

## **Critical Thoughts on National Identity**

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This paper is based on the argument that the Palestinian identity suffers from a serious terminological problem, in the sense that it is perceived by its carriers as one thing while it is depicted by scholarly work as something totally different.

The reasons for this discrepancy will be elaborated. This misrepresentation makes the discussion of the future of Palestinian identity quite problematic, with the danger of taking the issue off track. Before discussing the future of Palestinian identity, we have to specify the nature of this identity and decide what kind of identity it is. Is it national identity? Or is it not? If not, what kind of identity is it? This paper tries to answer these basic questions on both the theoretical and ontological levels, through relocating both Palestinianity and national identity in their respective historical/cultural contexts. When we decide what Palestinianity is for the Palestinians, then the way from the present to the future becomes clearer and more analytically manageable. The paper will then conclude with two crucial remarks regarding the future of Palestinianity, derived from the logic of the paper's argument.

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