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## **BOOK NEWS**

Explores the shared religious and emotional underpinnings of early American nationalism

## Lost Tribes Found

## Israelite Indians and Religious Nationalism in Early America

By Matthew W. Dougherty

The belief that Native Americans might belong to the fabled "lost tribes of Israel"—Israelites driven from their homeland around 740 BCE—took hold among Anglo-Americans and Indigenous peoples in the United States during its first half century. In Lost Tribes Found, Matthew W. Dougherty explores what this idea can tell us about religious nationalism in early America.

Some white Protestants, Mormons, American Jews, and Indigenous people constructed nationalist narratives around then-popular idea of "Israelite Indians." Although these were minority viewpoints, they reveal that the story of religion and nationalism in the early United States was more complicated and wide-ranging than studies of American "chosen-ness" or "manifest destiny" suggest. Telling stories about Israelite Indians, Dougherty argues, allowed members of specific communities to understand the expanding United States, to envision its transformation, and to propose competing forms of sovereignty. In these stories both settler and Indigenous intellectuals found biblical explanations for the American empire and its stark racial hierarchy.

Lost Tribes Found goes beyond the legal and political structure of the nineteenthcentury U.S. empire. In showing how the trope of the Israelite Indian appealed to the emotions that bound together both nations and religious groups, the book adds a new dimension and complexity to our understanding of the history and underlying narratives of early America.

Matthew W. Dougherty is Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream in the history of Christianity and Instructional Design at Emmanuel College of Victoria University in the University of Toronto.