



## The Representation of Kaleidoscope Realities in *Parizaad* by Breaking the Conventional Barriers of Stereotypical Societal Norms

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### Abstract

*Parizaad* drama by Hashim Nadeem represents an unconventional and non-stereotypical storyline beyond the mundane reflection of gender specific roles. This research paper unveils poor life of marginalia, dark future of transgender, bid of body selling women, semantic and sociological degradation of the black skins, fetishism of modernity and the eventual decay of moral concerns highlighted in *Parizaad*. *Parizaad* drama, as a techno literary conjugation, raises the voice of unheard through television to speculate on a broader spectrum both socially & politically. Pakistani dramas are known for their ordinary representation of women's struggles, subservience, sufferings and patriarchal subjugation most commonly. Contrarily to this common notion, *Parizaad*, presented at Hum TV Channel, subverts these traditional concepts and depicts the sufferings of a male in a women centered society having female gaze, feminine power both corporally and economically that dragged our attention to delve deep into this drama serial to evaluate it critically.

**Keywords:** *Parizaad, Gender Roles, Class Struggle, Poetic Catharsis, Societal Norms, Power Dynamics*

This research paper provides a background of this drama serial and starts from its title *Parizaad* that is articulated on the name of its protagonist whose societal affiliations are problematic right from his birth. The title seems peculiar and mysterious as his father says “Mazdoor k bachy ka name Parizaad na rakh” (Don’t name the child of a laborer, Parizaad) besides the judgmental world who finds it as ‘poetic’, ‘born of fairies’ and “fictional’ like a name of a film hero. The characters around him make a jiggling taunt of his name as a ‘ghost’ that is apparently not a Parizaad as he is a light skinned black man. Thus, as the name seems mysterious, the ecological environment also creates a supernatural aura of thunder and lightning in the first episode

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where his mother names him Parizaad by saying "I have born this child in starvation". His childhood takes its viewers towards the Lacanian psychoanalysis as he dwells in "imaginary self" or "mirrors stage" where he finds everything revolving around him, desiring and imagining a piano that remains his obsession till the end. As soon as his parents die and he enters the "symbolic order", he dies from inside as his elder brothers and their wives always mock him by saying "Hamary liye kuch to karo" (Do something for us)," Apni Shakal dekh kartoot dekh", "Mar jao to acha ha" (It is better that you may die).

Thus, here, starts the journey of Parizaad and the critical evaluation of this drama serial. The symbolic order around Parizaad is capitalistic that runs merely on commercial bases of money. Parizaad's teaching tuitions and then welding at a pathetic car shop reveals the labor of proletariat classes at length. It is not the case merely represented in a drama ,rather ,it comprises an element of social realism inside it. The loss of his education career takes me towards the backward areas of our society where innocent children and adults are compelled to earn something for the family by burying their all dreams of educational careers. Beside the palaces and beautiful roads that represent city as a civilized and developed place in the globe of the world, there lies an unseen and unheard area where "Safaid Posh" the actual needy people resides under the line of poverty.

In a generalized conception, men have the agency to accept or reject the girls in terms of certain standards such as beauty, suitable class structure and financial goodness. Controversially, in *Parizaad*, the male protagonist falls in love with Naheed who is above his level & who feel sorry for his pathetic condition in love. The feminine perspective is applicable on one side that the concept of agency is reversed like power dynamic shifts to women who have the social ability to reject a male proposal. Significantly, this rejection is not based on ordinary issues regarding male's gaze, rather, it is for the reason of Parizaad's poor economy and dark skinned color. Naheed admits his love for her, spends time with him but for a life time bondage under the contract of marriage, she rejects him. On the other hand, Parizaad's university fellow, Lubna, who belongs to an aristocratic background, comprehends Parizaad beyond his racial skin and lack of resources. Contrarily, her mother Natasha Hussain is a fantastic representation of women in power who consider life merely in terms of money and class. For instance, an elite party was held by Lubna where her invitation of Parizaad was reprimanded by her mother so bitterly in front of all tie coat

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men and stylish women of elite classes. Besides this, one female character, R. J. Annie, develops passionate love for Parizaad and vice versa. Annie, being blind, sensualize the presence of Parizaad with the pores of her fingers over his face in order to make his sculpture. Her passions rooted in wit, feeling and loving Parizaad in spite of her blindness and that is comparatively quite oppositional to afore mentioned female characters.

The statistical stylistics highlights the specific role of poetry as a way to convey the meanings that are needed to be read in between the lines in *Parizaad*. The narrative represented in form of poetic verses is a charm to provide the aura of aestheticism as a comic relief in the tragic life of the protagonist. Besides this, it stands symbolically and metaphorically to describe the internal dilemma versus the outward violence in form of metaphysical phenomenon. The certain feelings of loss and lack, childhood and adulthood sufferings, rejection of love and slave like employment are sufficient enough to be internalized in the unconscious working of mind. William Faulkner describes that the permanent sense of lack is created by “the terrible and irremediable despair of adolescence” (Faulkner 162, 1990). Frantz Fanon comments that being a black race is itself a symbol of poverty because contradictory to this idea it means that “You are Rich because you are white, You are white because you are rich” (Fanon 40, 1952). Thus, this paper asserts that Parizaad internalizes the racial slurs over his skin color and all these tragic sufferings inside him that converts in a form a poetic language as he develops a self-mechanism strategy of his own color when he read a poem in his class that “Tum to siyah rang may bhi jachti ho” (You look beautiful in black too). Poetry as a literary genre considers to be a form of catharsis as Wallace Stevens comments on the nobility of the poetry that it “is a violence from within that protects us from a violence without” to rescue from the outer realities. In this way, I argue that each single verse of Parizaad’s poetry reflects his internal state of mind as stream of consciousness developed by his outer world. Furthermore, Audre Lorde comments that “Poetry is not a luxury. It is a vital necessity of our existence” as she reflects about herself that she is “committed to poetry not only as an art but as a way of life.” Thus, it does the same for Parizaad to pour out whatever he feels inside. In short, as Anne Sexton says that poetry balances me to manage myself in the chaotic world outside is similar to the case of Parizaad figuratively.

The poetic words are the mirror of a person and reflection of his internal world to describe

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the darkest sides of society and the behaviors of the people around him. The rich characters make fun of his poetry as a product of poor class and taunt him to make money rather than wasting time in books and creativity of art. This is the worst side of society that their perception lies in the dreams of money by working like a robotic mechanic day and night. On the other hand, who finds his solace in literary world, it is termed as the work of imaginary castles in the air. The scene at a party divides the societal hierarchies in a sequential order where Parizaad had to pay the price of his presence among the elites. An aggressive rich elite demands him to sell his poetry that he will publish in books by his name to be more and more recognizable politically. It is worst that how influential elites commercialize the business of words like a commodity. Parizaad loves his words and know the significance of self-esteem, no matter, how unfavorable the conditions are.

Crucially, such poetic catharsis is generally associated with feminine attribution to voice their voicelessness but in this drama, all poetic association is linked with the male protagonist as reversely and inversely proportional as male agency is transformed to females apparently. This research paper delineates that this drama serial denotes the significance of literariness and the world of literature as a source of liberation from both of the internal and external sufferings. For example, a dramatic reference proves this perspective that when Parizaad was imprisoned for an undone crime for five years, he reads a lot of books of English literature such as *The Kite Runner* and Urdu Literature such as Jaun Elia and Habib Jalib to kill the pathetic moments of his life to find an internal peace within himself. Besides this, Parizaad remains a great admirer of Urdu Literature and poetic masterpieces of Ghalib, Meer Dard and Faiz Ahmed Faiz as well, by reciting their verses as a response to the cruel questions and oppressive realities of life. Being students of literature, this element in the play *Parizaad* maintained out interest as well as introspection to evaluate the role of literature and poetry till the last scene of the drama.

This critical article evaluates the character of Seth Behroz as a symbol of all influential elites and political rules of our contemporary society that runs with hierarchal order on a macrocosmic level. When he realized the kind hearted nature of Parizaad along with his long time slavery to him just like in the play, *Waiting for Godot*, Lucky does for Pozzo while rubbing his back on the floor for him, he develops a U tern change in his persona. With the passage of time, a round nature of his character appears and he asks his secretary to transfer all his power, bank

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balance and his royal palace like The White House to his loyal servant Parizaad. It seems as paradigmatic shift in terms of Karl Marx's concept of dialectical war by the proletariat against the master. Although, it happens not like a revolt by French Serfdom against the monarchy and political dictatorship of the Bourgeoisie as Lopakhin does against the Ranevsky's estate in *The Cherry Orchard*. Here, the land owner, Behroz, himself leads to turn the wheel of this dialectical war in the hands of his employed worker. Critically, this unconventional step is to procure a mental state of satisfaction as a defense mechanism against his sense of guilt for all the crimes.

Pivotaly, it highlights the stark reality of political corruption of elites where they murder the poor not physically and economically but also psychologically by teasing their only worth that is self-integrity. Parizaad says “Izzat e nafs k badly agar Qaroon ka khazana bhi mil raha ho to wo ghatay ka soda ha”. At the last episodes of this serial, when Parizaad becomes a CEO after the suicide of his country's topmost leader/ master, an elite named as Seth Shehbaaz offers him to be in his political party. The fact lies in this reality that same is the case with Pakistani influential parties that bribe the other to be a friend for the good times merely. Moreover, Seth Shehbaaz stands as a symbolic figure for our contemporary leaders of Pakistan as he demands another influential, Parizaad, to support him in an illicit business of fake medicines on a massive level to earn more profit by making an agreement of equal share.

Significantly, this research highlights that corruption is not only the case with the upper hand leading figures, rather, the subordinated hierarchies run on the same pattern. The employed secretary of Seth Behroz Agha Kareem trafficked a lot of commercial commodities in the darkness of the night by hoarding these materials. This is happening in the big stores and malls all around us without the recognition of moral sins. In addition to it, the master himself is manipulative as it was said by Janu (Sharjeel) about Seth Behroz Agha Kareem that "Seth Behroz dushmano ka dushman ha or Jo us k rastay may ata hay wo ussay qatal kar Deta hai” (He kills whoever comes in his way). In this regard, love and moral ideals are lost under the supervision of personal and political interests.

### **Literature Review**

Humaira Malik in the article titled “Comparative Thematic Analysis of *Joseph Andrews* by Henry Fielding and *Parizaad* by Hashim Nadeem as a Social Satire”, compares and contrasts

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Joseph Andrews and Parizaad, concluding that the two books share a lot of parallels, such as the class conflict, the affluent people's attitude toward the poor, and the exploitation of the poor. In an attempt to seduce him, wealthy women took advantage of Joseph Andrews' beauty and charm. Even though Parizaad didn't seem to have any charm, his wealth and talent made him appealing. Thus, despite their centuries-long separation, both texts illustrate how society's attitudes and morality are influenced by looks.

Shafqat Hussain writes an article titled Exploring Double Consciousness: Capitalist Attitude and White Supremacy in drama Serial *Parizaad* in the *Journal of social Sciences Review*. The concept of double consciousness, which was first used by W.E.B. Du Bois, is examined in the Parizaad character by Hussain. The protagonist struggles with his identity and self-worth embodying internal conflict. From an underappreciated poet to a successful businessman, his career demonstrates how race, and social norms connect to shape personal paths. It is portrayed as both empowering and alienating when Parizaad becomes a prosperous capitalist. Emphasizing Parizaad's eventual rejection of material achievement in favor of altruism, Hussain's research links this shift to the dehumanizing impacts of capitalism attitudes while he considers Parizaad's decision to support education, as a sign of his moral reintegration.

### **Research Methodology**

In order to examine the thematic, narrative, inter textual and stylistic components of the drama *Parizaad*, textual analysis is the main method used in this research paper. By concentrating on dialogue, character development, and symbolic motifs, this qualitative approach enables a thorough analysis of the drama as text to reveal underlying socio-cultural commentary. Critical theories like post colonialism, techno literary conjugation, racism, black existentialism, feminism, capitalism and gender studies serve as a guide for the analysis, which aims to comprehend how the drama deals with questions of identity, class inequality, and social expectations in a Pakistani setting. Through an analysis of the storyline, visual design, and character development, this approach seeks to understand how drama interacts with more general themes of exclusion, ambition, and the quest for self-worth. Secondary sources, such as scholarly publications and reviews are used to enhance context and offer further insights into the sociopolitical environment.

**Analysis**

This research paper asserts that this drama is a strategically a serial to sustain the state narrative of politics of power to prolong their monologist paradigm. As the ending episode provides some life lessons for the improvement of society. Parizaad changes his identity and names himself Ahmad to be a primary school teacher in an unpopulated far away small town in the hillside. His act of appealing to the government for educational funding for these small areas and his rhetoric for the conception of equal education for promoting Urdu medium institutions as the English medium schools indicate that it is exactly the contemporary situation of Pakistan where the mother tongue is prohibited in schools and even at homes, to promote the foreigner and the international language, English. This is the rhetoric of modernity that follows the European and Western standardization and their so called conception of Enlightenment in academia as well as in culture that seems a “fetishism of modernity” in Bernard Yack’s words .

Similar to this notion, the lower middle class is always a foot licker to their rulers to get favors to meet with the basic needs of life just as Parizaad does for a long time. Contrarily, on a deeper level, it deems that the dramatist is counter balancing the gender roles. For instance, Parizaad is penniless whereas women have money and power of rejection as a shift of agency from patriarchal men to women of elites. Similarly, a generalized concept of poetry as essential for women’s catharsis is shift to male catharsis as an aftermath of worst sufferings from the external and internal world. Contrary to both these positions, Behroz, an influential political leader as a sign of monolithic narrative shifts all his power to a beggar like Parizaad at the ending stage of drama. It seems another spectrum of balancing the scales strategically to voice for equality.

The critical analysis of this paper finds an intertextuality with Indian novelist, Aravind Adiga's novel *The White Tiger* (2008) thematically. Adiga's protagonist, Balram Halwai, as a taxi driver tries for social upheaval for societal approval as Parizaad does. Additionally, the starving and striving strategy of both of these protagonists in terms of their internal and external journey from being pauper to prince with a lot of hurdles and sufferings is similar to a greater extent. In addition to it, as Parizaad pays the cost of his master’s crime, Balram was also imprisoned for the crime which Pinki does by driving the car speedily .On the other hand, Balram's dialectical war against his masters, Ashok and Pinki Madam, by killing Ashok is far distinctive from Parizaad

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who becomes a hero after being a zero without killing his master who gives an astonishing reward as a result of all his faithful servings and subservient slavery.

The struggle from the lifestyle of a poor upbringing, turning to an employed subordinate under Behroz and a long time imprisonment but still being a loyal servant that turns his goodness to a happy ending. This sense of poetic justice seems justified at one hand, but at other level, it seems a fictive realm. Firstly, it is a common concept that good is rewarded and the bad one is punished as a divine justice. The optimistic ending of Parizaad is justified in terms of his whole life struggles with moralistic goodness as his reunion with Annie, her pure and true love. Secondly and contrastingly, the critical perspective take it as a mere imagination as it is not the case in our common society. The laws are not for justice, rather, they work as "state sponsored oppression" to repress the weak in order to strengthen the already stronger man. In the feudalistic areas of Pakistani society and particularly the land lord capitalistic regime suppresses the oppressed till the last breadth of his life without an equal reward. Thus, at once the happy ending of Parizaad is justified as an optimistic result of his ethical codes but on the other hand, it seems fictional in the context of our contemporary society.

Through a critical lens, this paper argues that modern love is a power prospect game for commercial necessities and 'conspicuous consumerism'. In this drama, the poor shopkeeper of piano supports this argument that "Jis nay pa liya usny khak kr diya or jis nay na paiya to khud khak my mil giya" (One who gets, lost its worth and one who can't find, loses his own respect and dies in the dust himself) as Parizaad philosophize this point of view by asserting that in this busy age, who cares for sensitive emotions.

The elite lady, Natasha Hussain crushes his passionate feelings in these materialistic words, "Insaan ki ehmiyyat sirf us k paisay say ha, shaiyri choro are paisa kamao. Dunya tumhary agy pichy ghoomy gi" (The worth of man is only by money. Leave poetry and start earning money . The world will revolve around you). Analytically, it reflects that pure love with little money fails and selfish love with the kingdom of wealth wins in such materialistic society. Furthermore, Seth Behroz confines his wife and sends a whole team of guards with her in order to keep a check and balance on her activities as a political need to be secure besides his confession of love for his wife, Lailah Saba. To make herself alive beyond the chains of his palace, she involves in meeting with



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her ex-boyfriend. At end, Seth Behroz's act of killing his wife and her ex-boyfriend is brutal and cathartic as Behroz says after her murder that "Tanha ho gya hon ma. Wohi nahi rahi to kya karna ab" (I am alone. Now, she is no more, so, what to do). Critically, honor killing is more about political decorum of an elite for which he can sacrifice any relation or human value.

Critically, the superlative modernity and materiality has set aside the traditional worth of norms and humanitarian values to a greater extent. "Pure love" in Omar Khayyam's terms with the creator and love with humanity is lost as a product of modernization where the focus had shifted towards consumerism and capitalism. Seth Behroz says that "Saffaki aani chahiye aur jo banda ye nahi janta, dunya us k liye nhi bani" (A person should be clever to know where to be cruel and if he doesn't know, the world is not a place for him to live). This is the stark reality of recent times where the only significance is of money that can't achieve purity but it can buy the interests with force and influence.

This drama serial is a realistic manifestation of the contemporary Pakistani society microcosmically and on a larger level it depicts the hollowness on a worldwide level in terms of money-making agenda as the protagonist admits that "Ye sab dikhawa ha. Ander sy khali hon ma" (All these protocols are showy. I am nothing from inside). This research paper argues that a complicated endless conflict of inside and outside, the body and heart is indicated in this drama serial without any resolution as Parizaad says in this context that "Jo dil aik bar gharoob ho jae wo kabhi taloou nahi hota" (The heart that sets once, can never rise again). The same is the case with us as this conflict complexes the heart but does not come to any solving strategy.

This research paper also explores another important and debatable concept in this drama that contributes to a worst reality on a macro level. A young girl who calls herself as Bubbly Badmash (rascal) tries to be known as a male by wearing male costumes and adopting their ways of speaking and acting. She rejects the institution of marriage by saying "Meray ander ka mard kisi dosray mard ki hakmiyyat bardasht nhi kar sakta" (My internal male can't afford the dominance of another male). The sufferings of her parents to deal with such male like girl is traumatic for social approval. Thus, her elopement at the day of her forced marriage takes her to the world of transgender. The matter of transgender and adolescence gender subverting issues are rarely discussed in Pakistani dramas. Bubbly adopts a thorough male garb and learns the art of

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knife killing which I perceived as a resistance from the marginalized and peripheral sections of society. In the Transgender community, they all dance, play and do what they want as they are socially outcast and excommunicated.

This paper also highlights feminine power that is shown through some elite female characters such as Lubna's mother in terms of money and Naheed in terms of rejection of love on material basis. Contrarily to this, the hidden and unspeakable story of the victimized Lubna and Laila Saba is heart rendering that indicates towards the real but untold stories. It depicts the feudal system that still persists in the root of minds as Lubna says "Meri boli lagai gai ha. Jahan Meri Maa ko ziada munafah milta ha, mujhy bejh deti ha" (I am a market woman by bid. My mother forces me to go and win their hearts where she gets more profit). It is critical when such close relations are turning to profit earning business of the blood relations that were considered as shelter. Similarly, the wife of Seth Behroz speaks about the harsh yet real truth so pathetically that " Let me feel these free moments more. I am caged by him because my parents made a deal with him due to some problems". I argue that this concept of "Boli" (bid) is not shown in poor lifestyle rather it is the matter of elite classes as both Laila Saba and Lubna are part of. Thus this drama reveals harsh truths lurking behind the flowery dominant narratives.

Moreover, Parizaad faces internalized feelings of black existentialism, double consciousness and nihilism towards life in the world of white bourgeoisie supremacy. The dramatist criticizes the white superior world in these terms that "Jism to gulabi hain aur dil say kalay hen" (These whites are black from inside the heart) and in more reprimanded way:

"Kya Ishq wo nibhayen gay, kya husan ko sa'rahen gain  
Tareek jin ky chehray hen"

Because of ingrained colorism, he decides for facial surgery in order to change his black skin outlooks and deep tone as well. His persona seems to be a sufferer of the internalized effects of "racial epidermal schema" and "inferiority complexes" (Fanon 16) according to Frantz Fanon's theoretical model. When R. J. Annie requests him to allow her to make a sculpture of his face, Parizaad replies You want to make fun of myself in front of the world just like others. These internalized feelings are the product of "institutional" and "systematic racism" (*Natives Race and Class in the Ruins of Empire* 44) make him consider everyone having the same mentality about

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his racial color. Thus, it is not only the matter of discussion in terms of race's original context from African and Caribbean lands, rather, it is the need of hour to discuss such issues in Pakistan as well to raise consciousness and voice for the subalterns and light skinned section of the society as Parizaad's silence and self-subservience to the outer forces empties him from inside as he says, "Shayad ye zarf ha jo khamosh hon ab tk" (Perhaps, it is my dignity that I am still silent).

Like the beginning of the drama serial, ending has its own significance in terms of life lessons hidden inside the deeper core of the play. Parizaad left all the splendid grandeur of empires, royal palace, properties investments and protocols because the moral conscience targets his soul that remains unsatisfied in spite of all these apparent luxurious charms. The reflection of his poor self in the mirror in front of his royal self arouses his moral consciousness to not to lose his morality in the struggles of his life. Thus, the last act of his abandonment and long journey to a far away mountain side metaphorically stands for the self-discovery into the lost self and soul as before going, he says to his all time flattering manager Kamali that "shayad khud ki khojh may ja rha hon" (I am going to search myself). Parizad has learned a life lesson when he connotes "Ye paisa mjhy mohabbat ki aik wo jhalak na dikha saka jis k liye ma sari Zindagi intezaar karta rha hon" (Money can't buy the one glance of love which I desired to see throughout my life). He concludes his life in poetic words, "Kitna mehroom hon ma, kitna muyassar hai mujhay" (How much I am deprived, how much I am blessed) which sheds light on his dwindling condition.

Furthermore, this paper demonstrates that the weaving sense of moral guilt penetrates inside the soul till its eventual recognition. Seth Behroz lost all his strength and political interests after murdering his wife whom he calls "the most beloved one of my life". The reality lies in this fact that memories are the part of life and some of them sticks to soul like an incurable disease. Fundamentally, when one's self comes to realize its weakness and regretting guilt, then, there is no best way to survive except suicide. In this way, no wealth can achieve the soothe for the soul that was tormented mercilessly. In spite of his fame and magnificent kingdom all around the country, he suicides because of this indorsing sense of moral erosions.

The last episode reveals the philosophical view of life on a greater level to make a life purpose and to be close to nature to find satisfaction of heart for dead soul. Parizaad says to his beloved, R J Annie that "to provide education to these innocent little ones who are passionate and

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determined for education is now the goal of my life". Basically, it seems that after a series of sufferings, the protagonist has learnt the lesson that money is nothing rather than an illusion as Parizaad says in his luminous palace that "Saltanate kisi ki badshahat ko sabit nhi kr sakti" (Sultanate cannot proof the kingdom of some one's heart). Thus , as he left everything and becomes close to the world of beauty where the flora and fauna represents peace and where the rivers flow, greenery lusher and mountains entice his heart towards love and contentment.

In a nutshell, this research paper concludes that the core issues of the society are still ignored by the "ideological status apparatus" (Althusser 51, 1971) because reality is shaped according to hierarchical structures' interests. Miscellaneous critical perspectives are highlighted throughout this research paper such as the internal journey and external plights of a male protagonist, Parizaad, several contemporary issues of Pakistani society like transgender, boli (bid) and moralistic strands of the proletariats under the capitalist and feudal status apparatus. Broadly, these notions constitute the Marxist, racist and sociological themes through this unique masterpiece. Now the final comment is on the OST of this drama serial that is the hallmark of the whole play and social concerns as well. Through critical lens of deconstructionist and discourse analysis, OST is exactly the story line of this protagonist and many Parizaads of our society.

"Na pooch parizadon say ye hijar kesy jhela ha  
Ye tan badan to chalni ha ar rouh par bi chalay hen  
Kesy jaan pao gay? Ishq may kya guzri ha?  
Kitnay zakhm khayen hen? Kitnay dard palay hen?" (excerpt from OST)

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