

Identity in Exile: New Directions in Palestinian Studies



Palestinian Chicago: Identity in Exile (New Directions in Palestinian Studies Book 1) by Om Krishna Uprety

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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The concept of identity has always been a complex and multifaceted one, and it becomes even more so when examined in the context of exile. For Palestinians, who have been living in exile for decades, the question of identity is particularly pressing. Who are they? Where do they belong? How do they maintain their culture and traditions? These are just a few of the questions that Palestinians in exile face on a daily basis.

In recent years, there has been a growing body of scholarship that has sought to explore the complex and evolving concept of Palestinian identity in exile. This scholarship has challenged traditional notions of identity and belonging, and it has offered new insights into the ways that Palestinians have negotiated their identities in the face of displacement and dispossession.

This article provides a comprehensive overview of the new directions in Palestinian studies, with a particular focus on the concept of identity in exile. We will begin by examining the challenges that Palestinians face in maintaining their identity in exile. We will then explore the ways that Palestinians have resisted and redefined their identity in the face of these challenges. Finally, we will discuss the implications of this new scholarship for the broader field of diaspora studies.

Challenges to Identity in Exile

Palestinians in exile face a number of challenges in maintaining their identity. These challenges include:

- **Displacement:** Palestinians have been displaced from their homes and land for decades. This displacement has had a profound impact on their sense of identity. They have lost their homes, their communities, and their sense of place.
- **Dispossession:** Palestinians have also been dispossessed of their land and property. This dispossession has had a devastating impact on their economy and their ability to provide for their families. It has also led to a sense of injustice and anger.
- **Discrimination:** Palestinians in exile often face discrimination and prejudice. They may be denied access to housing, employment, and education. They may also be subjected to violence and harassment.
- **Assimilation:** Palestinians in exile may also face pressure to assimilate into their new societies. This pressure can come from their host countries, from their families and friends, or from within themselves. Assimilation can lead to a loss of cultural identity and a sense of alienation.

These challenges can make it difficult for Palestinians in exile to maintain their identity. However, as we will see in the next section, Palestinians have developed a number of strategies to resist and redefine their identity in the face of these challenges.

Resisting and Redefining Identity in Exile

Palestinians in exile have developed a number of strategies to resist and redefine their identity in the face of the challenges they face. These strategies include:

- **Cultural preservation:** Palestinians in exile have worked to preserve their culture and traditions. They have established schools, cultural centers, and community organizations. They have also produced a rich body of literature, art, and music.
- **Political activism:** Palestinians in exile have also been active in political activism. They have organized protests, demonstrations, and boycotts. They have also lobbied their host countries and international organizations to support the Palestinian cause.
- **Education:** Palestinians in exile have placed a high value on education. They have established schools and universities to provide their children with a quality education. Education is seen as a way to empower Palestinians and to prepare them for the future.
- **Religion:** Religion has also played an important role in shaping Palestinian identity in exile. Palestinians have found comfort and strength in their faith. Religion has also provided a sense of community and belonging.

These strategies have helped Palestinians to maintain their identity in exile. They have also helped them to resist the forces that would seek to assimilate them or to erase their culture. Palestinians in exile have shown that it is possible to maintain one's identity even in the most challenging circumstances.

Implications for Diaspora Studies

The new scholarship on Palestinian identity in exile has important implications for the broader field of diaspora studies. This scholarship has challenged traditional notions of identity and belonging, and it has offered new insights into the ways that diasporic communities negotiate their identities in the face of displacement and dispossession.

This scholarship has also shown that diasporic communities are not simply passive victims of their circumstances. They are active agents who play a vital role in shaping their own identities and destinies. This scholarship has helped to empower diasporic communities and to give them a voice in the global arena.

The concept of identity in exile is a complex and multifaceted one. Palestinians in exile have faced a number of challenges in maintaining their identity, but they have also developed a number of strategies to resist and redefine their identity. This scholarship has important implications for the broader field of diaspora studies, and it has helped to empower diasporic communities and to give them a voice in the global arena.

As the Palestinian diaspora continues to grow, it is important to continue to study the challenges and opportunities that Palestinians face in exile. This

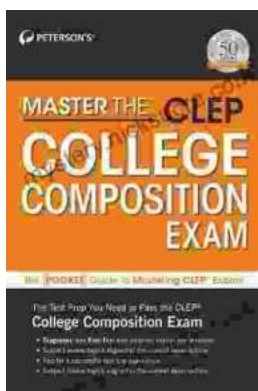
research will help us to better understand the Palestinian experience and its implications for the broader field of diaspora studies.



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