

CURRENTS IN 

AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP
S E R I E S

AMERICAN Religious History

A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY



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*“... American religious history—
and of American religion, which it
seeks to narrate and interpret—is surely
lively and growing, nourished by the
works of colleagues in related disciplines
and challenged by new discoveries about
the past and by the ever-changing
religious situation in the pluralistic
twentyfirst-century United States.”*

Cover image

STAINED GLASS WINDOW
THANKSGIVING SQUARE CHAPEL,
DALLAS, TEXAS, USA by John Elk

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INTRODUCTION

THE CURRENTS IN AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP SERIES offers Americanists abroad updates on the status of theory and practice in disciplines relevant to the study of the society, culture and institutions of the United States of America. Prominent scholars from across the U.S. graciously accepted the invitation of the Study of the U.S. Branch to author annotated bibliographies. We hope the series proves to be valuable in introducing or refreshing courses on the United States, or expanding library collections.



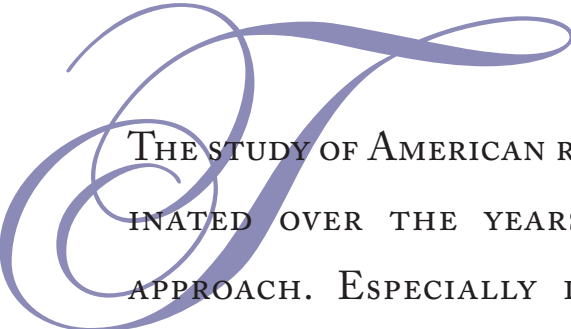
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A M E R I C A N R E L I G I O U S H I S T O R Y

A B I B L I O G R A P H I C A L E S S A Y



THE STUDY OF AMERICAN RELIGION HAS BEEN DOMINATED OVER THE YEARS BY THE HISTORICAL APPROACH. ESPECIALLY IN THE LAST SEVERAL DECADES, HOWEVER, AMERICAN RELIGIOUS HISTORIANS HAVE BEEN JOINED BY SOCIOLOGISTS OF RELIGION AND ALSO OCCASIONALLY BY ANTHROPOLOGISTS AND LITERARY SCHOLARS. THEY HAVE ALSO AT TIMES BEEN INFORMED, AS IN THE PAST, BY THE WORK OF PHILOSOPHERS AND THEOLOGIANs. HENCE, THIS REVIEW WILL CITE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THESE AREAS, AS APPROPRIATE.



If the historical approach has dominated the scholarship, we may well ask more specifically about the nature of that approach. To do so is to discover that there have been, in fact, several historical models that have been used to organize data and tell a story or stories about American religion. The longest-reigning model—indeed, the one that dominated the field from the mid-nineteenth century when, in 1843, Robert Baird first wrote *Religion in America*—has been called the consensus model. In the last quarter century or so, the *consensus* model has been challenged by two others. The older of these has been called the *conflict* model, and the more recent the *contact* model. All three models are currently employed, although most leaders in the field have moved away from the consensus model and are seeking alternatives.

But first, what is the consensus model? What kind of narrative does its employment organize? What are the alternative models, and what results do they produce? Consensus historiography writes the Anglo-Protestant past at the center of U.S. religious history. It sees processes of religious and ethnic blending—the proverbial “melting pot”—strongly at work in the nation’s history, and it minimizes any narrative of religious pluralism. Likewise, it minimizes the impact of social, cultural, and religious change over time and stresses a religious culture of continuity with Anglo-Protestantism. Alongside Baird’s early work along these lines, with its evangelical ethos, we may set Philip Schaff’s *America: A Sketch of Its Political, Social, and Religious Character*, although it is less technically a history. Appearing in the U.S. in 1855, in translation from its original German, Schaff’s work expressed his vision of a new American religion arising out of old European ones, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. Later nineteenth-century works in this tradition include Daniel Dorchester’s *Christianity in the United States* and Leonard Woolsey Bacon’s *A History of American Christianity*.

None of these books may be described as the productions of professional historians. It was in the first half of the twentieth century, however, that William Warren Sweet, in a series of works, signaled a turn toward professionalism in the field with his chair in religious history at the University of Chicago. His four-volume *Religion on the American Frontier*, published from 1931 to 1946, acknowledged change, but eschewed it and celebrated, instead, the attention to continuity that church history could offer. By the 1960s, in a series of ground-breaking essays collected in a volume called *The Lively Experiment: The Shaping of Christianity in America*, Sidney E. Mead, Sweet’s Chicago student, provided his own reading of American religious exceptionalism. He hailed



the American Revolution and what he called the “religion of the Republic,” with its ideological underpinnings in the European Enlightenment, as a source of religious unity and a preferred alternative to sectarian acrimony and competition. Then, in 1972, came the last comprehensive production of the consensus school in Sydney E. Ahlstrom’s monumental *A Religious History of the American People*, with its lament for the decline of the Puritan heritage in late-twentieth-century America.

By the time Ahlstrom’s work appeared, however, especially among younger scholars influenced by postmodernism, postcolonialism, and general critical-studies concerns, there was a general suspicion of grand narratives. Hence, no successor to Ahlstrom has produced a major new history with the sweep and narrative scope of his book. Instead, with far more attention to religious pluralism and its very prominent presence in the U.S. at the end of the twentieth century, the two alternative historical models cited above began to emerge. The first of these, the conflict model, emphasizes contentiousness and contests for recognition, status, and a fair share of the benefits accorded to the various religious traditions and groups in the United States. Such contests are often small and replicating, and they often occur, too, in urban spaces or in public and political zones. Thus, by definition, conflict historiography does not produce comprehensive narratives. Given that observation, perhaps the work that most achieves a measure of comprehensiveness—and certainly the work that first, in 1986, and most clearly articulated the conflict model—is *Religious Outsiders and the Making of Americans* by R. Laurence Moore. With its thesis that religious “outsiderhood” in America was a strategy that many ethno-religious and nonmajoritarian groups employed to achieve “insiderhood” (in other words, acknowledgment and acceptance), Moore’s work has fostered new scholarship along similar lines. In this context, a good example of the smaller-scale studies that the conflict model has generated is Robert A. Orsi’s edited collection of essays *Gods of the City: Religion and the American Urban Landscape*. Or, for a more inclusive narrative that tells the story of one tradition using conflict historiography, Stephen J. Stein’s revisionist history of the Shakers, *The Shaker Experience in America: A History of the United Society of Believers*, may be cited.

Meanwhile, the recently emerging contact model seeks to encompass the conflict model but also to include more. Its argument is that conflict has been only one of a series of exchanges between religious peoples and religious goods when they have met in the United States and that, therefore, any comprehensive narrative of religion in America



must examine and explore all of these exchanges. The most ambitious attempt at articulating this model thus far is contained in the 1997 collection of essays edited by Thomas A. Tweed, *Retelling U.S. Religious History*. It may also be found as the organizing principle in an older work, Mechal Sobel's *The World They Made Together: Black and White Values in Eighteenth-Century Virginia*, and—although it is not properly speaking a single narrative history—in the general textbook by Catherine L. Albanese, *America: Religions and Religion*, especially in its third edition.

GENERAL SURVEYS

In what follows, this essay will offer its own comprehensive overview of work in the field, organized according to various epochs and themes and beginning with narratives that aim at offering, in some way, an inclusive narrative of religion in America. Bear in mind that much of the scholarship that seeks to offer a chronicle with narrative sweep is organized according to consensus canons of historiography. Among general surveys, among the best known is Edwin Scott Gaustad's *A Religious History of America*, in its revised edition, which quotes as much as is feasible in a one-volume work from historical sources. Used repeatedly as a text in basic courses has been Winthrop S. Hudson, *Religion in America: An Historical Account of the Development of American Religious Life*, with John Corrigan as co-author by its fifth edition in 1992. Still a third consensus narrative that has achieved considerable recognition and use is Martin E. Marty's *Pilgrims in Their Own Land: Five Hundred Years of Religion in America*. Notice likewise needs to be paid to the somewhat shorter work by George M. Marsden, *Religion and American Culture*, often used as a text for courses. And more theologically oriented among general works is Richard E. Wentz's *Religion in the New World: The Shaping of Religious Traditions in the United States*.

Peter W. Williams, in *America's Religions: Traditions and Cultures*, departs to some extent from the narrative line of these works to give more sustained attention (within a textbook context) to Native American and African American religions as well as to Judaism, Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and a series of discrete Protestant traditions. Williams, who has also produced a classic study of what many scholars term, somewhat problematically, “popular religion” in his *Popular Religion in America: Symbolic Change and the Modernization Process in Historical Perspective*, writes with sociological sophistication in a good example of the kind of interdisciplinary scholarship that the historical study of American religion has supported. An even more thoroughgo-



ing departure from consensus historiography than Williams may be found in the fourth edition of Julia Mitchell Corbett's *Religion in America*, which features major subsections on "Consensus Religion" and "Alternatives to the Consensus." Catherine L. Albanese's work, already cited above, belongs here as well.

If we turn our attention to works that focus exclusively on Christianity, it needs to be noticed how books in this area have moved away from what has been termed "church history" to the more flexible, less institutionally driven, model that is called "history of Christianity" or, more broadly, "religious history." A classic work on the older church-history model is the 1976 production of Robert T. Handy, *A History of the Churches in the United States and Canada*. The geographical comprehensiveness of this work has not often been achieved by later scholars. Mark A. Noll, however, has followed Handy's comparative model, but he moved from church history to religious history in his 1992 work, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada*. The difference in the titles of these two histories suggests the methodological differences between them.

REFERENCE WORKS

All of the works thus far described as general surveys are broad and sweeping—the kinds of books that function best as texts for undergraduate courses in the university. For yet more comprehensive views of American religion, readers may turn to various reference works. Probably the most useful of these in religious historical terms is the three-volume *Encyclopedia of the American Religious Experience* edited by Charles H. Lippy and Peter W. Williams. This work contains lengthy yet succinct topical articles and also essays on major denominations and movements in American religious history. Its bibliographies are somewhat dated—it was published in 1988—but still quite useful. Supplementing this reference tool is J. Gordon Melton's *The Encyclopedia of American Religion*, now in its sixth edition. Although it is sometimes factually inaccurate, this work's division of the numerous organized forms of religious expression in the United States into religious "families" offers a helpful classificatory scheme. For American Christianity, there is no better aid than the *Dictionary of Christianity in America*, edited by Daniel G. Reid and others, with its brief entries on a myriad of persons, themes, and movements. And for the latest available statistical and summary information on particular religious groups and denominations, the place to turn is the *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches* pub-



lished each year by Abingdon Press at the behest of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. This work now includes non-Christian religious bodies. For example, the *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches, 2001*, edited by Eileen W. Lindner, lists among numerous other non-Christian organizations the Buddhist Churches of America, the Buddhist Council of the Midwest, the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, and the Buddhist Sangha Council of Southern California.

General surveys and reference tools largely depend for their scholarship on a series of more specialized works, and—in an introductory way—this is the place to survey them, using combined chronological and topical approaches to summarize quickly the key studies available. This essay begins the survey, therefore, with early America and progresses toward the twenty-first century, noting themes and topics as they assume importance.

SEVENTEENTH- AND EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA

For practical purposes, the study of early America in the region that became the United States commences with the seventeenth century and the event that historians and anthropologists call the “contact,” this time not the general “contact” invoked in contact historiography, but instead the more particular one between Anglo-Europeans and Native Americans. The classic study to introduce this theme is James Axtell’s collection of essays *The European and the Indian: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial America*, which contains a series of important pieces on religion. Ethnohistory—a “marriage” of history and anthropology—organized a number of other works that appeared in the 1970s and 1980s, and these generally touch on religion as part of the business of examining cultural encounter. Among them are Francis Jennings’s *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest*; Neal Salisbury’s *Manitou and Providence: Indians, Europeans, and the Making of New England, 1500–1643*; and William Cronon’s *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England*—all works that aim to incorporate the perspectives of Native Americans. A similar study for the Virginia colony is *Savagism and Civility: Indians and Englishmen in Colonial Virginia* by Bernard Sheehan. For a more recent and more general ethnohistory that incorporates some consideration of religion, there is *New Worlds for All: Indians, Europeans, and the Remaking of Early America* by Colin G. Calloway. And if the ethnohistorical approach is tracked in terms of nineteenth-century materials there is Joel W. Mar-



tin's *Sacred Revolt: The Muskogees' Struggle for a New World*, a postcolonialist study of the Creek revolt of 1813–1814.

More explicit studies on the Christianization of Indian peoples include Henry Warner Bowden's *American Indians and Christian Missions: Studies in Cultural Conflict* and George E. Tinker's *Missionary Conquest: The Gospel and Native American Cultural Genocide*, both of them—as their subtitles suggest—conflict histories, although the Bowden volume is more even-handed. The classic exploration of Protestant missionization of the Indians for the early national and antebellum (pre-Civil War) period in United States history is Robert F. Berkhofer's *Salvation and the Savage: An Analysis of Protestant Missions and American Indian Response, 1787–1862*. A more specialized study of missionization for much of the same period may be found in William G. McLoughlin's *Cherokees and Missionaries, 1789–1839*.

In the seventeenth century, the English people who settled the British North Atlantic colonies that later became the United States were, when churched, mostly either Anglicans (members of the Church of England) or Nonconformists (Puritans in New England, who became denominationally Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and Baptists; Quakers in Pennsylvania). The study of New England Puritanism, in particular, became a kind of cottage industry in the study of American religion, beginning with the work of Perry Miller and Alan Heimert.

Miller, with a background in literary studies, resuscitated American Puritan scholarship with his inquiries into the life of the (religious) mind in New England, beginning in 1933 with his first book *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts, 1630–1650* and then moving on to a series of works that are perennially cited in Puritan studies—often by the late twentieth century to take issue with them. Nonetheless, Miller's *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century*, *The New England Mind: From Colony to Province*, and his still-cogent collection of essays *Errand into the Wilderness* are important sources for understanding both the Puritans and the revival of interest in them. By the mid-1960s, Miller's corpus was joined by the work of Alan Heimert in *Religion and the American Mind: From the Great Awakening to the Revolution*. The Heimert thesis argued that the evangelical Great Awakening (the first major and pervasive American period of religious revival in the 1740s) provided a major impetus for the later political amalgamation of the British Atlantic colonies that became the United States.

The role of religious ideas in New England Puritan culture has also been explored in two vintage works by historian Edmund S. Morgan,



The Puritan Dilemma: The Story of John Winthrop (the first governor of the Massachusetts Bay colony) and *Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* (on the Calvinist notion of divine election for salvation). Later studies, however, have focused more on the social and political implications of religious ideas, following the Heimert more than the Miller lead, but doing so with a revisionist methodological turn that has sought to provide a more comprehensive cultural understanding of religious ideas. Thus, the role of Puritan millennialism has commanded attention in these works. For instance, James West Davidson's *The Logic of Millennial Thought: Eighteenth-Century New England* points toward eighteenth-century American patriots' religious estimate of the American Revolution as a millennial event. In turn, Nathan O. Hatch argues still more closely the case for "civil millennialism" in the American Revolution in his book *The Sacred Cause of Liberty: Republican Thought and the Millennium in Revolutionary New England*. And in *Sons of the Fathers: The Civil Religion of the American Revolution*, Catherine L. Albanese, using largely New England materials, argues for the millennialism and analyzes the general religious terms on which the Revolution was fought. This ascribed millennialism as a source of social activism, however, is in part disputed by the later thesis of Theodore Dwight Bozeman, who in *To Live Ancient Lives: The Primitivist Dimension in Puritanism* concludes that the earliest American Puritans wanted to restore a biblical world, not inaugurate a worldly millennium.

Other New England studies have continued to chisel away at the history-of-ideas orientation from a variety of perspectives. With an eye to performatory context, Harry S. Stout, for example, in *The New England Mind: Preaching and Religious Culture in Colonial New England*, has traced the role of pulpit rhetoric not only for prominent ministers and printed sermons but also among lesser lights, with their handwritten sermon drafts. His work nonetheless provides one more argument for the religious underpinnings of Revolutionary-War ideology.

An older work by Richard L. Bushman, *From Puritan to Yankee: Character and the Social Order in Connecticut, 1690–1765*, drew connections between social and economic stresses in the Connecticut Valley and the rise of the Great Awakening. More concerned with earlier religious practice in a Puritan context than with the later revival excitement is Charles E. Hambrick-Stowe's *The Practice of Piety: Puritan Devotional Disciplines in Seventeenth-Century New England*. In a far different reading of piety, Amanda Porterfield's *Female Piety in Puritan New England: The Emergence of Religious Humanism*, explores a spirituality of surrender



among both women and men. And in still another turn away from the history-of-ideas approach, literary scholar Andrew Delbanco, in *The Puritan Ordeal*, like Bushman and Porterfield suggests the emotional fallout of Puritanism, here as its early consensus on sin and grace broke down. Meanwhile, in *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England*, historian David D. Hall veers away from exclusive preoccupation with high religious culture to consider the role of magical beliefs among ministers and, especially, the populace.

Concern for the world of magic, the occult, and the metaphysical has attracted the efforts of scholars, especially in the now-notorious case of the Salem witchcraft epidemic and early New England witchcraft beliefs in general. For a more or less exclusive focus on events at Salem Village in 1692, Chadwick Hansen's narrative study *Witchcraft at Salem* is a useful introduction. More sociologically oriented is the work of Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft*, which sees the witchcraft episode in terms of the social and economic tensions between different parts of Salem town. These books may be supplemented by other and more recent works that move out into more general cultural study. Among them may be cited John Putnam Demos's *Entertaining Satan: Witchcraft and the Culture of Early New England*; Richard Weisman's *Witchcraft, Magic, and Religion in Seventeenth-Century Massachusetts*; and Richard Godbeer's *The Devil's Dominion: Magic and Religion in Early New England*—all of them offering intellectual and social history that seeks to understand the sources that generated witchcraft beliefs.

For the other colonies, there has been less work on religion, but a few important studies may be noted. Among them, for the Virginia colony the most frequently cited work is Rhys Isaac's *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740–1790*, which moves from the end of the colonial to the beginning of the early national era. Isaac connects religious revival and political revolution as he illumines the profound spiritual changes that occurred during the period. Mechal Sobel's work, already listed above, forms a companion volume to this one. Virginia was officially an Anglican colony, unlike the New England colonies, and for this aspect of the colonial religious experience John Frederick Woolverton's *Colonial Anglicanism in North America* is a useful study, encompassing the South as well as New York, where Anglicans also flourished. The general role of Anglicanism—and especially the fear of Anglican bishops in the American colonies and its political implications for the beginning of the American Revolution—is explored in Carl Bridenbaugh's *Mitre and*



Sceptre: Transatlantic Faiths, Ideas, Personalities, and Politics, 1689–1775.

For the Pennsylvania colony, the classic study is that of Frederick Barnes Tolles, *Meeting House and Counting House: The Quaker Merchants of Colonial Philadelphia, 1682–1763*, which argues the case for the worldly wealth that Quaker religiosity seemed to foster. That connection is pursued forcefully in a comparative framework by historical sociologist E. Digby Baltzell in his *Puritan Boston and Quaker Philadelphia: Two Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Class Authority and Leadership*, a work that contrasts the outward- and public-turning nature of Puritan religious values with the more inward-directed and privatistic ones of the Philadelphia Quakers.

In terms of more general studies of colonial religion in a social and political context, a work to notice is Patricia U. Bonomi's *Under the Cope of Heaven: Religion, Society, and Politics in Colonial America*, a revisionist study that takes issue with the long-held scholarly truism that religion waned from seventeenth-century strength to eighteenth-century weakness in the era of the American Revolution. Her reading of the vigor of religion in the Revolutionary-War era is supported by the sweeping work of two sociologists, Roger Finke and Rodney Stark, who in *The Churching of America, 1776–1990: Winners and Losers in Our Religious Economy* employ rational-choice theory to argue the progressive success of the nation's religious denominations in the course of its history.

A more complex reading of early and antebellum America is provided by the work of colonial historian Jon Butler in *Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People*. Here he moves away from an evangelical thesis to explain religious success. Instead, he scrutinizes the role of mainline denominations in shaping American religion and undermining the magical universe of early America that competed with Christianity. That magical universe in eighteenth-century America is the subject of Herbert Leventhal's *In the Shadow of the Enlightenment: Occultism and Renaissance Science in Eighteenth-Century America*. This book provides a comprehensive introduction to its theme, arguing that magical beliefs and behaviors were shared by elites and ordinary people alike at the beginning of the century, but disdained by cultural leaders at century's end.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

If we leave behind the world of early America and turn to works that deal with the late eighteenth and the nineteenth century, Nathan O. Hatch's *The Democratization of American Christianity* is probably the sin-



gle most important study for the early period. His revisionist thesis regarding the rise of a new cohort of religious entrepreneurs encompasses the so-called “Christian” movement (which led to the Disciples of Christ denomination and later the Churches of Christ), the Methodists, the Baptists, the African American churches, and the Mormons.

The world that Hatch invites readers to enter is one in which religious “enthusiasm,” as it was then pejoratively called, was seemingly ubiquitous. Finding characteristic cultural expression through revivalism and dependent often on Protestant techniques of mass evangelism, this American evangelical effervescence has formed the subject of a number of important works. A definitive overview beginning from the nineteenth century may be found in William G. McLoughlin’s *Modern Revivalism: Charles Grandison Finney to Billy Graham*. More sweeping and bolder, if briefer, is McLoughlin’s later *Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform: An Essay on Religion and Social Change in America, 1607–1977*, with its adoption of an anthropological thesis to explain the apparently cyclical pattern of American revivals. The social and economic ethos that helped to produce revivals, as we have already seen in the work of Richard Bushman for the eighteenth-century Connecticut Valley, is an important consideration. For the nineteenth century, we may turn to another community study that deals with similar themes and has become a kind of classic. This is Paul E. Johnson’s *A Shopkeeper’s Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815–1837*.

Emotion itself becomes a commodity in John Corrigan’s *Business of the Heart: Religion and Emotion in the Nineteenth Century*. By contrast, arguing not from society to religion, but instead from religion to society is Timothy L. Smith’s also-classic study, *Revivalism and Social Reform: American Protestantism on the Eve of the Civil War*. Meanwhile, the experiential dimension of the revivals fans out into more general considerations of religious experience in Ann Taves’s *Fits, Trances, and Visions: Experiencing Religion and Explaining Experience from Wesley to James*. This well-regarded study embraces Puritanism and early evangelicalism, especially Methodism, as well as later phenomena—spiritualism, pentecostalism, and even psychology.

The scope of Taves’s work, however, should not obscure the fact that evangelicalism was central to the religious commitments of the nineteenth century, and the study of American Protestant evangelicalism from then until now has occupied the time and attention of so many American religious historians that only a few more may be cited here. For a comprehensive and consensus overview there is Martin E. Marty’s



Protestantism in the United States: Righteous Empire, with its thesis of an emerging “two-party system” in American Protestantism (liberals and conservatives) in the late nineteenth century. After this sweeping narrative, it is possible to move in any number of directions. Keeping the Marty focus on the social and political leads in the direction of more specialized community studies of how, under closer observation, these processes work, as in historical sociologist David G. Hackett’s *The Rude Hand of Innovation: Religion and Social Order in Albany, New York, 1652–1836*.

Moving into broader, yet still specialized, regional studies that foreground evangelicalism, particularly in the nineteenth century, there is the authoritative study by Donald G. Mathews, *Religion in the Old South*, which surveys evangelical Protestantism in the region from 1750 to 1860. With a focus on Methodism for much of the same period and region, the more recent *The Way of the Cross Leads Home: The Domestication of American Methodism*, by A. Gregory Schneider, provides a strongly cultural approach. For studies of evangelical Protestantism among African Americans in the nineteenth-century South, Albert J. Raboteau’s *Slave Religion: The ‘Invisible Institution’ in the Antebellum South* is the best single source. This may be supplemented by the older work of Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made*, which deals with much of the same material.

For the Appalachian region, often considered part of the South, but with a regional culture of its own, there is *Appalachian Mountain Religion: A History* by Deborah Vansau McCauley, which carries the evangelical story well into the twentieth century. And for a nineteenth-century study of evangelical efforts in the California West, Laurie F. Maffly-Kipp’s *Religion and Society in Frontier California* offers an important resource.

Evangelicalism often contained, too, the primitivist impulse—that is, the desire to return to Christianity as it was practiced in the earliest (hence, “primitive”) New Testament church. Best exemplified in the new nineteenth-century movement that first eschewed a denominational label and simply called itself “Christian” (later the Disciples of Christ and the Churches of Christ), primitivism—or restorationism (for *restoring* the primitive church)—has attracted considerable scholarship, including, for the Puritans, the already-cited Bozeman study, *To Live Ancient Lives*. Among the other works that have appeared, *Illusions of Innocence: Protestant Primitivism in America, 1630–1875* by Richard T. Hughes and C. Leonard Allen is the most comprehensive monograph.



In addition, two multi-authored collections of essays edited by Richard T. Hughes are helpful in detailing the scope and seriousness of the primitivist movement. These are *The American Quest for the Primitive Church* and the later *The Primitive Church in the Modern World*, books in which the authors range over several centuries even though the “Christian” model from which they work is especially a product of the nineteenth.

This is the place, too, to notice the importance of women in mainstream evangelicalism and in other movements of the time. Recent studies of evangelicalism—such as Laurie Maffly-Kipp’s already-cited one—take pains to notice evangelical women. The most comprehensive account to feature white and black evangelical women prominently—along with many other women including Jews, Catholics, and Native Americans—is Susan Hill Lindley’s “*You Have Stept Out of Your Place.*” *A History of Women and Religion in America*. For a single history of the leadership class among mostly evangelical women straddling the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the place to turn is Catherine A. Brekus’s *Strangers and Pilgrims: Female Preaching in America, 1740–1845*. Useful, likewise, is the volume edited by Susan Juster and Lisa MacFarlane, *A Mighty Baptism: Race, Gender, and the Creation of American Protestantism*. The larger nineteenth-century canvas within which evangelical women found their place, at least in New England, forms the subject of Nancy F. Cott’s often-cited *The Bonds of Womanhood: “Woman’s Sphere” in New England, 1780–1835*. Meanwhile, for the later nineteenth century, Colleen McDannell’s *The Christian Home in Victorian America, 1840–1900* provides a comparative study of mainstream Protestant and Roman Catholic women. For the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham gives an in-depth account of African American Baptist women in *Righteous Discontent: The Women’s Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880–1920*.

No study of evangelicalism and restorationism for the early nineteenth century would be complete without some examination of their transmutation into religious forms that are related, but also “other”. The paradigmatic case is that of Mormonism, or—to give it its official name—the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Studies of Mormonism usually begin with an account of its founder Joseph Smith. For this, Fawn McKay Brodie’s *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet* is frequently cited, but the more recent work of Mormon historian Richard L. Bushman *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* should also be consulted. For the tradition itself, Jan Shipps, in *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition*,



supplies an account from a religious studies perspective thoroughly conversant with the comparative history of religion. Her work—which reads Mormonism as in some sense a restoration of the biblical Old Testament—has been well received by scholars who are themselves Mormons, although these same scholars tend to stress the continuity of their church with Christianity. Klaus J. Hansen has likewise provided an even-handed treatment that explores Mormonism in the context of American culture in his *Mormonism and the American Experience*. Two notable more recent works on early Mormonism have focused on its inception in a magical, metaphysical, and occult world. These are D. Michael Quinn's *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View* and John L. Brooke's *The Refiner's Fire: The Making of Mormon Cosmology, 1644–1844*.

In the nineteenth-century and later United States, other distinct alternatives to evangelical Protestantism also flourished and increased. Indeed, the much-noticed pluralism of the American present was also a pluralism of the American past. That pluralism begins within Anglo-Protestantism itself in the development of its liberal tradition, a development that came to full expression after the Civil War but had its roots much earlier in an eighteenth-century world. The classic source on this intellectual, philosophical, and spiritual culture is Henry F. May's *The Enlightenment in America*. In the Revolutionary War era, men who were social and political leaders or ambitious to be seen as and with such, joined Freemasonic lodges. Steven C. Bullock details some of the social dynamic of all of this without neglecting the religious worldview of Freemasonry in *Revolutionary Brotherhood: Freemasonry and the Transformation of the American Social Order, 1730–1840*. And using homogeneous Connecticut as her base, Dorothy Ann Lipson explores the spiritual culture of Freemasonry for some of the same time period in *Freemasonry in Federalist Connecticut, 1789–1835*. Both studies include the rise of Antimasonry in the late 1820s.

By 1825, liberal Christians were organizing in the American Unitarian Association. The outplay of their Enlightenment rationalism and moralism is examined through the lens of the moral philosophy taught at Harvard University in Daniel Walker Howe's *The Unitarian Conscience: Harvard Moral Philosophy, 1805–1861*. But there were liberal religionists to the left of conventional Unitarians, a number of them, in fact, former Unitarians. Paul F. Boller, Jr., introduces these New England Transcendentalists and their thought in his *American Transcendentalism, 1830–1860: An Intellectual Inquiry*. In turn, Catherine L. Albanese explicitly supplies a religious framework within which to read



the Transcendentalism of Ralph Waldo Emerson and his followers in *Corresponding Motion: Transcendental Religion and the New America*. The Transcendentalists, it should be noted, were nineteenth-century pioneers in exploring Asian religions. Their work in that regard is scrutinized in *American Transcendentalism and Asian Religions* by Arthur Versluis. And Carl T. Jackson broadens the scope of the nineteenth-century inquiry concerning Asia in America in *The Oriental Religions and American Thought: Nineteenth-Century Explorations*.

In the mid-nineteenth century, American spiritualism (attempted communication with spirits of the dead) began to spring up on the fringes of liberal Christianity. R. Laurence Moore examines some of the history of this spiritualist growth and some of the phenomena to which it leads in his *In Search of White Crows: Spiritualism, Parapsychology, and American Culture*. Bret E. Carroll, in a newer study, goes over some of the same ground and especially explores the ritual life of spiritualists in his *Spiritualism in Antebellum America*. And in *Radical Spirits: Spiritualism and Women's Rights in Nineteenth-Century America*, Ann Braude demonstrates the links between trance speech among female spiritualist mediums and their later public speaking and social activism on behalf of women's rights.

Religious experimentation became totalistic when it encompassed complete lifestyle changes in communitarian living arrangements. The Transcendentalists had created two communes that expressed their spiritual commitments in Fruitlands and Brook Farm, this last later becoming a "phalanx" dedicated to the radical social vision of Frenchman Charles Fourier. These intentional communities were joined by numerous others, beginning from late eighteenth-century Shaker groups and continuing through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries into the present. Some of these were closely tied to overtly religious sects; others were more secularizing in their expressions of spirituality. For the earlier communes, Mark Holloway's *Heavens on Earth: Utopian Communities in America, 1680–1880* provides some introduction. For later ones until 1914, there is Robert S. Fogarty's *All Things New: American Communes and Utopian Movements, 1860–1914*. The definitive account of the Shakers is that by Stephen J. Stein, already noted above. And for the well-known nineteenth-century Oneida Perfectionists, with their practices of complex marriage and male continence, there is Maren Lockwood Carden's *Oneida: Utopian Community to Modern Corporation*. The sexual practices at Oneida, as well as among the Shakers and the Mormons, are explored in *Religion and Sexuality: Three American Communal Experiments of the Nineteenth Century* by Lawrence Foster. Finally, for sociological analysis of



communes and their inhabitants, Rosabeth Moss Kanter's *Commitment and Community: Communes and Utopias in Sociological Perspective* is the place to turn.

By the later part of the nineteenth century, Protestant liberalism was moving in directions other than Transcendentalism, spiritualism, and intentional communities. The most radical liberals were called modernists, and William R. Hutchison has detailed their story in his classic work *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism*. Meanwhile, Jon Roberts has explored the impact of Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* (1858) on Anglo-Protestant elites in *Darwinism and the Divine in America: Protestant Intellectual and Organic Evolutionism, 1859–1900*. James Turner has explicated the role of Protestants themselves in the rise of agnosticism and atheism in his *Without God, Without Creed: The Origins of Unbelief in America*.

THE GILDED AGE AND THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

By the dawn of the twentieth century, Anglo-Protestantism was experiencing a series of intellectual, social, and political challenges and was slowly beginning to erode, as the nation became religiously more diverse and more secular. In a landmark volume edited by William R. Hutchison, *Between the Times: The Travail of the Protestant Establishment in America, 1900–1960*, Hutchison and a group of scholarly colleagues begin to explore the process. And for the end of the century, sociologists Wade Clark Roof and William McKinney, in *American Mainline Religion: Its Changing Shape and Future*, document the changes. But this is to get ahead of the story. Post-Civil-War America, in the period often called the Gilded Age (because of surface prosperity, but a contemporary sense of spiritual malaise beneath), saw the birth of a series of new metaphysical movements. At the same time, building on earlier growth and development, Roman Catholicism and Judaism provided spiritual comfort to numerous of the nation's immigrants and to their American progeny. Likewise, the two-party Protestant system that Marty wrote about in *Protestantism in the United States* saw a proliferation of alternatives in its own right wing, alternatives that would continue into the twentieth century.

Among the new metaphysical movements after the Civil War, the one that has commanded the most scrutiny is Christian Science. For an introduction to the general context in which it grew, J. Stillson Judah's *The History and Philosophy of the Metaphysical Movements in America*



stands virtually alone, with its treatment of spiritualism, theosophy, and New Thought. And for an introduction to Mary Baker Eddy, the founder of Christian Science, and to her new healing religion set within the framework of the late nineteenth-century mind cure movement, readers can turn to Gail Thain Parker's *Mind Cure in New England: From the Civil War to World War I*. A theologically oriented introduction from a Christian Science perspective may be found in Stephen Gottschalk's *The Emergence of Christian Science in American Religious Life*, with its introductory chapter particularly useful in its contextual approach.

The New Thought movement, which grew up in response to and alongside of Christian Science, has its chronicler in Charles S. Braden, whose *Spirits in Rebellion: The Rise and Development of New Thought*, although somewhat dated, is the most comprehensive single source. In more recent work, Sandra Sizer Frankiel explores the efflorescence of metaphysical religion in the California West in *California's Spiritual Frontiers: Religious Alternatives in Anglo-Protestantism, 1850–1910*. With women so prominently featured in the leadership and membership of the New Thought movement, Beryl Satter's *Each Mind a Kingdom: American Women, Sexual Purity, and the New Thought Movement, 1875–1920*, is especially helpful. Finally, a number of essays in the collection edited by Catherine Wessinger, *Women's Leadership in Marginal Religions: Explorations Outside the Mainstream* likewise deal with New Thought, Christian Science, and theosophy (see below).

Mary Baker Eddy's healing religion arose in a context in which religious healing was pursued through various means, some of them physical and some psychological. Two books by Robert C. Fuller detail these themes. On the one hand, his *Alternative Medicine and American Religious Life* ranges from sectarian forms of physical healing to osteopathy, chiropractic, and even psychic healing. On the other, Fuller's *Mesmerism and the American Cure of Souls* tracks connections between older traditions of spiritual direction—the “cure of souls”—and the growth of American psychology, with mesmerism as the mediating phenomenon.

The same year—1875—that Mary Baker Eddy was first publishing her ideas about the nature of disease and the spiritual sources of its cure saw the foundation of the Theosophical Society in New York City through the cooperative efforts of a Russian immigrant, Madame Helena P. Blavatsky, and a former U.S. government official, lawyer, and agriculturalist, Henry S. Olcott. In *Ancient Wisdom Revived: A History of the Theosophical Movement*, Bruce F. Campbell provides an account of



theosophy's foundation. Meanwhile, for a comparative study that links metaphysically oriented nineteenth-century movements to twentieth-century new religious movements, including the New Age movement, there is Mary Farrell Bednarowski's *New Religions and the Theological Imagination in America*.

With their mystical pragmatism, the metaphysical movements sought spiritual good in tangible earthly life, and this orientation made them appealing not only to Anglo Americans but also to some Roman Catholics and Jews, whose respective theologies emphasized in different ways the goodness of creation. Both Roman Catholics and Jews mostly reached the United States as part of huge ethnic cohorts in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, although both groups had small representations in colonial America. For Roman Catholics, the social historical work of Jay P. Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience: A History from Colonial Times to the Present*, offers a good comprehensive introduction. A more recent overview by Chester Gillis, *Roman Catholicism in America*, combines historical narrative with exposition of beliefs and description of institutional aspects of the church. The nineteenth-century immigrant saga of Catholicism is explored, in the case of New York City, in Jay P. Dolan's *The Immigrant Church: New York's Irish and German Catholics, 1815–1865*, while Catholic processes of acculturation to Protestant America form the subject of his *Catholic Revivalism: The American Experience, 1830–1900*.

If we track the immigrant story through to the end of the twentieth century, new Latino/a presence assumes the centrality that Irish, German, Italian, and Polish immigrations did previously. Dolan, along with Allan Figueroa Deck, offers an edited volume in *Hispanic Catholic Culture in the U.S.: Issues and Concerns* to help explore the new terrain. Ethnographic works by Thomas A. Tweed, and Darryl V. Catherine, cited below, also supply insight into Latino/a religious culture in the U.S. Meanwhile, ethnographically oriented studies by Robert Anthony Orsi, also cited below, explore various facets of the older European immigration and the religious practices of ordinary people. For Native Americans who are Catholics, Christopher Vecsey has produced three substantive volumes: *On the Padres' Trail*, *The Paths of Kateri's Kin*, and *Where the Two Roads Meet*—all under the general title *American Indian Catholics*. And in his sociologically shaped *Parish Boundaries: The Catholic Encounter with Race in the Twentieth-Century Urban North*, John T. McGreevy has examined the contact zone in urban centers between the children of older European ethnics and African Americans.



The presence of a strong conservative movement within American Catholicism in the wake of the worldwide Vatican Council II (1962–1965) is studied in a series of essays edited by Mary Jo Weaver and R. Scott Appleby under the title *Being Right: Conservative Catholics in America* and also in the Darryl Catherine ethnography *Conservative Catholicism and the Carmelites* noted below. For its part, a Catholic liberal left became a feature of twentieth-century Catholic religious life and left noticeable marks, especially in the 1960s, a theme explored in Charles A. Meconis's *With Clumsy Grace: The American Catholic Left, 1961–1975*. An older work on Catholic liberalism is Robert D. Cross's *The Emergence of Liberal Catholicism in America*, while sociologist and Roman Catholic priest Andrew M. Greeley, in *The Catholic Myth: The Behavior and Beliefs of American Catholics*, uses statistical data and intuitive readings to explain late twentieth-century American Catholicism.

For Judaism, summary introductions are provided in Nathan Glazer's *American Judaism* and Joseph L. Blau's *Judaism in America: From Curiosity to Third Faith*. Studies of Jewishness, the ethnicity, are more common than studies of Judaism, the religion, but studies of Jewish ethnicity must invariably pay some attention to religious themes and issues. Among these ethnically oriented books, the five-volume series *The Jewish People in America*, commissioned by the American Jewish Historical Society offers a comprehensive historical narrative from a centrist perspective emphasizing the Jewish contribution to American life. Works in the series include Eli Faber's *A Time for Planting: The First Migration, 1654–1820*; Hasia R. Diner's *A Time for Gathering: The Second Migration, 1820–1880*; Gerald Sorin's *A Time for Building: The Third Migration, 1880–1920*; Henry L. Feingold's *A Time for Searching: Entering the Mainstream, 1920–1945*; and Edward S. Shapiro, *A Time for Healing: American Jewry since World War II*.

A number of useful works on twentieth-century Judaism have been written from a sociological perspective. Among them may be noted two studies of Orthodoxy (the most conservative branch of American Judaism) in William B. Helmreich's *The World of the Yeshiva: An Intimate Portrait of Orthodox Jewry* and Samuel C. Heilman's *Synagogue Life: A Study in Symbolic Interaction*. Heilman has provided a more recent and more comprehensive survey in his *Portrait of American Jews: The Last Half of the Twentieth Century*, while Jack Wertheimer has offered his own sociological portrait in *A People Divided: Judaism in Contemporary America*, written from a centrist point of view. His edited volume, *The American Synagogue: A Sanctuary Transformed*, points to the changes



within Judaism by the late twentieth century. Besides Orthodox and Conservative Jewry, the third major American branch of Judaism is Reform. The Reconstructionist movement, which arose out of Conservatism, is also often noted. All four of these traditions are surveyed in Marc Lee Raphael's *Profiles in American Judaism: The Reform, Conservative, Orthodox, and Reconstructionist Traditions in Historical Perspective*. Michael A. Meyer contributes a history of the Reform movement that is germane in his *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism*.

Even as American Jews diversified among themselves, however, much to their general dismay, they have been subject to Christian missionary overtures. In *Evangelizing the American Jew*, David Max Eichhorn furnishes an account of these Christian efforts for the United States and Canada from the colonial period through much of the twentieth century. More tightly drawn temporally and more recent, Yaakov Ariel's *Evangelizing the Chosen People: Missions to the Jews in America, 1880–2000* presents an account of Protestant evangelization up to the twenty-first century.

With these studies of missions, the Protestant evangelical presence in the United States is again at stage center. Protestant missionary efforts, however, have been directed not only toward American Jews but also to inhabitants of foreign nations. For virtually the same period of which Ariel writes, Joel A. Carpenter and Wilbert R. Shenk have collected a series of essays on the foreign-mission theme in their edited volume *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880–1980*. More generally, William R. Hutchison has explored the connections between missionary behavior and general religious thought in *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions*.

Already in the nineteenth century, Protestant presence was undergoing a series of transformations, as has already to some extent been seen. Here, though, is the place to point to the nineteenth-century birth of adventism among the Millerites, followers of lay Baptist and former deist William Miller, who prophesied the second coming of Jesus in 1843 and 1844. Later millennialist groups such as the Seventh-day Adventists and, less directly, the Jehovah's Witnesses are related to the Millerite movement. For Millerism itself in the context of American culture, there is Ruth Alden Doan's *The Miller Heresy, Millennialism, and American Culture*. This may be supplemented with a collection of essays edited by Ronald L. Numbers and Jonathan M. Butler, *The Disappointed: Millerism and Millenarianism in the Nineteenth Century*. For the later



history of Seventh-day Adventism, *Seeking a Sanctuary: Seventh-day Adventism and the American Dream* by Malcolm Bull and Keith Lockhart provides a useful account. And for the Jehovah's Witnesses, former Witness M. James Penton offers historical, doctrinal, and sociological perspectives in *Apocalypse Delayed: The Story of Jehovah's Witnesses*.

Beyond adventism, the nineteenth century also saw the rise of the holiness movement and, from it, to an important extent the religio-cultural phenomena that would lead to pentecostalism. In this context, Vinson Synan's classic work, now in its second edition, is a place to begin. In *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century*, Synan gives a narrative account that is still useful. Aspects of holiness and pentecostalism are insightfully treated in Ann Taves's already-cited *Fits, Trances, and Visions*, while for the nineteenth-century holiness movement there is Melvin Easterday Dieter's *The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century*. A theological reading of pentecostalism and its connections to the nineteenth century is provided in Donald W. Dayton's *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, while its social roots in a culture of deprivation are explored in Robert Mapes Anderson's *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism*. Among those poor and "disinherited," African Americans stood out strongly as early pentecostal leaders, exemplified by William J. Seymour, the famed African American preacher of the legendary Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles from 1906 to 1909. Cheryl J. Sanders tracks the African American trajectory of holiness and pentecostalism in *Saints in Exile: The Holiness-Pentecostal Experience in African American Religion and Culture*.

Among recent works on pentecostalism, Edith Blumhofer offers a study that brings traditional church history in touch with more contemporary cultural study for what is arguably the most successful pentecostal denomination—the Assemblies of God—in *Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture*. And Grant Wacker furnishes a thoroughly cultural approach in his definitive *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*, with its argument regarding how pentecostals linked idealism to pragmatism.

By the 1920s, when pentecostalism was assuming form in various denominational organizations, fundamentalism was also becoming a strong conservative force within Protestantism. It was, however, in its early manifestations, considerably different in emphasis from pentecostalism, drawing on biblical literalism more than experiential ecstasy. Contemporary study of American fundamentalism as religion begins



with the work of Ernest R. Sandeen in his comparative volume *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism, 1800–1930*, which traces the millennial sources of fundamentalism and its amalgamation with a theology of biblical “facts” emanating from Princeton University. More social historical in orientation is the work, a decade later in 1980, of George M. Marsden in *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shape of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism, 1870–1925*, with its thesis that fundamentalism represented a form of militant antimodernism under Protestant evangelical auspices. The millennial world of early and later fundamentalism is explored in Timothy P. Weber’s *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming: American Premillennialism, 1875–1982*, while in his book *When Time Shall Be No More: Prophecy Belief in Modern American Culture*, Paul Boyer focuses on fundamentalist millennialism in the late twentieth century.

Works on American fundamentalism continue to offer new readings in an era in which study of fundamentalisms has become worldwide. Joel A. Carpenter traces the middle history of U.S. fundamentalism when, during a period of apparent decline after 1925, the movement regrouped and nourished itself in a separate subculture. Carpenter’s *Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism* argues that there was no religious “depression” in fundamentalist circles during that time. Fuller Theological Seminary was part of the fundamentalist efflorescence in theology, and George Marsden, in *Reforming Fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicalism*, tells that particular story. Meanwhile, a number of important works have appeared on the theme of gender within a fundamentalist setting. Among them may be cited Betty A. DeBerg’s *Ungodly Women: Gender and the First Wave of American Fundamentalism*, which demonstrates that gender issues were central to early American fundamentalism, and Margaret Lamberts Bendroth’s more comprehensive *Fundamentalism and Gender: 1875 to the Present*.

The 1920s saw not only the presence of fundamentalism but also the strong absence of immigrants from numerous nations, especially Asia. This was because of the quota system favoring Europeans (and northern ones at that) enacted by the American Congress in the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924 and because of a series of exclusionary acts directed specifically toward Asians. When, in 1965, this legislation was replaced with a more even-handed law, the nation’s gates were open much more widely to Asian immigrants and to immigrants from other non-European nations as well. Moreover, since the new law favored cultural elites, the immigrants who now came brought with them a strong



investment in maintaining their former cultures including their religions. Beyond this, the immigrants came to an America that was growing increasingly comfortable with diversity in a variety of contexts. As early as 1955, when Jewish sociologist Will Herberg first wrote *Protestant—Catholic—Jew*, there was increasing recognition that the United States could no longer be described as a singularly Anglo-Protestant nation. At the very least, ran the new argument, a national tripartite consensus had formed. By the early twenty-first century, however, that model of triple alliance can no longer be considered adequate for describing the new social reality, as detailed in Diana L. Eck's *A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation*. Just as important, pluralism prevails across all religious bodies in the United States, a point made repeatedly in Charles H. Lippy's *Pluralism Comes of Age: American Religious Culture in the Twentieth Century*.

As we have already seen, such pluralism is indeed a strong feature of Christianity, manifested in the presence of Roman Catholicism and numerous and varied Protestant and Protestant-related groups. But the third major worldwide branch of Christianity—Eastern Orthodoxy—is now a major version of Christianity in the U.S. as well. The cultural heritage of immigrants from a series of national groups, generally from Eastern Europe and Russia, Orthodoxy has not received sufficient general scholarly attention, and there are few descriptive historical studies of the Orthodox experience in the U.S. Nonetheless, the recent *Orthodox Christians in America* by John H. Erickson, although directed to college undergraduates and secondary school students, is quite serviceable for a comprehensive narrative.

Nowhere, however, is the religious diversity and pluralism in the U.S. more apparent than in the visible presence of peoples who have arrived on these shores from Asia and the Middle East and who bring with them the religious traditions of their lands of origin. The dramatic "forevision" of this essentially twentieth-century story occurred, in an elite setting, at the World's Parliament of Religion in 1893, a meeting held in conjunction with the Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Richard Hughes Seager, in *The World's Parliament of Religions: The East/West Encounter, Chicago, 1893*, narrates that cultural event with special attention to the role of Asians.

Probably the oldest of the non-Christian immigrants, aside from the Jews, were participants in African tribal religions and Muslims, since black slaves who were Muslims were imported to the British North



Atlantic colonies and then the United States from the coast of West Africa. Allan D. Austin introduces some seventy-five of these forced migrants from 1730 to 1860, several of them literate in Arabic, in *African Muslims in Antebellum America: Transatlantic Stories and Spiritual Struggles*. In *Servants of Allah: African Muslims Enslaved in the Americas*, Sylviane A. Diouf adds to the story. By the twentieth century, there were sources other than fading memory for black Islam. The new Islam that emerged was at first decidedly unorthodox, coming as part of an African American search for a spiritual home in the midst of alienation from Christianity and culminating in Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam. C. Eric Lincoln, a sociologist, tells this story in *The Black Muslims in America*, now in its third edition. Later works that also tell the story include Aminah Beverly McCloud's *African American Islam* and Richard Brent Turner's *Islam in the African American Experience*. The fuller African American story, though, is one of a gradual move toward Islamic orthodoxy in an America that, by the late 1960s, was welcoming more and more Middle Eastern and other foreign Muslims as immigrants. Drawing on numerous interviews and observations, anthropologist Robert Dannin chronicles this now mostly orthodoxy experience in *Black Pilgrimage to Islam*. Meanwhile, in his *In the Name of Elijah Muhammad: Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam*, Mattias Gardell renders an account of the spin-off movement from the old Nation of Islam that Farrakhan presently leads.

If we consider an "ethnic" version of a religious tradition to be that carried to this country by immigrants and continued here by their progeny, the ethnic Muslim experience in America is narrated, along with the African American, in Jane I. Smith's comprehensive account, *Islam in America*. Likewise, Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad has edited a collection of essays on American Islam, mostly the ethnic variety, in *The Muslims of America*. Together Haddad and Jane Idelman Smith have edited *Mission to America: Five Islamic Sectarian Communities in North America* and, also, *Muslim Communities in North America*. And for Baha'i, the Iranian offshoot of Islam that is a religion in its own right, there is Robert H. Stockman's two-volume *The Baha'i Faith in America*.

Some material on Pakistani Muslims in the U.S. is contained in Raymond Brady Williams's *Religions of Immigrants from India and Pakistan: New Threads in the American Tapestry*, but this work serves, more centrally, as an introduction to American Hinduism in its numerous ethnic versions. Alongside these Hinduisms carried by new immigrants to the U.S. are "export" versions of Hinduism and other Asian and world



traditions—that is, versions that are carried by missionaries to America and/or adopted by individuals who are ethnically and culturally unrelated to the carriers of the host religion. The oldest export version of Hinduism in the United States is Vedanta, which arrived as the Ramakrishna movement in 1893 with Swami Vivekananda and which has its American chronicle in Carl T. Jackson's *Vedanta for the West: The Ramakrishna Movement in the United States*. Various meditation yoga traditions have also found an American home as part of what might be called “guru culture,” as distinct from the “temple culture” of South Asian Hindu immigrants. Probably representative of these American movements is Siddha Yoga, the subject of *Meditation Revolution: A History and Theology of the Siddha Yoga Lineage*, edited by Douglas Renfrew Brooks and colleagues. In the wake of 1965 and a strong increase in the South Asian Hindu presence in the U.S., much work remains to be done.

For Buddhism, a useful general narrative is Rick Fields's *How the Swans Came to the Lake: A Narrative History of Buddhism in America*. The nineteenth-century story of export Buddhism in this nation—Buddhism as adopted or admired by elite Anglo-Americans—is told in Thomas A. Tweed's *The American Encounter with Buddhism, 1844–1912: Victorian Culture and the Limits of Dissent*. For the contemporary scene in the late twentieth century, Charles S. Prebish continues the attention to export Buddhism in *Luminous Passage: The Practice and Study of Buddhism in America*. More comprehensive in scope, encompassing both ethnic and export versions of the tradition, is Richard Hughes Seager's *Buddhism in America*. A collection of essays edited by Charles S. Prebish and Kenneth K. Tanaka, *The Faces of Buddhism in America*, likewise addresses both aspects of Buddhism in the U.S., while Paul David Numrich's ethnographic *Old Wisdom in the New World: Americanization in Two Immigrant Theravada Buddhist Temples* provides an in-depth study of how religious acculturation proceeds in two very different immigrant Buddhist cases. Even as Buddhism has been flourishing, fascination, especially, with Tibetan Buddhism has been an observable cultural phenomenon in the nation. Donald S. Lopez, Jr., analyzes the preoccupation in *Prisoners of Shangri-La: Tibetan Buddhism and the West*.

To invoke Lopez's work is to be turned in the direction of studies of the vernacular, of so-called “popular religion.” Coming after the Peter Williams study of popular religion listed briefly earlier in this essay, more recent work raises questions regarding the concept itself and has moved the discussion into new terms and territory. Methodologically speaking, the most authoritative source for this rethinking is David D.



Hall's edited volume *Lived Religion in America*. Subtitled *Toward a History of Practice*, this work features authors whose individual essays seek to embody cultural and ethnographic approaches, viewing religion as it functions in the lives of people whatever their social and intellectual station. However, a series of works has, in fact, paid attention to "lived religion" both before and after David Hall employed the term. Notable among them are Robert Orsi's historical and ethnographic work in *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem*, on the Italian American Roman Catholic *fiesta* of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, and *Thank You St. Jude: Women's Devotion to the Patron Saint of Hopeless Causes*, on Catholic devotion to Saint Jude Thaddeus promoted by Chicago's National Shrine of St. Jude.

This last—on religious practice among American women—is one among a series of recent ethnographies on the same theme. These works tend to embody sociological insights and methods to more or less extent alongside their historical elements. Among them may be cited R. Marie Griffith's *God's Daughters: Evangelical Women and the Power of Submission*, on the charismatic Women's Aglow Fellowship International; Christel Manning's *God Gave Us the Right: Conservative Catholic, Evangelical Protestant, and Orthodox Jewish Women Grapple with Feminism*; Lynn Davidman's *Tradition in a Rootless World: Women Turn to Orthodox Judaism*; and Debra R. Kaufman's *Rachel's Daughters: Newly Orthodox Jewish Women*—all of which argue for a sense of empowerment among women in conservative traditions. Dealing with a far more liberal religious milieu, Cynthia Eller's *Living in the Lap of the Goddess: The Feminist Spirituality Movement in America* studies the religious groupings that encompass feminist Wicca but broader orientations as well. Finally, Michael F. Brown's *The Channeling Zone: American Spirituality in an Anxious Age* explores the New Age phenomenon of "channeling," a recent variation on nineteenth-century and later American spiritualism that mostly involves women.

Recent ethnographic work has also dwelled on "lived religion" in a variety of ethnic and cultural contexts. The classic congregational ethnography is sociologist R. Stephen Warner's study of a small-town Presbyterian church, *New Wine in Old Wineskins: Evangelicals and Liberals in a Small-Town Church*. Sociologist Nancy Tatom Ammerman has also provided a congregationally oriented study in a more conservative setting in *Bible Believers: Fundamentalists in the Modern World*. Meanwhile, as a more comprehensive version of ethnographic work among conservative Protestants, American religious historian Randall Balmer's



Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory: A Journey into the Evangelical Subculture in America should be noticed.

For African American religion, among examples that may be given, Karen McCarthy Brown's work *Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn* is often cited, while Joseph M. Murphy's *Santería: An African Religion in America* in some ways provides a companion volume but ranges more widely. For Latino/a Catholicism, Thomas A. Tweed's *Our Lady of the Exile: Diasporic Religion at a Cuban Catholic Shrine in Miami* is a model of a work combining historical and ethnographic elements along with methodological reflection. As a more recent ethnography in this area that is at once comparative and historically reflective, there is Darryl V. Catherine's *Conservative Catholicism and the Carmelites: Identity, Ethnicity, and Tradition in the Modern Church*, on the reception of one Latina Roman Catholic order of sisters—and their neo-conservatism—as they teach in various Latino and non-Latino venues throughout the United States.

Among regional Appalachians, with old-style Anglo-Protestant and Calvinist roots and distinctive twists to the legacy, examples of the ethnographic mode are relatively numerous. *Pilgrims of Paradox: Calvinism and Experience among the Primitive Baptists of the Blue Ridge* by James L. Peacock and Ruel W. Tyson, Jr., is a study that may be noticed, along with a series of works by Howard Dorgan, among them *The Old Regular Baptists of Central Appalachia: Brothers and Sisters in Hope and Giving Glory to God in Appalachia: Worship Practices of Six Baptist Subdenominations*. Two recent ethnographic studies of snake handling in Appalachia are Dennis Covington's *Salvation on Sand Mountain: Snake Handling and Redemption in Southern Appalachia* and David L. Kimbrough's *Taking Up Serpents: Snake Handlers of Eastern Kentucky*.

For new religious movements (NRMs), ethnography is often the preferred mode of scholarship. An older example of the genre that is still important is E. Burke Rochford, Jr.'s *Hare Krishna in America*, the work of a sociologist. More theological and also more personal in its mode of questioning is David Toolan's *Facing West from California's Shores: A Jesuit's Journey into New Age Consciousness*. The autobiographical mode likewise organizes actress Shirley MacLaine's best-selling *Out on a Limb*. Participant-observer studies of Wicca and related movements are not hard to find, among them the recent study of Neopagan religious festivals by religious studies scholar Sarah M. Pike, *Earthly Bodies, Magical Selves: Contemporary Pagans and the Search for Community*. This is the place to notice, too, a multi-methodological collection of essays on non-



mainstream religious movements in the edited volume by Timothy Miller, *America's Alternative Religions*. Here the rubric of “new” religious movements is discarded as ambiguous, and the alternative religions represented among the essays encompass Christian and Jewish groups as well as Asian and Middle Eastern ones.

Ethnographic study and focus on religious practice lead toward contemporary sociological and anthropological study of American religion, and in this area resources abound. Often the examination of specific religio-ethnic groups lends itself especially well to such methodologies, as in *African-American Religion in the Twentieth Century: Varieties of Protest and Accommodation* by Hans A. Baer and Merrill Singer, with its helpful typology situating the different forms of black religiosity in the U.S., or in the landmark study by C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*.

Often, too, sociological study, especially, involves historical elements or combines easily with historical narratives, as in the case of Robert Wuthnow's book *The Restructuring of American Religion: Society and Faith since World War II*, which cites an increasing polarization between religious liberals and conservatives continuing through the decades after the war. The perceived presence of a great divide in American religious culture is taken up even more emphatically by sociologist James Davison Hunter in *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America*. Looking at Protestant religious conservatism itself, Christian Smith, with his research associates—using survey data and extensive interviewing—argues in *American Evangelicalism: Embattled and Thriving* for the positive results of a sense of conflict for evangelicals.

The challenge of secular society that Smith sees among contemporary evangelicals stands in marked continuity with a sense of embattlement since at least 1925 when the well-known (John Henry) Scopes trial over the legality of teaching biological evolution in the Tennessee public schools drew national attention. Edward J. Larson chronicles that event and its aftermath of cultural conflict in *Summer for the Gods: The Scopes Trial and America's Continuing Debate over Science and Religion*. And in *Darwinism Comes to America*, Ronald L. Numbers steps back further historically to offer an account that tells of the earlier reception of Darwin in the U.S. as well as the denominational fall-out of Darwinism after the Scopes trial. Likewise, in a work of much larger scope, Numbers provides the definitive study of the creationist movement in *The Creationists*.

To return to works written from a more sociological perspective and to turn as well to mainstream American religion leads to contemporary



study of congregations and what has come to be called public religion. Treating these themes, Jackson W. Carroll and Wade Clark Roof track tensions between and among generational cohorts in their *Bridging Divided Worlds: Generational Cultures in Congregations*. Likewise, in *Producing the Sacred: An Essay on Public Religion*, Robert Wuthnow uses what sociologists term the “production-of-culture” approach to explore the lives of congregations and other major kinds of religious organizations. In an earlier work, *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*, Robert N. Bellah and his sociological colleagues raise questions, on the basis of extensive interviewing among the middle class, about the health of community structures—and so congregations and public religion—because of the strong individualism in American life.

The invocation of public religion leads, finally, to the doorsteps of state. The historic separation of church and state in the United States has not prevented a series of interactions between religion and government, some overt and some more obscure. Both sociologists and historians, often together, have studied these interactions, in earlier decades under the rubric of “civil religion” and now, more commonly, simply in the language of “public religion.” As background for the official doctrine of church-state separation, Phillip E. Hammond’s *With Liberty for All: Freedom of Religion in the United States* offers a useful introduction. It was Robert N. Bellah’s work, however, that from the late 1960s introduced the language of “civil religion” into scholarly discourse. By the mid-1970s, his book *The Broken Covenant: American Civil Religion in Time of Trial* supplied an extended commentary on his argument in the context of the war in Vietnam. His view—that there is a form of religious nationalism that is intrinsic and important to American society and that is reflected in political discourse, monuments, and shrines—has occasioned lively academic conversation. The best record of that conversation is contained in a series of conference papers edited under the title *American Civil Religion* by Russell E. Richey and Donald G. Jones. Comparative and particularized work on the phenomenon of civil religion is reflected in *Varieties of Civil Religion* by Robert N. Bellah and Phillip E. Hammond. Meanwhile, the presence of a regional version of civil religion is argued, in the case of the American South, in Charles Reagan Wilson’s *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865–1920*, with the “Lost Cause” being the southern perspective on the Civil War.

Reagan’s contribution is the work of a historian, and in that context several other historical works that reflect the civil religion conversation



may be cited. The earliest of these is Ernest Lee Tuveson's *Redeemer Nation: The Idea of America's Millennial Role*, a study that focuses on millennial themes in public belief and behavior about America's providential destiny. Building on the kind of analysis Tuveson supplies, Catherine L. Albanese's already-cited *Sons of the Fathers* focuses on civil religion in the Revolutionary War era. More suspicious regarding whether the phenomenon of civil religion exists at all, except in the minds of scholars, is John F. Wilson's *Public Religion in American Culture*. And as an alternative proposal about what may be providing religious unity to much of American life, there is Catherine L. Albanese's *Nature Religion in America: From the Algonkian Indians to the New Age*.

The move to "nature religion" introduces themes of twentieth-century religious thought and what, in contemporary discussion, has come to be called spirituality. As background for this twentieth-century production, a useful brief survey of American religious thought may be found in William A. Clebsch's *American Religious Thought: A History*. For the fabled Gilded Age at the end of the nineteenth century—a time that so much shaped the theological agenda for the twentieth century and beyond—Paul A. Carter's *The Spiritual Crisis of the Gilded Age* ponders the effects of science on high culture. Meanwhile, religious thought—become public rhetoric—forms the subject of Martin E. Marty's three-volume *Modern American Religion*. In *The Irony of It All, 1893–1919*, *The Noise of Conflict, 1919–1941*, and *Under God, Indivisible, 1941–1960*, Marty offers a cultural-historical approach to public religious language that embraces elements of irony, contentiousness, and consensus.

To some extent, Marty's work might be described as an exercise in the public dimensions of spirituality, if by spirituality is meant the experiential aspect of religion. Under that rubric, Robert S. Ellwood's *The Fifties Spiritual Marketplace: American Religion in a Decade of Conflict* overlaps the last decade of the Marty opus. For the sixties, Ellwood also supplies an account that tracks the public language of religion and spirituality in *The Sixties Spiritual Awakening: American Religion Moving from Modern to Postmodern*. The blending of home-grown American metaphysical religion and Asian spirituality is chronicled and interpreted for some of the same period in Ellwood's now-classic *Alternative Altars: Unconventional and Eastern Spirituality in America*.

Many of the leaders that Ellwood writes about in *Alternative Altars* are women. For more explicit attention to elite women's spirituality, there is Amanda Porterfield's *Feminine Spirituality in America: From*



Sarah Edwards to Martha Graham, a narrative that studies key women cultural leaders over a period of roughly two hundred years. And for American women and their religious thought in the 1990s, there is the wide-ranging study of liberal themes in Mary Farrell Bednarowski's *The Religious Imagination of American Women*.

On another front, the theme of spirituality may be pursued in sociological terms, as in Wade Clark Roof's *A Generation of Seekers: The Spiritual Journeys of the Baby Boom Generation*, in which he explores—on the basis of survey data and numerous in-depth interviews conducted by himself and his research associates—the multiple religious commitments of the American generation born from 1946 to 1964. Later, in *Spiritual Marketplace: Baby Boomers and the Remaking of American Religion*, Roof returns to his original subjects for new interviews to argue for the creation of a “quest culture” of personal spirituality among the baby boomers. And in *After Heaven: Spirituality in America since the 1950s*, Robert Wuthnow covers much of the same territory, but in more prescriptive terms.


In an unusual volume that is the work of a literary critic, Harold Bloom—in *The American Religion: The Emergence of the Post-Christian Nation*—argues for a consensus American religion that has perdured through the nation's history and continued to flourish in the late twentieth century. Calling this religion an updated version of ancient Gnosticism, Bloom sees one expression of it in the New Age movement, a religious formation that threads its way prominently through the already-cited studies by Roof and Wuthnow. British sociologist Paul Heelas has scrutinized the New Age movement in the United States more closely in *The New Age Movement: The Celebration of the Self and the Sacralization of Modernity*. In a work based exclusively on print sources, Dutch scholar Wouter J. Hanegraaff connects the American New Age to a long tradition of Western esotericism in his *New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought*.

Hanegraaff's study excludes Native American themes and materials, which are prominent in the New Age movement in particular and in a more generalized spiritual yearning that may be found throughout mainstream American culture. For this “contact” phenomenon, especially with attention to the Native American side and in the context of the late twentieth century, there is anthropologist Armin W. Geertz's *The Invention of Prophecy: Continuity and Meaning in Hopi Indian Religion*, a work that explicitly takes up the Hopi-New Age overlap. Clyde Holler's *Black Elk's Religion: The Sun Dance and Lakota Catholicism* looks at a



more general romanticization as a functional tendency in American culture in the case of the near-legendary Lakota Sioux holy man Black Elk. For the nineteenth century and the divinized Mother Earth, that romanticization and its results are argued by Sam D. Gill in *Mother Earth: An American Story*.

Study of religious practice fans out into study of the material culture of religion. One recent work that combines the two for Anglo-Protestant American culture and some elements that arise therefrom is Stephen Prothero's *Purified by Fire: A History of Cremation in America*. Another is the now-classic work by Colleen McDannell, *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America*. Study of material culture, too, often turns on economic forces and factors as the commercial and religious intermix and interact. The most comprehensive account of this cultural choreography is R. Laurence Moore's *Selling God: American Religion in the Marketplace of Culture*. For American holidays—from Christmas to Mother's Day—Leigh Eric Schmidt furnishes both chronicle and analysis of middle-class, mostly white, cultural practice in *Consumer Rites: The Buying and Selling of American Holidays*. Finally, turning especially to the media, in *Unsecular Media: Making News of Religion in America* now-academic and former newspaper reporter Mark Silk gives an account that points to how economy and consensus religious values inform one another to shape news stories about religion.

Themes of material culture, of the media, and of “religion on the ground,” so to speak, offer a good place to end this essay, returning readers to their own academic ground after what has been an excursus or journey into a complex scholarly and cultural world. The books cited here, while numerous and full, are a beginning only. The field of American religious history—and of American religion, which it seeks to narrate and interpret—is surely lively and growing, nourished by the works of colleagues in related disciplines and challenged by new discoveries about the past and by the ever-changing religious situation in the pluralistic twenty-first-century United States. 



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