

How We Remember 1947

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Introduction

In my Major Research Project, I explore how the India-Pakistan partition of 1947 is conceptualized in a popular media text. Specifically, I look at a TV series produced in Pakistan that explores the partition and the events immediately preceding it, that led to the splitting of India into India and Pakistan from a nationalistic perspective. Major themes that are noteworthy of analysis include gender relations, notions of belonging and community, nationalism and identity, contextualization and impact of media, and trauma. Moreover, I pay attention to how gender relations and notions of family are conceptualized in relation to nationalistic ideologies, and how both are impacted during traumatic events. In particular, my research interest includes studying how this media depiction of the partition plays into or contests dominant narratives of the nation and citizenship along the lines of religious and gender classifications. The literature review below aims to explore theoretical conceptualizations of my areas of interest in order to enable my media text analysis to be situated in relation to existing literature.

The TV show that I study depicts the time period immediately preceding, during and right after the partition of Hindustan into India and Pakistan, going from 1947 till 1956 in its narrative (Dastaan (TV Series), 2017). However, the series itself was first aired in Pakistan in 2010 and thus situates itself in the past. With an IMDb rating of 8.7/10, the series has been popular with audiences, with the first episode having garnered over 662,000 views on the network's YouTube channel as of May 28, 2017 (Dastaan (TV Series 2010-), 2017; Dastaan Episode 1 HUM TV Drama, 2017) . In addition to being broadcast on the Pakistani TV network channel, Hum TV, it has also aired on MBC Bollywood in the Middle East and in India (Dastaan

(TV Series), 2017). The series is based on a book titled *Bano*, also the name of the female protagonist in the TV show, written by Razia Butt (*Dastaan (TV Series)*, 2017). It is part of what Gopinath (2000, p 285) terms “socially conscious” media that attempts to raise awareness about social issues. The TV depiction was met with an exceptional response, having been rated as the second best drama of 2010, according to a poll conducted by a Pakistani newspaper, Dawn News (*Opinion Poll: Who ruled 2010?*, 2017; as cited in *Dastaan (TV Series)*, 2017). In addition to ranking as one of the highest-rated TV series of Pakistan of all time, the series has received 14 award nominations in various categories, of which it has won 11; these include Best Drama/TV Director, Best Drama, Best TV Serial and several nominees amongst the cast members for their acting in leading or supporting roles (*Dastaan (TV Series)*, 2017). Arguably, it is this phenomenal response to the series, as evident by its various award nominations, and being broadcast beyond its initial audience on the channel that produced it, including across the border in India, that are some of the series’ unique attributes. In part, it is the success that the series has garnered that drew me to pick it for my media analysis; given its popularity and the likely wide viewership this entails, studying how it represents the themes I study is of further consequence.

In re-telling the story of the partition, the TV series positions itself in favour of the Pakistani national narrative, as is suggested by the conditions of its production and by the depictions in the series itself of various partition-related events. There appears to be a strong undercurrent of nationalism that ignites the effort to create the Muslim homeland of Pakistan and once it is formed, this nationalism works to steer it in the direction that was envisioned by its leaders. Nationalistic perspectives are of importance in my analysis because a re-telling of the partition that was produced by an Indian or British production house would likely offer

significantly different depictions of similar events. Therefore, it is important to note that the TV series offers one particular interpretation of this historical event.

While the majority of the TV series is set in the 1947 to 1956 period, particular scenes employ a different storytelling technique. Set in black and white or sepia, these scenes break the fourth wall by addressing the audience directly. They also differ in that these scenes break from the overarching plot of the drama to present facts about the partition. While there is a strong sense of fiction in the series otherwise, these scenes show what really happened during the partition, even as they are contextualized within the drama itself. This break from fiction is symbolized by imagery that is meant to show marches and protests from the partition as well as video clips of the national leaders of the movement as they work towards achieving the independent state of Pakistan. The scenes preceding and succeeding these depictions draw on the facts that are presented to further the storyline. To sum up, this project analyzes a media text to compare how its depictions of gender, familial ties, religion, nation-building, trauma and the construction of the “other” and the homeland support or question existing dominant ideological representations of these themes. I begin by elaborating on my research questions, followed by a literature review of the key ideas that my MRP delves into. This is followed by a description of how I collected and analyzed data and a look at the key findings that emerged. Lastly, there is then an analysis of these findings, along with the conclusion which wraps up the discussion by suggesting responses to my research questions as well as avenues for further research..

Research Questions

Drawing from a preliminary analysis of existing literature, as below, the questions I want to explore include:

1. Does this media text reaffirm or disrupt stereotypical representations of gender and family in relation to nation-building?
2. How does being situated in a particular socio-political and religious context affect how a media text depicts nationalism and the idea of the homeland?
 - 2.1. How is an “other” constructed through nationalistic discourse?
 - 2.2. What, if any, role does religion play in the construction of the homeland?

While the questions employ broad terms, such as “gender”, “family”, “nationalism”, “homeland” and “religion”, this is important to be able to capture the themes that the TV series draws on (Bryman & Bell, 2016). The interconnected nature of a society’s social, political and religious configuration necessitates research questions that consider these factors in conjunction with each other. The questions are based on assumptions that gender and family are key organizing concepts within nationalism and that an “other” is in fact constructed in nationalistic discourse (Bryman & Bell, 2016). Based on the literature review and preliminary analysis of the media text, these are reasonable assumptions to make.

The questions are grouped together thematically (Bryman & Bell, 2016). Question 1 is important because media plays a central role in strengthening or disrupting stereotypical representations. Given the popularity of this TV series, it is not unlikely that its depictions of these themes have far-reaching implications in affecting how audiences think about these concepts. Question 2.1 draws on the idea that an us vs. them dynamic is often prevalent in

nationalistic discourse, as suggested by the literature review to date. Similarly, question 2.2 assumes that religion plays a significant role in organizing along national lines; this assumption is made based on a preliminary analysis of the media text, which alludes to religion as a central organizing theme. To answer these research questions, I am relying primarily on non-reactive textual analysis, using the TV series as my text of study (Bryman & Bell, 2016). It is non-reactive in that the text has already been produced and my analysis of it will not alter its form in any way. As my analysis suggests that attitudes are fluid and behaviour takes place through negotiation, my research adopts a constructivist lens, in that the data collection and analysis processes inform each other and occur simultaneously (Bryman & Bell, 2016). Therefore, as we see below, the data collection and method of analysis sections tie into each other.

Literature Review

In a world of 24/7 access to live and archived content, media productions wield significant influence on public attitudes and actions (Sabir, 2011). Media productions can play a central role in either reinforcing or challenging existing gender hierarchies; the media text I study may do both simultaneously (Durrani, 2008). It is also be interesting to study if there is a gendered response to the idea of the nation and nation-building in my analysis. Moreover, I study the media text's female characters to conclude whether they uphold or challenge this idea of women as Pakistan's symbolic guards. Media productions offer a set of images that visualize values of religion, tradition, family and community; these are key concepts that I pay attention to as they are depicted in the media text (Sabir, 2011). In addition to this, I pay attention to if and how unaddressed trauma may be particularly salient towards the end of the media text, as it transitions to the present day and details how the partition continues to affect citizens to this day. Since differing media representations may thus speak to media texts as sites of struggle of identity formation and seeking legitimacy, I examine what it means to be the ideal Pakistani, as indicated by existing research, in more detail (Tormey, 2006; as cited in Durrani & Dunne, 2010). Situated within the context of nation-building, my MRP looks at how stereotypes of gender in terms of autonomy and roles within the family are depicted in the media text and whether these reinforce or contest dominant narratives. I also examine how the family serves as a metaphor for the nation itself. In addition to this, I look at how the media text's positioning within a specific socio-political and religious environment influences the ideology it supports with regards to nationalism. Central to this is the construction of the "other" and how this is interlinked with religion as a marker of difference. Below is a look at the major themes that this

MRP studies.

Gender

This section looks at how gender serves as an organizing concept for nation building and nationalistic ideologies. The media text I analyze positions women front and centre in the struggle for an independent nation. Media productions give rise to a set of discursive practices that situate citizens as intersectional gendered and nationalised individuals in a way that differentiates them from each other (Durrani, 2008). Gender roles and norms are formed, strengthened and questioned in the realm of ideological fields through the production and dissemination of a particular type of imagery (Babar, 2000). Media texts also offer individuals a set of images to identify with and form a sense of self through (Arnot, 2002; as cited in Durrani, 2008). Producing citizens for the nation and a sense of coherent nationhood relies on the interconnections between gender and nationality as markers of identity that shape each other (Arnot & Dillabough, 2006; as cited in Durrani, 2008).

Establishing that the partition was a traumatic “time of mass displacement, sexual violence, abduction, assault and disappearance”, Saeed’s (2009, p. 483-4) analysis sheds light on the gendered nature of experiences of trauma, looking at how women responded to the partition both, when it took place and to its memory in modern day engagements. Engagements with and effects of nation and border creation and maintenance continue to be gendered, as is their enactment in media texts (Saeed, 2009). In addition to gender, other differences in how audiences are located can mean that the same media text can be read in multiple and sometimes opposing ways (Gopinath, 2000, p. 284). Furthermore, Jamal’s (2006) forays into the positioning of women within the framework of tradition vs modernity and how this can erase their agency is

of particular value. Within the nationalist discourse, there exist contradictory narratives of women as daughters of the state or citizens of it, as influenced by politics, religion and law (Jamal, 2006). As daughters of the state, women are responsible to reproducing the unity of the family, which is the foundation for the formation of the nation itself (Ahmed, 2010, p. 579). Even as citizenship calls for autonomy, the positioning of women in Pakistan's nation-state, in their own communities and in families is multifaceted and fraught with complications (Jamal, 2006). This complicated relationship provides useful context as I analyze how various female characters' roles develop as the media text progresses.

Gender serves to organize citizenship; and Pakistani women both shape and challenge the discourses underlying nationalist movements (Jamal, 2006). The formation of state and strengthened nationalism bolster patriarchy and undermined gender equality by relegating traditional customs and culture, often associated with women, to the private realm (Jamal, 2006). Women are depicted as symbolic guards of the country, therefore producing gendered responses to national identity and borders (Saeed, 2009). It appears that Pakistani feminists contend that in addition to nationalism, religious forces support the restriction of women to the private domain and the regulation of their lives through codes of morality (Jamal, 2006). Experiences of subjugation are defined not only by gender, but also by class, ethnicity and cultural affiliations (Jamal, 2006). As depicted in my chosen media text, Jamal (2006) suggests that the "home" and "nation" can be spaces that challenge gender norms.

In the context of Pakistan, identity is militarized as well as masculinized (Durrani, 2008). Given this focus on militarization, Pakistani national identity subscribes to the gendered idea of men as protectors of the country, to whom women are subordinated (Durrani, 2008). Especially

in times of crises, Pakistan's male citizens are expected to be heroic, whereas female citizens are to be self-sacrificing (Babar, 2000). The idea of sacrifice is tied to happiness in that the former is considered good because it leads to the latter in the form of happiness, conceptualized as the independent state of Pakistan (Ahmed, 2010, p. 576). Even before its actualization, some things, such as the expectation that Pakistan will eventually become a reality, can be a source of happiness (Ahmed, 2010, p. 577). Therefore "we are directed by the promise of happiness" but this happiness is conditional in that Pakistan's formation depends on the sacrifice of some of its citizens' material comforts, wealth, and even life (Ahmed, 2010, p. 577). In idealistic constructions of Pakistani identity, women are often burdened with symbolizing religious identity, often through dress, and are frequently depicted as carers and nurturers, closely associated with the private sphere (Durrani, 2008). In my analysis, I look at whether these stereotypes are reinforced or contested in the chosen media text. By essentializing certain characteristics as being typically masculine, discursive practices feed into hypermasculinity being defined in terms of valour, bravery, aggression, violence, dominance, fearlessness and victory (Babar, 2000). These values become even more consequential when one considers their role in supporting ideologies of protecting the nation's mothers and daughters who embody the honor of the country (Babar, 2000). Succinctly put, "the soldier/son's role is to protect and defend the nation/mother/land by sacrificing his life (which is a debt received from the mother/land) and he thus has to repay his debt whenever the nation/mother/land is besieged by enemies and dangerous 'others'" (Khattak, 1994; as cited in Babar, 2000, p. 441-2). Female citizens are seen as needing protection, painting their male counterparts as guardians and saviours who unilaterally define the conditions of protection (Tickner, 1992; as cited in Babar,

2000). These are tropes that may emerge in the media text, through dialogues, imagery and story progression.

National and gender consciousness is constructed through ideologies (Babar, 2000). Defining identity through the lens of gender and nationalism, media texts mould understandings of what it means to be a man or woman in a nation state, as well as his or her responsibilities to the state (Babar, 2000). We see this hypermasculine discourse play out in policy-making, where leaders resort to rhetoric about “having proved their manhood, of exhibiting virility and strength, of having the courage and ability to hit out” (Babar, 2000, p. 443). Discursive practices such as education and media often serve the hegemonic social relations that solidify patriarchal interests of dominant groups, such as military and religious figures of authority, while marginalizing the interests of other groups, including women (Durrani, 2008). Crucial for social justice, Babar (2000) contends that demilitarized texts can play a key role in undoing gender roles that position some as dominant and others as subordinate. The literature thus promotes adopting a critical lens when analyzing the media text, with a view towards determining how media depictions are influenced by hegemonic ideals.

Nationalism

This section explores how nationalism operates and what the tools of its permeation are. As a modern ideology which supports formation of nation states, nationalism is prevalent in numerous media texts, including the one that I will be examining (Sabir, 2011). This “imagined political community” offers solidarity and a sense of belonging, despite existing inequalities within this imagined community (Anderson, 1983; as cited in Sabir, 2011, p. 73). State-controlled texts serve to make active citizens out of viewers by helping them conceptualize

a sense of self, and linking their national and cultural identity to religious ideology, which I discuss below (Sabir, 2011). Construction of identities also takes place through the creation of adversaries and is a mechanism for humans to organize and comprehend their worlds (Durrani & Dunne, 2010). Moreover, nation building is deeply intertwined with trauma (Saeed, 2009). Unaddressed trauma is integral to the remembrance of the partition, which is essential to the performance of nationhood (Ray, 2006; as cited in Saeed, 2009). Historically, national identity formation for India and Pakistan have been defined in opposition to each other (Lall, 2008). Significantly, Lall (2008) suggests that the key to greater tolerance is perhaps less intensely nationalistic identities that do not rely on an antagonistic view of the other. I explore the process of formation, maintenance and reformulation of nationalistic identities to offer a lens for how this occurs in my media text.

Media is an important apparatus in the formation of the us vs. them “imagined community” that is a constituent of nationalist discourse (Anderson, 1991; as cited in Durrani & Dunne, 2010, p. 217). This guides my analysis of how the “other” is shown in the media text. This creation of a homogenous self and other reinforces that national identities are relational and tends to erase differences within one’s own community (Durrani & Dunne, 2010). This conceptualization of the “self” also rarely speaks to the heterogeneity it actually comprises of and the differential access to power that it accords to individuals within a community (Durrani & Dunne, 2010, p. 218). Defining Pakistani identity in a homogenous manner belies the cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity that Pakistanis exhibit (Durrani, 2008). I thus study the media text to better understand how it does or does not depict heterogeneity in terms of who is Pakistani.

Demarcating boundaries that prioritize certain citizens over others strengthens existing

gender inequalities and power differences (Durrani, 2008). In specifying who constitutes the average or ideal Pakistani, the scope of who can acceptably be considered a citizen becomes narrow (Durrani, 2008). A critical reading of media texts delves into whose interests are served by the ideology it permeates (Ozkirimli 2005; as cited in Durrani & Dunne, 2010). As a tool of education, the hegemonic ideologies embraced by media representations are likely to change as the particularities of preferred identity formation evolve (Durrani & Dunne, 2010). Serving the interests of the country's elite, Pakistan's media is characterized by hegemonic ideals where "the dominant classes exercise power through both the coercive status apparatus and also through the ideological persuasion" (Gramsci, 1971; as cited in Sabir, 2011, p. 78). The latter is often expressed through cultural production, including media texts, which shape the "narratives of the nation" (Sabir, 2011, p. 78). Therefore, looking at a media text's depiction of nationalism offers a lens to observe how a particular mechanism for nation-building operates

Religion

Examining Pakistan in particular, this section looks at how religious ideology is intimately linked to nationalism and the ways the two affect each other. National as well as religious identities are majorly influenced by mass education techniques, and the media industry is arguably one strategy for this (Sabir, 2011). Given Pakistan's relatively recent birth along the lines of a religious identity and its current struggles with internal stability, notions of belonging and a dominant national imaginary impact not only the country's domestic struggles but also foreign relations with its neighbours (Ispahani 2003; as cited in Durrani & Dunne, 2010). Religion tends to play a greater role in national identity if the nation was born out a religion-based conflict, in opposition to a religiously different "other", as is true for Pakistan

(Hastings, 1997; as cited in Durrani & Dunne, 2010). Puar (2014, p. 200) adds to this discussion by noting that in addition to identity formation, religion can also be an affective tendency. As a result, religion may be a central theme in the media text, as a unifying force for nationalistic goals. Islam is seen as being embedded in the national imaginary and gives rise to a problematic conceptualization of Pakistanis as Muslims, thus undermining the variety and multiplicity of Pakistani identities in a nation that is culturally, ethnically and spiritually diverse (Durrani & Dunne, 2010). Medovoi (2012) draws upon the idea of the unmarked body, which can “pass” for a different socially constructed class, of ethnicity, class, and particularly in this case religion; this is an area for further research in the context of a present-day Pakistan that still associates national identity with being Muslim (Puar, 2014, p. 203). As Puar (2014, p. 204) notes, “some religious communities can escape the referent of race while others cannot”. However, the media text I study offers another perspective on religion that Durrani & Dunne (2010) also refer to. This viewpoint is that religion can serve as a unifying force behind which people from different walks of life can rally towards a common objective i.e. the formation of a new nation (Durrani & Dunne, 2010).

The media landscape is situated within the broader context of regional politics, economic realities and global discourse against religious fundamentalism, (Pintak & Nazir, 2013). Given that Pakistan was formed on the basis of having a Muslim homeland, religion and nationalism are inextricably intertwined (Sabir, 2011). This is illustrated by the conceptualization of Pakistan as “the “manifest destiny” of the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent...dream of Allama Muhammad Iqbal (a Muslim poet-philosopher of India), the “dream of the Muslims of India” or “the sacrifices of the Muslims of India” (Sabir, 2011, p. 73). It is possible that some variation of

terms like these could be present in the media text as it refers to the formation of Pakistan from a Pakistani perspective. I study the historical situatedness in which Pakistan came to be to further contextualize how its emergence at a particular moment and place in history shaped the trajectory of the nation in its early days.

Contextualization and Impact of Media

This section sheds light on the workings of the media industry in Pakistan and how this impacts the content produced and the values that media productions espouse. Pakistani media's relationship with the religion and the state aspires to be one where the media depicts Islam systematically in the context of a nation that is a declared Islamic state whose workings are intimately tied to the religion (Hagerty, 2005, Shah, 1996; as cited in Sabir, 2011). State control is exerted over national TV as well as private networks and radio (Sabir, 2011). This influences content and audience in important ways. Delving deeper into the conditions of production for the TV series I study helps locate it within the media landscape and may explain some of the artistic choices being made in the series itself regarding character progression and narrative and storytelling. The production source of media influences how it depicts violence and other key ideas; for instance English-medium press during the partition offered a more balanced perspective of ongoing unrest, as compared to the more charged and emotional coverage by local language media (Chattha, 2013). The differently nuanced coverage from Muslim, Sikh and Hindu media sources attests to the "spin" evident in media, which aims to make news more palatable to particular audiences (Chattha, 2013).

In times of conflict, there is a tendency for 'blame displacement' whereby one assigns responsibility to a hostile other while downplaying one's own violent actions as being taken in

defence (Chattha, 2013). By attributing blame for violence to other communities, media accounts that spread rumours, misinformation and partial coverage encourage retaliation by home communities, perpetuating cyclical violence (Chattha, 2013). Blame displacement may be evident in the depiction of violence towards the “other” in the media text I examine; examining blame displacement as a concept in greater detail will be integral to understanding whether it is prevalent in the text I study. Looking at the role that the press and word of mouth, travelling through religious, communal and social networks, play in worsening tensions and spreading “news” of violence, Chattha (2013) notes that such news can contribute to a continuing cycle of violence justified as revenge or seeking justice. Hence, this attempt to mould how violence is framed significantly impacts the continuation or cessation of violence (Chattha, 2013). This draws attention to the need for accounting for biases in media texts (Chattha, 2013). This is a prime example of how the situatedness of a media text affects how it handles the representation of its thematic foci.

Trauma

Disruptive trauma is integral to how nations and their citizens imagine their individual and communal identity. This section looks further into how trauma is linked to nationalism. Saeed (2009) introduces the concept of disruptive trauma as an organizational tool for the emotional effects of partition. The partition came with the cost of an estimated one million people’s death, thousands of rapes and between six to fifteen million people becoming refugees (Debs, 2013). It continues to be of historical moment and is of significance for not only those who were personally affected by being uprooted, but also by subsequent generations who continue to measure current violence against what the partition brought along (Menon & Bhasin,

2000; as cited in Saeed, 2009). This unhealed wound impacts the lives and identities of present day citizens, invoking an image of the wound-as-border (Saeed, 2009). Towards the end of the media text, commentary from a contemporary point in time attests to the partition as something citizens continue to grapple with.

The border is another image of consequence, where nationhood is policed and identity is enacted (Saeed, 2009). The partition is intimately tied up to notions of trauma, as illustrated by this excerpt from a Pakistani movie that explores partition: “there was an ocean of people who were leaving everything behind and going. Broken memories! Incomplete dreams! To the house of the lord!” (Saeed, 2009, p. 496). Similar emotions may be expressed in the media text under study. Defining trauma as an event that renders one incapable of dealing with it in the present tense, the memory of trauma can be remembered through unconscious recall or memory flashbacks as one tries to make sense of what was in the moment unfathomable (Saeed, 2009). Traumatic events and the trauma narratives they are a part of, are central to the formation of national identity (Debs, 2013). Trauma narratives’ success is influenced by the ease of narration of the traumatic event(s) and how it is connected to wider ideological frameworks (Debs, 2013). These narratives can be reinforced or questioned and reformulated over time by cultural productions such as the media text I analyze (Debs, 2013). This draws attention to the dynamic and constantly evolving nature of national identity, in a continuous process of contestation and affirmation (Debs, 2013). Trauma begets disruption; media texts that depict traumatic events can thus create a disruptive viewing experience for audiences (Saeed, 2009). Media depictions call upon notions of dislocation, dissatisfaction, border-crossing, ethnicity and religion, as well as implying that the dream which was Pakistan has failed as a Muslim homeland but succeeded as

an established state (Saeed, 2009). Given that the partition and its gendered subjectivities continue to invoke a turbulent past through media production, it bears wondering whether the trauma that accompanies it will ever be fully resolved (Saeed, 2009). In looking at the partition as happening in the present, Puar 's (2014, p. 198) constitution of the immediate aftermath of 9/11 as an event that "consistently demanded attention to the urgency of the 'here and now' while the temporal frames of past/present/future no longer seemed to make much (common) sense" may be applicable to other traumatic events, such as 1947. What is evident from this literature review is that an understanding of trauma is essential to understanding the India-Pakistan partition.

Data Collection Approach

The media text I analyze is available online and I have downloaded all episodes onto my computer with backups on Google Drive to ensure I have access to it in case the series is no longer available online. There are 23 episodes, and each episode is roughly 40 minutes long. I have watched all 23 episodes and looked at visual elements, such as dress, body language, imagery, as well as dialogues. Watching the episodes one per day, data collection took approximately three weeks. In an attempt to narrow down the data to a manageable amount given the scope of the MRP, I have selected only the first three and last three episodes for my analysis.

While the TV series offers multiple stories, including romance, I focus on the development of the nationalistic narrative. Since the TV series is publicly available, there are no ethical concerns about using content that is private, and no conflict of interests or risk of harming research participants (Bryman & Bell, 2016). Analyzing the major emergent themes in the TV series offer insights into the research questions I'm posing. It is worth keeping in mind that coding has been time consuming because it is complex and nuanced, as compared to sorting answers into an either/or category (Bryman & Bell, 2016). This also introduces some level of subjectivity and bias because each coder can code the themes somewhat differently (Bryman & Bell, 2016). Therefore, it is noteworthy that this data collection approach, while suitable for the analysis of this media text, is not without its limitations.

Method of Analysis

I have coded for themes of gender, family, nationalism, and religion. I transcribed dialogues and made notes about visuals, which I reviewed in their entirety to determine emergent codes, thus using a bottom up approach (Bryman & Bell, 2016). Once I had picked the six episodes to study in detail, I watched each episode a second time. Before the second viewing, I listed out the themes that emerged from the literature review. I kept these in mind as I watched the episodes and looked for dialogues, sound effects and visuals that spoke to at least one of these themes. If it did, I noted the dialogue down verbatim, or described the sound or visual as presented. In parenthesis, I noted the theme(s) that this element addressed. Several elements spoke to multiple themes at once; in such cases, all relevant themes are listed. I studied these audio-visual cues to better understand what they suggest about the dominant ideologies of the time, as they pertain to the aforementioned themes that are coded for, and whether these ideologies, as represented in the TV series, are disruptive or supportive of stereotypes. I do so with the aim of answering RQ1 specifically.

With regards to the RQ 2's sub-sections, I look at the role played by the dialogues more than visual cues, in establishing a fundamentally different "other", often on the basis of varying religious beliefs. The qualitative research method I use provides in-depth, rich and detailed data, with the limitation that findings cannot be generalized widely or replicated (Bryman & Bell, 2016). The qualitative research approach also offers insights and contextual understanding into the subjective meanings and interpretations of people's behaviours and attitudes (Bryman & Bell, 2016). I used post-coding as themes emerged and evolved as I analyzed the data (Bryman & Bell, 2016). Hence, the data collection and analysis went very much hand in hand.

Findings

For this section, I will list out noticeable aspects of the six episodes I have watched, and simultaneously consider how the features listed offer preliminary insights into possible answers to my research questions. The criteria for what I considered noteworthy is whether the audio and/or visual elements in a particular scene speak to one or more of the major themes listed below, which I arrived at as a result of reviewing the literature. The process for selecting pertinent elements and listing them is described in greater detail in the preceding Method of Analysis section. Listed in parenthesis at the end of each point are the major themes i.e. gender, family, nationalism and religion, depicted in each instance.

Episode 1

1. One Muslim female matriarchal character invokes “Praise be to the Lord” in Urdu, in praise of another character, whereas her Hindu neighbour expresses the same sentiment in Hindi. The former is clad in shalwar kameez and covers her head (commonly associated with Pakistani traditional wear and a marker of Muslim identity respectively), while the latter dresses in a saree and bindi (commonly associated with Indian traditional wear). Linguistic variations and differences in clothing are depicted as markers of difference and identity-making between neighbour. Religion is pertinent in that God’s will is seen as being essential to the success of endeavours. Women are shown as being the bearers and transmitters of religion (religion, gender, nationalism)
2. Invocations of thanks to God (Allah) and speaking in what is now considered to be traditional, or pure Urdu are employed. Language purity may accord some more claim to the nation or land than others. (religion, nationalism)

3. The episode is set in Ludhiana and speaks of news from Amritsar. The importance of news travelling by word of mouth is established as this communication channel is considered to be credible and trustworthy. Word of mouth later becomes an important way of learning about occurrences related to the partition. (nationalism)
4. In the context of a upcoming wedding, a male character notes “Girls put mehndi on and have to do nothing; so the guys must do everything”. Wedding preparations are largely led by women, but some tasks are inherently masculine, suggesting a gendered division of labour that is not (yet) questioned. (gender)
5. The female lead character, Bano wants to study further, but her mother is pressuring her to get married and to learn domestic chores, such as stitching. Gendered expectations are evident in that marriage is seen as the appropriate course of action for an adult woman. (gender, family)
6. Bano’s mother is seen deciding things on her behalf and commenting “She’s completely clueless”. Grown women are treated as being somewhat infantile and not having complete autonomy over their own lives. (gender, family)
7. Extended family and neighbours are all considered to be family. Family, beyond the nuclear family unit, is of prime importance. (family)
8. The characters address each other according the recipient’s religious beliefs. There is harmony in the community and respect for different religious beliefs. (religion)
9. The male lead, Hassan is introduced as a member of Muslim League party, which is advocating for the creation of Pakistan. In depicting Hassan as being politically active but also focused on his education, the text positions the struggle for independence in a

positive light, and what enlightened, forward-thinking young individuals are vouching for. (nationalism)

10. Hassan states, “All my dreams can be sacrificed for the dream of Iqbal. My life included, never mind the studies”. The creation of Pakistan is seen as being worthy of all sacrifices. (nationalism)

11. Bano wears the niqab but is seen running around freely in play. Bano’s modest dressing does not limit her mobility, providing interesting insight into how gendered expectations may be challenged. (gender, religion)

12. Faheem, a secondary male character who is Hassan’s friend, notes “Even here and in all Hindustan, everyone is affected passionately. Wherever sir Jinnah has spoken, all Muslims have stood together.” Multiple characters express support for and faith in the efforts to create a new nation i.e. Pakistan. Nationalism invokes a sense of unity in previously disparate groups of people. (nationalism, religion)

13. Hassan adds, “Soon all Hindustan will realise that Muslim League (ML) is the only true representation of the Muslims here”. Pakistan is strongly associated with Muslim identity, to the exclusion of other religious identities being part of this new nation, with the latter being presented as a primary reason for the creation of the former. (nationalism, religion)

14. The first time the lead couple, Bano and Hassan meet, she is wearing Pakistan’s colours i.e. green and white, and he is in all white. This sets the tone for gendered expectations foregrounded in the nationalistic narrative. White is also commonly associated with purity, thus associating positive attributes with the colors of Pakistan’s flag. (gender,

nationalism)

Episode 2

15. Saleem, Bano's brother, is from the opposing Congress political party, which is not supportive of the India-Pakistan partition. Even though Hassan and Saleem have similar ethnic and religious backgrounds, their political beliefs are shown as being contradictory to each other. This suggests that heterogeneity of opinions exists between people of a certain grouping, whether on religious basis or other factors. (nationalism, religion)
16. Even though all of Bano's family except Saleem supports the Muslim League family, the family's matriarch says "everyone has their individual perspective." Tolerance and acceptance of diversity is emphasized in this pre-partition era; in stark contrast to the divisive politics we see later on in the series. (nationalism, religion)
17. Speaking of Pakistan, Hassan says "God willing, this dream will become a reality"; and is met with skepticism on the one hand and encouragement on the other. The dream of Pakistan seems to be on shaky ground; there are hopes for it but also doubts about its likelihood. Once again, we see Pakistan's creation being suggested as God's will, highlighting the importance of religion in this national narrative. (nationalism, religion)
18. Lakshmi, Bano's house maid is Hindu. There is no segregation or noticeable animosity between Hindus and Muslims. (religion)
19. In a public meeting, Hassan states, "I don't accept that Pakistan is a temporary craze. It's our need. You will see, God willing, Pakistan will be a reflection of our true selves. We have a unique identity. We can never become assimilated with the Hindus." He invokes the idea that we may be neighbours but would never intermarry or even eat from the same

plate. “We have lived here for 1000 years. We are highly educated. Still we Muslims will not be heard. Pakistan has to be created....Hindus will get stronger and stronger and Muslims weaker and weaker. Then you will realise, how important a Pakistan was”.

Undeniable difference is invoked as a reason for the creation of Pakistan, on the grounds of religious identity and equal rights in the public sphere. While people hailing from different religions may exist in harmony alongside each other, they do not consider each other to be like their own. This exemplifies Ahmed’s (2014, p. 583) argument that “atmospheres might become shared if there is an agreement as to where we locate the points of tension”; here these points of tension include restrictions around marriage, drawing on the links between the policing of gendered relations and the policing of the state itself. (gender, family, nationalism, religion)

20. Saleem dismisses Hassan’s claims as mere speculations and contends, “This is useless talk. We are already happy. We have no need for mirror reflections. We are all friends; we have Hindu neighbours...They and we, are happy in our own homes.” Saleem further argues that those demanding a separate nation-state are only seeking attention and popularity. Saleem’s argument symbolizes the opposition for the partition from amongst the Muslims themselves (nationalism, religion, family)

21. Faheem notes, “You are happy because as yet you’ve not become a target for a Hindu and Sikh attack. How many Muslims are as fortunate here (in India)? Forgive me, if we hand over everything to them, we will never have a voice. Who else cares enough to even talk to us here?” The notion of being marginalized and not belonging on one’s own land is drawn upon to further justify the need for a new country for the marginalized. The

threat of violence and discrimination looming ahead are used to further strengthen the case for a new nation. (nationalism, religion)

Episode 3

22. Talking about how the partition would work, Faheem explains, “All areas with a Muslim majority...will join to make an independent state where Muslims can live according to our religion, freely. If Pakistan becomes a strong independent state, then the Muslims remaining in Hindustan will also not be mistreated. After the last elections, the Congress party has not fulfilled the promises it made to Muslims, let alone grant us independence. If we remain with them, they will never let Muslims progress or give us our rights. After centuries, they’ve got an opportunity to rule over the Muslims. They are only interested in fulfilling this desire.” Power dynamics are explained, along with historical injustices, that have instigated the struggle for Pakistan. The fact that there are strategies in place for implementing the partition hints that it is more than merely a lofty ambition and there are plans underway to make it happen. References are made to the period of colonization and subsequent decolonization that Hindustan was experiencing during the time of partition. (nationalism, religion).

23. The patriarch in Bano’s family says, “My whole life I have voted for Congress. However listening to these young men, I feel ML has some strengths.” Expressing partisanship is seen as a way of forming identity and strengthening community. Partisanship is shown as being fluid, depending on the needs of the time. This further insinuates that the desire for Pakistan’s formation spans generations and includes youth and older adults. (gender, nationalism)

24. Hassan is shown as advocating for girls' education. In portraying Hassan as being forward-thinking, the series positions the struggle for independence that he also advocates for as being a noble aspiration. Nationalist dreams are intertwined with feminism here; hope for a better future being the common thread linking the two. (gender, nationalism)
25. In conversation with his mother, Hassan asks of her "Please pray that Iqbal's dream comes true because it has now become the dream of all Muslims. Mother, pray that Jinnah's tour be supremely successful. Despite his ill health he is touring the whole country. Our Quaid & Liyaqat Ali are calling for only one thing – if you want a Pakistan, vote for ML... if ML wins the vote, then you'll see no one will be able to deny the demands of all of Hindustan's Muslims." Not only is the dream of Pakistan worthy of sacrifice at the individual level, but also at the leadership level, as indicated by the pioneer of the movement continuing to champion for it, despite his own failing health. This scene also indirectly provides historical context for the viewer, detailing the incidents leading up to the partition. (nationalism, religion, family)
26. Hassan's mom responds to her son's request for prayers for Pakistan, "If every Muslim in this country has your passion, then no power on this earth can prevent Pakistan forming." The struggle for independence is shown as the common man's fight, and one that is bringing together all Muslims in the land uniformly. (nationalism)
27. Narrator's voice says, "The 1946 ML won 30 out of 30 main, and majority of the Muslim provincial seats (82%). An unprecedented event in history, that in such a short period, a community unites so completely to stand together. They proved that Muslims had been

wrongly dismissed for too long as a ‘minority’. In these unprecedented circumstances, Muslims evidenced that they care, and that they will act. History shows no equal, nor will it. On the 6th of January 1946, the elections proved that ML is the best and most powerful representative of Hindustan’s Muslims, and that Quaid-e-Azam (great leader) Muhammad Ali Jinnah is their leader. Muslims across the country celebrated.” The narration provides a summarized historical overview of the facts that led to Pakistan’s creation. This helps orient the viewer who is unfamiliar with this sequence of events in a quick and easy to understand manner. However, even in the presentation of facts, a pro-Pakistan slant is evident in the way the political gains preceding the partition are glorified. (nationalism, religion)

28. The above narration is accompanied by imagery of train tracks, public speeches, demonstrations with ML signs, Jinnah, protests, Pakistani flags being hoisted, and Muslims praying. The visuals correspond well with the narration by showing artifacts that came to be closely associated with Pakistan as a country, and in conjunction with each other invoke feelings of patriotism, national pride and a sense of victory. (nationalism, religion)

These findings are based on episodes 1, 2, ,3 and 21, 22, and 23. Since much of the plot has taken place between the first three and last three episodes, here is a concise summary of what has happened between episodes 3 and 21. The partition has taken place, during which Hassan, who was engaged to Bano prior to the partition, has moved to the newly formed Pakistan with his mother. In contrast Bano has lost most of her family and is separated from the rest during the partition. She is left behind alone in what is now India, and is taken in by a Sikh family who

forcibly marry her to their son. She spends five years in captivity, hiding her Muslim identity, which would have gotten her in trouble in light of the ethnicity-based hostilities that are widespread immediately after partition. In the meanwhile, Hassan has been tirelessly looking for Bano in Pakistan, but to no avail for a long time. When Bano finally escapes with her son and arrives in Pakistan, she finds that much has changed. Hassan has finally accepted that he may never find Bano, and has gotten engaged to Rabia, who is visiting her fiancé with her family. The Pakistan she imagined is not what has actualized and she is now struggling to grapple with this reality.

Episode 21

29. A female supporting actress, Rabia is seen sporting national colours, in a green & white traditional Pakistani dress. In a subtle manner, this locates women as markers of traditionality, within the context of nationalism. (gender, nationalism)
30. Rabia is seen tending to the men in the house, asking Hassan, her fiancé, if he wants to eat anything. In this instance, the gender stereotype of women as leaders of the domestic sphere and being maternal and caring is reinforced. (gender).
31. Hassan, speaking of Bano, to Rabia says, “She is very innocent. She thinks Pakistan is heavenly. If she finds out the truth, she’ll be devastated.” To provide context, Bano and Hassan’s blossoming love story was cut short by the partition, during which Hassan ends up in the newly formed Pakistan. However, Bano is stranded in what becomes India, and held hostage by a Sikh family for five years. In these years, Bano is made to marry a Sikh man, bears his child and eventually escapes with the child to Pakistan, where she is eventually found by Hassan. (gender, nationalism)

32. A female supporting character is seen engaging in embroidery to help the household income. This female character and her parents are providing refuge to Bano and her son, when she escapes to Pakistan five years after its formation. When Bano sees this, she approves and comments, “I thought she was making it for her dowry.” Women are seen engaging in domestic labour, and their work is often tied to marital responsibilities or as in this case, preparing for marriage. (gender)
33. Lamenting the demands on dowry, the elderly maternal figure who Bano is staying with notes “If being talented was what was looked at in a dowry, my daughter would have been (married with) three children...but what’s needed in a dowry is money and wealth.” Bano is surprised and says, “Even in Pakistan?!” and is met with the response, “Even in Pakistan, everyone is greedy. Everyone is looking to become rich...Money has become everyone’s faith”. This is one of the first indications, couched in gendered terms, that Bano receives that the Pakistan that was to be a safe haven in theory may have gone awry in some aspects in reality. (gender, nationalism)
34. To the above observation, Bano replies, “How is this possible? If money was everything, why would people sacrifice everything for Pakistan?” and hears that “All I know is that because of dowry demands, my daughter’s marriage was broken off.” The maternal figure explains that her daughter’s potential in laws became rich in the partition, while her family stayed at the same socioeconomic level as before the partition. This indicates that class differences were exaggerated by non-uniform distribution of wealth. Bano is shocked to learn this and says, “Just because of money?” to which the response is, “Money is everything.” Bano is visibly distressed to hear this. Here we learn that the

all-for-one, one-for-all narrative that was espoused pre-partition has crumbled once the nation is formed, and that people are out seeking their own benefit, regardless of how it may impact their fellow country men and women. (nationalism, gender, religion, family)

35. Bano responds to trauma from having experienced violence during the partition as well as being held hostage in the period immediately following it; she imagines that her son (born to a Sikh father) is mocking her shock at discovering that the Pakistan she dreamt of is not what has materialized. She says: “Quiet, you’re laughing at us?!” This is symbolic of what Bano imagines to be the “other” i.e. non-Muslims’ and Indians’ response to Pakistan i.e. lack of belief in the ability of Pakistanis to successfully run a nation that has just been born. Moreover, there is a sense of angst that is the result of a dissonance between what was dreamt of and what the reality is (Ahmed, 2010, p. 583). As Ahmed (, 2010, p. 583) articulates, “To feel the gap might be to feel a sense of disappointment” that the Pakistan that exists is not the one which was hoped for. (nationalism, family)

36. Restrictions on women’s mobility are evident when Rabia insists on staying with Hassan when her mother protests, “How can I leave you here alone and go?” Rabia responds, “Don’t mothers leave their daughters at their in-laws?”, to which Rabia’s mom says, “This is not your in-laws!” Women’s movement is justified in relation to their relationships with others, such as in-laws, rather than being their right as an autonomous individual. (gender, family)

37. In relation to the above incident, Rabia’s mom invokes a paternal figure of authority in saying, “You’re crossing limits. If your dad finds out, he’ll set you straight.” She is

distressed when she hears Rabia is willing to stay with Hassan even if he doesn't marry her, suggesting that marriage is a necessary form of legitimizing gendered relations. Fathers or paternal figureheads are called upon to regulate and effectively police the behaviour of female family members. (gender, family)

38. Bano is living with a host family and is seeking employment, to which the paternal head of the family asks "Are you finding anything lacking here?" It is seen as being anomalous for a woman to seek employment for reasons other than financial need. (gender)
39. Bano responds to the above question, "I feel like I am home after ages, I just want to work." The response to this is, "Out of the house? Bano, that is not considered good in our society" Bano replies, "What is wrong with working in our own country? Here everyone is ours. By serving these pure people, God will reward me" She lists the following potential areas of service: education, tending to patients. Lines of division are drawn between the private sphere, where it is acceptable and even encouraged for women to work, and the public sphere, where it is not. Bano's rebuttal to this employs a religious and nationalist spirit and imbibes it with a strong work ethic that demands the participation of women outside the confines of the home. (gender, nationalism, family, religion)
40. Bano adds, "Not doing any work is a bad thing. Those women who focus on clothes and jewelry (symbols of vanity) instead of participating in productive work not only waste themselves, but also the nation's potential. If more than half of our population is confined to the house, how will our nation progress? We have to move forward, we have a lot of work to do." Encouraging women to work outside of the domestic domain is tied to

improving the nation's productivity and to national progress. (gender, nationalism)

41. Upon hearing "But we were always taught that if girls step out of the house, morality will be endangered", Bano responds, "Immorality is strengthened by lack of education. If a person cannot control himself, then he is no better than an animal that should be caged." We see long-held gender stereotypes are challenged here, with questions being raised in particular regarding the assumption that women are better suited for the domestic life.

(gender)

42. While Rabia takes a stand to continue staying at her fiance's house despite her mother's disapproval, she also recognizes the limits of her own agency, and addresses her fiance, Hassan, "I cannot stay here for long. In just a few days, dad will take me away from here. I'm very worried for you. Please take care of yourself." Women are depicted as caretakers, undertaking tasks of considerable emotional labour. Adult women are seen as being under the authority of their male relatives, as indicated by the father's ultimate say that is referenced in this instance. (gender)

43. Images of a lush green government house signify Pakistan's natural beauty and indicate prosperity. (nationalism)

44. Venturing out of the house, Bano has secured employment as a nanny. Bano's employer is first shown as a fancily dressed up woman lounging on the couch, applying nail paint at leisure. This scene gives off the vibe that there are noticeable class differences within Pakistan's citizens, in stark contrast to the ideology of equality that was espoused as being essential to the nation's identity, prior to its formation. The implication here is that the well to do in the newly formed Pakistan were serving their own interests.

(nationalism)

45. Bano's employer talks in English and admits to her Urdu being broken, adding that her children eat only English food. Here we see attempts to appeal to elements of British culture that, in the context of colonialism, has been perceived as being superior to local customs, language and food. (nationalism)
46. Bano asks of her employer, "You do not eat meals together (as a family)?" Her employer responds, "Sometimes, when we go to the club late". This symbolizes the erosion of family values (evidenced through lack of family time that meals together would provide) and religiosity (since clubbing can be considered anti-Islamic), particularly amongst the elite in the newly formed Pakistan. (religion, family)
47. Weakened family ties are also evident when Bano's employer talks about how the kids' father is very busy and is away a lot on business trips. This again alludes to limited family time and the declining importance of the family unit. The employer is depicted as having drifted from their religious roots.
48. The kids speak in English or accented Urdu when spoken to in Urdu and are surprised when Bano asks them, "Do you know any Urdu poem?" Once more, this hints towards a desire to become like the ruling class in colonial times, by adopting elements of British culture, including use of English. (family, religion, nationalism).
49. To the above, Bano replies, "It's okay, I will teach you the basic tenets of Islam, prayers, Urdu and Quran". The little girl who Bano is providing care for notes, "Mom doesn't like Urdu". Nonetheless, Bano encourages her to call her mother the Urdu name for mom from now on. This is a conscious attempt to reclaim the identity of Pakistan's people, and

reaffirm their ties to both, Urdu, and to Islam. (nationalism, religion)

50. Bano adds, “You can learn English in school. At home, I’ll teach you Urdu.” This differentiates between the public sphere where English reigns and the private sphere where Urdu is prevalent. (nationalism)
51. Rabia’s father, when talking about taking her home with him, says to her, “As a good daughter, you will listen to me”. Rabia responds, “Dad, I am aware that listening to everything you say is my duty, I can only request you to not ask this of me.” This scene is indicative of gender norms within the family, where adult women are expected to defer to the wishes of their male guardians, such as their father. (gender, family)
52. Bano speaks of her employers to her host family, “They are nice people but when I am there, I cannot believe I am in Pakistan.” She laments the loss of the Urdu language, saying that this did not even happen when they were colonized. Bano adds, “I think we have gained freedom from external forces, but on the inside we are still suppressed by the English”. To this, the father figure of the host family responds, “The rich Pakistanis, they want to become brown sahib (i.e. English gentleman)”. Bano is concerned and notes, “This disease will spread in our society before we even realize it...My dad used to say that the rich are more responsible, because us (i.e. the middle classes) adopt all their habits in order to become like them.” This interaction draws on several key factors that shaped the discourse of nationalism in Pakistan’s early days. We see noticeable dislike for the attempts by the elite to become Anglicized in terms of language and mannerisms. Furthermore, there are fears for what this means for the future of Pakistan and concerns that its true culture will be lost. This hints towards “a desire for a nostalgic “return” to an

impossible ideal” i.e. the perfect Pakistan where everyone speaks the same language and is of the same faith (Gopinath, 2000, p. 287). (nationalism)

53. The maternal head of Bano’s host family encourages Bano to educate the kids she nannies in the correct manner. Bano agrees, “I have started teaching them Urdu and Quran. I have made traditional Pakistani clothes for the kids”. She refers to their real Urdu, Muslim names when hearing criticism for their Anglicized nick-names. The correct manner here allocates Urdu and Islam a position of respect and situates them as bearers of progress and enlightenment (religion, gender)
54. Bano’s employer speaks to her tailor regarding clothes for an upcoming celebratory party. She is disappointed to see that the children’s clothes are traditional Pakistani clothes, demanding to know who ordered these and asking for new English clothes immediately. Once again, the ways of the English are given precedence over embracing Pakistani traditional wear by the well to do. (nationalism)
55. Scenes of a Pakistani elite party are shown, as hosted by Bano’s employer; ladies are clad in sleeveless saris with drinks in hand. In comparison, Bano looks and feels out of place in her simple traditional Pakistani attire. This scene provides a strong visualization of what Pakistan was becoming, through the depiction of the merry party-goers, in comparison to the values which were highlighted as being the new nation’s strengths before it was formed, as portrayed by Bano’s simple attire. (nationalism)
56. Bano overhears guests at this party talking about how they are blocking the opening of a government school in order to preserve class differences; this highlights the corruption and bribery spreading in the newly created Pakistan. Bano is visibly distressed by this.

Another guest mentions how one of them purchased land for less than its value because the original owner did not know of its worth. Showcased here is the sense of every man for himself that is spreading across those who have benefitted financially from the partition. Instead of using their newly found wealth to help their fellow countrymen and women who have lost much, if not all of their properties and livelihood due to the partition, the rich are shown as being self-serving and exploiting their power to strengthen their solitary empires. (nationalism)

57. At the party, Bano's employer gathers everyone and asks her children to perform a piece. The daughter asks if she can perform a different piece than the one her mom asks. The kids sing an Urdu poem, taught to them by Bano, instead of an English one like their mother was expecting. The poem they perform is a 1902 piece that is very popular in contemporary times, written by Allama Muhammad Iqbal, often known as the "spiritual father of Pakistan" (Muhammad Iqbal, 2017). The hostess is angry and asks kids to stop, taking Bano to task for teaching them the Urdu poem. The hostess' embarrassment arguably stems from an assumption that knowledge of English poetry is superior to of Urdu. It perhaps also arises from being caught off guard and that the nanny was more involved with her children's activities than she was. (nationalism, family)

Episode 22

58. Bano's employer accuses her, saying "You are making my children uneducated." Bano responds, "I am teaching them the first two basic principles of Islam...I am educating them in Urdu and in Islam, begum sahiba (i.e. madam)." Teaching about religion and the Urdu language is seen as being inconsequential and even undesirable. (religion, family)

59. Bano's employer is agitated and states, "Call me madam (not begum sahiba). Our kids used to call us mum and dad, now they're calling us amma abba (Urdu words for mother and father)." This is yet another example of how, even in the intimate setting of the nuclear family, language denotes class and status symbol, very little of which is accorded to Urdu (family).
60. Bano goes on a crusade telling her employer that the good education of her kids is her responsibility. In this scene, her employer's natural Urdu speaking ability emerges, which she had been hiding so far. In response, she reverts back to broken English, thus suggesting that English is seen as symbol of status. Bano's response and her employer's earlier criticisms shed light on the widely varying meanings of what a good education entails. (nationalism)
61. Later on, Bano laments her to her host family, "They kicked me out of the job, because I taught their kids "Ya Rab, Dil-e-Muslim" (i.e. Oh Lord, the Heart of a Muslim) instead of Jingle Bells", to which she gets the response, "When will we get rid of this colonized thinking?" Giving precedence to English language over Urdu is seen as a vestige of the colonialism. (nationalism, religion)
62. Bano is angered at seeing that the Pakistan she dreamt of has not materialized and wants to ask a friend why he showed her beautiful dreams of what Pakistan is like, why he told her that Pakistan would be the greatest nation of the world. She adds, "Is this why we made all those sacrifices? If this had to happen, what was wrong with Hindustan?" Here we see the first inklings of angst about how far away the reality of Pakistan is from what was hoped for prior to gaining independence. (nationalism)

63. Bano once again imagines her child is mocking her and scolds him. When she is chided for doing this, she responds, “I am also helpless and weak (like kids). Look what has happened to Pakistan. Who are these people who are weakening its roots? Aren’t they Muslims? Have they not made sacrifices? Or do they not believe in their own strength, that they are imitating others? Stop these people! The consequences of this will be terrible.” Evident here is a strong sense of foreboding that the foundation being laid for the country are false and will lead it astray. There is a call for carving a unique identity for Pakistan, of which religion is a central component, instead of passively copying others. Bano’s anger can be attributed to the fact that Pakistan has not turned as was expected; Ahmed (2014, p. 581) states, “Your rage might be directed against the object that fails to deliver its promise or it may spill out toward those who promised you happiness through the elevation of some things as good.” We see that Bano is frustrated that the dream of Pakistan in some sense has in fact failed to deliver; she takes this out on her fellow citizens whom she sees as being responsible for how Pakistan has turned out to be. This is particularly because she was held hostage in India for the first few years of Pakistan’s formation; it is during this early period that she had hoped Pakistanis in the nation would have steered it in the right direction. Bano’s emotional state here illustrates that “if happiness is what allows us to reach certain points, it is not necessarily how we feel when we get there” (Ahmed, 2014, p. 586). (nationalism, religion)
64. Bano comments on the state of Pakistan to the friend she is staying with, “You know who the biggest perpetrators are? You! People like you who know that what’s happening isn’t right but are still quiet. They don’t raise their voice, don’t protest but simply bury their

head in the sand.” This is a subtle call for the common man to take a stand against the injustices they see; it appeals to the power of the masses in steering the country towards more ethically sound grounds. (nationalism)

65. Bano’s hostess replies to the above allegation, “What do we do? Chasing after food, clothes and house (sustenance) we have become so preoccupied, where do we have the time to see who is usurping whose rights, by making money unethically or furthering their own political agenda? We are innocent people, we don’t get involved in others’ fights. For us, our own sorrows are enough” Bano responds, “Tomorrow, when these fights are yours, what will you do then? Then will you go again, seeking help from the English?” Bano’s friend notes, “This is not the work of women, these are men’s issues. Anyway, poor people can’t really do anything.” Bano’s friend speaks for the ordinary citizen of Pakistan whose attention is focused on making ends meet and precludes any thought of how their fellow countrymen are faring. As Bano points out, this is dangerous because it means the country can become divisive if no one stands up for each other, thus weakening the fabric of the nation. Interestingly, we see an appeal to gendered stereotypes as well as to limitations of class and socioeconomic status as a way to relieve women and the less well off of responsibility as members of the public. (nationalism, gender)

66. Bano says, “If these poor masses can obtain an entire nation, they can’t take care of it? Us poor masses don’t recognize our own power. There is a difference in being well-respected and being cowardly. Using the excuse of religion to hide in your homes, you are a coward, helpless and weak woman. I swear to God, God didn’t make women

helpless. You chose this life. But even know it's not too late. Stop these tyrants! Otherwise, we will regret it." Her friend reassures her, "That will never happen" but Bano argues "It WILL happen. What the English call corruption will catch on (until the nation is no more)." Here the strength of the masses is reiterated and substantiated through an understanding of struggle for independence having been a successful people's movement. A desire is expressed for common man to recognize his agency and use it for good. This scene addresses head-on the notion that respectability for women, as dictated by religion, involves being meek and submissive. Bano's dialogues here upend the idea of the quiet Muslim woman by terming this a personal choice and not what the religion commands. Instead she argues that religion in fact gives women agency. Like in previous instances, this scene depicts fear that the country will be led down the wrong path of moral degradation if everyone remains passive. In disregarding the idea of keeping the peace by voicing her concerns for direction that the country is headed in and pointing out the hypocrisy of subjugating women by claims to a religion that gives them agency, Bano embodies second-wave feminist thought in that she refuses "to be well adjusted, to adjust the world for the sake of comfort" (Ahmed, 2014, p. 592). (religion, gender, nationalism)

67. Imagery of minarets visible in the background. The mosque is not only a place of religious gathering, but is arguably also a setting for community and nation building, based on the common identity of all as Muslims. (religion)

68. Poorer Pakistani women are shown with their heads covered (e.g. Bano, the friend she is staying with and her mother), but not those who are better off (e.g. Rabia and Bano's employer). Here we see differences in depiction of gender based on class association;

those on the lower end of the socioeconomic spectrum are seen as adhering more closely to religiously symbolic clothing than the more affluent. (gender, religion)

69. Bano is surprised to see boys studying in a worn out roadside school. Her friend explains, “This is the poor people’s Urdu-medium school, not the rich people’s English-medium school where the kids would be well cared for.” Bano is surprised that, “In one country, we will have two mediums of instruction for schools??”, and is corrected to learn that “Three, not two. There are private schools too and then those children who have no schooling.” This poignantly points out how the equality that was envisioned for all of Pakistan’s citizens is in fact not the reality. Access to wealth clearly dictates access to education and its quality. In addition to this, the medium of instruction indicates the economic background of the students in each system of education. Moreover, schooling seems to be a privilege that is only accorded to boys (nationalism, gender)

70. Bano is aghast to see a kid begging on the roadside, saying “You are the future of this nation, its treasure. You have to take care of this nation. Why aren’t you in school?” She throws away his begging bowl and tells him, “Leave this. Come with me, I’ll get you admitted to school.” Education is depicted as fundamental to the nation’s progress. Therefore, those who fall through the cracks in terms of schooling may have limited ability to fully participate as citizens. (nationalism)

71. Bano’s friend speaks of Bano to her father, “She is very worried for Pakistan, looking at the people here. She has met such bad people too. I don’t know what dreams she had when she came here.” Her father responds, “You meet all sorts of people when you step out of the house. This is why I say that women should stay at home. Pakistan is still so

new, this was bound to happen. It'll all be okay eventually.” His daughter expresses further concern, “She (Bano) says that if the roots get infected, how can the tree be strong?” She narrates her conversation with Bano where she asked her to protest against the potential in-laws who broke off the engagement because of dowry demands. In suggesting that women are unable to handle the harsh realities of life, we see once again a tendency to treat women as children, and as emotional beings. There is again a reference to ensuring that in its early days, this newly formed nation lays the right foundation that will give rise to a bright future. We also see consideration of upsetting gender stereotypes to demand equal rights for women in the context of marriage. (gender, nationalism, family)

72. Worried about Bano’s health, her friend suggests to her father, “Why don’t you take her to a shrine? She may find peace there.” A shrine being a place of religious significance, religion is presented as a possible source of solace for troubled souls (religion)

73. Visual imagery of a large mosque courtyard, as well as Hassan praying with other men. This is accompanied by sad, wistful music plays in the background. Praying in a public space, such as a mosque, is associated with men, which raises questions about women’s role in the public sphere in terms of religion. The music may suggest the turbulent period that the nation is experiencing, right after its creation (religion)

74. Bano’s friend, a grown woman, limits her mobility i.e. does not go on a trip because her father will not give permission, then asks her mother to ask permission from her father on her behalf. Her mother responds, “He only has an issue with you going alone.” This is another example of women’s agency and behaviour being guarded by their male

relatives, as indicated by the self-policing employed (gender, family)

75. Attending a wedding with her friend, Bano comments on the arrangements, “They have set up everything so well, men and women separate...It looks like the men didn’t even come. These are our true Pakistanis, whose houses reflect integrity in all aspects. This is the Pakistan we thought of, the Pakistan we dreamt of, where every person will be educated, there will be no poverty, and religion will be our strength.” This provides some of the key characteristics of the ideal Pakistani individual and society, intimately tied with being Muslim; this includes gender segregation, a high level of education and a basic standard of living that is accessible to all. (gender, family, nationalism)
76. Bano is aghast at seeing a courtesan perform at the men’s gathering and is about to walk out saying, “I cannot stay for a minute at a place where women are disrespected.... they are making a woman dance....encouraging her....in family gatherings... They are making a mockery of women. Those houses were never considered decent where they had singing and dancing. I could never even have thought that in Pakistan it would be difficult to differentiate between good and bad households... I just want them (the hostess) to know that our nation is not for this purpose; doing all of this will destroy our nation.” We see a stigmatization for certain professions for women, argued on the basis of their lack of respectability and their opposition to religious teachings. The fact that this taking place in the intimate setting of a house party is seen as being insulting to the notion of family get-togethers. Perhaps what is more worrisome is a blurring of boundaries between what is considered good and what is immoral; this points towards the anxieties of identifying national identity in a nation that has just been born. There is

concern that an inability to pin down an identity and adhere to it will weaken the country's cohesiveness. (gender, nationalism, family, religion)

77. Visuals of courtesans dancing in the background. This visualizes the concerns listed just above and reinforces the aforementioned anxieties, bringing them to the forefront (gender)

78. Rabia talks about the greatness of Bano's sacrifices for the creation of Pakistan. Sacrifice is a theme commonly associated with both, women and the struggle for independence. It plays on the idea that because Pakistan is a nation that was formed through great sacrifices, its vision will be upheld and subsequent generations will ensure that their forefathers' efforts were not in vain (gender, nationalism)

79. Bano is talking to the father of her hostess friend, who comments "Setting up a charitable organization is a very noble cause but decent, family-oriented girls don't work in offices. It is considered bad." Bano responds, "It is not considered bad for decent, family-oriented girls to dance in front of men, but working along with men is considered bad?" When he suggests that she work in education, she points out the hypocrisy of the multi-tiered education system, adding, "We need to change the system. To do this, we all need to be on the same platform.....I did what I could for the creation of Pakistan, now I want to do what I can for its running. Please don't stop me." There are evident stereotypes about what is considered feminine work, even in the public sphere. Often this involves nurturing roles, such as teaching, in a segregated environment. Religious beliefs tend to be used as the basis for establishing what work is appropriate for who. Even the fact that the female protagonist feels the need to ask the male figurehead of the family that is

hosting her for permission to work speaks to deference of authority on the basis of age, but also gender. This scene goes some way in undoing gender norms with the female protagonist pushing to work in a traditionally male-dominated field i.e. politics, for the betterment of the nation. (gender, nationalism, family, religion)

80. Bano talks about her new workplace (a political activist's office), "My heart's burden has been relieved. There are really nice people there." Bano's hostess friend's father answers, "That's what I said; for every bad person Allah (God) has created one good person, that's why the world is running." Bano adds, "You'll see Dad, my Pakistan will stay till the end of the world." Good fortune is linked to God's doing, and is perceived to be a blessing for the nation in its entirety (nationalism, religion)

81. Bano is seen wearing the national colours i.e. green and white traditional Pakistani clothes. This sheds light on the central role women play in Pakistan's national narrative. (gender, nationalism)

Episode 23

82. Bano speaks to her toddler son, "This is the list of medicines my brothers have gathered...for their ailing Pakistani brothers. Look at this! Look at it intently. You used to laugh at me. Now will you laugh at me? If there are bad people amongst us, there are good people too. The way we defeated you, we will defeat them too. Now those days are not far when you will lose." Bano's son, born to a Sikh father, here stands for the "other" against whom Pakistan has risen; this other is central in the national narrative, to establish a "them" in opposition to which the "us" is defined. These dialogues refer to the struggles of Pakistan in its early days when many were apprehensive about the country's ability to

function and emerge successfully from its turbulent beginnings (nationalism, family)

83. Bano says to Rabia, "...I do not want to marry Hassan because I am not worthy of him."

Rabia responds, "Please don't say that. We are not worthy of you. So what if your name will not be noted down in history books? It is engraved in our hearts in beautiful words."

Rabia's words testify to the sacrifices of Bano, and others like her, whom history does not remember. Also, Bano considers herself unworthy of Hassan, whom she was engaged to before the partition, because she was subsequently forcibly married into the Sikh family that housed her after the partition. (nationalism, gender)

84. When her hostess friend encourages Bano to marry Hassan, Bano says, "How can you say that? You know that for five years, I ..." To this, her friend responds, "Yes, I know and so does everyone that for five years you lived with Sikhs. You have one kid. But Hassan is willing to accept you even now." Bano looks horrified at this. Once again we see gender comes into play in connection with notions worthiness and purity. Hassan's willingness to accept Bano, in spite of her previous marriage, is shown as being anomalous and arguably generous. Where marriage to a Sikh man brings shame to Bano, Hassan's subsequent acceptance of her would bring respect; thus highlighting the strongly gendered tone of how respect is accorded. (gender, family, religion)

85. The hostess friend's mother says to Bano, "See how Allah opens up doors. He wanted to make you and Hassan meet... I am sure Hassan prayed to God to meet you... I feel like I am bidding farewell to my own daughter, otherwise I used to think my house is unlucky for girls." Like before, good fortune is chalked up to God's will. As in the first episode, even those who are not related by blood or marriage, but whom one is close with, are

accorded the status of family. (family, religion)

86. Visuals of Bano with a white shawl on her head, mosque silhouette, depicted by a minaret in the background, and the sun rising or setting, indicating change. There are undertones of religion providing guidance and comfort in otherwise difficult and rapidly changing times. (religion, gender)

87. Bano's hostess friend hugs Bano's son, kisses his forehead and is crying at the prospect of them leaving home. This is because she has been caring for Bano's son in her absence. When she says, "Please let him stay back...I won't let him go", her mother responds, "How can I separate a mother from her child?" Bano's friend says, "She doesn't even love him. She doesn't want him. I do all his work, bathing him, feeding him, clothing him. He is MY child." Her mother responds, "Have patience. Allah sent them to our house as guests. We fulfilled our responsibility and let's complete this last duty diligently too." In caring for Bano's son, it can be argued that her friend has come to see him as her own, further strengthening the idea that family is not limited to only relatives. That Bano's friend has cared for her son without being asked to hints towards the gendered stereotype of women being nurturing and possessing a maternal instinct. Similarly, in this scene the viewer can sense criticism towards Bano for not fulfilling the role of the caring mother. Moreover, calling upon God to ease difficulties speaks to the importance of religion in everyday life (religion, gender, family)

88. In the office, Kaleem, the political activist that Bano is working for, complains to Bano, "May God give someone an illness, but not a bad wife. I thought I would spend my days serving mankind but when I can't find peace in my own house, what can one do?" When

Bano looks uncomfortable and doesn't respond, Kaleem adds, "It looks like I might have to shut down this organization." Bano responds, "But that's not the right thing to do. Our nation needs people like you. Try to make your wife understand, she'll cooperate." In complaining about his spouse, Kaleem proclamation highlights that the strength of the family unit is a prerequisite for individuals to work together towards a strong nation.

(gender, family, nationalism)

89. When Kaleem makes unwanted advances towards Bano, Bano hallucinates and imagines him to be Basanteh, her Sikh husband who held her captive for five years on the wrong side of the border. She responds, "You have come here too to soil my land which is pure as a mother. I will never leave you." Once again we see the "other" as the enemy, against whom the nation must rally. Unwanted advances towards this daughter of the nation is seen as tantamount to sullyng the integrity of the nation itself (nationalism, gender)

90. In assaulting Bano, Kaleem rips off the religious amulet off her neck. In doing so, the protection that the religious amulet would have provided to its wearer is also stripped off.
(religion, gender)

91. As Bano looks at the amulet, the scene cuts to flashbacks, in black and white, of her mother wearing the same amulet asking her to cover her head as an adolescent in front of Hassan; this is in the pre-partition era. This is followed by a flashback of Bano as a bride to be engaged where her mother is wearing the amulet and kisses her shoulder. Next up is a flashback to when Bano's house is raided during the partition, and her mother, with shaking hands and crying, tries to choke Bano to prevent her from being defiled. There is then a flashback to Bano and her mother being painfully separated from each other and

then being locked up in the same room, hugging each other tightly, followed by a flashback to when their previously friendly Hindu neighbour refuses to offer shelter to Bano and her mother. Lastly, there is a flashback to Bano fending off men attacking her mother and the two of them being separated again and screaming. The scene then cuts to present time where Bano is also screaming in distress over Kaleem's unwelcome advances. Bano stabs Kaleem over and over again till he falls over and she continues doing so. The flashbacks begin by showing the mother-daughter duo happy before partition, observing religious clothing and partaking in family gatherings. This is in stark contrast to the painful memories of the partition that follow. In all instances, the amulet is seen as protecting its wearer; thus its breaking now signifies the end of an era of sorts. That one of the flashbacks suggests death is preferred to assault strengthens tropes of gendered expectations of moral behaviour. The flashbacks also depict the changing meaning of who counts as family, as depicted by the lack of support from neighbours who were practically kin before the hostilities of the partition. The merging of the last flashback with the current scene underlines the continuity of trauma from pre- to post-partition, albeit in different forms. (religion, gender, family, nationalism)

92. With blood-stained hands, Bano reaches for the amulet still in Kaleem's hands. There is a cut to flashback where she reaches for the amulet from her dead mother's neck and screams for her to wake up. This scene signifies a sort of 'picking up the pieces' and dealing with trauma after it has been inflicted, at the level of the individual and the nation. Religion is shown as a source of strength in such trying times (religion, family, nationalism)

93. Bano shows up at Hassan's house with blood all over her, holding the amulet high. Bano says to Hassan, "I killed Basanteh. I purified this nation, Hassan. Now no one will violate a woman's dignity; no one will usurp another's right, because I killed Basanteh, I killed that Shaytan (the devil)" Bano repeats the last line three times and laughs manically. When Hassan asks her to get a grip on herself, she responds, "I am in my senses. Those who are do things like this, who kill Basanteh.... Now there is no Basanteh here." The blood on the female protagonist represents the struggles she has faced and overcome. That Bano is equating the ill-doings of a fellow countrymen with that of the "other" that Basanteh represents, suggests that the clear division of us vs them, of good vs. bad is being questioned. While the "other" is equated to Satan, it becomes evident that not all of the harm to the nation is due to those outside its borders. Moreover, the nation's well-being is linked to the safety of its women. The final dialogue in this scene serves as a warning or a wake-up call to fellow citizens to guard the nation zealously. (nationalism, gender, religion)
94. Hassan and Rabia come to visit Bano at the rehabilitation centre she is now confined to due to her poor mental health. In response to how she is doing, Bano says, "I am fine, it's just that these people don't let me go outside. How is my country?" Hassan says, "Very good." Bano asks, "Everyone is doing alright, right? No one has any troubles, right?" Hassan says all is well, "Here everyone cares for each other in the good and bad times. Here no one is in pain." Bano smiles contentedly and responds, "I killed Basanteh so how could there be any trouble now? My country has become pure. Now even I will go to Pakistan for sure." In order to placate Bano, Hassan tells her that Pakistan is exactly like

the haven she imagined it to be. Whether or not this is true, the realization of the dream of Pakistan the way it was imagined pre-partition is chalked up to getting rid of the evil that the “other” represents (nationalism, religion, family)

95. In the last scene, Bano is seen using the amulet as a rosary bead, draped in white and looking out the window absent-mindedly. This final image reiterates the significance of religion in the national narrative of Pakistan. (religion)

96. Wistful music plays in the background, repeating the chant, “O nation of mine” The choice of music in this closing scene reinforces the nationalistic stance of the TV series. (nationalism)

97. Bano’s last lines and the last ones in the serial are, “Long live Pakistan” over and over again as she counts on her rosary/amulet and the scene fades out to black. This reinforces the intimate links between national identity in Pakistan and religious identification as a Muslim. (nationalism, religion)

Discussion of Results/Analysis

Four main themes have emerged: gender, nationalism, family and religion, which are discussed below. This is followed by a section that considers how these various themes overlap.

Gender

Women tend to be depicted as the weaker sex, in need of male guardianship (refer to finding 42). They are closely tied to the household and the private domain of life (finding 4). This adheres to stereotypical portrayals that strengthen colonialist and nationalist tropes of the family and of home (Gopinath, 2000, p. 291) (refer to finding 51). Even adult women are treated in an infantile manner and they lack control over their life choices (refer to findings 5 and 6). While sometimes these attributes are self-imposed, other times they are reinforced by other male and female characters. In multiple instances, adult women face restrictions on moving without a male guardian and are reliant on their custodians for pursuing their education (finding 74). Male heads of families are called upon to ensure that the women in the family behave respectably. There is also an unquestioned gendered division of labour, as evidenced by the work of preparing for a wedding in the first episode (finding 4). This gendered division of labour is also evident in other scenes where women are shown undertaking traditionally feminine work, such as child-rearing and embroidery, within the confines of the household (finding 32). The female identity is closely tied to appropriate modest clothing, which also speaks to national identity, given that women tend to be clad in not only traditional clothes but also sporting national colors (findings 1 and 14). Here we see overlaps in depictions of gendered, nationalistic and religious identities.

The women are shown as being self-sacrificing, whether for the happiness of others

around them or for the dream of Pakistan; their personal will comes secondary to these greater goals (finding 78). Additionally, a desire to work outside the home is seen as anomalous and needing justification, raising questions about the perceived morality of stepping outside the private domain (p. 79). In contrast, for men, being active and productive is key to their gender identity (finding 9). A woman's reputation is considered tainted if she has been held captive by the "other" on the wrong side of the border (findings 83 and 84). It is considered benevolent, and arguably exceptional of a man to overlook a woman's history when considering her as a potential life partner. There are connections made between the purity of a woman, and that of her nation, tying in themes of gender and nationalism. Purity is also associated with religiosity for women, further connecting these to the concept of religion. In fact purity is shown to be so important for a woman that a threat to it, particularly by the "other" in the national narrative, is considered worse than mortal danger itself. Maternal instinct is considered a given for women, as indicated by several female characters' presentation as caring towards family members and particularly children (finding 87). Where the imperfect mother is shown, as one who does not care for her child, this is attributed to trauma and thus regarded as abnormal (finding 63).

Furthermore, in noting that Bano's contribution to the creation of Pakistan will likely go unrecognized in official documents, the series encourages viewers to consider how the official record has been shaped by a select few narratives and to pay attention to those perspectives that are amiss in historical records. There are some contestations of gender stereotypes as depicted by Bano's central role in the partition movement and her activism in the public domain which is otherwise male dominated (finding 80). While there are some indications of a narrative that empowers women and encourages them to fight for their rights, is positioned alongside a

skepticism of women's ability to handle the harsh realities of the world beyond the home (finding 71).

Nationalism

To begin with, political affiliation is shown to be an important avenue for identity formation. Expressing partisanship is seen as a way of forming identity as well as strengthening sense of community (finding 12). It is noteworthy that partisanship is shown as being fluid, depending on the needs of the time, which suggests that identity is also dynamic and not fixed (finding 23). Linguistic variations and differences in clothing are also depicted as markers of difference and identity-making between neighbours (finding 1). In fact, language purity may accord some more claim to the nation or land than others. While in the pre-partition era, Urdu is proudly spoken, post-partition, the well-to-do are seen distancing themselves from the language in favour of English, even going as far as considering Urdu the language of the illiterate (finding 25). The TV series offers an interesting critical commentary on this, positioning it as a vestige of the colonial period, which accorded English with higher class status, given its association with the British. Giving preference to English over Urdu bears testament to the desire of well off Pakistanis to imitate the wealthy colonizers who were in power before them (finding 52). This critical commentary is substantiated by an attempt to mould the future generation to be more civic-minded and to return to the roots of Pakistani identity instead of relying on the colonizers as crutches towards identity formation, of which Urdu is a vital component (finding 53). This is also evident in the incorporation of the iconic poem by Allama Muhammad Iqbal discussed below (finding 57).

Access to private English language schools is a privilege available to the wealthy, while

the middle class attains education in the public schools that teach in Urdu (finding 70). Yet another tier is those deprived of education due to poverty, as is the establishment of religious schools, which offer a potentially deviant combination of nationalism and religion. Together these multiple education systems highlight the differing abilities to claim benefits and citizenship within Pakistan. Considered in light of the dream of Pakistan as providing freedom from oppression, we see that the newly formed state comes with its own forms of subjugation (finding 66). This tension between the imagined Pakistan and the one that came to be is noticeable in Bano's angst about the direction the country is headed in. The working middle class i.e. the masses, have worked to achieve independence but are now too caught up in the rat race of survival in the turbulent times that accompany the formation of state, to be able to pay heed to lofty nationalistic goals (finding 65). This implies limitations on agency in the context of nationalism, based on socio-economic status. Puar's (2014, p. 208) advice that "We would do well not to fantasise that we can escape one set of problems without re-instituting another" rings true in this new Pakistan, that is attempting to address new challenges after having gained independence to resolve other ones.

Although Pakistan is strongly associated with Muslim identity, not all Muslims are depicted as initially favouring an independent Pakistan, implying that the struggle for this nation was perhaps not as uniform as it is often portrayed (finding 20). Even characters hailing from the same ethnic backgrounds and communities are shown differing in their views on Pakistan. Initially there is skepticism about the need for Pakistan, to which advocates respond by citing examples of discrimination and persecution that are becoming more common across the land (finding 21). Along the spectrum, there are also characters that express shifting political party

affiliations, highlighting the fluidity of these sentiments. Characters vying for the creation of Pakistan are shown in a positive manner, as forward-thinking and contributing members of society (finding 9). Pakistan's formation comes before all personal and communal goals and is deserving of sacrificing all (finding 10). The national leaders of the movement are spoken of with respect and reverence (finding 25). The national narrative is situated with reference to the recently achieved freedom from colonial forces; the argument is presented that the vacuum of power left by the British will be exploited by the Hindu majority to marginalize Muslims.

The narration of facts about the partition plays a key role in providing a sense of reality to the nationalistic narrative and showing how this narrative played out in actuality (finding 27). This is strengthened by the display of audio-visual recordings of the partition, giving the TV series a sense of authority and expert knowledge (finding 28). The nationalistic stance post-partition is more nuanced in that it recognizes that the achievement of an independent state was the beginning of the struggle to form a nation, and not the end (finding 66). This stance is mindful of the need to establish common values amongst its people, through language, dress, religion and other national symbols (finding 49). The shift in how nationalism is portrayed before and after the partition is particularly interesting in that it hints towards a possible area of research i.e. looking at how the dominant nationalistic narrative for Pakistan changes over time.

Family

In the pre-partition era, the family extends beyond the nuclear unit to include extended family as well as neighbours (finding 7). With the partition, family lines are redrawn to include those of the same religious and ethnic affiliations only, to the extent that previously close neighbours who considered each other family now refuse to help each other. However, towards

the end of the series, there is an expression of desire to return towards a communal, neighbourhood-based definition of the family, where everyone looks out for each other, except now all members of this family, and nation, are Muslim. Talk about the partition infiltrates into the most private of domains, the family (finding 26). It becomes a topic of conversation between parents and children, suggesting that the movement was close to the hearts of the people and reinforcing that the personal really is political. Families that are not close-knit are portrayed negatively, insinuating that the fabric of society is endangered by weakened family ties (finding 47). This is tied in with alienation from religious values and a forgetting of the humble beginnings of Pakistan. The family depicting this state of crumbling familial values is shown as also having been corrupted by money.

The maternal figure is assumed to be responsible for children's education and upbringing, reinforcing gender stereotypes, while the paternal head of the family is the breadwinner (findings 51 and 60). In a similar vein, happiness at home is also tied to the wife's role as care-taker of domestic affairs (finding 88). Family and nationalism are intimately linked in that peace and harmony in the former is a prerequisite for working towards a similar state in the latter. Last but not least, the mother-daughter relationship is given prominence, with separation from and an attack on the mother being drawn upon in the context of national sacrifice (finding 91). This poses intriguing questions about the relationship between the mother figure and the motherland. It also upends common depictions of romantic media texts, which tend to prioritize the heterosexual romantic relationship more so than female bonding relationships (Gopinath, 2000, p. 285-6).

Religion

Religion is woven into social interactions, as depicted through invocations to God (finding 2). Prior to the partition, differences in religious beliefs as well as views on the partition are respected, with Hindus and Muslims living and working together (finding 16). However, the nationalistic narrative of Muslim League, the political party spearheading the partition movement, relies heavily on drawing upon the need for a Muslim homeland (finding 13). Pakistan is spoken of as a safe haven that Muslims need to escape religious persecution. The need for separation on the basis of a religious identity is emphasized. Moreover, the struggle for independence is said to be supported by and an expression of God's will (finding 17). There is an all-encompassing generalization made that equates being Pakistani with being Muslim, which makes one consider the perhaps contradictory positioning of the non-Muslim Pakistani in contemporary times.

Urdu as the national language is closely linked to Islam, with the former being the medium of instruction for the latter. Teaching religious values to children, the leaders of tomorrow, is considered to be of paramount importance. The centrality of religion is also evident in the imagery of mosques, and of women covering their head (findings 28 and 67). The gendered depiction of religious clothing is further segmented by class; poorer women are shown as being more modest in their dressing than their more affluent counterparts (finding 68). Also, religion and spirituality is shown as the source of inner peace and calm in otherwise difficult times (finding 80). As depicted in multiple cases, meeting good people and experiencing positive encounters are attributed to God's will. Religion is also called upon as a reservoir of patience and as offering guidance for behaviour in testing times. Religious items, such as an amulet, play a key role in protecting the wearer and bringing them good luck (finding 90). Depicting blood on

this amulet then hints towards the lives lost and sacrifices made in the name of this religion-specific homeland. The “other” against whom the nation needs protection is equated to Satan, underlining the centrality of religion in the national narrative (finding 89). In depicting the use of an amulet as a rosary, whose purpose is to record religious recitations, for praying for the country’s well-being, the themes of religion and nationalism are skillfully combined. Thus we see multiple depictions of religion’s centrality to constructing and maintaining Pakistan as the homeland for Muslims.

Overlapping themes

The discussion of dowry ties several themes together (finding 33). Gender stereotypes are reinforced in suggesting that women ultimately dream of marriage and gender. The national narrative is disrupted and we see a dissonance between the dream and reality of Pakistan in the depiction of class differences. Religion is played into when money is said to supercede faith.

Class differences are also at the forefront in the interactions with Bano’s employer (finding 55). While they are both fellow countrywomen, her employer employs status differentiation to distance herself from Bano, who arguably represents the vast majority of Pakistanis at the time, in her positioning as a member of the working class, even though she was relatively well to do pre-partition. While the national dream was built upon seeking justice and equality for all, the juxtaposition of these characters suggests that while some sacrifice all material possessions for Pakistan, others benefit from abandoned land and manipulate this to their advantage (finding 56). Moral decay is shown as being prevalent amongst the rich, in the form of widespread corruption and bribery. However the poor are shown as morally upright but complicit by their lack of willingness to speak up and protest against wrongdoing.

Nationalism, religion and gender are intertwined in Bano's expression of eagerness to work in the public domain, serving the country and gaining spiritual reward by doing so (finding 79). However even this expression is limited to an interest in traditionally female occupation that have a strong element of care-taking (finding 39). Within the context of nationalism, women are shown as having some agency but not the same as men. They are working behind the scenes and tending to more social and administrative tasks, with no mention of participation in militaristic ventures or representing political parties publicly. Even here, working alongside men is considered unfavourable, suggesting that occupations may be segregated by gender. The family is seen as the site for performance of gender norms and religious practices. This is particularly evident in Bano's admiration of households that host gender-segregated events in light of religious injunctions, equating this with respectability (finding 75). On the flip side, inter-mingling of men and women is frowned upon, as is dancing and music. This is tied in to nationalism in that if the family structure is spoilt, the nation will suffer as well, reinforcing that several themes under study connect with each other under the umbrella of nation-building as an ideology.

Conclusion

In response to Research Question 1 (RQ1), it appears that the TV series serves to largely reinforce stereotypes about family as it relates to gender. Husbands are considered the primary providers for the family, while wives are caretakers, responsible for the upbringing of children and making the home a comfortable place to be. This is linked to religion in that families that are religious are shown more positively than those depicted in a more secular light. It is also linked to nationalism through the portrayal of the mother figure as bearing similarities to the motherland, in her purity and her benevolence towards her children or citizens. However the TV series does contest the nuclear family unit as the standard, in depictions of extended family members as being intimately involved with each others' affairs as well as neighbors being accorded family status. This encompassing definition of family is represented positively. It ties in with the idea of nationalism in that when families and neighbourhoods care for each other, the nation is cared for.

As far as RQ1 relates to gender, the TV series pays considerable attention to the role of women in nation-building. While it reinforces certain gender stereotypes, a case can be made that it does some way in disrupting some of these as well. There are attempts to go against the typical narrative that ascribes women to the private sphere; this is evident in women's participation in the political movement to create Pakistan. However, even here the ultimate leadership is male, which raises questions about whether women are citizens in the same way as men and are able to exercise their agency in the public sphere to the same extent. This is further problematized by the depiction of women as childlike and helpless in some instances. The honor of the nation is tied to the honor of the women, and the latter is guarded by male relatives who are the final authority on

women's life decisions and mobility. An attack on women is tantamount to an attack on the nation's respectability itself, calling for a taking up of arms to protect its name and reputation. The link between women and the nation is also expressed through sporting of what would become the national dress of Pakistan in the colors of the flag on several occasions.

Gender norms are also challenged in the admiration expressed for women's contribution to the formation and running of Pakistan, and the recognition that half of the national workforce's potential should not go untapped. The fact that this arises in a debate of the righteousness of women in the public workplace points towards a national narrative that is grappling with how to position women within its framework. Significantly, the idea of sacrifice, considered essential to the narrative of Pakistan's formation, is shown through women's sacrifices. While recognizing the importance of women's contribution towards the struggle for independence, the TV series also suggests that these contributions have not received due recognition in the recording of history subsequently. This further illustrates the contradictory representations of gender in terms of nation-building, empowering in some ways and marginalizing in others.

The second research question is answered through its sub-set questions, the first of which (RQ 2.1) I now address. Nationalism is evidently a major theme running through the series, central to which is the idea of the "other". Notions of inherent difference and marginalization are invoked to justify the creation of Pakistan, which would allow marginalized groups to fully express their identity and seek equal rights in the public sphere. Pakistan is positioned in opposition to a defined other i.e. Hindustan and the non-Muslims. There are undercurrents of the need to prove to this "other" that Pakistan is or will be a successful nation-state, bound together

by its people who support and uplift each other. This camaraderie comes in part due to the need to band together against a hostile other. This “other” is seen as threatening to make the nation impure and the solution may be to rid the nation of this evil altogether.

Moving on to the role of religion in nation-building (RQ 2.2), the depiction of religion changes through the course of the series; starting off the TV series demonstrates harmony across religions. However, during the partition, religion becomes a point of difference and source of conflict, and in fact the reason for the creation of Pakistan as the series progresses. Religion as a claim for belonging to Pakistan, as depicted in the series, poses difficult questions about access to citizenship for non-Muslim Pakistanis. This is an area in which further research is warranted because of the consequences it can have in current times. A sizeable population in Pakistan ascribes to faiths other than Islam; research into media depictions of non-Muslim Pakistanis may shed light on how people of different religious backgrounds may have differing access to citizenship.

The TV series goes some way in disrupting the use of religion to subjugate women, as indicated by the criticism of relying on religion as an excuse to limit women’s participation in public service for the nation. In fact, religion is depicted as empowering women, thus going against the grain of common depictions. The portrayal of religion is nuanced along lines of gender, with a greater emphasis on women being dressed modestly and within that, of socioeconomic status, with higher status according women more freedom in terms of dressing. The TV series modestly pushes the boundaries of common representations of gender, family and religion in the context of nation-building. It invites audiences to question these tropes in relation to Pakistan, without being too deviant from mainstream depictions.

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