of Dighton Rock as an inscription left in 1511 by the lost 1502 expedition of Portugal's Miguel Corte-Real.²³ Delabarre's scenario had Corte-Real become a leader of the local Wampanoag through his firearms and an innate European ability to lead that reminds me of Peachy and Dan in Rudyard Kipling's *The Man Who Would Be King*. "The Wampanoags were a superior race," Delabarre wrote in 1936, "a fact which might well be accounted for by early white influence and admixture of white blood."²⁴ As with Rafn's scenario, Native Americans only became capable of creating rock art after Europeans showed them how. Delabarre routinely called their efforts "imitative," and "meaningless scribblings." Delabarre's Corte-Real scenario was championed after his death by a Portuguese-American physician, Manuel da Silva, who similarly argued the living Wampanoag were an improvement on pure Indigenous people as a *mulatto* hybrid of Portuguese and Native Americans. Today Dighton Rock is housed in a state park museum so cluttered with the bric-a-brac of Portugal's heroic age of exploration (much of it thanks to the late Dr. Silva) that it is almost impossible for a visitor not to conclude the Corte-Real theory is correct.

Delabarre's and Rafn's writings on Dighton Rock probably influenced the White Tribism notions of Wisconsin amateur historian Hjalmar Holand. Holand was a tireless advocate for the authenticity of Minnesota's Kensington rune stone, which supposedly was a record of a late fourteenth-century visit by a party of Christian Norse that battled with the local people. Where Delabarre (and later Silva) argued Norsemen improved the

local Wampanoag through interbreeding, Holand chose the Mandan of the Missouri River as beneficiaries of Nordic gene flow.

The Mandan people had been the subject of White Tribism speculation since 1733, when the Sieur de La Vérendrye gathered stories from the Cree (Nehiyawak) and Assiniboine (Nakoda Oyadebi) that indicated the Mandan had light hair and lived in dwellings similar to those of the French.²⁵ There had been similar stories of strange peoples to the west or southwest of the Great Lakes since time of Champlain and Sagard, in the early seventeenth century.²⁶ Those earlier stories probably referred to the Mandan as well, or were stories of the Spanish that the Mandan passed along to the Assiniboine and Cree. I suspect those stories represented Indigenous memories of the Coronado *entrada* of the 1540s that met the Wichita people, and through repeated telling by Assiniboine and Cree, the stories turned the Mandan themselves into quasi Spaniards. When La Vérendrye finally visited the Mandan in 1738, he was surprised to see they hardly differed from his Assiniboine guides, who had assured La Vérendrye en route he would meet Frenchmen like himself.²⁷ The Mandan nevertheless endured as a preeminent White Tribe. They were proposed to be a remnant of the fabled colonization of America by the Welsh Prince Madoc in 1170, the inspiration for some of the most persistent White Tribe myths.

A Welshman, John Thomas Evans, visited the Mandan in 1796-97 in search of a connection to Madoc, and found no evidence of the Welsh language.²⁸ The myth should have ended there, but the artist George Catlin visited the Mandan in 1833 and perpetuated the Madoc theory.²⁹

Then along came Hjalmar Holand. In *Westward from Vinland* in 1940, he replaced medieval Welshman with medieval Norsemen in explaining purported exceptionalities of the Mandan. Their “superior intelligence and ability” could only have come from their partial descent from Scandinavians. “Swedes and Norwegians are of the purest Nordic stock,” Holand explained, “and a relatively small number would have been sufficient to transmit the physical peculiarities for which Mandans were noted than if any other nationality had been represented by these early culture bearers.”³⁰ Holand may strike us today as a fringe American theorist awkwardly extolling Gothicist or Aryanist supremacy as war raged in Europe with Nazi Germany, but he convinced a number of scholars that the authenticity of the Kensington stone was worth considering, and he received a Guggenheim Foundation grant in support of his researches. In 1948, the Smithsonian’s curator of archaeology, Neil M. Judd, endorsed the Kensington stone’s authenticity in *National Geographic*, and the institution put it on display in 1949.³¹

A Canadian newspaper editor, James Curran, advanced his own ideas about White Indians in *Here Was Vinland* (1939). He argued there was a mixed-race population around the mouth of the Albany River that proved Vinland was actually centered on Hudson Bay. Curran also extolled the Mandans’ shrewdness, technical skills, and female beauty in asserting their Norse origin. Curran’s book is a torrent of undisciplined pseudohistory, but it garnered international attention and respectful reviews. The prominent Canadian historian Lawrence J. Burpee (who was the editor of *La Vérendrye’s* letters and journals, no less) told Curran it was “an excellent piece of book-making” and one of the three “outstanding Canadian books of the year,” and in a review in *Canadian*

Geographical Journal stated “Mr. Curran is to be congratulated on a very comprehensive and suggestive piece of research.”³²

Canada has its own version of the Dighton Rock appropriation, which uses a white isolates version of White Tribism. The Peterborough Petroglyphs in southern Ontario are in a provincial park co-managed by Curve Lake First Nation, but legions of pseudohistory buffs think Indigenous people had nothing to do with the glyphs. Barry Fell, a retired Harvard marine biology professor and self-styled epigrapher, miscast them as the work of a 14th-century Norse king, Woden-lithi, in *Bronze Age America* (1982), which got the crank theories rolling. In the early 1990s, after retiring from the University of Calgary, the eccentric (and mischievous) hyperdiffusionist and expert on Maya script, David Kelley, argued its glyphs were a *proto-tifinagh* that originated among the Berbers of North Africa and arrived in Scandinavia.³³ Kelley didn't explain how *proto-tifinagh* made it to Scandinavia, but he was plainly tapping into hoary ideas about “white Berbers” being descendants of wandering Norsemen. In 1998, Canadian author Michael Bradley claimed that someone had used a grinder to remove a ship glyph that proved the petroglyphs's European origin. He broadly accused Curve Lake First Nation of the vandalism.³⁴ I have visited these petroglyphs several times and know well the original site reports and drawings by Paul Sweetman and Joan and Romas Vastokas. There isn't a shred of evidence that any glyph ever recorded in that location is missing.

Bradley asked: “What do the aboriginals have against these glyphs?”³⁵ After centuries of White Tribism and its misappropriations of Indigenous culture and Indigenous bodies, I would ask in return: what have so many theorists of ancient

European voyagers and the settlement of the Americas had against Indigenous people and their cultures?

¹ Pietro Martire D'Anghiera, *De Orbe Novo: The Eight Decades of Peter Martyr D'Anghera* [sic], transl. Francis Augustus MacNutt, vol. 1. New York and London: G. Putnam's Sons, 1912, 133.

² Ibid.

³ See Douglas Hunter, "Stone of Power," PhD diss, York University, 2015, 67–68. I have developed the concept further in this paper, and in *The Place of Stone* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, in press).

⁴ In particular see Thomas *Iewes in America* (London: 1650) and *Jews in America* (London: 1660) for an early expression of the Lost Tribes origin of Native Americans.

⁵ See David Hurst Thomas, *Skull Wars: Kennewick Man, Archaeology, and the Battle for Native American Identity* (New York: Basic Books, 2000).

⁶ See Stephen Williams, *Fantastic Archaeology: The Wild Side of North American Prehistory* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), in particular Chapter 8, "Archaeology and Religion," for an overview of such nineteenth-century fakes.

⁷ For Schoolcraft's persistent convictions, see for example "Observations Respecting the Grave Creek Mound," in *Transactions of the American Ethnological Society*, vol. 1, 369–420 (New York: Bartlett and Welford, 1845).

⁸ Hugonis Grotii, *De origine gentium Americanarum dissertatio* (Paris: [s.n.], 1642), 39. For an English translation, see Hugo Grotius, *On the Origin of the Native Races of America: A Dissertation*, trans. Edmund Goldsmid (Edinburgh: [s.n.], 1884).

⁹ Wallace, W. S. "The Literature Relating to the Norse Voyages to America." *Canadian Historical Review* 20, no. 1 (Mar. 1939), 10.

¹⁰ See Hunter, "Stone of Power," Chapter 6.

¹¹ See Thomas H. Webb and Carl C. Rafn, "Accounts of a Discovery of Antiquities Made at Fall River, Massachusetts, communicated by Thomas H. Webb, M.D., in letters to Charles C. Rafn, Secretary, with Remarks by the latter." *Mémoires de la Société royale des antiquaires du Nord, 1840–1844*, 104–19.

¹² Jared Sparks, "Antiquities of North America," *The American Monthly Magazine*, Jan. 1836: 67.

¹³ Henry Wordsworth Longfellow, *Ballads and Other Poems* (Cambridge MA: John Owen, 1842).

¹⁴ Carl C. Rafn to Thomas H. Webb, Apr. 26, 1839, Carl C. Rafn Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Rafn to Webb, Apr. 21, 1840, Rafn Papers.

¹⁷ Rafn to Webb, Oct. 22, 1841, Rafn Papers.

¹⁸ See Fridtjof Nansen, *In Northern Mists*, transl. Arthur Chater, vol. 2 (New York: Frederick A. Stokes, 1911), Chapter 11; quote, 103.

¹⁹ For Stefansson's claims, see for example "Wants Eskimo Saved from Our Religion," *The New York Times*, Sep. 30, 1912. For Jenness's rebuttal, see Diamond Jenness, "The 'Blond' Eskimos," *American Anthropologist* n.s. 23, no. 3 (Jul.-Sep. 1921), 257–67.

²⁰ See G. M. Gathorne-Hardy, "A Recent Journey to Northern Labrador," *The Geographical Journal* 59, no. 3 (Mar., 1922), 153–167.

²¹ Farley Mowat, *The Farfarers: Before the Norse* (Toronto: Key Porter, 1998). Published in UK as *The Alban Quest: The Search for a Lost Tribe* (London: Weidenfield & Nicolson, 1999).

²² Nansen however had supposed "the Eskimo women were probably no less attractive to the Northerners of that time than they are to those of the present day, and thus much mixture of blood gradually resulted." *In Northern Mists*, 2:103.

²³ For his initial airing of the Corte-Real theory, see Edmund Burke Delabarre, "Recent History of Dighton Rock," reprinted from the *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, vol. 20, transactions 1918–19. Cambridge: John Wilson & Son for The University Press, 1919. For the evolution of his Corte-Real theory and associated publications, see Hunter, "Stone of Power," Chapter 10.

²⁴ Edmund B. Delabarre, "Miguel Cortereal: The First European to Enter Narragansett Bay," *Rhode Island Historical Society Collections* 29 (Oct. 1936), reprint, 7.

²⁵ In January 1734, La Vérendrye reported on a meeting in 1733 with Cree and Assiniboine chiefs at which

he asked what they knew of the Mandan, who were called the Ouachipouennes or Caserniers (“barrack-dwellers”). “I asked them what they thought of that tribe and whether they were savages like themselves. They replied that they took them for French; their forts and houses were much like ours, except that the roofs are flat with earth and stone over them... These Caserniers are of very tall stature, well-proportioned, white, and walk with their toes turned out. Their hair is light in colour, chestnut and red; a few have black hair. They have beards which they cut or pull out, some, however, allowing them to grow.” In Pierre Gaultier de Varennes et de La Vérendrye, *Journals and letters of Pierre Gaultier de Varennes et de La Vérendrye and his sons*, ed. Lawrence J. Burpee (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1927), 153–54.

²⁶ See Samuel de Champlain, *The Works of Samuel de Champlain, Vol. 3: 1615–1618*, ed. H. P. Biggar (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1929), 119; Gabriel Sagard, *Le grand voyage du pays des Hurons* (Montréal: Bibliothèque Québécoise, 2007), 159–60.

²⁷ En route with his Assiniboine guides in 1738, La Vérendrye reported, “Every day they talked to us about the whites we were going to see, Frenchmen like ourselves, who said they were descended from us. Everything they said gave us hope of making a remarkable discovery.” (La Vérendrye, *Journals and letters*, 316) When he finally met them, “I confess I was greatly surprised, as I expected to see people quite different from the other savages according to the stories that had been told us. They do not differ from the Assiniboin, being naked except for a garment of buffalo skin carelessly worn without any breechcloth. I knew then that there was a large discount to be taken off all that had been told me.” (319-20).

²⁸ Thomas Dinisi, “Evans, John Thomas (1770–1799),” *Dictionary of Missouri Biography*, ed. Lawrence O. Christensen, William E. Foley, Gary Kremer (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 286–87.

²⁹ For an overview of (some) Mandan theories, see David M. Kreuger, *Myths of the Rune Stone: Viking Martyrs and the Birthplace of America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), 34–35.

³⁰ Hjalmar Holand, *Westward from Vinland* (New York: Dull, Sloan & Pearce, 1940), 263–64, 278.

³¹ Erik Wahlgren, *The Kensington Stone: A Mystery Solved* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1958), 3–6.

³² Lawrence J. Burpee to James W. Curran, Aug. 14, 1939, Curran Papers, Trent University Archives. Lawrence J. Burpee, “Amongst the New Books,” *Canadian Geographical Journal* 19, no. 4 (Oct. 1939), v.

³³ David E. Kelley, “Proto-Tifinagh and Proto-Ogham in the Americas,” *The Review of Archaeology* 11, no. 1 (Spring 1990), 1–9; “The Identification of the Proto-Tifinagh Script at Peterborough, Ontario,” *NEARA Journal* 28, no. 3-4 (Winter/Spring 1994), 86–99.

³⁴ Michael Bradley, *Grail Knights of North America* (Toronto: Hounslow Press, 1998), 370–72.

³⁵ Bradley, *Grail Knights*, 372.