



On Identity

By Amin Maalouf

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This book offers a lucid inquiry into the precise meaning of one of the most misapplied words and concepts in our language, and one that has given rise to some of the most heated passions and crimes throughout history: identity. The notion of identity—be it religious, ethnic, national, or other—has been one of the fundamental questions of philosophy from Socrates to Freud. In this series of reflections, the author, a Lebanese who now lives in France, considers how we define ourselves and what identity has meant and continues to mean in different cultures.

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Editorial Review

Review

The notion of identity - personal, religious, ethnic or national - is one that has given rise to heated passions and crimes throughout the history of mankind. What it is that makes each one of us unique and dissimilar to any other individual has been one of the fundamental questions of philosophy from Socrates to Freud. In this important series of reflections, the author, a Lebanese who now lives in France, where he is a well-known writer and commentator, considers how we define ourselves and how identity is understood in the world's different cultures.

About the Author

Amin Maalouf's fiction includes *Leo the African*, *Rock of Tanios*, which won the 1993 Prix Goncourt, *Samarkand* and *Ports of Call*. He is also the author of an acclaimed scholarly work, *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes*, as well as the much admired essay, 'On Identity'. Barbara Bray has twice won the Scott-Moncrieff Prize, as well as the French-American Foundation Prize, for her translations. These include *The Lover* by Marguerite Duras, *The Concert* by Ismail Kadare, and George Sand's letters in *Flaubert-Sand: The Correspondence*.

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Vera Harris:

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