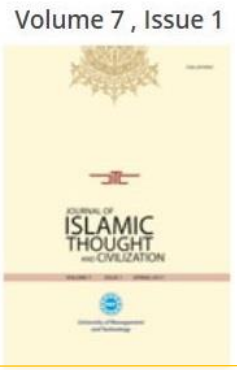

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MacIntyre, Ricoerue and Iqbal on Pakistan's Identity Crisis: A Muslim Critique

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Abstract

The view is widespread and internalized in Pakistan that the state is suffering from a severe identity crisis. It is almost universally agreed that a lack of consistent interpretation of Islamic doctrine is partly to blame for the distressing loss of identity, which has never been properly defined. For this reason, the term will be traced from its legitimate source in the psychology of an adolescent crisis and to determine the basis of a Constructivist-Kantian view of the permissive "friendly states" in which lifestyles and varied roles constitute an identity politics that are attractive to a narrow group of Pakistan's intellectuals envious of Western ways. This leads to a predictable crisis of identity having very little to do with Islam, and still less with Pakistan's identity. As critique of a very grievous slander against Pakistan and vigorous protest against it, the philosopher-poet Iqbal, and the Western giants MacIntyre and Ricoeur will be cited to present the Universalist view of Islam as the basis of our true culture, and by contrast the despair of Western thinkers who know that identity crisis is ultimately a crisis of faith they would do well to avoid. The factors of terrorism, natural disasters, and political corruption serve to further divide the country and challenge any emerging moral narratives. The so called Islamic doctrine, due to disagreements or various interpretations, meanwhile, has not provided an answer to these problems that Pakistanis face. The result is a state plunged into an identity crisis with no clear answer. This paper will subject the question of the identity crisis to some great thinkers who assert the claim of higher values as indeed the basis of firm identity formation which requires moral principles as the constituting essence of the "narrative" out of which identity is formulated in Pakistan and everywhere else in the world.

***Keywords*:** personal identity, identity crisis, identity politics, state identity, constructivist hypothesis, moral narrative, tradition

Introduction

Identity is a crucial part of understanding individuals, groups, and nations. Just as individuals of every occupation have professional identities, they also have personal and national identities. National identities tend to be much more uniform than other forms of identities. After all, national identities capture what it means for one to be a part of a particular nation, outside of the obvious geopolitical qualifications. To identify with a particular nation is to understand the nation and what its people stand for. Constructs of national identity are often all-encompassing, including aspects that are rarely included in responses by the average person to

questions of national identity. The psychological and philosophical foundations of identity are important in most constructs of identity, but are often overlooked in practice.

Pakistan is a state struggling with its own conception of national identity. The current situation in Pakistan involves major polarization from a variety of internal and external threats and disruptions. Devastating floods, other natural disasters, terror attacks, corruption and political instability are among current issues plaguing Pakistan. These issues have contributed to strong disagreement, separation, and polarization in the state, as there is little agreement on how to move forward or which values should be held in the highest regard currently. Islam is mistakenly considered to be a greater source of instability than stability, as there are not only factions within the religion itself but also disagreements in the interpretation of the Qur'ān and Islamic law. The current project features an application of MacIntyre's conception of self-identity to the current identity crisis in Pakistan in order to better understand the issue and identify potential solutions to this crisis. Relevant commentary from Iqbal and Ricoeur will also be included in this analysis.

2. Defining Identity Crisis

The term identity crisis was invented by the psychoanalyst Erik Erikson as the fifth of eight stages of an infant's development toward maturity. Occurring between the years 10-18, an adolescent according to this theory tries on new roles and alternative lifestyles in search of a self that is in transition in an unclear and not fully determined directions to discover personal values, meaning and goals unique to the person and a testament of an adult character once the personal crisis is overcome. The goal, as originally devised, is "a reintegrated sense of self, of what one wants to do or be, and of one's appropriate sex role."[1]

In contemporary American politics, "identity" plays a huge role. In the early seventies, the Democratic Party turned away from its outreach to the working class for what is often called "identity politics" by which individuals began to group themselves in categories according to being black, transsexual, feminist and other such designations by which they constituted a sense of themselves and by which issues such as which bathroom a transgender man should use became a major political issue.[2] Regrettably, identity politics has never brought unity or stability to any country. Many wars and genocides from the Nazi era in Germany, the Rwandan massacre and more than one unfortunate incident in Pakistan had their origin with rival groups proclaiming their very being by such standards thus making racial, religious, and ethnic interest greater than national affinities.

[1]Helen Bee, Hope Lanier, and Tom Bond. *Developing Child* (Harper and Row, 1992), 77.
[2]Ibid.

Of late, under the label of Constructivism, Alexander Wendt proposed that something called "state identity" of culture, norms, beliefs, and ideas to describe the different interests of citizens as actors.[3] States are shaped in character or identity by the role they play in identifying with representative cultural norms that they legitimize. This is a process of internalization named the "constructivist hypothesis."[4] Wendt's approach involves a state's self-understanding as the basis of a state's interests, leading directly to an understanding of its actions. Keeping this view, the question which needs to be asked is whether the Pakistani state in its various formations represented cultural norms that its citizens could identify with, and whether identity politics itself creates social unrest and crisis.

3. Identity Crisis in Pakistan

"For decades now Pakistanis have been marketing themselves to the Middle East as 'fellow Muslims,'" one commentator states. "And, for centuries the Middle East has been referring to them as 'Hindis'for they come from the other side of the Indus."[5] Obviously, the solution for this commentator, a Hindu sitting with a Pakistani in an Arab restaurant in Canada, is for Pakistan to return to its common roots with the culture of the Indian subcontinent and lose its "two-nations" claims based on its religious principles and cultural ties to Muslim nations. That, at least, is how it looks to a Hindu writing in a newspaper for Jamu and Kashmir. Worth commenting on is the response of a young beauty from Beirut to the astonishment of the Pakistani who insisted on his difference from his lab partner from India. "To us, you are all the same," the young beauty answered from which the writer excitedly drew a very harsh conclusion worth citing in full to demonstrate precisely how the Indian subcontinent became two nations. The Hindu gentleman so pleased by the response concluded not untypically of Pakistan. "So, here is a nation borne out of political opportunism alone. It has no character and no indigenous role models to look up to. A nation confused about its past. A nation with an unenviable future. This is a nation without an identity."[6]

Only, the meaning of the girl's response may have been very different given that Canada is famous for welcoming immigrants who feel perfectly Canadian from the first generation onwards. The "us" excluded both the Hindu and the Muslim for insisting on differences much frowned upon in Canada where tolerance and multiculturalism are in fact the source of their national identity, witnessed for instance

[3]Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 1999)

[4]Ibid., 259

[5]Ibid., 260

[6]Rajeev Kumar Nagotra, "Pakistan's Identity Crisis," *Daily Excelsior,* Februray 26, 2017. www.dailyexcelsior.com/pakistans-identity-crisis/

by Canada's Prime Minister personally greeting the Iraqi refugees arriving in the country.

Similarly, "Pakistan's Identity Problem" in *Foreign Policy*, a prestigious Journal, yet again called upon Pakistan to embrace a pre-Muslim identity which was identified with indifference to a festival in Sindh province celebrating singing, dancing and featuring a kiss on stage, all broadcast nationally to predictable disapproval of conservative sentiment.[7] Another perspective is offered by Danish Rahi. An example of the problem is how a breed of Pakistani dogs, the Bully, are now bred in Germany without due recognition of the national origin of the dogs, which the author helpfully renames the "Pakish Bully." This is an advanced example of "soft power" through marketing that would resolve our essential issue since, "at the heart of the problem sits the issue of identity crisis, a lack of direction and leadership, and confusion that is slowly turning into mass hysteria and chaos throughout the country."[8] By contrast, the newspaper *Dawn* featured an article arguing precisely the opposite, that the growing cosmopolitanism and openness to Western liberalism and alleged consumerism has robbed Pakistan of its identity. At the end, everyone seems to agree that our so-called identity problem has reached a critical point. "Pakistan is a society in perpetual flux," the author heading a Pakistani think tank explains. "We still have to find our moorings; to decide who we are. We are doubtless trying to resolve our identity crisis though without success."[9] "Future of Pakistan depends on how it deals with identity, image and dissent,"explained Mohammad Taqi, a former ambassador to the US. at a major conference in London on behalf of the country's dissenters.[10]

Obviously, there had been in these articles an assumption made that while the country is in a flux, its "identity" must be stable, permanently established and the sole dependable source of our value as a nation. It is this view of identity which will be strongly contested in this presentation. Nationalism, as grounded in the notions of individual selfhood identified by sexual preference, racial origins, specifically and vocally minority views in any number of lifestyles, has vocal and successful defenders. Until now, the view first propounded by Wendt that the inherently anarchist relation between states involving at the lower levels warlike Hobbesian state may yield to the liberal and Kantian "friendly" state in which the self of citizens

[7]Madiha Afzal, "Pakistan's Identity Problem," *Foreign Policy.* March 24, 2015. foreignpolicy.com/2015/03/24/pakistans-identity-problem/

[8]Wafi Muhammed, "Book Launch: Identity Crisis Haunts Pakistani Society," *The Express Tribune.* September 23, 2016. Retrieved from: https://tribune.com.pk › Pakistan

[9]Adriana Husseini, "Mock Culture," *Dawn.* 2015. Retrieved: epaper.dawn.com/DetailImage.php?StoryImage=06_02_2017_009_001

[10]Wafi Muhammed, "Book Launch: Identity Crisis Haunts Pakistani Society," *The Express Tribune.* September 23, 2016, https://tribune.com.pk/story/1186721/book-launch-identity-crisis-haunts-pakistani-society-rahi/

individually may extend beyond borders to embrace all the actors and their cultural affinities, besides that these may be to a person professing the Muslim faith, regardless of our differences. In any event, the unity of nations in the West, including the Common Market so highly regarded by Wendt, is in serious trouble while its existential agony about selfhood is truly a wonder to a student of Iqbal, Ricoeur and MacIntyre who professes proudly the Muslim faith. The question is an urgent one. Samuel Huntington explained,

> The question 'Which side are you on?' has been replaced by the much more fundamental one, 'Who are you?' Every state has to have an answer. That answer, its cultural identity, defines the state's place in world politics, its friends, and its enemies. The 1990s have seen the eruption of a global identity crisis. Almost everywhere one looks, people have been asking, 'Who are we?' 'Where do we belong?' and 'Who is not us?' these questions are central not only to peoples attempting to forge new nation states, ... but also much more generally.[11]

We return with the support of these philosophers for the very influential contemporary thinkers who argue that identity is silly-putty allowing any person "a number of possible social identities, depending on the situation."[12] This line of thinking finds itself frequently at odds with the demands of the Muslim faith. In this vein, Ayesha Jalal, professor of history at Tufts University's Fletcher School and Hassan Abbas, Research Fellow at Harvard School of Government, addressed the Council on Foreign Relations in 2007 explaining our identity crisis as a consequence by Islam actually becoming a "divisive force in so far as it is being utilized by the state to deny people's rights or even to deny diversity."[13] Pakistan was created as a homeland for Muslims by a determinedly secular founder, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, whose untimely death left the question of Islam's role in society unresolved. Afterwards, Pakistan's rulers and military have relied on religion to define state ideology, leading at last to Islamic extremism in a hopeless attempt to counter the power of India, a policy which created the violence and fragmentation characteristic of failed states and an identity crisis in Pakistan as a consequence.

Not far behind is Farzana Shaikh, a Chatham House fellow, who published a widely reviewed and highly praised *Making Sense of Pakistan.* She believes that a nation crated around a principle of Islam was a failure from the start.[14] The government of Pakistan is becoming delegitimized because of political corruption and other international issues. "It is," she writes "the country's problematic and contested relationship with Islam that has most decisively frustrated its quest for a coherent national identity and for stability as a nation state capable of absorbing the challenges

[11]Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (India; New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1997), 126.

[12]Robin Cohen, *Frontiers of Identity: The British and the Others* (Longman, 1994).

[13]"CFR's New Multimedia Crisis Guide Explores Pakistan's Problems, Future," *Council on Foreign Relations*. "Crisis Guide: Pakistan," September 23, 2010, Interactive Multimedia. 2010.

[14]Frazana Shaikh, *Making Sense of Pakistan* (C Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd, 2002).

of its rich and diverse society."[15] In particular, the promulgation and defense of an Islamic constitution by military and civilian governments hid their failure to deliver social or economic benefits in order to better serve the Islamic purpose of the state. Not only have Islamic leaders through their differing accounts of Islam eroded the foundations of a pluralistic society, she argues, but by determining that Pakistan's identity as "not India" and seeking parity with a giant India has led Pakistan to an unnecessary quarrel with India over Kashmir, allegedly as a consequence of our identity crisis and feelings of impotence. It is not irrelevant that this work, representative of scholarly attempt to portray Pakistan as suffering a terminal identity crisis as a result of its adherence to Islam was published in Kolkata, India. One would never suspect that Pakistan has a vibrant and fiercely independent press, many festivals of the arts and literary readings or that strongly Islamic parties have never done well in elections or that the supposedly fundamentalist stronghold of the North-West recently voted for the strongly secular *Awami League*. As for Kashmir, that is a pain felt across Pakistan and in no way tied to its feelings of inferiority.

4. MacIntyre's Conception of Identity

MacIntyre's notion of personal identity relies on personal narratives. Specifically, there is a grand narrative that holds the unity for human life. Every human life, then, is on a journey or quest. It is important to recognize that this concept of personal identity is based on the notion that everyone develops unique and subjective moral goals and aims. These he refers to as moral judgments that individuals develop throughout life.[16] When individuals succeed in accomplishing these moral aims and goals they make positive moral judgments. When individuals, in contrast, fail to fulfill their own moral aims and goals, then they make negative moral judgments about themselves. One's personal identity, according to MacIntyre, is dependent on the formation of moral goals, aims, and judgments. When reflecting on one's life, one can look back to the moral judgments that one has made about oneself.

Moreover, individuals make moral judgments about the nations that they belong to as well. When there is no clear moral narrative within the government, there is not much room for a national identity to form. Likewise, many national identities, especially those in the Middle East, are based on religions. In Pakistan, Islam has long been a guiding force for the development of any form of identity within Pakistan.

It is important to examine how MacIntyre developed his theory on moral virtues. After all, MacIntyre's conception of personal identity relies on his moral theory. MacIntyre argues that there are three stages of moral virtuous development: practice, the narrative unity of human life, and moral tradition. As Mela states,

[15]Ibid.

[16]Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (Indiana: Notre Dame Press, 1984).

"Centered upon a specific "practice" and the "internal goods" that determine it, the participants create stories that give meaning to their life. These "narrations" weave themselves together, in order to form a concept of a human end, which is the driving force of a "tradition," that is a wider cultural narration which functions as a basis of justification on the individual and the social level, so that the separate actions are judged according to their cohesion to or their deviation from this wider complex of values."[17]

5. Paul Ricoeur and Self Identity

Alasdair MacIntyre and Paul Ricoeur both propose that the narrative we tell about our personal and collective lives constitutes our character and therefore secures identity as 'historicity' if we include a moral dimension to our story. Such narratives must be based on ethical judgments and by taking moral responsibility that links us individually or as a nation to our past, present and projected future as an established self, certain of itself and unshaken by the doubts and existential crisis so characteristic in the West. To be sure, there are some differences between the two. MacIntyre blames the self-and intellect centered Enlightenment for the current moral crisis and self-doubt in the West. He advocates instead on building a self from a narrative unity of heroic Aristotelian virtues much embraced and adopted by Islamic philosophy. In *After Virtue*, MacIntyre defines man as "a story-telling animal."[18] Virtue is an active process of synthesis, that is, a "concept of a self whose unity resides in the unity of a narrative which links birth to life to death as narrative beginning to middle to end."[19] There needs to be established a moral consistency in each person's story that knits human life into a meaningful self in its ethical completion as a closed and grounded text.

Ricoeur is more socially conscious and trusts in weaving together various narratives such as exist also among different communities in Pakistan to establish our identity as a concordance of our separate stories.[20] In his view, by encountering and assimilating into our own story different beliefs and practices only strengthen the moral rightness of our narrative and therefore the soundness of our story. He recommends that we gain by advancing our religion in a friendly and mutually profitable exchange which holds on its own in encountering the narrative of others. Let me go into details in what seems to be most relevant in MacIntyre for our purposes, which is his identifying a moral failure in such areas as abortion, sexual preference, war, in sum any number of ways moral choices are made without faith in the west or among Pakistanis enchanted by Western ways.

[17]Lia Mela, "MacIntyre on Personal Identity," *Public Reason* 3, no. 1 (2011): 109.

[18]Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory,* 216.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative.* Vol. 1. Translated by Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1984)

There is, behind such narratives out of which identity is constructed, in the west the basis of irresolvable conflict, however well-put and logically-phrased the rival assertions of identity may be. But if there is no appeal to higher authority, there will inevitably be irresolvable debates among moral choices that has reached by now unimaginable dimensions leaving no way to decide for one side or another, which brings about the kind of disunity that Ricoeur seeks to weave into a common and accommodating selfopen to the Other. But here too there is a kind of despair of those living in societies lacking faith. "Atheism must mean the destruction of the moral God not only as the ultimate source of accusation but as the ultimate source of protection, as Providence,"[21] Ricoeur wisely notes in essays written with MacIntyre centering on Western crisis of faith, "but if atheism is to have any religious significance, the death of the providential God should point toward a new faith, a tragic faith which would be to classical metaphysics what the faith of Job was to the archaic law of retribution professed by his pious friends."[22] It is clear, then, that any identity, including national identities, must have a moral foundation, even if such a foundation rests on irreligious grounds. For MacIntyre the new faith is to return to Aristotelian *telos* and its heroic virtues of courage, honour, respect for higher powers, in sum traditional theories and contexts of which they were originally a part in classic Greek philosophy, not as found in contemporary society in the West as "an exercise of our rational powers and as mere expressive assertion."[23]

6. Iqbal and Muslim Identity

Mohammad Iqbal, a much honoured but hugely neglected poet and philosopher, had much to say about the universe of identities of Muslims of the Indian subcontinent to allay the anxieties of Muslims regarding our identity in a world that is modern, but full of devices to erase out Muslim identity. The historical events of Pakistan's past, for example, play a major role in the development of identity in the state. Geography, as well as religion, history and time all matter for individual as well as national identity "No people can afford to reject their past entirely, for it is their past that has made their personal identity."[24]

Nevertheless, in the world of today which is changing with every passing day, we, as a nation, must have an identity which embraces both the elements, permanence and change. The ultimate spiritual basis of all life, as conceived by Islam, is eternal and reveals itself in variety and change that allows for a firm Moslem identity in a world of constant flux. Iqbal states that "A society based on such a conception of

[21]Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative.* Vol. 1. Translated by Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1984)

[22]Ibid., 82.

[23]MacIntyre, 11.

[24]Muhammad Iqbal. *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Stanford; Stanford University Press, 2013), 132.

reality must reconcile, in its life, the categories of permanence and change. It must possess eternal principles to regulate its collective life, for the eternal gives us a foothold in the world of perpetual change."[25]

Iqbal also critically analyses the situations where universal faith-based Islamic identity may come into conflict with nationalism. Iqbal writes,

> If nationalism means love for one's country and sacrificing one's life for the honor of the country, then such nationalism is a part of the faith of the Muslims. However, nationalism comes into conflict with Islam when it turns into a political concept and, claiming to be the basis for human unity, demands that Islam should retreat behind the personal belief of individuals and cease to be a life-giving element in national life. The problem of nationalism confronts Muslims only in countries where they form a minority and where nationalism demands that they annihilate their own identity. In countries where Muslims are in majority, Islam finds accord with nationalism as both are practically the same. In such countries where the Muslims are in a minority, their endeavor to gain autonomy as a cultural unity would be justified. Both positions are quite in conformity with Islam.[26]

Muslim Identity must emerge relevant to Islamic ideals which has no borders, and should not be appropriated for purposes not sanctioned by the world view of the Prophet Muhammad (*SAW*). It shares a distinct and unique worldview well beyond the modern concepts of nation states, unity of language and common economic interests. These are the concepts followed by those who are seeking a Pakistani identity and fail to establish the same. In fact, "The essential difference between the Muslim Community and other Communities of the world consists in our peculiar conception of nationality," Iqbal advises us. "It is not the unity of language or country or the identity of economic interest that constitutes the basic principle of our nationality. It is because we all believe in a certain view of the universe, and participate in the same historical tradition that we are members of the society founded by the Prophet of Islam. (*SAW*)"[27] This is well to remember in the context of the current discussion that the concept of Muslim Identity may provide a route which will address the current crisis of our identity coming essentially from the Western cultural crisis Iqbal witnessed at its beginning.

There is found in the work of these philosophers a despair that Iqbal foretold and side-stepped by grounding his philosophy in the Muslim faith above the nation-state and indeed founded by its principles toward a universal faith-based identity. Macintyre and Ricoeur painted a picture of the crisis of the human personality in the

[25]Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, 117.

[26]Syed Hasan Ahmad, and Edward John Thompson, *Iqbal, His Political Ideas at Crossroads: A Commentary on Unpublished Letters to Professor Thompson, with Photographic Reproductions of the Original Letters* (Aligarh: Printwell Publications, 1979), 34-35.

[27]Latif Ahmad Sherwani, *Speeches, Writings and Statements of Iqbal* (Adam Publishers, 2006), 121.

state of moral disorder detached from the faith which provides the context from which identity and meaning are derived.[28]

7. Contributing Factors to Identity Crisis in Pakistan and Lacking of a Moral Narrative

Basing the current narrative on past narratives is only part of the solution to resolve any national identity crisis within the state. The Pakistani religious identity goes well beyond the territory of Pakistan, as the Islamic identity goes well beyond borders and has long been shaped by the West and within the Middle East itself. In fact, it would be a fallacy to try to recognize a uniform and consistent Islamic narrative and corresponding identity across the Middle East, given the heterogeneity of religious interpretation and practice across the region. With the Western interferences in the Middle East and the localization and nationalization of the religion in the past few centuries, no single Islamic narrative exists for Pakistan to rely on. This, coupled with the major public crises faced by Pakistan, has led to the lack of coherence in defining even a set of narratives on which a coherent identity could be based in Pakistan.

While the historical narrative of Pakistan is important in understanding the development of personal identity in the state, it is also important to keep in mind the many problems that are currently disrupting the current formation and maintenance of personal identity in Pakistan. Natural disasters serve two particular purposes in the development of personal identity in Pakistan. First, natural disasters disrupt established systems in Pakistan. This means that when natural disasters occur, individuals in Pakistan must scramble to try to rebalance their lives and prevent the loss of death. The moral narratives that result from natural disasters have major implications on the personal identities of those in Pakistan. Thus, natural disasters, in this way, contribute to the identity crisis in Pakistan. However, there is a way that natural disasters can actually promote a uniform national identity that remains rooted in Islam. Natural disasters provide opportunities for positive moral judgment. When individuals in the state come together to help one another, they are effectively drawing positive moral narratives for themselves and for their fellow countrymen. The result, then, is a more unified national identity in Pakistan. Natural disasters have the potential either to alleviate the identity crisis by promoting an overall atmosphere of mutual help and sacrifice or to aggravate the identity crisis as a result of destruction of social fabric leads to a chaotic situation.

Political corruption, in contrast, has a purely negative effect on identity in Pakistan. Whenever politicians make political decisions based on their own interests,

[28]Alasdair C. MacIntyre, and Paul Ricoeur, *The Religious Significance of Atheism*, No. 18. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), 257.

they are not representing their people. This leads to social unrest and a division in how people view one another in Pakistan. Political corruption, thus, heavily contributes to the identity crisis in Pakistan. It also constitutes a narrative in Pakistan based on negative moral judgments. When corruption is rampant in political leadership, the general public loses faith in them and even in their own contributions to the state. Political corruption cannot be justified even through the Islamic laws. Political corruption is unanimously disregarded as immoral and unislamic by all the Islamic sects.

Increased terrorism in Pakistan also appears to be contributing to its national identity crisis. Terrorism has political ends. Many of these political ends are based on the interpretation of Islamic doctrine. This fuels the disagreements within the Islamic tradition by exacerbating existing tensions and providing a multitude of narratives that clearly lead to negative moral judgments. On the question of the causes of terrorism in the country, there is an atmosphere of inherently conflicting and confused moral judgments. Even there are certain segments of our society which justify the very act of terrorism. This scenario has aggravated the identity crisis in the country; leaving a lay man helpless in deciding which side he should stand or which opinion he should hold, thus contributing to negative moral judgments and identity crisis. Here, religion is not able to amend these rifts because issues within the faith are fueling this crisis as well.

8. Conclusion: Opportunities for Developing a Moral Narrative

Under McIntyre's definition of identity, the formation of any identity results from consistent moral narratives in which moral judgments are assessed through the histories of individuals, nations, religions, etc. For Pakistan, there is clearly an identity crisis, characterized by the now constant disorientation and lack of coherence expressed by the government. Natural disasters, terrorism, and political corruption are the primary direct factors preventing the establishment of a natural identity, but it is the so called Islamic religion that has failed to provide an overarching stability to the moral narrative in Pakistan. On numerous issues in the Islamic religious tradition and doctrine, there is disagreement. Terrorism is fueled by religious radicals, with no clear plan of action. Likewise, there is no clear political response to the growing corruption in Pakistan. Islam across many parts of Asia lacks a consistent foundation to provide Pakistan with a moral framework or even a moral narrative to build an identity because of having disagreements or various interpretations. The result is major division, political corruption, and polarization within Pakistan and the existing identity crisis in the state. Nonetheless, Islam can be the foundation for the development of a consistent and stable moral narrative. Islam does not require everyone to abandon prior cultural conventions and rituals. Thus, there can be cultural harmony between the ancient cultural expressions and the more recent Islamic cultural expressions. Addressing this crisis requires mutualistic cooperation and a

willingness to make moral judgments that the Pakistani population as a whole can agree on concerning issues of terrorism, political corruption, etc. Despite these clear issues, there is a way forward. Pakistan must begin constructing a moral narrative, perhaps based on an Islamic nationalism or some other system, e.g., constructivism. Minimizing political corruption and taking a consistent stance on the ideology behind terrorism in the state and the region are the first steps.

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