

AFRICANS AMERICANS AND THE BIBLE

SACRED TEXTS AND SOCIAL TEXTURES

Edited by
VINCENT L. WIMBUSH

With the assistance of Rosamond C. Rodman

CONTINUUM New York · London

Contents



Preface	xiii
Acknowledgments	xv
Contributors	xvii
Introduction: Reading Darkness, Reading Scriptures Vincent L. Wimbush	,1
Part One PRE-TEXTS (What comes before, leads to, the weaving together [textus, textura]) (Hermeneutical Frameworks and Historical-Comparative Contexts and Backgrounds)	
The Study of the Bible as Ethnography and Ethnology	
The Bible and Contemporary African American Culture I: Hermeneutical Forays, Observations, and Impressions Velma Love	49
2. The Bible and Contemporary African American Culture II: Report on a Preliminary Ethnographic Project James M. Shopshire, Ida Rousseau Mukenge, Victoria Erickson, and Hans A. Baer	66
The Study of the Bible as Socio-Cultural Hermeneutics	
3. "I Don't Read Such Small Stuff as Letters": Phenomenology of African American Engagement with the Bible Theophus Smith	83
4. The Role of the Bible and Other Sacred Texts in African American Denominations and Sects: Historical and Social Scientific Observations	92

Hans A. Baer

***	<u> </u>
V111	Contents

5. African Americans and American Biblical Hermeneutics Charles Mabee	103
6. African American Social Cultural Formation, the Bible, and Depth Psychology David Asomaning	111
7. The Bible as Informant and Reflector in Social-Structural Relationships of African Americans James M. Shopshire	123
8. Beyond the Guild: Liberating Biblical Studies *Barbara A. Holdrege*	138
The Study of the Bible as the Study of Modern Sociocultural History	
9. Sacred Cosmos: An Ethnography of African Indigenous Religious Traditions Jacob K. Olupona	163
10. Afro-Latinos and the Bible: The Formative Years in Mexico, Brazil, and Peru Colin Palmer	179
11. Casting Aside the Ballast of History and Tradition: White Protestants and the Bible in the Antebellum Period Randall Balmer	193
Part Two CON-TEXTS (The weaving together [con-texere] of worlds [textura, textus] into a History	7)
"You Better Run": Flight: Or Cultural De-formation and the Discovery of the Self-in-Marronage	
12. The Bible and African American Poetry Keith Gilyard	205
13. The "Joseph Story" as Slave Narrative: On Genesis and Exodus as Prototypes for Early Black Anglophone Writing Phillip Richards	221
14. Origins of African American Biblical Hermeneutics in Eighteenth-Century Black Opposition to the Slave Trade and Slavery John Saillant	236

15.	"My Burden Lightened": Frederick Douglass, the Bible, and Slave Culture Sterling Stuckey	251
16.	Christianity as a Theater of Interiority: Emma Dunham Kelley's Fiction of the 1890s Carla L. Peterson	266
17.	Biblical Themes in the R. Nathaniel Dett Collection: Religious Folk-Songs of the Negro (1927) James Abbington	281
18.	African Muslim Slaves, the Nation of Islam, and the Bible: Identity, Resistance, and Transatlantic Spiritual Struggles Richard Brent Turner	297
	n Buildin' Me a Home …″: tlement: Or Formation of Self- and Worlds-in-Marronage	
19.	The Meanings of Scripture in Gullah Concepts of Liberation and Group Identity Margaret Washington	321
20.	Conjuring Canes and Bible Quilts: Through the Prism of Nineteenth-Century African American Spirituality Richard J. Powell	342
21.	Prophesying Daughters: Nineteenth-Century Black Religious Women, the Bible, and Black Literary History Chanta M. Haywood	355
22.	Biblical and Historical Imperatives: Toward a History of Ideas about the Political Role of Black Churches Barbara Dianne Savage	367
23.	The Virtues of Brotherhood and Sisterhood: African American Fraternal Organizations and Their Bibles Cheryl Townsend Gilkes	389
24.	The Bible in the Educational Philosophies of Fanny Jackson Coppin and Nannie Helen Burroughs Linda M. Perkins and Traki Taylor	404
25.	"Behold the Dreamer Cometh": Orishatukeh Faduma and Pan-African Biblical Hermeneutics Moses Moore	418

Contents

x

26.	The Bible and the Aesthetics of Sacred Space in Twentieth-Century African American Experience Leslie King-Hammond	433
27.	Re-Readings: The Great Migration and the Bible Milton Sernett	448
28.	African American Gospel Music Horace Clarence Boyer	464
29.	The Fire This Time: Apocalypse and the African American Novel Tradition Maxine Montgomery	489
30.	The Preacher-Kings: W. E. B. Du Bois Revisited Michael A. Gomez	501
31.	My God Is a Time-God: How African American Folk Oratory Speaks (of) Time Cecile Coquet	514
32.	The Anointed Ones: Hamer, King, and the Bible in the Southern Freedom Movement Vincent Harding	537
33.	City Called Freedom: Biblical Metaphor in Spirituals, Gospel Lyrics, and the Civil Rights Movement Keith D. Miller	546
34.	Wresting the Message from the Messenger: The Rastafari as a Case Study in the Caribbean Indigenization of the Bible Nathaniel S. Murrell	558
35.	Life-Giving Stories: The Bible in a Congregation N. Lynne Westfield	577
36.	African Americans, the Bible, and Spiritual Formation Cheryl J. Sanders	588
37.	Biblical Inspiration, Cultural Affirmation: The African American Gift of Song Mellonee Burnim	603
38.	The African American Catholic Community and the Bible Cyprian Davis, OSB	616
39.	Sacred World and Sacred Text: The Mehu Healing and Retreat Centre in Ghana Kofi Asare Opoku and Kathleen O'Brien Wicker	625

40.	"A Way Out of No Way": The Bible and Catholic Evangelization among African Americans in the United States V. P. Franklin	650
41.	When Mighty Waters Rise: African American Folk Healing and the Bible Fayth M. Parks	661
	kin ^t "Mumbo Jumbo" and Following the "Neo-HooDoo" Way: gotiation: Or Re-form[ul]ation from the Site of Marronage	
42.	The Bible and African American Folklore Yvonne Chireau	673
43.	Aaron Douglas, the Harlem Renaissance, and Biblical Art: Toward a Radical Politics of Identity Abraham Smith	682
44.	Academic Biblical Interpretation among African Americans in the United States Randall C. Bailey	696
45.	The Construction of a Black Fundamentalist Worldview: The Role of Bible Schools Albert G. Miller	712
46.	"For the Cause of Mankind": The Bible, Racial Uplift, and Early Race Movies Judith Weisenfeld	728
47.	Dry Bones: Spiritual Apprehension in August Wilson's Joe Turner's Come and Gone Sandra L. Richards	743
48.	The Bible as and at a Threshold: Reading, Performance, and Blessed Space Grey Gundaker	754
49.	Adventures of a Black Child in Search of Her God The Bible in the Works of Me'Shell N'Degeocello Farah J. Griffin	77 3
50.	Hot Buttered Soulful Tunes and Cold Icy Passionate Truths: The Hermeneutics of Biblical Interpolation in R & B (Rhythm & Blues) *Cheryl Kirk-Duggan*	782
51.	Representin' God: Masculinity and the Use of the Bible in Rap Music	804

Part Three SUB-TEXTS

(Getting under [sub-], viewing from different perspectives the implications of, the thing woven [textus])

819
820
823
824
828
830
832
835
838
840
843
849
853
693
857
861
870