

Conflicts of Imagination:
A Cross-Class Analysis of Hindus in Pakistan

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Thesis

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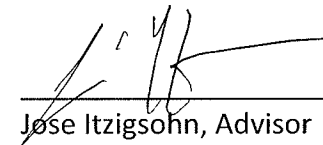
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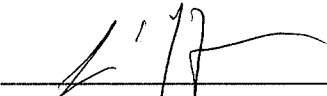
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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis came out of my own struggles with belonging and an effort to understand love for a group even when one is a minority in it. When I started this research, I had recently migrated to the US and was engaging with my own identity as a Pakistani and as an American in a new country. But I was not sure if I was Pakistani... or if I was American... after all what did being a Pakistani or an American really mean. I did not know the answers to those questions. My own relationships with “Pakistaniat” (Pakistani word for Pakistaniness) and Americanness were contentious. But here I was in a new country, being asked questions as a Pakistani and as a Muslim American.

Growing up in Karachi, Pakistan, I got the impression that I was not a “true” Pakistani. Not only was I a religious minority – part of the Shia sect – but also somehow a foreign element – due to my family roots in Amroha, a small town in India. The Shias face aggressions in Pakistan which can range from micro-aggressions to threats on one’s life. I remember a girl refusing to be my friend when she learnt that I was Shia. Later, my father had to leave Pakistan and start a new life in another country due to the death threats he was getting. He still lives abroad. Few years ago, my cousin was targeted and got shot multiple times by two gunmen on a motorcycle as he was leaving his office. He heard them shouting “infidel” as they drove by. We all knew “infidel” is a word reserved for Shias by some militant groups. He could not have survived if a person, a complete stranger, had not taken him to the hospital. My cousin chose not to leave Pakistan. He loved living there.

I also grew up in an endogamous kinship group from the town of Amroha in present day India. My parents always reminded me and my siblings about Amroha practices culture. But Amroha is in India and we are Pakistani and I love Pakistan.... I wanted to ask them but never did. When my cousins and uncles visited Karachi from India, they were just like us but supported another cricket team. As a child I wondered if we are from Amroha and they are from Amroha, and we all speak the same language, eat the same food, have similar values then what is the line between India and Pakistan in terms of culture? In terms of ways of being? Cricket was an answer. But is there something more? I wondered if others engaged with similar questions.

I migrated but the subjectivity of being a religious minority and a “foreigner in your own land” did not leave me – it just changed. On migration to America, I had enthusiastically decided that this is my home and I will look forward to a life here. But of course I get asked “where are you really from?” and when I answer I am from New York, people tell me not to be embarrassed of being Pakistani. But I really am not. Being from Pakistan is very important for me but home for me is not Karachi any more, as hurtful as it is for me. Home is New York and my life is in America. Me and my friends and family members regularly talk about what it means to be a Muslim in America in a post 9/11 world. What can we do to be seen as safe and trustworthy? We read about the government tapping people’s phones and we are not sure what it means for us.

When I got the privilege to start my sociological research as a young graduate student, similar questions bubbled up to the surface of my thinking. I wondered what is nationness for people – especially religious minorities -- and how is it lived and experienced. I wanted to study both Muslims and non-Muslims in Pakistan to get an idea of what a national subjectivity is and the ways it manifests itself and is formed.

I realize that I have only scratched the surface of the topic of nationalism in general and religiously intertwined nationalism in particular through this endeavor. I am happy though that I am on the first step of a life-long scholarly endeavor to understand belonging in a world categorized, organized, marked, mapped and lived in nation-states.

This endeavor could not have been successful without the support of many many people. Firstly, I am grateful to my advisor Jose Itzigsohn and my readers Michael Kennedy and Josh Pacewicz in guiding me and having their faith in me and this project. Secondly, I am grateful to David Lindstrom who in my first year urged me to seriously start thinking about my Masters thesis and therefore put in motion the year long effort which went into this work. I am grateful to Vazira F-Y Zamindar and Brown South Asia studies for funding the fieldwork which forms the basis of this research. I am also grateful to Patrick Heller, Barbara Stallings and the Graduate Program in Development for showing faith in me and awarding me the NSF/IGERT fellowship for this year, which opened up my time considerably to work on the thesis. I am thankful for the thoughtful comments I received when I presented this work at the *Religious Diversity: Conflict, Cooperation and*

Creolization Conference at The Boston University and at the *Urban Inequalities in the Global South workshop* at The Watson Institute at Brown University. I am eternally grateful to my parents Syed Anwar and Rehana Saeed, my husband Kevin Mole and my siblings Noor and Hasan Masood for their unflinching support for my scholarly endeavors and their deep love, care and acceptance. Needless to say, none of this was possible without that. I am also thankful to my mentor, former colleague and now brother-in-law Haris Gazdar for all the support he and his colleagues at Collective for Social Science Research in Karachi provided me in access and having a safe space to work and to think during my fieldwork. I am also grateful to my cousin Zafar Masud, for (always) opening his heart and (particularly this time) for sharing his office for me to work in. Lastly, I am deeply and modestly thankful to my interlocutors and friends in my field sites in Karachi. They shall remain unnamed for the sake of privacy but they know who they are. I will be eternally grateful to you for trusting me and opening your homes and your heart to me despite clear and present dangers that all of you experience on a daily basis.

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Abstract

The study of national belonging among religious-minorities is limited in sociology but even limited is this study in post-colonial Islamic countries. This qualitative study of Pakistani Hindus in the city of Karachi across class illustrates that nationness and minorityness cannot be understood separately from each other. National, minority and religious aspects of subjectivities interact for religious minorities to create a unique religious-minority-national subject. The role of class is important for the formation of such a subject but mostly through the channel of a different national subject formation across class rather than minority or religious subject formation. Further, I explain that this subject formation happens through the interaction of local experiences with national and transnational imaginaries and structures.

Introduction

The study of national belonging among minorities is limited in sociology however the work which is available is limited to the US and American context and to the study of ethno-linguistic minorities and migrants (Brubaker et al. 2006, Condor, Gibson and Abell 2006, Skey 2010). With a recent interest in sociology in expanding the category of the ethnic to its different variations like ethno-linguistic, ethno-religious and ethno-racial

(Brubaker 2013, Brubaker 2015, Gorski and Turkmen-Dervisoglu 2013), a gap can be noticed in understanding the subjectivities of religious minorities.

This is a study of Hindus in Pakistan, a postcolonial Islamic Republic, which makes the study even more novel for US sociology. Even though a large body of emerging literature shows that religion is implicated in the construction of nation-states and nationalism -- even those which tout secularity (Brubaker 2015, Kaplan 2005, Mahmood 2015, Marx 2003, Zubrzycki 2012), Pakistan is different in that its nationalism and state machinery is deeply connected to the religion of Islam. In fact, Pakistani constitution restricts certain rights only to Muslims even while guaranteeing freedom of religion to all. In this context, I ask, how do Pakistani Hindus conceive of themselves as Pakistani national subjects. In order to present various aspects of the same question, I have maximized variance in this paper and have presented views from two very different families -- both Hindu Pakistani and living in the city of Karachi but one being working class and the other bourgeois. The two cases maximize variation to show the various ways of being Hindu and Pakistani and their various interactions. The working class family is deeply pious and in a slow and gradual process of migration from the country while the elite family, though holding their Hindu heritage very close to the heart, does not engage in much religious practice. This family also claims to enjoy living in Pakistan and has no intention of migration from the country. The paper shows that national subject formation for a religious minority in Pakistan is deeply connected to one's class and its resulting habitus.

It also shows that the local, national and transnational experiences and imaginations mediated by class inform the creation of the national subject.

In section one, I will present the literature which led me to the puzzle which informed this research. In section two I present the context in which this study is placed. Firstly, I give a very brief history of Pakistani nationalism and its contested relationship with Islam. I also present demographic information on religious makeup of the country and present quantitative data showing the high levels of nationalism. Then I present a brief overview of my field site. The next section is on the methodology that I pursued while conducting the ethnography which led to this MA thesis. The next section outlines empirical information. After a brief analytical chapter, I conclude this thesis.

Literature Review

This study is distinctive in its endeavor to study national belonging among a religious minority. It is novel on two fronts. Firstly, national belonging and national subjectivity among minorities has largely been studied from the perspective of ethno-linguistic minorities. Secondly, US sociology tends to focus on the intersection of class and race/ethnicity while I compare and contrast national subjectivities across class within a religious grouping.

The idea of national-minorities is intrinsic to the concept of a nation and is a product of a world structured by nation-states. It is not surprising, therefore, that the term “national-minorities” is as old as the concept of the nation-state (Mahmood 2015). In US sociology, the study of national belonging among minorities has been largely based on ethno-linguistic minorities. Until recently, sociological literature did not distinguish between racial, ethno-linguistic or religious identity. For the purpose of analysis in this mode of thinking, race, language and religion were all conduits of *ethnic* identity formation and shaped by social forces (Brubaker 2004, Brubaker 2015, Wimmer 2003). Therefore, an ethno-linguistic minority experience could have been used to theorize about minority subjectivities in general. A more recent literature, however, contends that linguistic, religious and other identities could potentially be made and experienced differently from each other and so there is a need to look at the processes of how these identities are built (Brubaker 2013, Brubaker 2015, Gorski and Turkmen-Dervisoglu 2013). From this lens, when we study past literature on national-minorities and their subjectivities with regards to the nation-states they are part of, we see that these studies largely focus on ethno-linguistic minorities (Brubaker et al. 2006). Some studies did touch upon the topic but largely categorized the groups differently. For example, in their influential study of Hungarians in Romania, Brubaker et al. focused more on the linguistic aspect of the difference between Hungarians and Romanians and much less on the religious differences between them by claiming that Hungarian and Romanian nations are built around their respective languages (Brubaker et al. 2006) even though there is a significant religious cleavage between the two groups in general -- the Hungarians being

Catholic and Protestant and the Romanians following the Romanian Orthodox church. Similarly, in *The Dignity of Working Men: Morality and The Boundaries of Race, Class and Immigration*, Michelle Lamont discusses the religious minority status of her interlocutors in France but the boundary making she is principally interested in exploring is between natives and migrants and not between Christians and Muslims (Lamont 2000).

Lately, some groundbreaking work on the intersection of class and racial and ethnic identity has been published. This work has been situated in the US and European context. For example, Lamont shows that class boundaries are perceived differently between people of different backgrounds like Blacks and Whites in America (Lamont 2000). In his groundbreaking work on assimilation of migrants in the US, Itzigsohn shows that both race and class shape the incorporation (Itzigsohn 2011). I carry this tradition forward by looking at how class shapes national belonging among a religious minority. Specifically, I worked with self-identified Hindu Pakistani citizens in the country. Therefore, my case is empirically different but also theoretically consequential.

The literature on national belonging among minorities is vast (Brubaker et al. 2006, Condor, Gibson and Abell 2006, Skey 2010) but is dominated by, as is most sociology, by the US and European experience. When we move beyond the core of the world system and its corresponding sociological reflection, we come to recognize the limitations of that focus. Especially, for the study of religious minorities, we see that the case of US and Europe is not generalizable as the relationship between religion and the

nation-state differs significantly from nation-state to nation-state and across time. It is contingent upon power and its historic implication with religion (Talal Asad 2003). A fruitful recent body of work within the social sciences follows this line of thinking and shows that different national conceptions are in varying relationships with religion across time and geography (Brubaker 2015, Kaplan 2005, Mahmood 2015, Marx 2003, Zubrzycki 2012). Drawing upon this work, we can claim that the difference between “secular” and “religious” nation-states is contentious and contingent and that drawing such a boundary between the two (Friedland 2002) is problematic.

Nevertheless, in the context of some states and societies, the relationship between power and religion renders the religion to be used to legally discriminate against certain religious groups as well as socially mark them as inferior. This is also true for the context of my study – Pakistan. Pakistan is not only the world’s first Islamic Republic, adopting the title in 1956, but is also a country with laws privileging Muslims over non-Muslims. For example, even though the Pakistani constitution guarantees freedom of religion, it restricts a non-Muslim from ever becoming the president of the country (The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 2015). The rationale for Pakistan’s existence and its partition from united India was itself entangled with Islam even though this entanglement is deeply contested (Dhulipala 2015, Jalal 1994). What there is little contestation about is that Pakistan’s laws and society as it stands currently has a discriminatory tendency towards its non-Muslim citizens. I claim, the situation as it stands today can be called a condition of religious racialization where religion is not a matter of

faith but a category through which power operates. Of course I do not claim that Pakistan is uniquely predisposed among modern nation-states towards racialization of religious minorities. There are instances of formal (Jews in inter-war Europe, Irish Catholics in Northern Ireland, Coptic Christians in Egypt) and informal (Muslims in France, Catholics and Jews in the United States till few decades back) social exclusion of religious minorities in many modern societies.

In Pakistan, like in most post-colonial South Asia, national borders, ethno-linguistic borders and religious borders do not neatly intersect. For example, the ethno-linguistic region of Punjab is divided between India and Pakistan. Moreover, large numbers of ethno-linguistic Punjabis identify with Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism among other religions. In my field site I encountered Hindus from at least two ethno-linguistic backgrounds and Muslims from at least four ethno-linguistic backgrounds¹. Even with the presence of linguistic, racial and regional minorities in the country, the study of national belonging and nationness among religious minorities is especially important and productive due to the implication of religion with Pakistani nationalism. Others have studied the status of Ahmedis (Mahmud 1995, Saeed unpublished) or religious minorities in general (Rehman 2000, Yasmeen 1999) in Pakistan but very few have studied Hindus in the country (Schaflechner 2016). Like Hungarians in Romania (Brubaker et al. 2006),

¹ I use the word at least because ethno-linguistic grouping like any grouping is contested. In day to day conversations I encountered that sub-divisions within purported ethno-linguistic categories could be sometimes imagined as wholly separate ethno-linguistic categories in themselves.

Pakistani Hindus are not minorities due to a history of migration but because the borders of nation-states moved in their lives.

Being a religious minority in Pakistan or elsewhere is historically contingent but we don't know much about how this category is experienced; its subjectivity is poorly understood. There are three aspects of subjectivity at play here. Firstly, the subject can experience oneself as a national subject with an experience of nationness (Brubaker et al. 2006, Jenkins 2011). Taking Richard Jenkins lead, I would define nationness as a "sense of being the kind of person or living the kind of life that's appropriate to the membership of a state" (Jenkins 2011; 16). Therefore, we can see that through a national subjectivity, the subject identifies oneself as a kind of person like other national subjects and as opposed to the subjects of other nation-states. This is also the moment where boundaries are constructed between one's nation and the other nation. The second subjectivity, which is important to discuss here is that of the religious subject. Even though traditionally, a religious subject has been identified as one with an inner personal religious belief (Locke 1689, Brubaker 2015) in the context of religiously organized societies (which most societies are formally or informally as discussed above), religion is not just about belief and one's relationship with divinity but also about self-identification and categorization. Therefore, instead of religious belief or religion, my category of analysis is the subjectivity of people who claim a certain religious identity. Their religious subjectivity is not just about their personal beliefs but also about their heritage, familial and kinship structures, group membership and sometimes ties of solidarity. The third aspect of human

subjectivity which I discuss in this paper, is the minority subjectivity. Taking my cue from Saba Mahmood (2015), I contend that a minority subjectivity is the direct result of modernity. Modernity is structured around the institutions of nation-states which are assumed to be racially and culturally homogenous and who get legitimacy by claiming their majoritarian roots. The national-minorities here are artifacts of power who by precisely being the minority create the majority. The rise of modernity also coincided with religion being used in particular ways for political claim making. For example, a rising Europe asserted its power over the waning Ottoman empire by eventually taking power from the empire over its Christian subjects (Mahmood 2015).

To study these three aspects of subjectivity, I am using the case of self-identified Hindus in Karachi, Pakistan. Because of the novelty of this approach, the study of overlapping, contentious and intimately linked aspects of subjectivity among a non-migrant religious minority in a post-colonial state, I am maximizing variation to understand it. For that reason, I elaborate the lives of two very different Hindu Pakistani families -- one from the upper, and one from a more precarious, class.

Even though the paper talks about a specific case in a post-colonial state, it is an effort in bringing religious identity to the study of national-minorities. Globally, the category of religion is increasingly becoming more important in identity politics. Not only in the United States where anti-Muslim sentiment is currently being used by some for political mileage, attacks on religious minorities are increasingly being reported in Europe,

Middle East, Indian Subcontinent and East Asia. Therefore, it is high time for sociologists to not only study religion as a means of groupness and community but also its inter-relations with the political and the economic.

Context and field site

Pakistani Nationalism

Pakistan has been called a country with “nationalism without a nation” (Jaffrelot 2002). The phrase reflects the tension between nation and nationalism in the post-colonial state. The country was carved out of the British colony of India in 1947. The demand for Pakistan was not simply based on religious identity as is commonly understood. Pakistani nationalism is a double-nationalism based on ethno-regional and ethno-religious traits. The demand for Pakistan was for the Muslim “nation” within India. In this way the demand for Pakistan was not just for Muslims but for the Muslims of a particular world region created by the colonization of that region by an imperial power.

As the British crown took hold in India after the sepoy rebellion of 1857, the “Muslim question” became central to the politics of the British Raj. Some scholars assert that Muslim nationalism in India was a bargaining chip that the leader of the movement Mohammad Ali Jinnah wanted to use for the creation of a federal decentralized India with several autonomous Muslim majority territories (Jalal 1994) and which never happened.

For others that is marginal to the creation of Pakistan. According to these historians, Pakistan was either created as a result of the treachery of the British empire or the stubbornness of the leaders of the Pakistan movement like Jinnah (Raja 2010) or was demanded by Indian Muslims to be constructed as a sharia based state (Dhulipala 2015).

The partition of India was one of the bloodiest episodes of the 20th century. Riots broke out and 14 million people migrated across the newly formed border. Many Hindus however remained in the territory of Pakistan – mostly in the regions of Sindh and Bengal. Simultaneously 35 million Muslims remained in the territory of India.

According to the data by The Association of Religion Data Archives, Pakistan's demography by religion is as below:

Religion	Percent	Numbers
Muslim	96.16	172,280,363
Christian	2.18	3,905,690
Hindu	1.32	2,364,913
Others	0.34	609,144

Table 1: Pakistani population by religion (2012)

Source: The Association of Religion Data Archives

Therefore, at least 6.9 million non-Muslims live in Pakistan out of which 2.3 million identify as Hindus. Because Pakistan's nationalism is intertwined with the religion of Islam, one can argue that all non-Muslims are the 'others' of the nationalizing state. Hindus are in a much worse situation, however. According to the official Pakistani national rhetoric, it was precisely separation from Hindus that Pakistani nationalists wanted during their struggle – calling Hindus and Muslims two separate nations.

A brief study of Pakistani national movement confounds us whether Pakistan movement was even a national movement. Jinnah, the leader of the movement presented contradictory views on not only the role of religion in Pakistan but also but also on whether Pakistan is a nation-state at all. I will show this by presenting some quotes from his speeches. He said the following in the annual gathering of the Muslim League in 1940:

"Islam and Hinduism are not religions in the strict sense of the word, but are, in fact, different and distinct social orders [...]. The Hindus and the Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs and literatures [...]. To yoke together two such nations under a single State, one as a numerical minority and the other as a majority, must lead to growing discontent and the final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the government of such a state. (Jaffrelot 2002)"

What is interesting is that Jinnah conceives of Islam and Hinduism not as religions but social orders. He counters the Lockean notion of religion as a private affair. Social order on the other hand was a basis of a society, which he believed had to be enclosed within the boundary of a state.

However, Jinnah's conception of Pakistan was contentious and contingent. Post independence, in 1947, he said the following to the constituent assembly of Pakistan:

"I cannot emphasize it too much. We should begin to work in that spirit, and in course of time all these angularities of the majority and minority communities, the Hindu community and the Muslim community -- because even as regards Muslims you have Pathans, Punjabis, Shias, Sunnis and so on, and among the Hindus you have Brahmins, Vashnavas, Khattris, also Bengalees, Madrasis and so on -- will vanish. Indeed if you ask me, this has been the biggest hindrance in the way of India to attain the freedom and independence, and but for this we would have been free people long long ago. No power can hold another nation, and specially a nation of 400 million souls, in subjection; nobody could have conquered you, and even if it had happened, nobody could have continued its hold on you for any length of time, but for this."

In the above quote he not only makes a modernization theory like argument that ethnic and religious differences would diminish over time within a nation-state but also calls Indians and Pakistanis a single nation². Nevertheless, minorities have remained symbolically distinct since the creation of the country. For example, the country's flag also has a white stripe representing non-Muslim citizens of the country, keeping them eternally separate from Muslims on this vital national symbol.

Pakistani nationalism received a big blow when East-Pakistan struggled for and received independence from West-Pakistan on the basis of ethno-linguistic Bengali nationalism to form Bangladesh. Scholars contend that even after the creation of Bangladesh, Pakistan is too diverse to hold as a nation -- with ethno-linguistic and sectarian divisions imploding the collectivity from within. Therefore, it relies on anti-India rhetoric to hold itself as a state (Jaffrelot 2002). This anti-India rhetoric can be perceived as anti-Hindu by some as mainstream government rhetoric equates India with Hindus.

Despite the contradictory nature of Pakistani nationalism, representative surveys show that Pakistanis are more nationalistic than citizens of many other countries. For example, as can be seen in Figure 1, according to the World Values Survey wave 6, 90% of Pakistanis claimed that they would fight for their country if needed in the next war. Pakistan is only third to Qatar and Uzbekistan in this 60 country sample.

² As the population of colonial India at the time was roughly 400 million

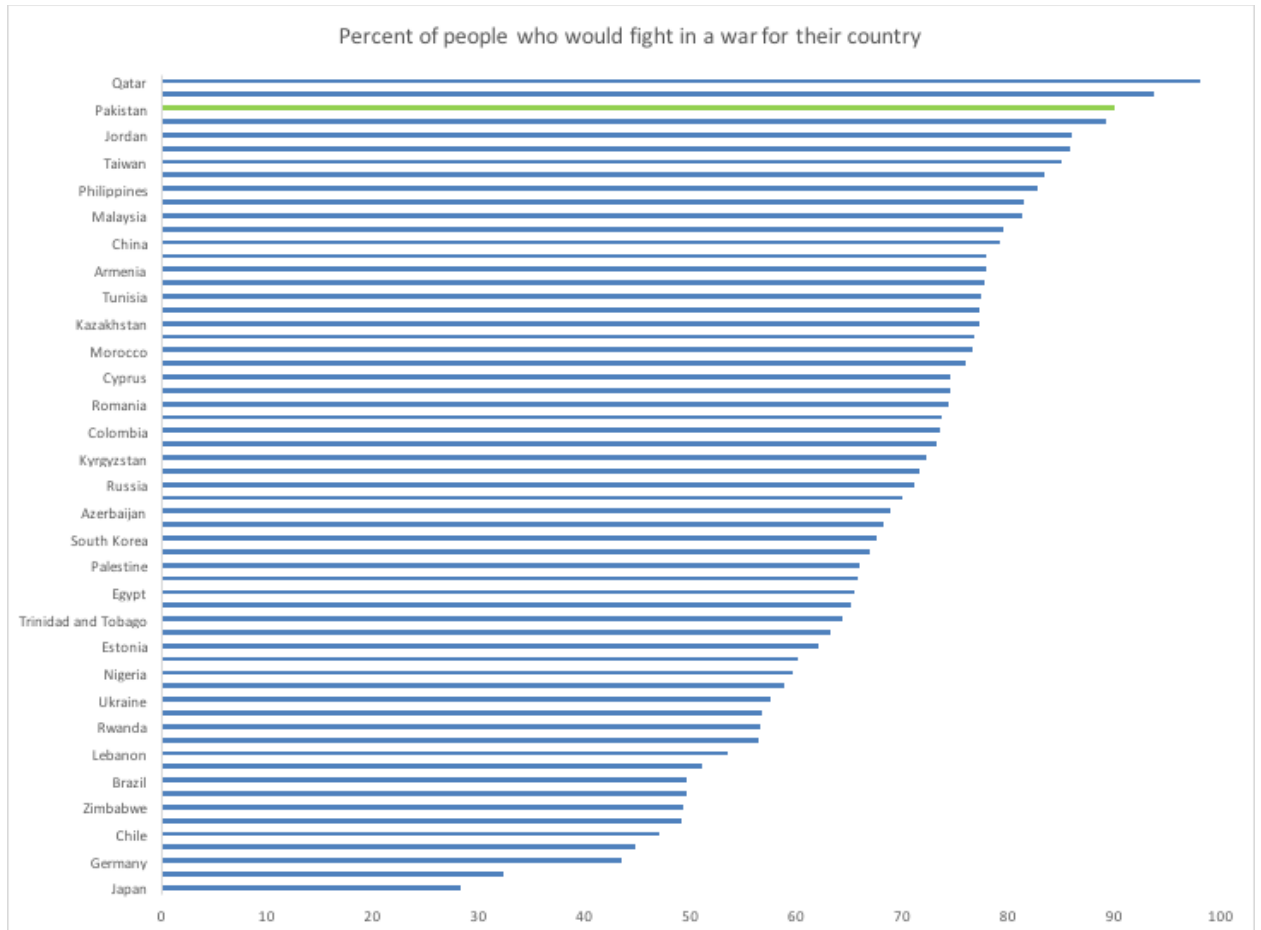


Fig 1: Nationalism in Pakistan in a global perspective

Source: World Values Survey Phase 6

Therefore, based on all this information, nationness or national belonging among religious minorities and especially Hindus was a puzzle for me. Generally Pakistanis have shown to be very nationalistic but their nationalism is centered around religion of Islam. In this circumstances, I ask, how would a non-Muslim, especially a self-identified Hindu, see themselves as a national subject. Would it be rooted in notions of citizenship or is nationness itself a subjectivity which can be studied. Armed with these questions I started my study.

Karachi and Center-City

I conducted my fieldwork in the the city of Karachi, the largest city of the province of Sindh which is home to 97% of Pakistan's Hindus. Hindus have participation across social classes in the country. Karachi was first developed as a trading post by Hindu merchants but was owned by Muslim land owners. It was developed as a modern port by the British and quickly became the third largest of British India during colonial times. A large migrant population from the (present day) regions of Gujrat, Sindh and Balochistan moved to the city for jobs and the population almost trebled between 1872 and 1911 (Smyth 2005).

Most of my fieldwork was conducted in the neighborhood of Center City and its adjacent gated community of Workers Colony. All but very few houses in Centre-City are owned by the Muslim community of the area which traces its roots to the neighborhood for generations. This Muslim community also claims that they are part of the same kinship group. The Hindu community in center-city are mostly working class but some people also have menial office jobs. Most of the Hindus in the neighborhood are tenants. Workers colony, at a walking distance from Center City is composed of workers quarters which the city government has allotted to its menial workers. Non-Muslims form a majority of the population of Workers Colony. I was not able to get any demographic data on Center City and Workers Colony but the election block that it is part of has almost 4% registered non-

Muslim voters and this election block has a higher than average proportion of non-Muslim voters (Punjab Lok Sujag 2013).

Even if data with a capital D existed, a count of all men, women and children, their ages, their education, their income, their assets and even a one-word answer claiming to be their view, it would not even give a glimpse of what it is like to be there and to walk there. I am thinking of numerous times when the lanes were too full of sewage water and I walked with my hospitable interlocutors hopping from a concrete block to block which were placed there by a resourceful resident. Perhaps those blocks had a home and residents knew where to get them and how to place them when the sewerage system gets blocked once again.

It's not that sewerage water on the road dampened anyone's spirit in Center-City. Any evening was as full of vigor. Teenage lads walked about in groups wearing nylon shalwar kameezes or checkered half sleeve shirts and cotton trousers. In the summer, they wore dark colored plastic sandals. Its too warm to wear covered shoes and heaven forbid.... any socks. Women sat in groups outside the buildings in cotton shalwar kameezes, always covering their chests with a dupatta, hair long and braided, often with oil in their hair or walked about in pairs visiting friends and family who also lived in Center-city. No one covered their noses although a verbal complaint about the sewerage was the first line of order in a conversation.

There is no greenery in sight here. The houses are stacked next to each other. Each one covering a narrow plot of land – mostly 240 to 600 sq. yard but three or four stories are built on each other. Climbing broad concrete stairs is part of the habitus. I remember slowly climbing, one rubber flip flop chasing the other, many a dark stairwell, checkered with stains of spit-out betel nut juice wearing my cotton shalwar kameez, note book next to my chest and a voice recorder in my bag. If you are standing on one of the vigorous streets and look towards the sky, you would see a net of electric wires, dark grey fat snakes intermingling into each other with no rhyme or reason. One or two would be hanging loose as if they had dozed off and could not keep their head up.

Methodology

This paper is based on interviews and participant observation I conducted in Karachi over the summer of 2015. I kept Center-City and Workers Colony as my key sites. Anchored in the lives and experiences of my interlocutors in these neighborhoods, I branched out to interview small and large business owners who identified as Hindu.

I conducted two types of fieldwork for this paper. One was in the neighborhood of center-city, which is one of the few mixed Hindu-Muslim neighborhoods of the city. This is where I conducted most of my work with working class interlocutors. For the ethnography I conducted with business owning interlocutors, I was invited in almost all

cases to visit them in their offices. There were also cases where I was invited to their homes or asked to meet at public places like malls and restaurants.

I conducted 80 interviews in total including follow-up interviews. I spent time at the homes of my interlocutors in Center-City and Workers Colony but also attended several religious festivals and small and large Hindu temples in the city. I participated in worship and listened to sermons. My interlocutors included people who were identified as Hindus and as Muslims and those who identified as atheists but categorized themselves as belonging to the group “Muslim” or “Hindu” as identified by others.

I told everyone I met in the context of my research that I was a graduate student at Brown University, USA and gave them my contact details at my first meeting with them. I mostly used a voice recorder for my interviews and carried a notebook with me at all times to jot down notes. I always asked people before recording their voice and scribbled notes if any one declined to be recorded. Most people did give me the consent to record their voice. I jotted down notes every day or if I had a long day, early next morning. My fieldwork was mostly at night or over the weekend as most people were busy during the day. I am using a pseudonym for everyone I met as well as their caste groups and neighborhoods to protect their privacy.

Although I was not actively purporting to help people through my research, I also supported my interlocutors in several situations in the best manner that I could. I do not

claim to be altruistic, my experiences of support in the end helped me gain insights into the daily life of my research participants. Nevertheless, being of help made me immensely happy as it was in this small way that I could be helpful to people who had opened their hearts and homes to me, someone they had met but few weeks back. I am very grateful to those that shared their time, their food and their resources with me. I was called a guest and a sister and mostly treated with respect. There were those too who did not want to talk to me, deemed me suspicious, even a foreign agent and refused to be met or interviewed by me. With the on-going relationship between America and the region and also between the Pakistani militarized state and many of the vulnerable people in the country, I respect their opinion and prerogative to keeping their lives private.

Taking cue from previous sociological research, I did not mention that the object of my study was nationalism or people's identities as Pakistanis. Mentioning an identity evokes it and therefore limits a researcher's ability to peer into the everyday discourse around nationalism. I did talk about state policies and travel etc., topics which have been seen to incite discussions of national identity (Brubaker et al. 2006, Fox and Miller-Idriss 2008). I kept the object of my study open ended and mentioned that I am studying communities and how they live.

My methodology was inspired by Kimberly Kay Hoang's methodology in *Dealing in Desire* (Hoang 2015) where she not only embeds herself in different fields related to her research question but also studied both "up" and "down". In my case, to study

Pakistani nationness I embedded myself in not only Hindu families but also in Muslim families. I also not only studied “down” by looking at working class subjectivities but also “up” by shadowing and interviewing business owners – both Muslim and Hindu. I studied self-identified Hindus and Muslims from different castes, ethno-linguistic groups and classes. The purpose of my fieldwork was not to aim for generalizability but for saturation (Small 2009). Early on in my fieldwork, I noticed that nationness among my Hindu interlocutors differed by class and therefore I became interested in studying national subjectivity cross-class. Even though, many of my interviews showed this trend, I am using the stories of two of my key informants and their families in this paper. Both of these men were important interlocutors for me over the summer, people who I met many a times and gained more extensive knowledge about them.

By being opposites in many ways, these cases present very different ways of being Pakistani and being Hindu. In some ways, they are at the opposite ends of several continuums. Rahul and his family is working class. Rahul himself had a temporary job as a supervisor at a building site at the time of my research but he has spent many years assisting a dentist. His mother Saraswati is a domestic servant and his brother Suraj assists a dentist. The other bread earners in this extended joint family is their cousin Mona, who was out of work at the time and her mother who is a janitor at a public school. This family is also deeply religious. Fasting and attending worship (puja) ceremonies was a regular feature of their life. Rahul himself believed that he is a medium between the earthly realm and several goddesses. Rahul and the Jaggan family intended to migrate from Pakistan to

India. Rahul himself migrated during my time in Karachi. Migration and the eventual move to India was something the extended joint family discussed a lot. Poorab and his family are business owning and they have a decent export business. Poorab has has relations to politicians, senior government officers and other business people. He is not only well-off but also aware of his privilege which he discussed with me many times. Poorab and his family deeply care about their identity as Hindu and frown upon people who convert from Hinduism but are not practicing. They rarely if ever go to temples and do not follow fasts or religious dietary restrictions. Poorab was very vocal about wanting to live in Pakistan and was proud that his children also did not want to migrate.

My aim in showcasing their stories is also to privilege depth over breadth. Due to my repeated interactions with these key interlocutors, I believe I am better able to identify aspects of their and their families' subjectivities related to being a religious minority in Pakistan. I am also better able to present an in-depth view on how class interacts with national, religious and minority subjectivities. In doing so I am following what Abu-Lughod calls the ethnography of the particular (Abu-Lughod 2000).

Empirics

Rahul and the Jaggan Family

It had been almost two weeks that I was in Karachi. I had been talking to my friends and former colleagues about my research and was getting some insight into how they

experienced being Pakistani but this day was the first day I was going to Center-City to conduct an interview. A friend had talked about my research with Saraswati, a woman who cooked at his place and Saraswati had graciously accepted to talk to me on her night off.

It was about 10 pm that night and I had been trying for 60 minutes to cross a half a block of a very busy shopping area. Some shops were starting to close but many were still open and shoppers, men and women were bustling on the street going from a clothing store to a shoe shop and from an ice-candy man to a snack vendor. Only half of this concrete road could be used by motor vehicle riders as it had to be shared by parked motorcycles and food vending carts. Its then that I got a called on my cell-phone. A man was on the line who introduced himself as Rahul, Saraswati's son. He asked me where I was and why I was late. I told him where I was and that the traffic was quite bad. He asked for the number plate of my car which I told him.

In about 10-15 minutes a heavy set man with a dark brown complexion started clearing the traffic. Acting as a "traffic constable", this man signaled for the traffic to move in one direction while stopping the vehicles from the other direction. Two people joined him and in a small time the traffic cleared and my car could move. I was silently sending a prayer for the "citizen traffic constable" when he appeared on my car window and knocked. I thought he wanted to tell us where to move in order to clear the traffic but he

said “I am Rahul. Please go straight and take a left to reach our house. I will walk and meet you there.”

I asked him to come with me in the car. In this first conversation, Rahul told me that he has sent his wife and son to India because of the bad neighborhood they live in and would also migrate to India soon.

As Rahul’s migration from Pakistan to India proceeded this summer, I witnessed his first sentence about it unravel as the meanings of “sent” and “neighborhood” and “migrate” expanded and changed for me. I saw many in this neighborhood who were yearning to migrate. Some were and some could not due to financial means or bureaucratic blockages. Not all wanted to migrate nonetheless. There were many who saw their future in Pakistan and no where else. Rahul’s case showed me that the question I was asking – of belonging to a collectivity called a nation became a question of lived memories -- where rooting for a cricket team you have always rooted for, chanting national slogans you have always chanted and for his wife, raising your child similarly to how you were raised became contentions of nationness which are breaking this joint family apart. On the other hand, for Rahul as for the overwhelming majority of Pakistani Hindus I met, Pakistani nationness was first and foremost about their genealogy – about how their ancestors had lived on this land -- and therefore about an inherited sense of belonging to the Pakistani territory. This theme was recurring and foremost in any of my conversations around belonging.

Rahul was born and raised in Center-City like his father. He says that his grandfather moved to Karachi from a village in present day Gujarat state of India to find work. For Rahul, his caste and religious traditions are very important. For example, in his caste, people cannot marry their cousins except the daughter of one's father's sister and it's also imperative to get married in the caste. As there are very few people from the Jaggan caste among his acquaintances in Pakistan, marriage with Indian citizens is very common. So even though travel to India is expensive as well as hard due to harsh visa restrictions between India and Pakistan, 13 people from his immediate family went to India to get several of the young people married. Rahul, his brother and sister and a nephew were all to be married during this period. They lived in India for 23 months at this time. Rahul's wife who was an Indian citizen moved to Pakistan and they started her Pakistani citizenship process. Their son was also born in Pakistan and was a Pakistani citizen.

Below is a chart of Rahul's extended family within a genealogical chart. The members highlighted in orange share family expenses while the ones in whites are parts of other families. For example, even though Rahul has a brother and a sister, the sister has moved into the extended family of her in-laws who live in India.

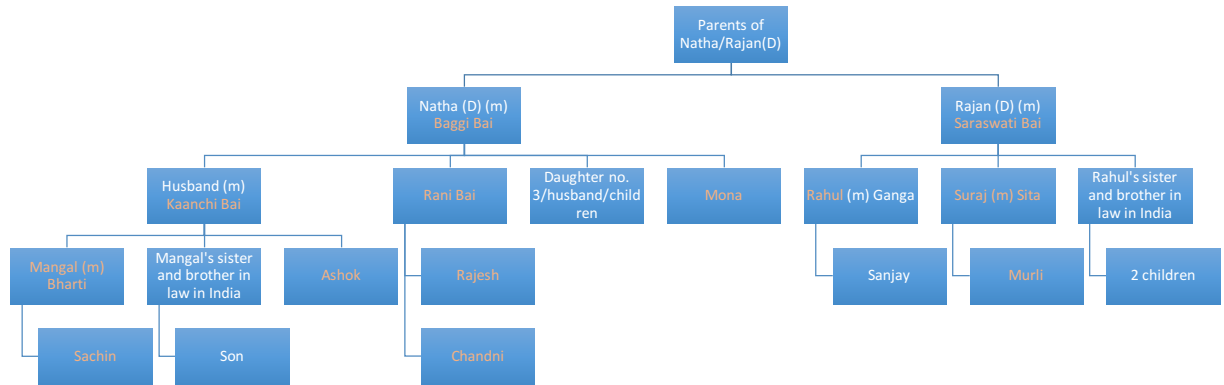


Fig. 2: The Jaggan joint family of which Rahul was a member (the members are highlighted in Orange)

Rahul identifies as a “Bua”. I came upon the concept of Buas while doing fieldwork in Karachi and hearing about Goddess worship among the Wagri caste in the city. I knew that Buas claim to be mediums and go in a trance like state after drinking a mixture of blood, vermilion and vodka. A fellow fieldworker in Karachi had made a documentary on Bua practice in the city which I had seen with great interest. When I mentioned this to Rahul, he smiled, nodded his head and did not say anything. Another day while I was interviewing one of his friends, his friend mentioned that Rahul is a Bua. My eye brows shot up and my mouth fell open. I asked him if he was a Bua. Then he mentioned that the last time he went to India, the time he had gotten married seven years ago, he was recognized by other Buas that he had the power. After this Rahul agreed to answer some of my questions on his experience being a medium between the earthly world and the goddess. This is what he said

Syeda: Don't the Waagris (another caste) pray to the goddess Kali?

Rahul: I'll tell you. Now suppose you are a Bua. Imagine you are a Bua. Right? What happens is that there is not one goddess. There are four to five goddesses. Every temple has four to five goddesses. There is one that you worship, it is the deity of your family. She is supported by two to three more goddesses. Then there is one above her (in hierarchy), she is called.... what was that... the goddess of tilak. You can spiritually even get a goddess from another person (Muslim call to prayer playing in the background). You can borrow it from someone else, they will give it to you to help you. But there are conditions – you also have to worship her annually.

Syeda: And what do you mean by getting a goddess from another person. What is exchanged?

Rahul: The other bua would descend the goddess inside you. It will be entered within you.

Syeda: OK....

Rahul: He will make you sense her...that this is my goddess!

Syeda: How does that happen?

Rahul: There is a procedure for that.

Syeda: Is it a secret?

Rahul: No. For us, they make you drink from a bowl, there is sindoor and ghee in it. OK. After you drink it and it goes in. Then that feeling comes out.

Every community has their own procedure. For us you drink from a bowl.

OK? Like you told me (about the Waagris) that they drink vodka...

Syeda: Yeah...

Rahul: That is their way of doing it. For us...there is no vodka etc. In some communities they add blood to the bowl...

Syeda: Yeah...

Rahul: Every community has their own style. Like I showed you the photo of my guru...how is he my guru?

Syeda: How?

Rahul: The goddess inside of me...

Syeda: Yes yes...

Rahul: He has given me the goddess. That's why he is my Guru."

Syeda: Which goddesses are inside you?

Rahul: I don't know but I feel I have at least four to five goddesses inside me.

Syeda: Originally you had?

Rahul: Originally I only had the goddess of my own family and then I got my guru's goddess.

Rahul had shown me photographs of him in a trance and also of his guru who lives in India. This shows that not only does Rahul experience a deep spiritual connection with the goddess but the community of other Buas in India helped him realize his spiritual

powers. He told me that he looked forward to connecting with them. Given that his spirituality was a big part of his life, he preferred living in an environment where he can explore his spirituality with the larger community of like minded Hindus. Given the paucity of Jaggan caste members in Karachi, his uniquely Jaggan spiritual experience (as when he explained when he said “for us, they make you drink from a bowl...”) was being limited in Pakistan. However, he never mentioned that his reason for migration was exploration of his spiritual self – ultimately for him, the decision was about joining his wife in her decision to leave Pakistan and ensuring that his son grows up in a majority Hindu environment where he would not experience a minority subjectivity. Therefore, his religious subjectivity and spiritual desire was implicated in his decision of migration but was not the trigger. This conversation also shows that Rahul is a deeply religious person and experiences his spirituality in visceral ways. Therefore, faith for him was not just an internal belief but also a bodily, almost material experience

This summer, Rahul was living without his wife and son and was just waiting for a visit visa to move to India, which he had all the intention to convert to an asylum visa and eventually get Indian citizenship. He had also lived on asylum visas in the last trip he had made to India in which he got married.

Rahul mentioned how he did not like living in Pakistan. He wanted to live in a country where the public life was enriched with Hindu symbolism. When asked how he

liked living in India he said that he wanted to live in a Hindu majority country where everyone else was also Hindu and where he would feel safe.

“I did feel good. I really liked it. I liked the environment ... the environment is really .. nice. The environment is good here too, but it's better over there. From what point of view? From a religious point of view. If I think as a Hindu then it would be better for me over there. Safe and secure. Everyone thinks about their children. Our parents thought about us, we will think about our children ... where they have a safe future. Over here, I was talking the other day, that a young child who is in a class, there is this thing about who is a Muslim and a Hindu. Whereas this is not so over there. Over there his entire environment would consist of Hindus. For him who is a Muslim who is a Hindu, that does not remain.”

Even though Rahul aspired for an environment where there is no religious difference, he definitely wanted an environment where a majority of other people also belonged to his religion.

He also considered India to be culturally different – more liberal. For example, he said this about life in Karachi versus Ahmedabad:

When I go out with my wife and she is wearing good clothes.... ten people will look at her... from top to bottom. And I say in my head, is this a different species in front of you? Is she something different? She is (like) the same woman you have in your own house! I just don't know what kind of an environment this has become. In India, this is not the case. Over there when you travel by a bus, a lady can sit next to you. When you go out like in a public park... she is there and there is no problem. You go in a rickshaw, wherever you go (you find women)! It is accepted in India ... there is no much difference (between men and women). Over here there is a difference. The ladies compartment (in a bus) is separate and the gents compartment is separate. When you travel by a bus, you can see what the men are doing at the back! And you can't even stop them. What to do and what not to do! You just look at them and get worried."

Once I asked him how he felt in India. Did he see any differences between him and his friends and family who were born and raised in India. He mentioned that the dialect differs considerably. His language has Urdu influences and he sometimes uses words that they didn't use. He said it is easy for them to know who is from Pakistan as Pakistanis use different words sometimes and even have a distinct Gujarati accent. When I asked him why he came back to Karachi from his last extended visit, Rahul told me that he was having monetary problems in India. They had saved some money before travelling to India but their, the money was spent. He had borrowed some from his Indian relatives and in-

laws but India is a materialistic place. People can only help you so much. Rahul's uncle once said that India has modernized and so people's values have also become modern. They are greedier and selfish than people in Pakistan.

He termed his decision to move to India as a decision he was not taking for himself but for his child. He wanted to ensure his child's safety. When asked what he meant by safety he mentioned the attack that the Taliban had carried out on the Army Public School in Peshawar. Safety of children for him was not an issue faced by his religious community or even his city but was a national problem.

Rahul's migration was about a certain imagined community he wanted to be part of but it was also about the loss of groupness for his family. There was a sense that their joint-family is changing irreparably as a group. The day before he took the train to India, Sita, his sister-in-law kept talking to her two-year-old son about how his uncle is leaving but will come back very soon while feeding him his lunch. Bharti, his first cousin's daughter in law and also a part of his joint family, had taken out old albums and showed me photos of Rahul's wedding that he was leaving behind due to their weight. Sita told me she thinks her son will get sick after his uncle leaves and in fact both Sita and Bharti's young sons fell sick soon after Rahul left. Mona, his cousin, and I went for a walk and stopped to have some snacks from a cart vendor. Here she told me about her nervousness with regards to the household expenses. Rahul was one of the five bread earners in this family and now that she was out of work and with Rahul gone she wondered how they

will meet their expenses. She told me that she had mortgaged her gold jewelry when Rahul and his wife needed money and now with him gone, the loan shark would appropriate her jewelry.

When I came back, Mona left for her room. Rahul told me he is leaving because his wife does not want to live in this large joint family. Mona's mother and Rahul's aunt is the figurative head of this household and she uses many bad words for the younger women in the family. Rahul's wife could no longer stand living with her and so had moved to her parents' home in India. Now she had been gone for a few months and they were pressing him to move to India to be with his family. Some people in his family were asking him to divorce his wife but he was not up for it and so was moving to India. He told me that he was not moving to India for any ideological reasons but just to be with his wife and son. He smiled and said:

“Sister, here we used to say Pakistan Zindabad and there we will say Vande-e-mataram³. Here we use Quaid-e-Azam and there we will use Bapu⁴.”

He made the sign as if he was counting money. He was referring to the currency notes in Pakistan and India and the national “founding fathers” they have on their notes.

³ Pakistan Zindabad = long live Pakistan, Vande-e-mataram is an Indian national slogan.

⁴ Quaid-e-Azam is a honorary title for Jinnah while Bapu is the honorary title of Gandhi.

The next day when I arrived at Rahul's home, tempers were running high. Pakistani and Indian nationality was again being used to name names. Saraswati, his mother, complained about back problems.

Bharti: She was so healthy in India. She has gotten so weak since she moved back.

I agreed with Bharti. Saraswati looked weak that day.

Saraswati (laughing): In fact, I have gotten fatter....

Bharti: These Pakistanis always think *their* country is better. This uncle also says that my country is great.

Bharti was referring to a very old man who perpetually slept on a cot. Mona had told me some time earlier that he was an alcoholic and a drug abuser and was part of the family as he was a distant cousin and had nowhere to go.

Imagining the "uncle" feeling passionate about a national cause was somehow funny and I laughed.

Rahul: See how nationalities play in our house? During Pakistan-India matches we are all fighting.

Me: Do you support India or Pakistan?

Rahul: Sister, I am Pakistani, I support Pakistani cricket team. My wife supports India.

Saraswati (loudly): We have eaten the grain from this soil and were born here. Our parents and ancestors were born here. We are Indian. Before partition everyone was Indian. But since Pakistan was made we are Pakistani.

For Saraswati, Rahul and their family, national belonging and nationness was part of the everyday, it was the way they made sense of the world. A person's subjectivity was marked by their national identity and even a family member was othered based on their national subjectivity which was opposed to the national subjectivity of the subject.

After he moved, Rahul he sent me the following email.

"Sister, you were right about migration. It is not easy. It has been three months since I moved to India and I have been looking for work. I have been able to get a 2-year visa in India. I have also admitted my son to a good school. I have been surveying the environment here for three months and believe that finding a job here as a Pakistani national is very difficult. This is because people don't trust you. As Pakistanis we have a very bad reputation. No one rents a house to you even without a proper guarantor. And for a job, its even harder. No one even accepts a guarantee. Therefore,

I have decided to make a small house constructed and start my own business here.”

Evidently, he was having a hard time in India and associated himself with the Pakistani nation more when he migrated.

Poorab and the Jindlanis

I met Poorab Jindlani through another business man I had interviewed in Karachi. I had called Poorab and given the reference of his uncle, the man I had met earlier. He was open to meeting me and asked me to come meet me at his office on a Friday. Instead of giving me the address of his office he told me that it is in the building which housed a McDonalds on a busy road of the city. I knew that McDonalds and reached there on the time he had given me. It was a Friday in Ramadan, right after the heat wave which had killed more than a thousand people in the city. The McDonalds was closed during the fasting hours due to government regulation but the Islamic Bank next door was open. I searched for the stairs to go up and found a very narrow and dark stairwell. After looking for his office for 15 minutes and calling him many times on his cell phone, Poorab called me and directed me to his office which was in the building next to the McDonalds building.

Poorab's main profession is as an exporter of Onyx and limestone. Many of his buyers are in India or Russia. Poorab is a middle aged man - balding and with a grey

moustache and round glasses. Poorab's extended family is wealthy and well connected. His uncle has been a minister and several others are also prosperous businessmen. He discusses how he is friends with many Hindu and Muslim politicians, wealthy business men and government officers in the city. Unlike Rahul, Poorab lives in a nuclear family with his wife and two children – son Raj, a business student in college, who I also met and daughter Jyoti, an arts student in college.

During my several meetings with Poorab, I realized that his cousins come in and out as they please. I have not seen many people in that office whenever I went. There is no large board or markings outside the building for anyone to see that the office was there but once you walk up the stairs you see the sign on a glass door. One needs to know where this office is to find it next time. When one enters the office proper, there is a dirty and worn out red carpet on the floor. There is also a brown wooden counter behind which there is always someone - a young man with a black moustache and a full head of thick black hair. He never says much. Just looks at me. I say I am here to meet Poorab Jindlani or just Jindlani Sahib and he just takes me to the large room where I met Poorab, his son and his cousins over time.

This room was large. The floor was still covered with the same dirty and old red carpet. The furnishings are sparse. There is a large wooden desk on one side with little decorations and there are two large black or very very dark brown leather sofas next to the other walls. There is also a large flat screen TV mounted on the wall in front of the

door. The TV was always on and was muted when I visited Poorab. It always shows Geo TV, a Pakistani news channel.

When I entered the office, Poorab was sitting on the chair behind the large desk. He always wore shalwar kameez and worked on a worn out laptop when I reached. I sat myself down. He is a courteous man - always meets me with a smile. On our first meeting he asked me if I was fasting. It was the month of Ramadan. I told him that I was not and so he called someone to send tea and biscuits in his room.

Poorab is in his early fifties and is a father of two. He grew up in a smaller town in the province of Sindh in Pakistan. He comes from a family of land owning agriculturists and his father was an electrician. He moved to Karachi as an adult and has also lived in the UK. He went to the UK to study but did not finish his degree and ended up teaching at a college. After few years in the UK, he moved back to Pakistan. He identifies as a Marxist and is highly critical of American policies all over the world.

He cares much about Pakistani politics. He worked for the Communist Party of Pakistan in the eighties. He identifies strongly with being a Pakistani but the national collectivity for him is not about national pride but about national embarrassment. This is close to what the anthropologist Michael Herzfeld calls “cultural intimacy” and which he defines as such “the recognition of those aspects of cultural identity that are considered a source of external embarrassment but which nevertheless provide insiders with their

assurance of common sociality” (Herzfeld 2003). Therefore, for Poorab, being Pakistani was a globally stigmatized identity but it ensured him that he belonged to a collectivity marked and bounded by and through its stigma. He thinks of Pakistan as a nation which is exceptional in its failure. He says “all that happens in this country is what does not happen anywhere else in the world. Now look at democracy: it’s been successful in many countries and here it is fail. No system is able to work. It's working in your neighbor, India but it isn't successful here. This doesn’t mean that democracy is wrong.” For him, Pakistan is a uniquely bad case – global norms like democracy do not work in the country. We also learn about his idea of Pakistan having a global stigma from what he says about his family members in India. After discussing how they have a negative image of Pakistan, he says “where the entire world is cursing Pakistan... naturally they do it too.”

Poorab believes that the Pakistani national movement was secular but was later hijacked by capitalist elites to make it religious so that they could control the masses. He mourns the loss of an imagined secular Pakistan. He says:

“No... see the political and cultural values which make us a nation have changed... they have weakened. They should have our cultural core... so what has taken its place? It is the religious point of view. If fifty thousand or even twenty thousand students graduate from a madrassa every year, the values of an entire nation can change in thirty years. You would have extremists all around you and they will change the social values.”

He wants the Pakistani state to be secular, however his religion and religious identity is extremely important for him. On our last meeting, he mentioned how vulnerable he felt as a Hindu in the country. Even though he is not a believing Hindu nor does he practice Hindu rituals much, being Hindu is an essential part of his identity. He discussed how he thinks Muslims in Pakistan have an innate feeling of superiority. Not only is Islam a missionary religion, his Muslim friends regularly try to convince him that Islam is a better religion than Hinduism. He blames it on the missionary nature of their religion. He has many arguments with his friends none of whom are practicing. These friends claim that Islam is a “modern” faith while Hinduism is pagan. He also felt that as Muslims believe converting another person is a good deed, they are perpetually trying to convert him even without knowing it.

For him, keeping his Hindu identity and culture alive inter-generationally is very important. He discussed how his worst nightmare is if his children fall in love with a Muslim. According to the prevailing norms and separate marital laws in the country for Muslims and Hindus, his children would have to convert to Islam if they marry a Muslim. He mentioned that he would not get any support from his Muslim friends if this was the case as they believe that someone converting to Islam is a good deed.

Poorab and his cousin believed Hindus are the most discriminated against people in Pakistani society. Once while I was talking to them, they discussed how they know

several people among their family and friends in their hometown who were converting from Hinduism to Sikhism. For them the reason was the way Hindus were seen in Pakistan.

Poorab said

“Muslims treat Sikhs better than they treat Hindus – they respect them better. The Mullahs always say break the idols and Sikhs don’t have any idols. It is Hindus who have them. There is a lot of conversion happening in upper Sindh – in Kashmor, in Ghotki...”

He also worries about the economy of the country which he believes is hurt because of bad governance.

“In Pakistan.... only if they plan for two to four things for the next five years, in the right way, this country will stand on its own. It is just a small country, not such a big country”

He also believes that the Pakistani territory is exceptional and is at least better than India.

“See in this country, so I also go to Europe for product exhibitions, our minerals have the best quality. I don’t know what’s the difference between the soil here and there (India) but quality wise our products are the

best....our rice, our tea, our capsicums. If you were in England and you would compare the product from Pakistan to the one from India....you would see that that Indian product is smaller in size. The one from Pakistan is so big (made a gesture of size with his hand and smiled). It is so attractive, just because of its quality and cleanliness.... but we have no professionalism here, none (which is hurting us).”

For him the problem with Pakistan is bad marketing. He believes that the marketing of particular Pakistani cultural symbols would change Pakistan’s alleged disrepute abroad. This is what he said:

“I was in Russia the previous year...I went there this year as well... I keep going... and the general counselor (of Pakistan) there is an old friend... a Baloch. I advised him to open a Pakistan house. Invite the local people on 14th of August⁵...you dress up in a *sherwani*, wear a waistcoat, put up a flag and play national songs and distribute some sweets... give everyone a *gulabjaman*⁶ each.”

Despite feeling discriminated as a Hindu in Pakistan, Poorab likes living in the country and is proud that his children also want to live in the country. He thinks that other

⁵ Pakistan’s national day

⁶ A sweet fritter eaten in many parts of South Asia

countries just look better on paper. He looks at his own experience in England as a hard time. This is what he says about life in the west.

“There is so much propaganda in the media about the west... its all lies, I tell them (his children) that I can't stop you but I know for sure that life abroad is not the same as it is here. Life is not as good outside Pakistan. It only looks glamorous, you see all these colorful people, but if you meet them individually... you would see that they have all become cogs in a machine. They want to move abroad too where they can live an easier life. The pattern of their life is such that they work so much that they die (of exhaustion) and when they don't work they also die, poor souls. See... like you know... everything you buy in the west is on a loan... everything. According to my estimate an average person there isn't earning for themselves, they earn for their financial institutions. Despite all its problems, we prefer Pakistan. You can never live more comfortably than this. Because we are from this culture and we have networks and this is a network oriented society... you will never get an easier life than here.”

He has bad experiences of travelling on a Pakistani passport. He gets stopped at the airport. He gave me an example of not being given entry in Moscow. He told the immigration officer that he is not a Muslim which worked and he was given entry in the

country. He mitigates the risk of carrying a Pakistani passport by mentioning that he is not a Muslim and believes that he gets treated better.

“Yes... he (the immigration officer) suddenly asked...your name does not sound Pakistani.... I said you are right my name is like an Indian name because I am a non-Muslim... but I have a Pakistani nationality.... Its similar to how you Russians have many Muslims living in your country as a minority... so anyways I get benefits by telling people that I am not a Muslim. To be honest, there are many places I get benefits by telling them I am non-Muslim... even in business, I get this advantage. I tell them that is the truth... and they are more willing to listen to me... (they think) no this is a different person...he is not like those people.”

Even though he is happy that non-Muslims have a better image abroad than Muslims, his travel experiences have helped him forge a collective identity as a Pakistani. It is rare that he would mention “us Pakistanis” except when he talks about travelling. He said:

“So people severely doubt us, I tell the Mullahs⁷ here that you should travel abroad then you will realize (that you are destroying the Pakistani image).”

⁷ Religious cleric. Also used as a pejorative for a religious person

He calls himself and his family original Pakistani as in his collective memory, the border between India and Pakistan is more recent than the history of his family in the territory which is now in Pakistan. He also fights with his relatives who live in India. They tell him that Pakistan is a bad country as it treats its non-Muslim population badly but he tells them that what Modi is doing in India is little better.

I also met Poorab's son Raj who volunteers at a non-profit which tries to create a better image for Pakistan. Raj is very fair and thin. He sat next to me on a chair next to the same large desk. I told him about my protocol. He listened to me but did not say much. He took the informed consent form and kept it on the desk under his hands.

The purpose of Pakistan Lovers Forum, the non-profit he volunteers for, is on their website. Their purpose is to show Pakistan in a bright light. This purpose assumes that Pakistan is represented as a terrorist country and therefore people behind Pakistan Lovers Forum including Raj use social media to show positive images of Pakistan. Their nationalism is image centered but they do not differentiate between external and internal. For them Pakistan's image is the same across the globe but they are showing short positive stories about the country to counter that assumed image.

Raj also shows his enthusiasm for Pakistani sports. He normally does not watch cricket but only does if Pakistani national team plays.

Raj has not travelled much internationally but his only experience abroad was in India which he did not enjoy. He makes a moral boundary between Pakistanis and Indians. He believes that Indians are self-centered and disrespectful towards women.

Raj: Outside Pakistan I have been to India.

Syeda: How did you like India?

Raj: Personally, I did not like it at all.

Syeda: why?

Raj: The people in India are very self-centered.

Syeda: Where in India did you go particularly?

Raj: I went to Jodhpur through Khokrapar.

Syeda: What was your age then?

Raj: 'It was 4 years back. I must be 16'?

Syeda: OK

Raj: I was alone. Papa was not there and I had family with me. The people there are very 'self-centered'. It is fun to travel around but the people there don't respect other people. In Pakistan its much better. People have sense for other people's needs. If something happens to someone in Karachi and Pakistan, people stand for the other's needs but I did not see anything like that there. Indian police is so famous. They are bad. Its nothing... 'they don't even know how to behave with women'.

Syeda: Indian police or Indian people?

Raj: Both Indian police and people. We were in Jodhpur and had a hotel booking. They did not let us stay as we had a Pakistani passport.

Syeda: So what were they saying? They wanted you to go somewhere else first? Or....

I thought that they were having problems are they did not register with the police. Pakistani visitors to India have to register with the police the first thing they do in a city.

Raj: No. Their issue was with the Pakistani passport. The main issue was that we had non-reporting visa. 'They had an issue with that'. They were asking us how we got non-reporting visa.

Syeda: But that was...

Raj: Not their concern.... But they made us fill extra forms.

On our last meeting Poorab presented me with an opportunity to start a think tank together in Pakistan. Despite all these problems, Poorab did not want to migrate to another country as he did not believe that any country was devoid of discrimination.

Analysis

Poorab and Rahul's stories tell us several things about the different identities and their boundaries that these men navigate. I will discuss three of their overlapping

identities, being Pakistani, being Hindu in Pakistan and being a Pakistani Hindu (versus being a Hindu in India). The first maps with the national subjectivity that I discussed earlier in the paper while the second maps with minority subjectivity and the third maps on to an amalgamation of national and religious subjectivities which I found were entangled for my interlocuters. I will go on to discuss how these identities/subjectivities differ or not between the two families and the potentialities which could account for those differences or similarities.

Both families identify as Pakistani and this identity gets amplified when they are travelling. Territoriality and genealogy are two ideas these families evoke for their sense of self as Pakistanis. They both talk about their ancestors being born in and spending their life in the territory of Pakistan. In the context of Pakistani Hindus, there is a sense that the territory crept on to them. The border between India and Pakistan was drawn in 1947 and suddenly they were minorities in their own land. This is exemplified by Saraswati's point that she considers herself Indian as everyone who is now in Pakistan was at one time Indian. She says now she is Pakistani since the border was drawn. She and her family are not religious minorities as they have migrated somewhere – it is the national border which has migrated into the genealogy of her family. Rahul supports the Pakistani cricket team although he was willing to change his national slogan on migration. For Rahul, the difference between Indians and Pakistanis was in bodily habituated practice and social values. For example, he said that Pakistanis – Hindus or Muslims – can get instantly recognized in India due to their accent of Gujarati which is hard to change. The second

difference in his view concerned the modern social values in India versus the more backward social values in Pakistan. For example, Indians were greedier and more materialistic as befitting a nation where there is more money to be made. But on the other hand, Indians were also more accepting of women wearing more liberal dress and being more mobile.

The moment when I saw Rahul being most nationalistic was in his email to me from India. His use of the phrase “as Pakistanis we have a very bad reputation”, points to his sense of belonging to a national collectivity even if he was planning to change his citizenship. It was his passport but also the memory of being born and raised in a particular nation-state which he had left. The disrepute of the Pakistani identity and the resulting discrimination that he faced in India amplified his sense of self as a Pakistani.

For Poorab and Raj too, being Pakistani was an important identity. The boundary that they drew between Indians and Pakistanis was less territorial and more cultural. The key difference they saw between Pakistanis and people of other nations was that Pakistanis had style – “they knew how to eat and dress well”. For Raj especially, the difference between Pakistanis and others was that Pakistanis knew how to respect women. Even though the incident he narrated about his grandmother being interrogated at the India border was borne out of Pakistanis disrepute as militants and terrorists – so much so that his old grandmother was suspected as the possessor of a bomb – Raj did not

see it that way. He imputed that the incident had more to do with foreigners not being polite to women.

Like Rahul post migration, both Raj and Poorab were grappling with the embarrassment of being Pakistani but unlike Rahul, they were more aware of it while staying in Pakistan. Rahul mentioned it first after he actually migrated and experienced discrimination. This is a testament to Raj and Poorab's class. Raj is active on global social media and reads international newspapers. His efforts in improving Pakistan's image are also on a global scale – to give a better image of Pakistan to those (outsiders) watching. For Poorab, global travel was a regular part of his work and so the Pakistani identity for him regularly meant extra checks and suspicion on border patrol. For both Rahul and Poorab, the embarrassment of being Pakistani in a way strengthened their sense of national belonging. This way of being a national subject is contrary to mainstream notions of nationalism as national pride. As Herzfeld discusses in his work, national embarrassment or shame can simultaneously spark deep feelings of belonging.

Both Poorab and Rahul are deeply concerned about being Hindu in Pakistan. Even if Rahul is in a more precarious position because of his class, he reports never feeling actually harassed by a Muslim. He did not like his son feeling embarrassed because of his religious minority status. He mentioned that in his son's school, the other children used to ask him about his religion. His wife who had grown up in India and so who had never experienced religious education in school also took offence to the school teaching Islam

to all children. This was one of the reasons she wanted to move back. Rahul and his wife's plan in this circumstance was to be in a place where they would be in a numerical majority as Hindus and raise their son in a majority Hindu environment. In this sense they did not see India as a secular state with citizens belonging to many religions but a Hindu reflection of Pakistan – a Hindu majority state.

Poorab on the other hand, despite being elite, feels harassed by his Muslim friends in Karachi. For example, he feels that their regular discussions about the *modernity* of Islam and compared *primitive nature* of Hinduism is a covert pressure on him to convert. He claimed that like him his friends did not have any overt religiosity. They did not practice the tenets of mainstream religion but when it came to supporting a Hindu-Muslim marriage, forbidden by Pakistani and mainstream Islamic law, his friends would want the Hindu partner in that marriage to convert to Islam. He also mentioned that being Hindu in Pakistan is more discriminated against than the Sikh religious identity and that is the reason why some of his family members are converting to Sikhism as Sikhs are seen as valiant and courageous despite being non-Muslim while Hindus are stereotyped as cunning, feminine and weak.

The third identity important for this paper is the identity of Hindu Pakistani. For Poorab a Hindu Pakistani is different from a Hindu from another nationality. Even though my questions were about “else-where” which could be any country outside Pakistan, he talked about his experiences with relatives in India. For Poorab, Hindu Indians were much

more religious than Hindu Pakistanis. He mentioned several things that Hindu Indians practiced in his view, like severe dietary restrictions and fasting on several days of the week. In his opinion, Hindu Pakistanis did not have similar practices. He also mentioned that Hindu Indians were more caste conscious than Hindu Pakistanis and pinned it on the Indian state's caste-based "formal" quotas and policies. Rahul on the other hand did not see a difference between Hindus in India or Pakistan also evidenced by his interest in migrating to India so that his son could be raised in a Hindu environment. This is also because Rahul is a practicing Hindu and appreciates the opportunity to do ritual practice in India with other Buas.

Although for both Rahul and Poorab, the sense of a partial belonging to the Pakistani nation exists, one decides to migrate to India, which he imagines as a home for the Hindus while the other chooses to live and raise his children in Pakistan. Class plays an important role in the ways these men navigate Pakistani society however. One has a large business and networks with politicians, business people and other elite of the city. For him, life in Pakistan is the most comfortable life he believes he can have anywhere. For Rahul, moving from temporary job to temporary job, his economic situation is not a barrier for migration. He has some networks in Pakistan but he can also rely on his in-laws and their networks upon migration. With a family situation which provokes him to move, migration is a real option for him.

This modern class situation though is mediated through traditional structures. Another factor which pushes these men's decisions to migrate or not are based on their caste circumstances. One married an Indian citizen mostly due to caste requirements while for the other (Poorab) a large number of people from the sub-castes live in Pakistan which his sub-caste traditionally marries. For his family, there are very few intermarriages between India and Pakistan. Both men have family in India but the intimacy they share with these family members is different. Rahul's move to India has largely been for love of his wife and child. The move of his wife speaks to several reasons. Even though she largely moved due to family conflict, her move cannot be divorced from the public Islam in Pakistan she despised. It was also because of religiously inspired militancy and civil war that Pakistan is involved in and what it does to a parent's subjectivity. The trigger for her was the massacre of 141 people in a school in Peshawar which happened in early 2015. Even though she did not see herself as a Pakistani, she saw then that her fate was connected to a nation-state which is struggling to keep its residents safe. The anxiety about the safety of her child pushed her to travel to India after living in Pakistan for seven years. Despite pressure on him to divorce his wife, Rahul chooses to migrate.

Conclusion

On conclusion, I would say that aspects of subjectivity are formed, unformed and reformed through the interaction of the local, the national and the transnational experience and field of meanings. The three tiers – local, national and transnational or

micro, macro and global act and react simultaneously to form a subject. Especially in the case that I study, all three aspects of the subjectivities of my interlocutors that I focused on – national subjectivity, religious subjectivity and minority subjectivity had relations to the local -- in the form of memories and genealogies but also in interactions with friends and at school, the national – in the form of national laws, national territory and an imagined national culture and the transnational – in the form of visa regulations and untoward experiences at the airports but also in the form of an imagination of the transnational border as something new. They continued thinking that they are both Indian and Pakistani doubting the very existence of the border.

I am aware that this particular paper of mine has a skewed gender balance but overall, I claim that nationalism is felt, lived and experienced very differently by men and by women. Among my interlocutors, ideas around nation and nationalism varied between men and women in general – men being much more vocal about group identities while women looking at the question of “nation” from the point of view of family. For example, both Bharti and Sita, were looking at Rahul’s migration from the perspective of their children missing him and Mona was worried about his economic obligations to the family. Rahul on the other hand, even if his migration was due to family circumstances made more groupist claims around being a minority in Pakistan by talking about the embarrassment of being a minority in school. He wanted his child to live where he did not experience a minority subjectivity.

The three subjectivities are seen in relation to the 'other' and so one would assume that national subjectivity only works at the transnational sphere but as was seen through these two cases, there are local and national experiences and imaginations at play in creation of the national subject. For example, the local aspect of the body and its imagination creates a national subject. For Rahul and his family, memories which shape the body result in forming a uniquely Pakistani subject- which has a different accent and a dialect which it cannot change even if it wants to and which marks it as a Pakistani subject in India. Another aspect of the local is the genealogy and its relationship to the local – for both Rahul and Poorab, the location of where their ancestors lived and the food they ate – at/from the local land -- is a key aspect of how they see themselves as a Pakistani.

The national subject is also formed from its interaction with the national imagination. I would say that Anderson's idea of the imagined community is at play here but this imagination is not rooted in a homogenous empty time but in an imagined image (Anderson 1995). For all my interlocutors, the imagined community and its unique culture was important in defining themselves as Pakistani or not. For Poorab and Raj, the Pakistani culture of living with style and respecting women and their own understanding of their behavior which confirmed to this culture gave them a reassurance that they belonged to the imagined community despite being non-Muslim. For Rahul who imagined himself as both an Indian and a Pakistani, even if the local tier spoke to him being a Pakistani, the national culture of Pakistan which for him was disrespect of women and

illiberalism confirmed to him that he is at least partly an Indian national subject. He was modern and respected women and saw himself differently from other Pakistanis in this way. For Poorab, the exceptionalism of the national land and society also helped him forge an imagined community, he was proud of the Pakistani land and its production but embarrassed of the Pakistani society.

The third aspect of national subjectivity is based on the subject's interaction with the global – in travel experiences and in consuming and imagining the information produced outside the country. Here, one could see cross-class differences quite clearly. For Poorab, his frequent travels abroad and therefore the experience of embarrassment that he felt when being held up at immigration due to his Pakistani passport shaped his national subjectivity. Social media and the internet too are transnational spaces where Raj and Poorab experienced being stigmatized and where the young Raj struggled for a better Pakistani global image. Rahul, being a working class man neither travelled frequently nor accessed the internet very often. Therefore, one could see that his patriotism while he was in Pakistan was not shaped around the embarrassment of his national identity. Once he migrated though, the discrimination he felt as a Pakistani in India solidified his national subjectivity as Pakistani.

Minority subjectivity also comes about through its interaction with the three imagined tiers. Although one would imagine that discrimination happens at the micro level, the interaction of local experiences with the national and especially transnational

imaginations shapes a minority subject. As expected, both Rahul and Poorab were living a discriminated minority subjectivity on a local level. For Rahul, his child experiencing the stigma of being a non-Muslim at school was similar to Poorab's experience contending with his friends talk about the "primitivism" of his religion. For minorities, nation-state and the exclusions associated with it play on the level of households. Subjects are not neutral to their nations or their identity as a minority and in fact, nationalism, nationhood and minorityhood cease to be abstract ideas and are part of day to day lives.

However, minority subjectivity also has relations with the imagined national culture. For example, for Poorab, what he experienced at the local level was for him not a localized incident but a testament to the national arrogance of Pakistani Muslims. State policies also shape the minority subject. For Rahul's wife, Islamic teaching at school was also a reminder of the minority status of her and her family.

In the case of Pakistan, minority subjectivity has a direct linkage with a transnational past and present. My interlocutors live a minority subjectivity due to the creation of a national border which linked their minority subjectivity permanently to another nation. Saraswati evokes this fact well when she says that before partition of India and Pakistan, we are all Indians. India is always present in each conversation I have with my Hindu interlocutors – even when it is not mentioned by name. The fact that "another country" is read as India by my interlocutors regularly is a testament to this. Transnationally, Pakistanis see themselves as belonging to a stigmatized identity which is

marked by their citizenship documents however non-Muslims understand that their image as non-Muslims is much better than Muslims transnationally and so being Hindu in Pakistan is very different from being Hindu transnationally.

Religious subjectivity is also formed through a complex interplay between the local, the national and the transnational. On a local level bodily experiences and social relations are constitutive of the religious subjectivity and in this way both men's religious subjectivity was very different but they self-identified as Hindu. For Rahul, his spiritual experience was embodied, visceral and intense. It was not just a matter of belief but also experience. For Poorab, it was a matter of his heritage and his family – not a matter of belief, practice or ritual. He claimed that he was not religious but religiously couched arrogance of his Muslim friends deeply offended him. For him being Hindu was a matter of his imagined past and future as he invoked how his ancestors were Hindu and also how he wanted his children to continue identifying as such. In the sub continental context, religious subjects are also formed through their interaction with an imagined national/transnational context. For example, Poorab claimed that him and other Pakistani Hindus do not believe in caste due to Pakistani state's policies of not having formal caste-related quotas.

Class interacts most significantly in the subject's understanding of their selves as national subjects as opposed to minority or religious subjects. For the upper class Pakistani Hindu, being Pakistani is living a comfortable and stylish life while the working

class Pakistani does not have the same privilege. Travelling and accessing information from outside of Pakistan is also an upper class activity where they are reminded of the stigmatized Pakistani identity which enhances the sense of being Pakistani.

Subjectivity is not just a formation of larger hegemonies -- nations and transnational orders but is also grounded in a sense of attachment to a place, tradition and lineage. In the case of Rahul and Poorab, we see that not only class but also caste level traditions shape their lives in very different ways. For example, Rahul's marriage to an Indian citizen and his Bua community in India are both deeply rooted in his caste traditions and are also instrumental in his decision to migrate to India. As for Poorab, even his marriage was connected to his caste traditions but there are many women from the castes that the men from his caste are eligible to marry. Therefore, it is important to not only understand a minority or subaltern group from the perspective of the oppressions they face but also from their own perspective – in how they make sense of the world around them in varied circumstances.

This research pushes the concept of nationness (Brubaker et al. 2006, Jenkins 2011) in several important directions. Firstly, nationness is not just about the sense of being a national subject by oneself but the relationship of one's ancestors to the land is also very important. An understanding of one's ancestors being born from, raised on and being eaten the grain from the national territory is very important for a sense of belonging. One can say that what they are referring to is what Anderson (citing Benjamin)

called homogenous empty time. Here I show that a minority subject does not have the privilege of homogenous empty time for their sense of an imagined community (Anderson 1995). There is always a break. They always have to engage with what Benjamin called here and now (*jetztzeit*) to make a sense of their place in the nation. The here and now is a moment of immediacy, spurts in which history moves forward. For my interlocutors, the border between India and Pakistan created during partition always informs the here and now. Even if they are “original Pakistanis” due to their imagined genealogies, as Poorab said, the creation of the border has marked them as minority-national-subjects.

Secondly, nationness is also about “creation of a life appropriate to the membership of a state” (Jenkins 2011) and this “life” includes consumption of national symbols. The watching and support of Pakistani National Cricket is a large part of my interlocutors life. For minority subjects, this consumption is one way they can prove their nationhood as mentioned by Rahul and Saraswati. In families with mixed nationalities like the Jaggan family, sport is one way people assert their national imaginaries on life in the present.

Thirdly, sociological literature has discussed nationness as something internal, a sense (Jenkins 2011) or a vision (Brubaker et al. 2006). In this case we see that nationness is formed through a complex interaction between the internal and the transnational. Rahul imagined himself more of a Pakistani when he migrated to India and dealt with Indian practices engaging with Pakistanis. Even though he was seeking a deletion of his

minority subjectivity by being in a majority Hindu state, his Pakistani citizenship and past (marked on his body as dialect and accent) also resulted in him living with a minority subjectivity although different from the one in Pakistan. In a globalized world, a transnational gaze is very present for those who can afford access and they engage with it. This interaction with the transnational gaze molds the national sense or vision and international events and experiences keep it in perpetual progress.

Fourth, nationness like any sense or vision is perpetually negotiated and contested within a subject. In some ways one is the kind of person appropriate for the national vision and in some ways one is not. For example, for the Jaggan family, their minority subjectivity and religious practice and for both families, the interactions with the majority were a constant rejoinder that they are national subjects in so many ways but not quite.

For religious minorities, minority subjecthood and religious subjecthood interact in complex ways. Being a religious minority, one's religion is not just a matter of personal faith (Locke 1689, Brubaker 2015) but is a political identity. A question which emerges from this study is how does the minority religious subjectivity relate to belief. For example, in Europe there is a trend of Muslim migrants becoming more pious over generations (Brubaker 2015). I saw that being Hindu in a majority Muslim society was not just a matter of faith but also a matter of identity, heritage and culture. Do religious minorities then practice their faith more to preserve their identity, heritage and culture?

I showed that national, minority and religious subjectivities are intertwined with local, national transnational experiences and imaginings. There is a need to look at the return of public religion from the perspective of subjectivities navigating a complex set of local, national and international events and meanings.

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