Lost Tribes And Promised Lands The Origins

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popular culture stories found in comic strips tv programs magazines and movies gain their popularity by evoking our desires and anxieties aden offers a well constructed argument that creating a sense of place and with it a sense of personal identity and community serves as an important enticement for many popular cultures works aden handles contemporary theory deftly and does an excellent job of identifying many of the tensions

present in 20th century america quarterly journal of speech stories encountered at the movies on television and in popular magazines are treated as reflections of the popular culture believing that the american experience has been guided by a normative narrative or grand narrative that constitutes the american dream aden holds that stories can be used to extract the rules of a narrative determine the direction and identify conceptions of the promised lands for a culture critical studies in mass communication

whether seen as a land of opportunity or as paradise lost the american west took shape in the nation s imagination with the help of those who wrote about it but two groups who did much to shape that perception are often overlooked today promoters trying to lure settlers and investors to the west insisted that the frontier had already been tamed that the only frontiers remaining were those of opportunity through posters pamphlets newspaper articles and other printed pieces these boosters literally imagined places into existence by depicting backwater areas as settled culturally developed regions where newcomers would find none of the hardships associated with frontier life quick on their heels some of the west s original settlers had begun publishing their reminiscences in books and periodicals and banding together in pioneer societies to sustain their conception of frontier heritage their selective memory focused on the savage wilderness they had tamed exaggerating the past every bit as much as promoters exaggerated the present although they are generally seen today as unscrupulous charlatans and tellers of tall tales david wrobel reveals that these promoters and reminiscers were more significant than their detractors have suggested by exploring the vast literature produced by these individuals from the end of the civil war through the 1920s he clarifies the pivotal impact of their works on our vision of both the historic and mythic west in examining their role in forging both sense of place within the west and the nation s sense of the west as a place wrobel shows that these works were vital to the process of identity formation among westerners themselves and to the construction of a west in the national imagination wrobel also sheds light on the often elitist sometimes racist legacies of both groups through their characterizations of native americans african americans mexican americans and asian americans in the era wrobel examines promoters painted the future of each western place as if it were already present while the old timers preserved the past as if it were still present but as he also demonstrates that west has not really changed much promoters still tout its promise while old timers still try to preserve their selective memories even relatively recent western residents still tap into the region s mythic pioneer heritage as they form their attachments to place promised lands shows us that the west may well move into the twenty first century but our images of it are forever rooted in the nineteenth

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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