

in search of a homeland

In Search of a Homeland: Exploring the Deep Human Desire for Belonging

In search of a homeland is a phrase that resonates deeply with many people across the globe. It captures a profound and timeless quest—not just for a physical place to call home, but for a sense of identity, belonging, and security. Whether driven by migration, displacement, or personal discovery, the search for a homeland reflects a universal human experience that transcends borders and cultures.

In this article, we will explore what it means to be in search of a homeland, why this journey is so significant, and how it shapes individual lives and collective histories. Along the way, we'll delve into related themes such as migration, cultural identity, refugee experiences, and the emotional ties that bind us to a place we call home.

What Does “In Search of a Homeland” Really Mean?

The phrase “in search of a homeland” might evoke images of migrants crossing oceans, refugees fleeing conflict, or people returning to their ancestral lands. But the concept is broader and more nuanced than simply finding a geographic location.

A homeland is more than just a territory; it often symbolizes safety, acceptance, and roots. It's the place where one's cultural heritage, family history, and personal identity converge. Being in search of a homeland means seeking that place where you feel you belong—physically, emotionally, and socially.

The Emotional and Psychological Dimensions

For many, the search for a homeland is deeply emotional. It involves grappling with feelings of loss, hope, and resilience. People who have been uprooted by war, natural disasters, or economic hardship often carry the trauma of displacement alongside their desire to rebuild a life somewhere they can truly feel at home.

This longing influences mental health and well-being. Studies show that a stable sense of belonging can reduce anxiety and depression, while the lack thereof can lead to feelings of isolation and alienation. Understanding this helps us appreciate why the search for a homeland is not only a physical journey but also a psychological and spiritual one.

The Historical and Cultural Context of Searching for a Homeland

Throughout history, countless communities have been in search of a homeland, whether through migration, exile, or colonization. This search has shaped the world map and the cultural fabric of societies.

Migration and Diaspora

Migration is one of the most common reasons people find themselves in search of a homeland. From the great movements of people across continents to the more recent waves of refugees and asylum seekers, migration stories highlight the challenges and hopes tied to finding a new home.

Diaspora communities often maintain strong connections to their original homelands while adapting to new environments. These dual identities create rich cultural tapestries that reflect both the memory of the homeland and the realities of the adopted country.

Refugees and Displacement

The plight of refugees is a poignant example of being in search of a homeland. Forced to flee persecution, conflict, or environmental disasters, refugees often embark on perilous journeys hoping to find safety and rebuild their lives.

International law recognizes the right to seek asylum, yet political and social barriers can make the search for a homeland difficult and fraught with uncertainty. Understanding the refugee experience fosters empathy and highlights the importance of global cooperation in addressing displacement crises.

How the Search for a Homeland Shapes Identity

Identity is deeply intertwined with the concept of homeland. Our sense of who we are is often influenced by the cultural, linguistic, and historical context of the place we consider home.

Cultural Heritage and Belonging

Cultural traditions, language, food, and rituals contribute to the feeling of belonging to a homeland. When people are separated from these elements, whether through migration or assimilation pressures, the search for a homeland often involves reclaiming or preserving these cultural markers.

For immigrants and their descendants, balancing the heritage of their homeland with the culture of their new country can be complex. It may lead to hybrid identities that enrich both the individual and the broader society.

Generational Perspectives

The meaning of homeland can vary across generations. While first-generation migrants might have a vivid memory or direct connection to their country of origin, second or third generations might find their sense of homeland spread across multiple places or feel more attached to the country where they were born.

This generational shift influences how communities maintain cultural ties and navigate questions of identity in multicultural societies.

Navigating the Practicalities: Tips for Those in Search of a Homeland

Whether you are physically relocating or emotionally on a journey to find your place in the world, there are practical steps that can help ease the process of finding or creating a homeland.

- **Research and Preparation:** Understanding the cultural, legal, and social environment of the place you seek to call home is crucial. Learn about immigration policies, community resources, and cultural norms.
- **Build Community Connections:** Engage with local communities, cultural groups, or diaspora networks. These connections can provide support, friendship, and a sense of belonging.
- **Preserve Your Heritage:** Keep alive the traditions, language, and customs that link you to your homeland. Sharing these with others can also foster cross-cultural understanding.
- **Be Open to New Experiences:** Embracing the culture and people of your new environment can help you feel more integrated and secure.
- **Seek Support Services:** Many organizations specialize in helping migrants and refugees adjust, offering language classes, counseling, and legal assistance.

The Continuing Relevance of the Search for a Homeland Today

In an era marked by globalization, climate change, and political upheaval, being in search of a homeland is more relevant than ever. Millions of people around the world are displaced or migrating in search of better opportunities, safety, and belonging.

The digital age also transforms this search. Virtual communities, social media, and online cultural forums allow people to maintain ties to their homelands regardless of physical distance. At the same time, technology can help newcomers integrate by providing access to language learning, employment resources, and social networks.

The search for a homeland remains a testament to human resilience and the enduring desire to find a place where one can truly belong. It challenges societies to be more inclusive and compassionate and reminds us all of the importance of home in shaping who we are.

In the end, the journey in search of a homeland is as much about the inner landscape of identity and belonging as it is about the outer world of borders and nations. It is a story that continues to unfold in every generation, inviting us to reflect on what home truly means.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the central theme of 'In Search of a Homeland'?

The central theme of 'In Search of a Homeland' revolves around the quest for identity, belonging, and the emotional journey of finding or reclaiming one's homeland amid displacement or exile.

Who is the author of 'In Search of a Homeland' and what inspired the work?

The author of 'In Search of a Homeland' is [Author Name], inspired by personal experiences and historical events related to migration, diaspora, and the struggle for cultural roots.

How does 'In Search of a Homeland' address the concept of displacement?

The work explores displacement by portraying the challenges faced by individuals uprooted from their native lands, highlighting themes of loss, resilience, and the pursuit of a new sense of home.

What literary techniques are prominently used in 'In Search of a

Homeland'?

The book employs vivid imagery, personal narratives, and symbolism to evoke the emotional landscape of searching for belonging and to deepen readers' connection to the characters' experiences.

Why is 'In Search of a Homeland' relevant in today's global context?

It resonates today due to ongoing global migrations, refugee crises, and cultural displacements, offering insights into the human condition and fostering empathy towards those seeking safety and identity.

Additional Resources

In Search of a Homeland: Navigating Identity, Displacement, and Belonging

In search of a homeland is a phrase that resonates deeply across history and contemporary society, capturing the profound human quest for identity, security, and belonging. This pursuit transcends mere geography; it encompasses cultural roots, political recognition, and emotional attachment. Whether driven by forced displacement, voluntary migration, or the search for cultural affirmation, the concept of a homeland continues to shape narratives worldwide.

The complexity of this search lies in its intersection with issues such as nationalism, diaspora, statelessness, and globalization. As millions grapple with the realities of exile, refugees, or cultural dislocation, understanding what constitutes a “homeland” becomes pivotal for policymakers, sociologists, and affected communities. This article delves into the multifaceted nature of seeking a homeland, examining historical contexts, modern challenges, and the evolving definitions of belonging in an interconnected world.

The Historical Context of Homeland Seeking

The quest for a homeland is deeply rooted in human history, often emerging from displacement due to war, colonization, or persecution. For example, the Jewish diaspora's centuries-long search for a national homeland culminated in the establishment of Israel in 1948, a significant milestone illustrating the political and emotional weight of this pursuit.

Similarly, indigenous populations continue to advocate for recognition and restitution of ancestral lands, highlighting the enduring impact of colonial displacement. The history of the Armenian people, the Kurds, and the Palestinians exemplifies how homeland is not only a physical territory but also a symbol of national identity and cultural survival.

Displacement and the Refugee Crisis

In recent decades, conflict and instability have intensified the search for a homeland on a global scale. According to the UNHCR, there are over 100 million forcibly displaced people worldwide as of 2024, including refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced persons. These populations often face the dilemma of finding safety and security without relinquishing their cultural identity.

The refugee experience underscores the tension between temporary refuge and permanent homeland. Host countries provide sanctuary but may struggle with integration policies, while displaced individuals seek pathways to citizenship and belonging. This dynamic illustrates the complexity of homeland not just as a place but as a set of rights and recognition.

Defining Homeland: Beyond Borders and Maps

The traditional understanding of a homeland as a fixed geographical location is evolving. In the era of globalization and digital connectivity, homeland can extend to cultural communities dispersed across continents.

The Role of Diasporas

Diaspora communities maintain strong emotional and cultural ties to their places of origin, even as they settle in new countries. These transnational networks facilitate cultural preservation, political advocacy, and economic support back to the homeland. The Indian, Mexican, and Somali diasporas exemplify how homeland identity adapts to new contexts while sustaining a sense of belonging.

Technology plays a significant role, enabling virtual communities and cultural exchanges that transcend physical borders. Social media platforms and digital storytelling allow diasporic populations to participate in homeland discourses actively, influencing homeland politics and identity formation.

Statelessness and the Search for Recognition

For some, the search for a homeland is intertwined with statelessness—a condition where individuals lack legal nationality in any country. Stateless populations, estimated at around 4.2 million globally, face unique challenges in accessing education, healthcare, and employment.

The Rohingya crisis is a stark illustration, where millions are denied citizenship in Myanmar and remain in limbo. Their search for a homeland is not only a physical quest but a fight for legal recognition and

human rights. International legal frameworks, such as the 1954 and 1961 Statelessness Conventions, attempt to address these issues but face enforcement hurdles.

The Psychological and Cultural Dimensions of Homeland

Beyond political and legal aspects, homeland carries profound psychological significance. It anchors identity, memory, and community.

Identity Formation and Homeland

The concept of homeland shapes personal and collective identity, influencing language, traditions, and social cohesion. For immigrants and refugees, the tension between assimilation and cultural preservation often revolves around the connection to their homeland.

Studies show that maintaining cultural practices related to one's homeland can enhance mental health and social integration in host countries. Conversely, loss of homeland or forced separation can lead to trauma and identity crises, underscoring the importance of cultural continuity.

Homeland in Literature and Art

Artistic expressions frequently explore themes of homeland, reflecting longing, nostalgia, and resistance. From poetry to film, the homeland serves as a powerful motif that communicates complex emotions tied to belonging and displacement.

Authors like Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and Khaled Hosseini illustrate through narrative how homeland shapes characters' experiences, weaving personal history with broader socio-political contexts. Such works contribute to global awareness about the human dimensions of homeland seeking.

Modern Challenges in the Search for a Homeland

The contemporary landscape presents new obstacles and dynamics in the quest for homeland.

Globalization and Mobility

Increased mobility and interconnectedness have complicated traditional notions of homeland. People often identify with multiple places simultaneously—birthplaces, adopted countries, and cultural communities. This hybridity challenges exclusive nationalist narratives and invites more inclusive understandings of belonging.

However, globalization also fuels tensions around migration, border control, and citizenship policies, sometimes marginalizing those in search of a homeland. The rise of populist movements and restrictive immigration laws can hinder displaced individuals' access to safe homelands.

Climate Change and Environmental Displacement

Emerging environmental crises add urgency to homeland debates. Rising sea levels, desertification, and natural disasters are forcing communities to relocate permanently, creating “climate refugees” without recognized legal status.

Islands in the Pacific and coastal regions face existential threats, raising questions about the future of homeland when physical territories disappear. International law currently lacks specific provisions for environmental displacement, complicating solutions for affected populations.

Political Conflicts and Sovereignty

Territorial disputes and political conflicts continue to obstruct homeland aspirations. Regions like Kashmir, Western Sahara, and Palestine remain contested, with competing claims preventing the realization of stable homelands for their people.

Negotiations and peace processes often stall due to entrenched nationalistic sentiments and geopolitical interests. These situations exemplify how homeland is inseparable from sovereignty and political power.

Paths Forward: Rethinking Homeland in the 21st Century

The search for a homeland in today's world requires innovative approaches that balance human rights, cultural identity, and geopolitical realities.

- **Inclusive Citizenship Models:** Expanding pathways to citizenship and legal recognition can provide displaced populations greater security and belonging.
- **Multicultural Integration Policies:** Encouraging cultural pluralism helps diasporas maintain homeland

ties while integrating into host societies.

- **International Cooperation:** Addressing statelessness and environmental displacement demands coordinated global responses and updated legal frameworks.
- **Recognition of Non-territorial Identities:** Embracing transnational and hybrid identities acknowledges the diverse ways people experience homeland today.

Ultimately, the enduring human desire to find or reclaim a homeland reflects fundamental needs for stability, identity, and community. As societies evolve, so too must the concepts and structures that support this search, ensuring that “homeland” remains a source of hope rather than exclusion.

[In Search Of A Homeland](#)

in search of a homeland: In Search of a Homeland Penelope Lively, 2001 Based on Virgil's magnificent poem *The Aeneid*, this retelling of a great classical story sees Aeneas flee from the sacked city of Troy with a daunting mission. He has been entrusted by his goddess mother Venus to find a new homeland for his people.

in search of a homeland: In Search of a Homeland Juliane Hammer, 2001

in search of a homeland: In Search of Israel Michael Brenner, 2020-03-24 A major new history of the century-long debate over what a Jewish state should be Many Zionists who advocated for the creation of a Jewish state envisioned a nation like any other. Yet for Israel's founders, the nation that emerged against all odds in 1948 was anything but ordinary. Born from the ashes of genocide and a long history of suffering, Israel was conceived to be unique, a model society and the heart of a prosperous new Middle East. It is this paradox, says historian Michael Brenner—the Jewish people's wish for a homeland both normal and exceptional—that shapes Israel's ongoing struggle to define itself and secure a place among nations. *In Search of Israel* is a major new history of this struggle from the late nineteenth century to our time.

in search of a homeland: Transnational Arab Stardom Kaya Davies Hayon, Stefanie Van de Peer, 2024-01-25 Building on the work of star studies scholars, this collection provides contextual analyses of off-screen representation, as well as close textual analyses of films and star personas, thereby offering an in-depth study of the Arab star as text and context of Arab cinema. Using the tools of audience reception studies, the collection will also look at how stars (of film, stage, screen and new media) are viewed and received in different cultural contexts, both within and outside of the Arabic-speaking world. Arab cinema is often discussed in terms of political representation and independent art film, but rarely in terms of stardom, glamour, performance or masquerade. Aside from a few individual studies on female stardom or aspects of Arab masculinity, no major English-language study on Arab stardom exists, and collections on transnational stars or world cinema also often neglect to include Arab performers. This new book seeks to address this gap by providing the first study dedicated entirely to stardom on the Arab screen. Structured chronologically and thematically, this collection highlights and explores Arab film, screen and music stars through a transnational and interdisciplinary set of contributions that draw on feminist, performance and film theories, media studies, sound studies, material culture, queer star and celebrity studies, and social media studies.

in search of a homeland: *In Search of Justice in Thailand's Deep South* Soraya Jamjuree, 2022-09-20 Since 2004, the violent conflict between Thai Buddhists and Malay Muslims has caused more than 7,500 deaths and 13,000 injuries in the southern border provinces of Thailand. This will be the first collection published in English to give voice to those who have rebounded from these profound personal tragedies to demand justice and peace. The ethnic and religious separatist insurgency in the southern provinces of Thailand is complex. Ninety to ninety-five percent of Thai citizens are Buddhists. In the southernmost provinces, however, Muslims are in the majority—yet they are governed by the Buddhist Thai capital in the north. In 2006 and 2014, the Thai government went through separate coups, resulting in differing policies to address this problem in the south, including a National Culture Act to promote Thai-ness throughout the country. In the south, this has resulted in a repressive and corrupt police force and military raids on Muslim villages, provoking the burning of schools and other symbols of Thai government, bombings, and even the killing of teachers and monks. The narratives collected here, primarily from women, testify that although the violence has been generated from both sides of the Buddhist/Muslim divide, the actions undertaken by armed forces of the Thai Buddhist state—including repressive violence and torture—have served as a catalyst for increased Muslim insurgency. These contributions reveal the fundamental problem of how a minority people can fully belong within a state that has insisted on religious, cultural, and linguistic homogenization.

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in search of a homeland: *The Jews of Khazaria* Kevin Alan Brook, 2018-02-09 The Jews of Khazaria explores the history and culture of Khazaria—a large empire in eastern Europe (located in present-day Ukraine and Russia) in the early Middle Ages noted for its adoption of the Jewish religion. The third edition of this modern classic features new and updated material throughout, including new archaeological findings, new genetic evidence, and new information about the migration of the Khazars. Though little-known today, Khazaria was one of the largest political formations of its time—an economic and cultural power connected to several important trade routes and known for its religious tolerance. After the royal family converted to Judaism in the ninth century, many nobles and common people did likewise. The Khazars were ruled by a succession of Jewish kings and adopted many hallmarks of Jewish civilization, including study of the Torah and Talmud, Hebrew script, and the observance of Jewish holidays. The third edition of *The Jews of Khazaria* tells the compelling true story of this kingdom past.

in search of a homeland: *Doing Diaspora* Thusinta Somalingam, 2017-01-18 Thusinta Somalingam bietet in der vorliegenden Studie eine neue Perspektive auf den Bereich Bildung, die sich von nationalstaatlichen Orientierungen löst und ihren Blick auf grenzüberschreitende Bildungsarbeit richtet. Auf der Grundlage eines vielfältigen empirischen Datensatzes erarbeitet die Autorin anhand des Fallbeispiels der Tamil Diaspora, dass transnationale (Bildungs-)Räume nicht zwangsläufig national(staatliche) Aspekte wie Sprach- und Nationalbewusstsein relativieren, sondern durchaus auch zur Verstärkung und Rekonstruktion bestehender nationaler Strukturen und Tendenzen beitragen können. Die Arbeit von Thusinta Somalingam gibt neue Impulse zur Erforschung von grenzüberschreitenden Bildungsräumen und bietet neue Perspektiven für die Transnationalitäts- sowie die Diasporaforschung.

in search of a homeland: *The Black Coptic Church* Leonard Cornell McKinnis II, 2023-07-25

Provides an illuminating look at the diverse world of Black religious life in North America, focusing particularly outside of mainstream Christian churches From the Moorish Science Temple to the Peace Mission Movement of Father Divine to the Commandment Keepers sect of Black Judaism, myriad Black new religious movements developed during the time of the Great Migration. Many of these stood outside of Christianity, but some remained at least partially within the Christian fold. The Black Coptic Church is one of these. Black Coptics combined elements of Black Protestant and Black Hebrew traditions with Ethiopianism as a way of constructing a divine racial identity that embraced the idea of a royal Egyptian heritage for its African American followers, a heroic identity that was in stark contrast to the racial identity imposed on African Americans by the white dominant culture. This embrace of a royal Blackness—what McKinnis calls an act of “fugitive spirituality”—illuminates how the Black Coptic tradition in Chicago and beyond uniquely employs a religio-performative imagination. McKinnis asks, ‘What does it mean to imagine Blackness?’ Drawing on ten years of archival research and interviews with current members of the church, *The Black Coptic Church* offers a look at a group that insisted on its own understanding of its divine Blackness. In the process, it provides a more complex look at the diverse world of Black religious life in North America, particularly within non-mainstream Christian churches.

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award-winning author and photographer Susan Kuklin's latest masterfully crafted narrative. The five, originally from Afghanistan, Myanmar, South Sudan, Iraq, and Burundi, give gripping first-person testimonies about what it is like to flee war, face violent threats, grow up in a refugee camp, be sold into slavery, and resettle in America. Illustrated with full-color photographs of the refugees' new lives in Nebraska, this work is essential reading for understanding the devastating impact of war and persecution — and the power of resilience, optimism, and the will to survive. Included in the end matter are chapter notes, information on resettlement and U.S. citizenship, historical time lines of war and political strife in the refugees' countries of origin, resources for further reading, and an index.

in search of a homeland: Budapest Diary: In Search of the Motherbook Susan Rubin Suleiman, 2019-08-10 Can you forget the place you once called home? What does it take to make you recapture it? In this moving memoir, Susan Rubin Suleiman describes her returns to the city of her birth — where she speaks the language like a native but with an accent. Suleiman left Budapest in 1949 as a young child with her parents, fleeing communism; thirty-five years later, she returned with her two sons for a brief vacation and began to remember her childhood. Her earliest memories, of Nazi persecution in the final year of World War II, came back to her in fragments, as did memories of her first school years after the war and of the stormy marriage between her father, a brilliant Talmudic scholar, and her mother, a cosmopolitan woman from a more secular Jewish family. In 1993, after the fall of communism and the death of her mother, Suleiman returned to Budapest for a six-month stay. She recounts her ongoing quest for personal history, interweaving it with the stories of present-day Hungarians struggling to make sense of the changes in their individual and collective lives. Suleiman's search for documents relating to her childhood, the lives of her parents and their families, and the Jewish communities of Hungary and Poland takes her on a series of fascinating journeys within and outside Budapest. Emerging from this eloquent, often suspenseful diary is the portrait of an intellectual who recaptures her past and comes into contact with the vital, troubling world of contemporary Eastern Europe. Suleiman's vivid descriptions of her encounters with a proud, old city and its people in a time of historical change remind us that every life story is at once unique and part of a larger history. I recommend this autobiographical narrative because it is grave and beautiful. Better still, it is shatteringly truthful. — Elie Wiesel Susan Rubin was a little girl when her parents fled through darkened fields to escape the Communist regime in Hungary in 1949... [This] is a poignant piece of self-revelation, sprinkled with some trenchant observations on the way the dead hand of history has weighed down the former Warsaw Pact countries. — Kirkus [A] fascinating, revealing journal... brutally honest. — Publishers Weekly This pensive, forthright journal records Suleiman's efforts to reconnect with a long-forgotten homeland. — Booklist Suleiman lyrically describes her quest and the complex interaction of the Eastern Europe of the past and present. — Boston Globe A tale of survival, adaptation and pure luck, whose darker side reveals the linguistic and emotional cost of emigration and exile, the feeling of permanent displacement, of being nowhere at home. — Forward This story must speak to all those who have fled and who have ever dreamed of a return. — Independent Jewish Women's Magazine [A] thoughtful and sophisticated memoir... You don't have to be Hungarian or Jewish to appreciate writing like this. — Montreal Gazette

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belongingness in the ancestral homeland. This title can be previewed in Google Books - <http://books.google.com/books?vid=ISBN9789053568781>. This title is available in the OAPEN Library - <http://www.oapen.org>.

in search of a homeland: Original Sin Stanly Johny, 2024-12-15 On 7 October 2023, Hamas launched a surprise attack on Israel that claimed many lives and has led to a devastating, retaliatory war in Gaza. Even as the death toll mounts every day, the world remains divided in its support of Israel or Palestine. With the US proposing 'a new Middle East', an idea that found significant international support, the war has cast a shadow of doubt over the future of the region. The Abraham Accords of 2020 saw four Arab countries normalize their ties with Israel, laying the foundations of the new regional realignment. But these shifts ignore West Asia's 'original sin'-the unresolved question of Palestine. Based on his multiple reporting visits to the region and dozens of interviews, Stanly Johny traces the roots of the conflict and unpacks the complex geopolitical systems that are involved. He also examines India's evolving policies on Israel-Palestine, its diplomatic history in the region and its current interests. Original Sin is a new, definitive study of West Asia that is essential for anyone who wants to engage with the current war.

in search of a homeland: Contemporary Korean Political Thought in Search of a Post-Eurocentric Approach Jung In Kang, 2014-11-20 This book is a collection of essays written by Korean political theorists addressing the study of contemporary Korean political thought on the premise that such study should be carried out with a post-Eurocentric approach. The negative effects brought about by the domination of Western-centrism are pervasive in academic disciplines as well as in everyday life of South Korea. This book outlines three strategic approaches to combating Western-centrism: (1) theorizing contemporary Korean politics from a Korean perspective, (2) the Koreanization of Western political thought, and (3) modernizing traditional East Asian political thought. These essays examine and explore the validity of the three strategic approaches with the objective of coping with Western-centrism in Korean political theory. These contributing authors share a concern about Western-centrism, but approach it from different directions and at different layers.

in search of a homeland: Encyclopedia of Identity Ronald L. Jackson II, 2010-06-29 The two volumes of this encyclopedia seek to explore myriad ways in which we define ourselves in our daily lives. Comprising 300 entries, the Encyclopedia of Identity offers readers an opportunity to understand identity as a socially constructed phenomenon - a dynamic process both public and private, shaped by past experiences and present circumstances, and evolving over time. Offering a broad, comprehensive overview of the definitions, politics, manifestations, concepts, and ideas related to identity, the entries include short biographies of major thinkers and leaders, as well as discussions of events, personalities, and concepts. The Encyclopedia of Identity is designed for readers to grasp the nature and breadth of identity as a psychological, social, anthropological, and popular idea. Key Themes ArtClass Developing Identities Gender, Sex, and Sexuality Identities in Conflict Language and Discourse Living Ethically Media and Popular Culture Nationality Protecting Identity Race, Culture, and Ethnicity Relating Across Cultures Religion Representations of Identity Theories of Identity

in search of a homeland: In Search of the Promised Land? Katell Berthelot, 2017-11-13 Katell Berthelot challenges the widespread historiographical consensus that the Hasmoneans embarked on wars of conquest in order to reconquer the Promised Land, the Biblical Land of Israel. She shows that the sources used in support of this consensus - such as 1 Maccabees 15:33-35 - have been over-interpreted. She suggests a different approach to this question. In particular, she argues that in 1 Maccabees, the Hasmoneans deliberately imitate the language ascribed to the Seleucid kings, and that the discourse on the Land found in 1 Maccabees, is congruent with the language of property rights over a given territory in the rhetoric of Hellenistic diplomacy. Berthelot's close examination of accounts by Josephus and other writers, as well as of archaeological and numismatic data, allows her to reconstruct the different factors that led to the Hasmonean wars of conquest. Although Hasmonean leaders were clearly motivated by politico-religious objectives (e.g. getting rid

of competing temples in areas under their control), the Deuteronomic commandment to wipe out the inhabitants of the Land and abolish idolatry does not necessarily account for their acts of destruction and the so-called 'forced conversion' of the Idumeans, the Itureans and other groups. Instead, Berthelot's analysis of the sources leads her to reach a different conclusion. Finally, Berthelot investigates the echoes of the Hasmonean wars of conquest in the Dead Sea Scrolls and their memory in rabbinic literature. This allows her to show that, contrary to expectation, there is little evidence that the Hasmonean dynasty was perceived as having reconquered the Promised Land or restored the people of Israel within the borders of the Land of Israel.

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