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**“Poets/Poetics of Self-Identity: Iqbal and Heidegger on
the Cosmopolitanist ‘Originological’ Anxiety”**

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An unwillingness to face the natural unfolding of the present self and continuing to entertain quixotic notions of a past self perhaps lies at the core of the identity crisis in the Muslim world. This paper briefly analyzes what Heidegger proposes about human “*becoming*” in order to illustrate that the existentialist analysis of self constitution, while featuring a positive emphasis on change, leads to violence in identity construction. A better approach is found in the thought of Levinas and Derrida, whose philosophies can assist Muslims in constructing realistic identities in a postmodern/cosmopolitan world. This study suggests that Muslims should come to terms with a self that is always in an “originological” anxiety, the psychic state in which the self searches for an anchor. In fact, Iqbal’s philosophy of the self (*khudi*) reaches quite impressive sophistication. “Even Iqbal is not aware of Iqbal,” he says, hinting at the complexities involved in identity constitution. Iqbal’s eclectic suturing of self-identity was in fact a radical step in the history of Muslim thought. However, Iqbal’s theory of the *khudi* lacks a thorough analysis of the self’s encountering of the other. A lucid exposition of the *khudi* will be bypassed in an attempt to discover how Levinasian and Derridean thought could possibly address the crisis of Muslim identity in a more systematic way. The second major focus of this paper is the search for Islamic textual hermeneutics that could reflect such eclectic identities. This section highlights examples from the author’s own experimentation with literary theory as Islamic hermeneutics.