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## Beyond binary discourses? Pakistan studies textbooks and representations of cultural, national, and global identity

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### **Abstract**

Pakistan studies textbooks occupy a central role in translating curriculum imperatives into the foundational stories identified by the authorities as core knowledge for classroom transmission, and consequently in constructing Pakistani young people's identities. The purpose of this article is to explore the content of recently-crafted Pakistan studies textbooks in the Punjab in relation to identity-related issues at a point in time when domestic circumstances, critical diagnoses of flawed textbook approaches in the late twentieth century and a dynamic international context all pushed the previously dominant theocratic/ Islamic discourse of curriculum policy towards more democratic and pluralistic pathways and the possibility of 'enlightened moderation'. The specific focus of the study is upon how textbook writers' interpreted and enacted policy objectives and guidelines regarding Pakistani national identity, internal ethnic and cultural diversity, and global perspectives in their writing of textbooks within the rubric of the revised 2006 secondary school Pakistan studies national curriculum.

**Keywords:** Pakistan studies, textbooks, history, identity.