Paper 3

National Identities and the External Other in Muslim Majority Contexts: Youth Narratives in Pakistan and Senegal

Naureen Durrani and Barbara Crossouard

Abstract

This paper focuses on youth's constructions of their national identities in two contrasting Muslim-majority contexts—Senegal and Pakistan—with very different histories of nation-state formation and post-independence trajectories. Drawing on case study research, we take up the historical specificities of their respective state formations and emergence as independent nations from their colonial past. After describing our theoretical frameworks and research methodology, we present our analysis of the identity narratives of 65 Pakistani and 75 Senegalese youth. We show that youth in both contexts were proud of their democracies, although with different inflections in each context. Our analysis shows that youth's national imaginaries were predominantly produced with reference to significant external others which had deep historical roots. In Pakistan, this involved the external other of India, an articulation that has been historically sedimented on religious grounds since their partition. In more contemporary times, youth imaginaries of religion and nation remained intertwined, being constructed together against external others associated with the 'War on Terror'. Similarly, religion was central to the national imaginaries of Senegalese youth. Senegal's Sufi leaders were constructed as national icons and particularly valorised for their peaceful resistance to the colonial 'other'. Youth also valued Senegal's syncretic forms of Islam, constructing this against 'jihadist' Islam that they associated with other African, Middle Eastern and South Asian nations. Finally, our analysis highlights how the salience of external others in youth narratives in our two case studies worked to diminish the significance of internal differences and make internal power hierarchies invisible.

Key words: national identity; religion; Muslim youth; external other; Pakistan; Senegal

Word count: 7703

Introduction

In the current climate of international relations and global conflict, academic interest in the identifications of Muslim youth, particularly their national and religious belonging, has seen an exponential growth. However, this intensified gaze has often produced universalised and homogenised constructions of Muslim youth, which also ignores the complex ways youth identities are constructed within the local contexts of their everyday lives (Dunne, Durrani, Fincham and Crossouard, 2017). Furthermore, existing global literature mostly provides adult perspectives on youth and is largely silent on 'youth voice and perspectives' (Lopez Cardozo et al., 2015, p. 17). Additionally, given the assumed relationship between the lack of education and an increased likelihood of youth violence, the main research focus has been on non-educated youth (Kadiwal and Durrani, 2018). Rather little is known about how educated youth construct themselves as national citizens (Dunne et al., 2017). Finally, studies of youth identities in the Global South have largely under-utilised in-depth qualitative methodologies (Sommers, 2011) and misrecognised the specificities of post-colonial contexts (Farrugia, 2018).

This paper addresses these methodological, substantive and theoretical gaps in the literature through in-depth case study research which explored Muslim youth narratives of identity in Pakistan and Senegal, focusing mainly on youth in higher education in both of these Muslim-majority contexts. Theoretically, it argues that the construction of our identities depends on articulations of difference in relation to the 'other' and that these articulations are intrinsic to our sense of belonging at local, national and global levels. When focusing on studies of national identities in post-colonial contexts, it is crucially important that research attends to the reification of difference during the eras of colonial governance, and how these differences continue to be reproduced by neo-colonial global relations (Dunne et al., 2017; Kadiwal and Durrani, 2018).

We start by explicating our post-structural and postcolonial[1] theoretical framing of identity, in particular how this emphasises the 'constitutive others' through which youth identities are discursively produced (Hall, 1996). We then situate Pakistan and Senegal in their complex historical, social and political contexts to help understand youth discourses of national belonging and differentiation. The research methodology is presented next, followed by our analysis of youth narratives of identity, which is structured around two

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[1] We use the term postcolonial without a hyphen to refer to a philosophical body of thought, and with a hyphen to refer to the socio-political and temporal dimensions of now independent states that previously endured colonial rule.

themes. We first illustrate the production of national identity as involving differentiation against an external other, and how this often involved the weaving together of national and religious imaginaries. We then highlight the ways that the construction of a unified national imaginary flattened internal differences, rendering internal power hierarchies invisible. The concluding section re-iterates the significance of context to youth identity formations.

Understanding nation and identity

This section focuses on our understanding of identities, and how this relates to the imagined community of the nation. We understand all identities as a work of construction, involving continual processes of becoming that are conflictual and agonistic. This means that the constitution of the subject is socially contingent but also always framed by discursive practices and norms. These naturalise particular identity performances and mark others as unthinkable, unintelligible. In other words, identity is constructed through difference and a constant demarcation of the 'self' from the 'other' (Hall, 1996). Nevertheless, through constant repetition and recitation of discursive norms, the on-going performance of our identities allows them to appear as a 'naturalised facticity' rather than 'effects of institutions, practices [and] discourses' (Butler, 1990, p. xxxi).

This theoretical lens also informs our understanding of the construction of national identities. The nation as an 'imagined community' (Anderson, 1991) is a relatively recent phenomenon, having emerged in the Americas and then Europe as part of anti-colonial and anti-imperial movements. It then became progressively institutionalised, when what became known as 'nation-states' developed 'official nationalisms'. The term 'nation-state' has been described as referring to a form of governance concerned with the protection of territorial boundaries, alongside governing of a people within those boundaries (Guibernau, 1996). It has become a powerful discursive framing for state rule which has international recognition. Importantly however, imaginaries of the nation and its 'people' are constituted discursively through the circulation of narratives of belonging and the demarcation of boundaries between 'us' and 'them'. These serve to unite and divide different groups positioned hierarchically within the nation, in opposition to the 'other' (Özkirimli, 2005). Education and schooling are particularly powerful state institutions which are implicated in the forging of national unity and difference (Smith, 1991).

While the overlap between the boundaries of the nation and the nation-state is seldom neat (Guibernau, 1996), in post-colonial contexts in particular, the two rarely coincide. This is in part because post-colonial 'nation-state' boundaries were arbitrary constructions imposed

by Western states in ways that ignored local social relations and divisions between and amongst colonised peoples. These divisions had often been exacerbated by colonising powers' use of a combination of direct and indirect rule that typically privileged certain indigenous groups over others (Kabeer, 2002).

An additional complexity for post-colonial nations has been how they could define themselves as 'modern' nations in ways that were sufficiently distinctive from the imaginaries of the nation of their colonial rulers. Chatterjee's (1993) analysis suggests that Indian nationalists embraced Western modernity in the public domain; forging independent democratic institutions was essential to overthrowing their colonial subjugation. However, these practices emulated those of the West, so that the need for distinction was realised within spiritual and cultural domains. This nevertheless sits in tension with dominant (Western) understandings of the modern state. The privileging of reason within the ethos of modernity positions religion as its 'other', and as antithetical to a secular, democracy (Dunne et al., 2017; see also Paper 2 this issue). As we will show below, this secular thesis cannot account for the construction of national imaginaries in our case study contexts.

The next section situates the local, national and global contexts in which Pakistani and Senegalese youth articulated their identities with respect to nation and religion.

Contexts

Pakistan and Senegal offer useful contextual contrasts and similarities for a study of Muslim youth identifications of national belonging and difference. Both are Muslim-majority post-colonial states but they have distinctively different histories of colonialism and post-independence social and political developments, as we discuss below.

Colonial histories and state-formation

Located in South Asia, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is the second largest Muslim-majority country in the globe, having achieved statehood in 1947 as a result of the partition of British India into Hindu-majority India and Muslim-majority Pakistan. By contrast, Senegal, located in Sub-saharan Africa, gained independence in 1960 from France. Having been part of French West Africa since 1885, Dakar had latterly become the administrative capital of what has been called a 'super-colony' (Conklin, 1997).

Islam is significant to colonial histories and state formation in both case study contexts. Focusing first on Pakistan, the expansion of Islam in India is traced to the conquest of Sindh by Muhammad ibn al-Qasim in 711-712 AD (Cohen, 2005). By the early 16th century, the

Mughals had established their (Muslim) empire in India and at the time of British arrival, Muslims constituted roughly one-quarter of the Indian population. Cohen (2005, p. 20) attributes the flourishing of Islam in India to inter-marriage, conversion largely associated with Sufism, and 'the attractiveness of Islamic egalitarianism, and social and political advantages in a context of Muslim rulers'.

In Senegal, Islam was introduced peacefully in the wider region around contemporary Senegal in the 10th century by trans-Saharan traders from North Africa, with merchants and elite groups constituting the early converts (Clark, 1999). Pre-colonial religion in the region points to a syncretic Islam, incorporating local traditions and beliefs, so that there was peaceful co-existence between Islam and traditional religions (Clark, 1999). These syncretic traditions are still prevalent in contemporary Senegal. Senegal's Islam is predominantly Sufi, and organised around four brotherhoods. The Qadiriyya originated in Baghdad, the Tijaniyya in Morocco, while both the Mouride and the Layenne brotherhoods originated in Senegal. These Sufi brotherhoods have been influential in the economic, social and political spheres in Senegal in both past and present. The Mourides in particular were central in the development of groundnut farming and because of their work ethic became favoured intermediaries between colonial administrators and local peoples. This allowed the Sufi brotherhoods to provide 'an unusually effective link between state and society' in Senegal (Cruise O'Brien, 2003, p. 193), a situation that still resonated for our youth participants, as we show below.

Islam was an important signifier in nationalist projects and anti-colonial struggles in both countries. The British colonial divide and rule strategies made Indian society more overtly 'religious' and 'sectarian' than prior to British rule' (Washbrook, 1999, p. 397; see also Chatterjee, 1993, and the discussion of gender symbolism in Paper 7 of this issue). The essentialisation of religious difference in India is linked to Orientalist knowledge production, the census, and representational politics (Gottschalk, 2000). As the religious minority, the political and economic power of Muslims began to wane under colonial governance. Contestations then emerged over the community's identity and its political future. Elite Muslim and Hindu groups, in economic and political competition with one another, drew on selected (religious) symbols from history to construct national(istic) identities. In these competing nationalist discourses, the All India Muslim League's imagination of the nation,

under the leadership of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, succeeded in mobilising Muslims to stake a claim to nationhood based on Islam as a shared religion to form the new state of Pakistan.

Turning now to Senegal, its Sufi brotherhood leaders partly colluded with the colonial rulers, but also became symbols of an independent Senegal. The French colonial administration latterly adopted policies of non-interference toward Islam and local religious leaders in the region that encompasses what is now Senegal. It simultaneously opposed 'the creation of anti-French Islamic states in the region' and supported 'friendly, "officially" recognized, and acceptable leaders' (Clark, 1999, p. 158). Muslim religious leaders used Islam as a form of resistance to French policies of assimilation (Loimeier, 2000), whilst sometimes also being complicit in supporting colonial administration. Although there was armed resistance by some religious leaders, the founder of the Mouride brotherhood, Cheikh Amadou Bamba, brought together religious and political resistance to French colonial rule in largely peaceful ways. As described above, the Mouride brotherhood was to become influential in economic, social, political and religious spheres, and indeed is seen as making the emergence of Senegalese nationalism possible from within the vast territory of French West Africa (Cruise O'Brien, 2003).

Contemporary socio-demographics

An overwhelming majority of Pakistan's and Senegal's citizens are Muslim. While the percentages of non-Muslim citizens in both countries stands at around 4%, religious minorities in Pakistan include Christians (1.59%), Hindus (1.60%), and the Ahmadi community (0.22%) (GoP, 2017), who self-identify with Islam but are declared non-Muslims by the state. In Senegal those who are not Muslim include Christians who are predominantly Roman Catholics, as well as those who follow local animist religions (CIA, 2018). In Pakistan, the majority of Muslims follow the Sunni sect (85-90%), with the adherents of Shi'a Islam constituting a substantial minority (10-15%) (CIA, 2018). As described above, Senegalese Muslims, by contrast, mostly belong to four Sufi brotherhoods—the Tijaniyya, Mouride, Qadiriyya and Layenne.

Both countries are ethno-linguistically plural. Pakistan's five major ethnic groups include: Punjabis (55%; 11% of these speak Siraiki, a Punjabi variant), Pakhtuns or Pashtuns (15%), Sindhis (14%), Mohajirs (8%), and Balochs (4%) (GoP, 1998). While the Mohajirs are concentrated in urban Sindh, the remaining four groups are associated with its 'home' province/region. Urdu (along with English) is the official language of Pakistan. Senegal's

major ethnic groups include the Wolof (44.5%), Pular (25.2%), Serer (13.8%) and Diola (5%). Wolof is also a first language for around two thirds of the people. French has been retained as Senegal's official language, although it is only spoken as a first or second language by around 20% of the population (Diallo, 2010).

Both countries have large youth populations, with the proportion of people under 25 years being 52% and 61% in Pakistan and Senegal respectively. Both countries also have large gender gaps in favour of men and the two countries differ with respect to gender gaps in employment, political participation and education (see the introductory article in this special issue for statistics for all case studies).

Post-colonial histories

Upon independence, both countries put in place parliamentary democracies but the role of religion was differently demarcated within their constitutions. While the Constitution of Pakistan embraces Islam as a founding principle of the nation-state, Senegal follows a French model of a secular republic in which any appeal to religion is formally debarred. As already noted however, the separation of Islam and the political sphere is not clear cut. The stability of democratic processes in the two countries is also different. In Senegal, elections have been regularly accompanied by street protest and violence, but several rotations of political power through the ballot box have occurred since 2000, with the result that Senegal has been described by leading political figures in the USA as a 'beacon of African democracy' (BBC News, 2012). Pakistan has yet to develop a stable democracy, although formal democratic processes have been consolidated since 2008. The military has directly ruled Pakistan for most of its existence as a nation-state and it remains the most dominant institution during civilian rule.

In both case studies, colonial and post-independence state-formation and political developments have resulted in the creation of external (and internal) 'others', which our analysis found to be significant within youth identity formations. In the case of Pakistan, the struggle to carve out a territory for Muslims involved fierce contestations not only against the British but also Hindus and other Muslim groups. The independence movement of Pakistan was largely non-violent but the hasty partition of India resulted in the largest migration of people in history, amidst large-scale communal violence and rape of women. The presence of a hostile non-Muslim neighbour—India—against whom Pakistan has fought four wars (1948, 1965, 1971, 1999) and on-going tensions over the disputed territory of

Kashmir, has entrenched the significance of the military within Pakistan's identity. Pakistan's status as a frontline state both in 1979 in the Western-led alliance against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and later in the US-led 'War on Terror' in Afghanistan has fuelled a sense of conflict in Pakistan.

In the case of Senegal, alongside the development of commerce, the notion of a 'civilizing mission' was integral to France's colonial expansion (Conklin, 1997). What has become Senegal was at the heart of this civilizing mission, particularly as Dakar became the administrative capital of what was a vast French 'super-colony' (French West Africa). Historically, Senegalese leaders (e.g. Senghor, Césaire, Cheikh Anta Diop) were prominent in pan-African movements for independence. Unlike Pakistan, Senegal has enjoyed a relatively peaceful existence with its neighbours and greater political stability after independence. Rather than an identity under pressure, Senegal's position in the region is one that claims distinction. As will see below, the distinctiveness of its 'African Islam' is a further element in those claims.

Methodology

This study sought to privilege youth voices through an in-depth exploration of their narratives of belonging with respect to nation and religion. In keeping with our theoretical frameworks and research aims, the study used a qualitative approach. We engaged through focus group discussions (FGDs) with 140 male and female youths, 65 in Pakistan and 75 in Senegal. Alongside the FGDs, all participants completed a bio-data sheet that recorded socio-demographic characteristics and religious affiliations. In total, 31 FGDs were conducted with Muslim and Christian youth. These were segregated on basis of gender and religion to facilitate freer expression of any potentially sensitive issues. In Senegal, two youths participated in an individual interview. The FGD/interview data were supported by observations in the research contexts, both of the interview processes and the wider setting. To facilitate access to youth voices, local youth researchers were involved in both case studies, sometimes independently and at other times alongside the lead researcher. Details of the numbers of participants in each context by gender and religion can be found in the introductory article of this special issue.

Our access to the field was shaped by our previous research relationships to the context. Data collection in each country lasted over a 2-week period in the later months of 2014. Naureen led fieldwork in Pakistan and Barbara in Senegal. In Pakistan, all but one of the

FGDs took place in Peshawar, the capital city of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), a province bordering Afghanistan. The Pakhtuns (75%) dominate the ethnic landscape in KP and strong religious codes underpin their ethnic cultural code called *Pakhtunwali* (Saikal, 2010). One FGD took place in the southern metropolitan city of Karachi with the aim of capturing the voices of Shi'a youth. To facilitate an open exchange of interactions with this Muslim minority group, a Shi'a youth researcher conducted the FGD independently. Given these fieldwork locations, youth accounts in Pakistan are predominantly those of Sunni Pakhtuns. In Senegal, all FGDs were conducted in and around the capital city Dakar. As a metropolitan centre, this generated a diverse group of participants in terms of religion and ethnicity. The Muslim participants included those who identified with the Mouride, Tijane and Layenne brotherhoods. All Christian youth who declared their religious sect identified as Catholic. In terms of ethnicity, the participants were from 15 different ethnic groups, with Diola, Wolof, Sérère, Lebou, Mankagne and Pular all represented by 5 or more youth. Half of the participants declared they came from Dakar. Another quarter were from Casamance (reflecting the origins of the local researchers). The remainder were from a wide range of other locations in Senegal.

A generic FGD guide, focusing on participants' views of nationality, religion, ethnicity and gender, alongside their intersections, was developed to support the discussions with the participants (see Appendix B in Dunne et al., 2017). The guide was flexibly utilised to provoke discussions and enable youth to perform their identities within the FGDs. The FGDs varied in length from 40 minutes to 1.5 hours. In Pakistan, all interviews were conducted in Urdu except one, when the participants preferred to use English. In Senegal, most interviews were conducted in French, although Wolof was predominantly used in interviews with Muslim participants who were not in higher education. The two youth researchers supported interpreting between Wolof and French and conducted the FGDs which used Wolof. The majority of the interviews were recorded and fully transcribed and translated into English.

The study was collaboratively designed, including the development of research and ethical protocols and the theoretical framework, which guided the subsequent analysis. Naureen and Barbara initially analysed their respective country data independently then subjected the combined data set to iterative analyses, always attending to the theoretical framework outlined above and each case's contextual specificities. All quotes in the analysis offered below are of Sufi Muslim youth in Senegal and Sunni Muslims in Pakistan unless indicated otherwise.

Youth Imaginaries of Nation

We earlier elaborated our post-structural understanding of identities and how these are constituted through relations of affiliation and difference, notably involving 'the constitutive other' (Hall, 1996). We also stressed the complexities of the production of a unified national imaginary in contexts of postcoloniality, and the continuing significance of the historical fractures that were integral to the formation of post-colonial nations. Our analysis of the Pakistan and Senegalese cases takes up these understandings and highlights two dominant themes: firstly, how national imaginaries were constituted against significant others who were external to the nation in both contexts, and secondly, how the production of a unified national imaginary through the invocation of external others simultaneously produced a flattening of internal differences.

Youths' national imaginaries in Pakistan and Senegal
Before turning to the construction of the national imaginaries in each contexts, a first point to stress is the significance of nation within youth identifications across both countries. When prompted to elaborate upon different dimensions of their national belonging and their difference from other nations, animated expressions of national distinction and pride emerged in both contexts, with the circulation of these affects within the focus group itself intensifying such patriotic expressions:

> *We get such patriotic feelings naturally. We live here, get our education here and are born and bred here. (Pakistani female)*

> *I feel very proud to be a Senegalese. It creates in me a feeling of love for this country [...] it's our homeland. Everything we have, we have it here. (Senegalese female)*

As these excerpts show, the concept of the nation was thoroughly normalised within youths' imaginaries. Whether related to notions of birthplace, homeland, or to one's education, a sense of nation and national belonging had become a 'naturalised facticity' for our participants (Butler, 1990).

In both contexts, the rights and freedoms enjoyed by citizens of a democratic country were also integral to youth's imaginaries, and were celebrated as part of the deep affective attachments they demonstrated towards their nations. So for example, in Pakistan, across

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religious affiliations and gender boundaries, freedom of expression, decision-making and independence were seen as important entitlements that gave youth pride in their nation:

> It's a free state. There is no compulsion. I am a free man. I can go anywhere. There are no restrictions on me. (Pakistani male)

Similarly, in Senegal, participants celebrated its status as an independent nation:

> Now we as Senegalese we take our own decisions, what to do, when to do it and how to do it. (Senegalese female)

However, although significant external others were implicated in both contexts, this pride in the independence of their nations was inflected through different discourses, in ways that can be traced to the different ways they had emerged as nations and to their historical trajectories in the eras following independence.

Turning first to Pakistan, while proud of their independence, youth also pointed out the fragility of its electoral democracy, and the embattled history of its nation. There were frequent references to wars with India for example, which produced a dominant representation of a nation under siege:

> India is the biggest threat to our survival. It has never accepted our existence. (Pakistani male)

> Yes, I would call India our enemy because we will always remain enemies, there can be no reconciliation with India; it is futile to think that we can reach reconciliation with India. (Pakistani male)

From its inception, the national imaginary of Pakistan was demonstrably embattled, constructed against a powerful external other. This fracture was integral to the foundation of the nation, but in the intervening period, had been continuously revivified by the multiple military skirmishes that had occurred on their borders ever since. We revisit these tensions when we discuss how religion and nation were woven together in this imaginary.

On the other hand, rather than an embattled identity, Senegalese youth claimed their democracy as a marker of their distinction. They particularly contrasted the (relative) stability of Senegal's democratic processes with the turbulence and coup d'états experienced in neighbouring African countries (Dunne et al., 2017). As in Pakistan, youth defined their national imaginary against others who were external to the nation, but the emphasis was on Senegal's distinction in comparison to neighbouring countries in Africa whose democracies were more fragile:

> *It's especially the stability there is in this country that makes us proud to be Senegalese [..] it is a country that really stands out for its democracy (Senegalese Female)*

> *… we don't have coup d'états, we don't have genocides, we don't have the kinds of civil wars that are destroying Africa – we've been spared that until now, that's something we should be proud of. (Senegalese Female)*

More generally, youth described their national characteristics in ways that also claimed distinction. The superiority of Senegal was related to its ways of dressing, its language, manners, its way of speaking French, and especially Senegalese '*correctness*' in comparison to other African nationalities, or groups who were characterised as '*niakk':*

> *'…niakk', that's the Ivoirians, other nationalities.. Burkinabe…everything that's a bit in the sub-region, all that is Ghanaians, Nigerians, Burkinabe, etc (Senegalese female)*

The meaning of this term was explained to be someone who was '*not civilised*', who lived in the bush, beyond the pale of civilisation. In further claims to distinction, youth pointed to the part that Senegalese leaders had played in the past in the development of pan-African independence movements, and the continuing significance of Senegalese politicians within the Francophonie (an association of ex-French colonies). In these instances, the distinction of Senegal as a leader of post-colonial nations in Africa was often defined against the external other of 'the West' or 'white men', as in this example:

They [leaders such as Senghor] fought to make black people and Africans believe
that you can become emancipated by yourselves, that you don't need the white men.
Between us, we are strong enough; we are intelligent, we are capable enough to
make things work. [..] They fought for the recognition of a black cultural identity.
(Senegalese Female)

The Senegalese female who commented on the meaning of '*niakk'* noted the irony of the juxtaposition of Senegal's claim to be leaders of Africa's peoples with the denigration of their African neighbours. This produced ambivalences in Senegalese youth's positioning in relation to the ex-colonial power and '*white men'* more generally. In other words, 'Frenchness' was sometimes claimed as a marker of distinction, while at others it was a signifier against which youth sought to differentiate themselves. We return below to the external other of 'the West' that is part of these differentiations, and which was also significant in Pakistani youth discourses.

Overall, in both contexts, youths' national imaginaries were powerful, and were articulated predominantly through opposition to external others. As shown above however, in one instance this was an embattled imaginary involving continual struggle against an external other, infused with appeals to the military and to war, and awareness of the fragility of Pakistan's democracy. In the other, youths' national imaginary resonated with claims to distinction and superiority over its neighbours, whether with respect to Senegal's democracy, its leading role in Africa, or more generally.

Our analysis now turns to the interweaving of nation with religion as part of the national imaginaries of Muslim youth in both contexts. In the sections that follow we first note the significance that youth in both contexts attached to (Muslim) religious leaders as national heroes for leading the fight for independence, so that religion and nation were fused together in opposition to the 'colonial other'. Secondly, we address the different ways youth constructed the uniqueness of Islam in their nation, where in Pakistan youth asserted the unity and purity of their Islamic practices, while Senegalese youth celebrated the syncretic diversities and the pluralities of their 'African' Islam. In all cases, we show how these constructions are operationalised against significant others external to their nations.

Turning to the first of these themes, youths' national identity narratives in both contexts resonated with accounts of struggles to overthrow colonial subjugation in ways that clearly demonstrated their pride in their nation as an independent state. The colonial power as an external other was an important signifier which was repeatedly invoked within youth narratives, where religion and nation were often thoroughly intertwined. So for example, in Pakistan, youth referred to the sacrifices their Muslim ancestors had made in freeing the nation from the shackles of imperial rule:

> *I am proud of our ancestors who fought against the British colonisation and oppression, be they leaders of the Muslim League or the Khudai Khidmatgar[2]. Their resistance and struggle got us our independence and sovereignty. (Pakistani male)*

In a similar way, Senegalese youth spoke with great passion about their independence and freedom from '*the dominance of white men'* (Senegalese female). While political figures such as Senghor were often invoked when participants were asked about their national heroes, religious leaders who had stood against the external other of '*westerners'* (as colonisers) were integral to Muslim youths' national imaginaries:

> *we should not forget Cheikh Omar Foutihou Tall, he who even took arms to fight the westerners, to tell them listen! No, we are going to install here (inaudible) the Muslim religion. (Senegalese male)*

Many other youth invoked Cheikh Amadou Bamba - the founder of Mouride brotherhood - as a national hero, pointing to his leadership of the Senegalese in a pacifist struggle against the French colonial powers (see earlier discussion).

The nation continued to be imagined with reference to more contemporary external others. Because national narratives are stories of collective struggle and resistance in opposition to the 'other', the conflict-affected context of Pakistan offered multiple discourses of antagonistic external relations that were recruited by youth in their narratives of identity. As shown below, this included the external others of India, the USA and Israel.

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[2]Also called *Surkh Posh* or The Red Shirts movement. It was a non-violent movement against the British Raj by Pakhtuns of the North West Frontier Province of British India, led by the Pakhtun nationalist, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan.

We have seen above how youth drew on different wars with India to construct a nationalistic, embattled past. Within this, religion was definitional, so that youth spoke with great pride about the founding place of religion in their nation:

> *Pakistan was created in the name of Islam. Only a handful of countries are established on the basis of an ideology. Pakistan has the largest number of religious scholars, it produces the largest number of people who know the Quran by heart, and has the largest number of madaris (religious schools) (Pakistani male)*

Youth also celebrated the common humanity of all Muslims and their unification around a set of practices that were constructed as being similar around the world:

> *A true Muslim will behave in similar fashion everywhere irrespective of geographical differences. (Pakistani male)*

The centrality of religion in youths' national imaginaries meant that interventions in more contemporary times by external others such as the USA and those associated with the 'War on Terror' became profound provocations. In addition to memories of the 1965 war with India (see above), Pakistani youth critiqued the USA for meddling in Pakistan's affairs and attempting to run Pakistan as its satellite colony.

> *The 1965 war with India was a historical event when the entire nation stood shoulder to shoulder against the enemy. It was a great historical event how we defended ourselves against a much bigger enemy. (Pakistani male)*

> *But according to my knowledge Pakistan has no role in terrorism. After 9/11 it was a pre-planned US policy to launch an attack on Afghanistan and link Pakistan to terrorism and that's why Pakistan has a bad name. (Pakistani female)*

> *Why can't we reveal who is behind the terrorism and for what purpose? Well the purpose is very clear. I feel it is to defame and stigmatise Islam and wipe Islam out of this country. (Pakistani male)*

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The superimposition of religion on national identity, as implied by the narratives above, stretches the imaginary of the Pakistani nation beyond its territorial boundaries, resulting in Pakistani youth identifying these acts of aggression by external others as being against the Islamic nation or *Ummah*:

> *Because they [Israel] always conspire against the Islamic world and Pakistan. They have occupied Palestine. That's why I would never recognise Israel or accept its nationality. (Pakistani male)*

As shown above, Pakistani youth brought together the Muslim nation/*Ummah* with the Pakistani nation and expressed pain at the collective victimhood and violation of their nation by the external non-Muslim 'others' (see Paper 5, this issue).

While Muslim youth in Senegal also highlighted the universal messages of Islam (see Paper 2, this issue), they were equally concerned to celebrate their particular and distinctive forms of African Islam, which involved syncretic fusions with local religions. They defined Senegal's Sufist/African Islam against the external other of 'jihadi Islam' that was associated variously with the Islam of 'Arabs', the Maghreb, the Middle East, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria:

> *and we go [in our discussion] to Afghanistan or we go to another country, the cult of those countries is the jihad; it's different. We do not kill on behalf of religion, but we feed ourselves on behalf of religion. (Senegalese male)*

Such narratives celebrated the different ways in which Islam was practised in Senegal and highlighted the peaceful way that its African forms of Islam had been spread in Senegal by its brotherhoods:

> *they [Senegal's brotherhood leaders] succeeded in spreading Islam in the most peaceful way, because they didn't use war to spread Islam. It was through messages, miracles, etc. that they convinced all the Senegalese, or the majority of Senegalese to be Muslims. (Senegalese male)*

They stressed how Islam was tolerant of other religions, highlighting how Senegalese Christians and Muslims lived peacefully together, sharing their respective religious celebrations. They contrasted this with '*diabolized*' Islam that was practised elsewhere:

> *…today currently we see people who claim to be representatives of Muslims, whereas basically they are not Muslims, basically they are really not practicing properly. Basically, they are not here to bring the message of peace the Prophet was carrying at the beginning, they rather spend their time talking about things that are not even part of the Holy Qur'an, that are not part of Shari'a. And that's what is leading to conflicts in some regions (inaudible/overlapping voices)…Islam is diabolized… with the Islamists in Mali, all that (Senegalese female)*

Mali (which has a shared border to the south and east of Senegal) is here constructed as a significant external other, as a neighbouring country where Islamic insurgencies recently provoked French intervention to defend its capital.

Nevertheless, Senegalese and Pakistani youth were united in being highly critical of the demonization of Islam in the West, in ways that again positioned the West as the external other of Senegalese imaginaries of nation and religion. Nonetheless, when gender identities are added to the picture, the articulation of the otherness of the West could be selectively used to resist gender equality reforms and construct them as alien to Senegalese culture. We take up the gender symbolism of youth constructions of their national and religious identities more specifically in the final paper of this issue.

In summary, in both Islamic Pakistan and secular Senegal, youths' discourses of religion and nation were interwoven together in powerful ways in opposition to a colonial or neo-colonial 'other'. More generally, imaginaries of the nation in both contexts were constantly produced with reference to significant external others.

National unity and the flattening of internal difference
We have highlighted earlier the particular difficulties confronting post-colonial nations in defining a distinctive identity against the colonial other (Chatterjee, 1993). Forging a strong imaginary of the external other tends to bolster national identity, homogenising the national community and flattening internal hierarchies and differences. We now turn to the ambivalent ways this flattening of internal differences worked in both contexts.

In Pakistan, youth narratives frequently indicated a hierarchical positioning of different groups within the nation based on religion, gender and ethnicity. Both Muslim and non-Muslim youth and men and women identified the marginal position of non-Muslim Pakistanis and women within the Pakistani national imaginary (see Paper 5, this issue). Furthermore, the Pakhtun youth simultaneously constructed themselves as better Muslims and Pakistanis relative to other ethnic groups and as being ethnically stereotyped by them. Nevertheless, when youth positioned themselves through discourses of the external other, these internal hierarchies were put aside to offer a united national imaginary that flattened these internal divisions in response to external threats. Regardless of religious, gender and ethnic divides, Pakistani Muslim and Christian youth, male and female, unequivocally identified as loyal Pakistanis who referred to the military as a symbol of their national identity, and as the protector of the nation's integrity in the face of the hostile external other. They did this even when they had earlier critiqued the military for fragmenting Pakistan's democracy.

> *What really makes me feel proud of Pakistan is Pakistan's army! (Pakistani Christian female)*

> *Pakistan has a very strong and independent military … Powerful countries, such as USA, China and India recognise the might of Pakistan Army. (Pakistani male)*

Pakistan's nuclear programme similarly evoked a strong sense of national pride and provided a sense of security from the threat of hostile 'others'.

> *Although, it [detonation of nuclear bomb] alarmed other countries, but for Pakistan it was a historic event as now Pakistan is identified as a stronger country defence-wise (Pakistani Shi'a female).*

Likewise, irrespective of their religious, gender and ethnic affiliations, Pakistani youth critiqued the national media in Pakistan for '*creating sensationalism to entertain people for their own financial gains without even bothering about its impact on the country*' and the international media for portraying a '*negative image of Pakistan'* and constructing youth in Pakistan in a homogenised way as terrorists (Pakistani Christian female).

Additionally, while few Pakistani youth, both men and women, spontaneously identified a woman as a national icon, Aafia Siddiqui who is currently serving an 86-year sentence in Texas on terrorism charges, was identified by some youth as '*the daughter of Pakistan*' (Pakistani Male):

> *She suffers for Islam. She is imprisoned. She is not fulfilling their [the US] demands and is being tortured. Obviously, they are against Islam so they are after Aafia. (Pakistani female)*

Conversely, on one occasion when Malala Yousafzai was identified as a national icon for winning the Nobel Prize, a heated debate about her credentials and the role of the West in the construction of her image emerged:

> *What has Malala done? […] It's the West who nominated and selected her? She was not in competition with anyone. The West gave it to her. Has she made a great discovery? Has she faced an issue internationally? (Pakistani Male)*

Moving now to the discourse of external other and its flattening of internal hierarchies in Senegal, Senegalese youth acknowledged differences in the practices of different Muslim brotherhoods, as well as minor disputes between them. However, the youth's construction of Senegalese Islam as having an overriding message of '*peace and tolerance*' involved more external differentiation against religious others, rather than internal differentiations between Senegal's brotherhoods. As we have seen above, youth contrasted Senegalese Islam to the '*diabolized*' Islam of other contexts. Senegal's Sufi brotherhoods were admired for producing distinctly African forms of Islam and for unifying the nation peacefully against the colonial other. This was a dominant discourse, and contributed to a flattening of differences between ethnic groups:

> *all the ethnic groups are the same. Me, I am a Toucouleur but I cannot make a choice, because Senegal is so diverse that, you don't know whether it's the Toucouleur, the Serrere, the Wolof or the Bambara. Each of them can help you, me I treat them all equally anyway, I like them all. (Senegalese male)*

In this context, such flattening of ethnic difference could also draw on discourses of republicanism, as well as appeals to the global *Ummah.* Notably however, such depictions take little account of the socio-economic differences between different regions of Senegal that non-metropolitan youth highlighted in earlier research into youth citizenship, and was also contradicted by youth discourses that constructed particular ethnic groups as 'backward' (Crossouard and Dunne, 2015; Dunne et al., 2017).

In summary, youth in both contexts constructed their national imaginaries in opposition to external religious 'others' in ways that often wove nation and religion together. As shown above, youth's construction of a unified and distinctive national imaginary tended to flatten internal hierarchies and ethnic differentiations in particular.

Conclusion

In this paper we presented our analysis of youth identity formations with respect to nation and religion in two contrasting Muslim-majority countries—Pakistan and Senegal, situating youth identity narratives within historical specificities of their colonial past and post-independence developments. We have highlighted the centrality of religion to youth's national identifications as well as their demarcation of external others in ways that have deep historical roots.

Despite differences in the place of religion in their respective constitutions, in both contexts youth wove nation and religion together in ways that showed the influence of their respective colonial and post-colonial histories. However, in contrast to Pakistani youths' imagination of a largely stable and universal Muslim 'self' that transcends geographical and cultural boundaries, Senegalese youth celebrate the diversity and distinctiveness of its 'African' forms of Islam, which at the same time serves to distinguish the Senegalese nation from other Muslim nations.

The interweaving of religion and nation was also central in defining the external other of the colonial past and in contemporary times. In both contexts, youth defined the nation in relation to the colonial 'other'— the West or Britain in Pakistan and the West or France in Senegal. In Pakistan, multiple antagonistic 'others' post-independence - India, the USA and Israel - meant that nation was tightly interwoven with religion in ways that stretched the territorial boundaries of the nation. While the Pakistani youth articulated a narrative of

collective victimhood and violation by the external non-Muslim 'others', the Senegalese youth defined and valorised the pluralities and syncretism of Senegalese Islam against the many different (violent) forms of Islam elsewhere, including within neighbouring states such as Mali.

In contrast to the strong demarcations of youth participants in Pakistan, there was more ambivalence towards the colonial/western external other in Senegalese youths' narratives. Pride in Senegal's role in throwing off the yoke of colonialism and as contemporary leaders of Africa - sitting at the table as an ally of the West at the same time as representing Africa's cultural distinctiveness - was strong. These ambivalences were also evident in FGD debates about Senegal's gender equality legislation. While celebrated by some, this provoked resistance from some male youth who associated gender equality with Western modernity and constructed this as the external other of local traditions and religious practices (see Paper 7, this issue). This contrast in youth's imaginary of the other reflects the differences in the two countries with respect to geo-political circumstances, foreign interventions, histories of armed conflict, civil wars and separatist movements, as well as constitutional arrangements and democratic (in-)stability.

The interweaving of nation and religion in opposition to external others, tended to bolster national unity in ways that could flatten internal hierarchies and differentiation in both Pakistan and Senegal, particularly when youth are articulating their national identities. In Pakistan, the imaginary of a conniving and violent external other appeared to solidify national unity, flattening otherness based on religious, gender and ethnic affiliations and identifying the military as the key signifier of Pakistani identity. Likewise, in Senegal both ethnic and internal religious differences were set aside to offer a united national imaginary that constructed its distinction over other nations. These constructions implicated the colonial 'other' as well as nations and regions practising different ('jihadi') forms of Islam elsewhere, constructing Senegalese Islam as peaceful and the leaders of its Sufi brotherhoods as key signifiers of Senegalese national identity.

To conclude, the histories, politics and geographies of Pakistan and Senegal have profoundly shaped youth construction of their identities, suturing the nation and religion together in opposition to significant external others, in ways that tended to flatten and marginalise internal differentiations and power hierarchies.

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