



## Impact of Ethnic Politics and Exploitation: An Analysis of Ice-Candy Man and Meatless Days



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**Abstract:** *Third-world nations have a problem with ethnic and religious violence, which is examined in this research by Frantz Fanon. Pakistan, a formerly colonised country, falls under this category. Numerous writers have written works that address this subject, including Sara Suleri and Bapsi Sidhwa. This investigation focuses on ethnic politics and religious issues in Pakistan. India was divided in 1947, and the new countries of India and Pakistan were born. Nonetheless, since East Pakistan (Bangladesh) broke out in 1971 due to ethnic politics, significant issues with national identity have been highlighted. This study's main objective is to explain why ethnic politics and religious conflicts have become worse in Pakistan after it broke apart from previous United India. Governmental elites in developing countries abuse their population based on their ethnicity. As a result, racial and religious tensions in the country erupted. It helps to comprehend Fanon's views on neocolonialism in this case. The book Ice-Candy Man and the memoir Meatless Days were closely read (textually analysed) for this study.*

**Key Words:** Nationalism, Neo-colonialism, Ethnic Politics, Exploitation, Islamization

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### Introduction

An investigation of the problem of racial and religious strife in Pakistan. The idea of Muslim nationalism, which was supported by Islamic theology, was utilised to achieve Pakistan's independence. The formation of a Muslim nation was the aim and purpose of the liberation fight. Yet any chance of Muslim unity was dashed by the country's subsequent ethnic and sectarian conflicts.

These concerns of division, Islamization, and ethnicity are addressed in the works of first-generation Pakistani English-language fiction authors. Basti by Intizar Hussein, The Weary Generations by Abdullah Hussein, Ice-Candy Man by Bapsi Sidhwa, Meatless Days by Sara Suleri, and other works are a few examples. The horrific effects of the Indo-Pak Partition and post-independence social realities are often the focus of first-generation writers, and these writers portray

the subcontinent's separation through the lens of the painful experiences of the migrants both during and after the event (Kanwal, 2015, p. 21). In order to explore further the problems of racial and religious violence in Pakistan, a post-colonial country that promised harmony based on religious identity, this study examines Ice-Candy Man and Meatless days.

The best basis for understanding nationalism as a whole is provided by the past, which shows that nationalist movements were originally a reaction to colonialism's oppressive practices. Resistance movements against the colonialists were triggered by the colonial experience. The prospect of a home to call their own and the opportunity to finally be recognised as human beings led the colonised to embrace nationalism. The colonised were able to gain their independence as a consequence of these revolutions, although many post-colonial countries are still governed by tyrants. One such country is described in Sara Suleri's book, *Meatless Days*, with particular attention paid to the founding of Pakistan and the ensuing military rule that caused East Pakistan's democratic separation in 1971.

The idea that the country's elite in the West was abusing and exploiting the eastern masses swiftly came to dominate East Pakistan. Particularly the Punjabi government was said to have a neocolonialist mentality.

South Asian "ethnic and religious violence" (Nandy 2002, p. 4) is a direct result of ethnic identity politics, which in turn creates splits among a country's own population. People from marginalised groups or communities are disproportionately affected by acts of communal violence. During the 1971 Pakistan-Bangladesh split, anti-Bengali sentiments in East Pakistan eventually contributed to the breakup of the country. The 1971 struggle that led to the separation of East Pakistan and the founding of Pakistan on the basis of religious identity

are at the centre of *Meatless Days*.

*Meatless Days* and *Ice-Candy Man* both address the issues of the British Colonial Raj's decolonization and the division of Pakistan into East and West, but *Ice-Candy Man* is more important because it depicts an India prior to colonisation in which people of various faiths coexisted peacefully and without hostility.

## Research Questions

1. Why does Pakistan face problems of ethnic politics after the partition of United India.?
2. How do the ruling elites exploit people of the same nation in the name of ethnicity and Faith?
3. Why the religious identity of Pakistanis failed to keep the country together, and East Pakistanis broke away from West Pakistan in 1971?

## Research Objectives

1. To scrutinize the racial and religious challenges after the division of the Indian subcontinent?
2. To scrutinize the Ethnic Politics and Exploitation in the selected text *Ice-Candy Man* and *Meatless Days*.
3. To examine the strategies of a country's governing elite abuses its own people based on racial discrimination.

## Significance of the Research

In order to do this study, we will be interpreting certain passages from *Ice-Candy Man* and *Meatless Days* and analysing their literary and cultural significance. The study's significance lies in the light it sheds on the all-too-common occurrence of religious and ethnic violence in Pakistan. Minimize the amount of political religion in your life. Recent studies from *Meatless Days* highlight the perils of ethnically motivated nationalism and how it has fueled violence in Pakistan.

Studying the book also reveals some unsavoury truths about the dominance and outsized influence of the military in Pakistani politics. Pakistan's political atmosphere is heavily influenced by ethnic politics. Ethnically and religiously driven politicians have backed the neocolonialist gang that exploits citizens of the same nation under the cover of ethnicity and the name of faith.

## Research Methodology

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This study will use a qualitative research methodology to analyse how ethnic politics and isolation are depicted in Sara Suleri's *Meatless Days* and Bapsi Sidhwa's *The Ice-Candy-Man*. This research will consult two books' texts in order to undertake textual analysis. The theoretical framework put forward by Frantz Fanon will be used to evaluate the results of the present investigation.

## Literature Review

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Several authors have fictionalised the region's emotional and social upheaval during the partition. English, Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi, Bengali, and many other subcontinental languages convey the misery caused by the division. Famous writers and their works: *Train to Pakistan* (1956) by Khushwant Singh; *Adha Gaon* (1966) by Rahi Masoom Raza; *Shadow Lines* (1988) by Amitav Ghosh; *A Bend in the Ganges* by Manohar Malgaonkar (1964); *Sunlight on a Broken Column* by Attia Hussain (1961); and *The Dark* by Raj (1991).

Bapsi Sidhwa is a prolific Pakistani-American novelist. She wrote *Jungle Wala Sahib and Their Language of Love* (2013). Publication of the Urdu translation *The Crow Eaters* (1982, England; 1983; 1984; published as *The Pakistani Bride*, 1990 US; 2008 US); *The Bride* (1982, England; 1983; 1984; published as *The Pakistani Bride*, 1990 US; 2008 US); *An American Brat* (1993, USA; 1995, India); *Cracking India* (1991, USA; 1992, India;

originally released as *Ice Candy Man*, 1988, England); and *An American Brat* are other movies worth mentioning (1978, Pakistan; 1979 & 1981, India; 1980, England; 1982, US). Her English-language memoirs detail her upbringing in India's Parsi or Zoroastrian community, Partition, and the sexism she faced as a woman in both nations. The most famous Bapsi Sidhwa song is "Ice Candy Man" (*Cracking India*). Pre-partition Lahore, India, is the setting. This book examines intergroup hostility's theological roots to explain Partition.

A postcolonial perspective is used to examine partition as a tactic for partition: Bapsi Sidhwa's study of *Ice Candy Man* (*Cracking India*) It would be an understatement to suggest that Sidhwa has had a lasting impression on Pakistani writing. Sidhwa uses her writings as a means of bringing attention to the profound changes that her people's culture and government are undergoing. Sidhwa directly addresses the issue of India's partition in *Ice Candy Man*. In her writing, she addresses topics related to marriage and Asian women, as well as the partition crisis and the Parsi community. Sidhwa continues to be a significant author in the canon of modern feminist literature. She is the only female Parsi novelist I am aware of who has written on the partition. Under the persona of a teenage narrator named Lenny, Bapsi Sidhwa publishes her fake autobiography.

## Textual Analysis and Discussion

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### Identities and the division of United India

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When the British Colonial Raj was overthrown in 1947, "ethnonational oppression" was born in both India and Pakistan (Yack, B. 2003). The idea of ethnicity served as a cause for extensive devastation during the violent dissolution of United India. As a result, millions of individuals from several faiths—including

Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Parsees, etc. were slaughtered. The suffering caused by United India's religiously driven split served as the idea for Bapsi Sidhwa's book *Ice-Candy Man*. The story depicts the pain that the break caused its protagonists go through. It addresses the nationalism and identities that gave rise to it, which led to the Indian subcontinent's inhabitants falling into a pit of racial and religious hatred.

At least one million people were killed crossing new nation boundaries (Hai, 2000, p. 387). "Massacres, rapes, looting, and burning against Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindus." The group's communication and collaboration issues are examined below. Lenny, a young Parsee polio sufferer, tells *Ice-Candy Man*. According to the *New York Times*, "in the novel's representation, Parsis or Zoroastrians were politically neutral in a struggle whose major protagonists were Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs," making Lenny's Parsee minority group viewpoint especially intriguing and germane to the partition tale (Daiya, 2011, p. 68). Lenny talks of the awful days of the division after several years of comparative peace. She also observes the effects the isolation caused by religion has on her maid, Ayah. The book's emphasis on separation is important, but it also sheds light on the role that religious minorities play in the post-colonial countries that sprang from the former British colonies.

The characters of the book, who are Sikhs, Hindus, and Muslims, coexisted happily before the division. Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs all share the same goals. They chanted as they held steadfast against the British colonisers. "We must be liberated!" based (Sidhwa, 2015, p.63). When they joined together to defy British colonisers, they grew closer. It demonstrates their firm belief in a United India where people might live peacefully, free from the interference of religious divisions, and stand united against the British occupiers. Muslims and Hindus both fought politically for independence

from the British Raj. The heroes of the book, who are all of the very different religions, cohabit peacefully because they all have a strong sense of brotherhood. According to Jagjeet Singh, a granthi (priest) of the Sikh faith, "Our communities are descended from the same ethnic pool. We are fundamentally Jats whether we identify as Muslims or Sikhs. We are really close as brothers. We cannot engage in armed conflict with one another. For instance: (Sidhwa, 2015, p.57). What difference does it make to us peasants whether a peasant is Hindu, Muslim, or Sikh? ask a Muslim Chaudhry. They were so close they never considered becoming enemies. "So what if you are a Sikh?" *Ice-Candy Man* replies to Sher Singh's query. First, I am a friend to my peers, then an adversary to their adversaries, and finally a Muslim! Muslims, Sikhs, Parsees, and Hindus ate and celebrated together.

Muslims and Hindus cooperated throughout their separate electoral campaigns. The Khilafat Movement damaged the All-India Muslim League while bringing Muslims and Hindus closer together (Jalal, 2014, p. 20).

The majority of Muslims continued to reside in India after the partition, refuting the notion that they supported The Muslim League. The legitimacy of the Muslim Brotherhood's claims was further weakened in 1971 when the majority-Muslim province of Bengal (East Pakistan) seceded from the minority-Muslim state of Pakistan.

Ayah says, "What is it to us if Jinnah, Nehru, and Patel fight?" He is referring to the Indian leaders who, during the partition, caused a fracture in the unity of the many ethnic and religious groups residing in United India. They are not supporting us in this conflict. Sidhwa (2015) Sharbat Khan concurred, saying, "They are creating issues for all of us.". As they failed to maintain India united against the British Raj and instead decided to divide the nation along religious lines, it is generally accepted that the political

leaders of India are responsible for the suffering caused by partition. As a result, Sharbat Khan's prediction of disaster came true, as the schism finally resulted in bloodshed and mass death. Tensions between Hindus and Muslims arose as a result of heightened religious intolerance. Ayah's Hinduism lost the respect and decency she had acquired after the partition.

As the Indian subcontinent was divided, religious wars disrupted their formerly peaceful life, bringing in a condition of intense hostility and violence. Violence erupted in the city of Lahore during the Partition, driving many non-Muslims to escape (Daiya, 2011, p. 68). I also become aware of religious differences, "Lenny states in the story. That takes place really soon. Everybody has a day when they identify as a Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, or Christian, and a day when they are just themselves. People lose power when they become just symbols (Sidhwa, 2015, p. 94). The following quotation demonstrates that people have been murdered because of their religious convictions: "Dost Mohammed warns the locals that the Sikhs have attacked at least five villages and that every Muslim is being slain. Muslim women are being raped and subjected to public genital mutilation in the middle of towns and mosques, among other crimes. The Indian subcontinent saw a breakdown in ethnic and religious unity after the British Raj fell, and it felt threatened by religious divides.

The region's history underwent a sea change as a result of this incident. Humanity returned to savagery when it first became conscious of its religious identities. Their tolerance waned as the ominous clouds of religious identity settled upon them. Master Tara Singh announces in a fit of passion that he would not permit the establishment of Pakistan for Muslims (Sidhwa, 2015 p.136) They were no longer friends; their bond had been replaced by hatred, and they slaughtered each other without hesitation.

Hence, the Partition of United India caused genocide. The continuous war between Pakistan and India is caused by the two nations' conflicting assertions of religious superiority. Those who stayed in their native nations after the split encountered conflict with their neighbours as a result of their minority status (Daiya, 2011, p. 71). Religion served as a driving force behind the characters' shifting allegiances and a foundation for close bonds and relationships. Imam Din informs the Muslim men that Hary/Himat Ali has changed, saying, "Hari-the-gardener has become Himat Ali!" (Sidhwa, 2015) The Muslim men are angry and request documentation of his circumcision. He avoids danger by reciting the Islamic Kalma "in the rhythm and tone of Hindu chanting".

Lenny's maid, Ayah, who was killed in the religious conflict, is an important figure. Earlier in her career, she attracted fans from several faiths. When it comes to Ayah's followers, Lenny says, "I also learn to differentiate the delicate interchange of signals and some of the complicated ceremonies by which they live." (Sidhwa, 2015, p.18). "Only the group surrounding Ayah keeps consistent," she said, being polite and open to people from various backgrounds. Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, and Parsees all work together for her on a regular basis. In a romantic sense, she had strong feelings for Ice-Candy Man. Yet, worries about being perceived as being inconsiderate of other religions gradually became the norm (Daiya, 2008, p. 68). Lenny, who is the narrator of the narrative, continues, "Ayah is no longer just my all-encompassing Ayah; she is now a symbol." one who practises Hinduism" (Sidhwa, 2015) During the division of the Indian subcontinent, Ayah became a victim of the ethnic and religious conflicts that developed. Unfortunately, following the division, her life was converted into terrible misery when she was abducted and transformed into "a dancing girl".

Sectarian fighting made her unclean. Despite Pakistan's youth, she didn't want to remain. She moved to Amritsar after Ice-Candy Man insulted her. "When I think of Ayah, I believe she must run away from the monster [Ice-Candy Man] who has slain her soul and distorted her angel's voice," Lenny stated. Hindu Ayah's case highlights minority rights in Pakistan. Religious bigotry destroys Ice-Candy Man and Ayah's romance. It also highlights the vulnerability of minorities in post-Partition India and Pakistan. "The subjugation of a minority population by a national majority is as sad as the minority's victory of its own independent nation-state, with the servitude of some new minority," says German-American political thinker Hannah Arendt. Her tragic demise supports these beliefs (Cocks, 2002, p. 61). Due to her ethnicity, most Muslims hated Ayah. The divide exacerbated religious minorities' plight. Ayah symbolises all subcontinental minorities, and Lenny, the narrator, emphasises her subjugation and degradation (Kanwal, 2015, p. 22).

Immediately after the collapse of religion, it became the single most important factor in the subcontinent in terms of fostering a feeling of individuality. India and Pakistan were created as separate nations when the subcontinent was partitioned. There are now separate countries ruled by Muslims and Hindus as a consequence of this split. For example, the Sikhs and Parsees were among the religious minorities that were forced to relocate outside of their new nation-states and never fully acceded. This was the situation due to the fact that religious doctrine served as a dividing line. Lenny says she's afraid of being misunderstood due to who she is. Women of the Sikh religion have periodically grabbed me and asked, "What is your name and what faith are you?" The truth is out: I identify as a Parsee. „O Kee? They want clarification and ask, " If so, which one is it? shocked to hear about a faith they were unfamiliar with (Sidhwa, 2015, p. 98). The

book by Paromita Deb (2011) discusses the discrimination and hardship endured by the Parsees, a minority group that was mostly disregarded during the partition.

As a Parsee, Lenny's anguish and confusion were made worse by the divide. We are able to grasp the serious nature of the division via her eyes. "Offers a different Parsi perspective on the Indo-Pakistani division," she says (Kanwal, 2015, p.22). She relates the story objectively and without bias because of her youth. She did not identify as a member of any faith, despite the Indian Subcontinent's population being about equally split between Muslims and Hindus. She was prepared to be marginalised by society even after the divide. Hannah Arendt lends support to the Parsees' concern about an insecure status in a country with a Muslim/Hindu majority since she thinks decolonization results in the colonisation of new minority groups. Minorities in the newly independent nations, like the Parsees, had to learn to get along with people of different religious origins after the partition of India.

"Our own history and our Prophet have offered the clearest proof that non-Muslims have been treated not merely fairly and equally, but generously," declared Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who proposed protecting religious minorities in Pakistan. Ahmed (1997). He promised to defend Pakistan's non-Muslim minority. But, it has simply been a promise. Pakistani minorities feel neglected by the government. Lenny's narrative throughout the story describes the oppressed Parsees (Deb, 2011, p. 219). Sidhwa's *An American Brat* illustrates Parsees' fear of General Zia's Islamization efforts. General Zia's Islamization campaign was the worst religious prejudice.

Sidhwa's 2015 essay "One man's religion is another man's poison" shows that religious struggle leads to hatred and bloodshed. The subcontinental divide may have caused numerous deaths. Sensitivity to various religions was controversial during

decolonization. Religious sects gradually become recognised. "Within the same country, religion separates the people and puts the spiritual groups, formed and sustained by colonialism and its machinery, at conflict with each other," Fanon (2004) days of ethnic and sect differences within a nation. South Asia's ethnic split causes "ethnic and religious strife.." (Nandy, 2002, p. 4).

Ethnic divisions cause hatred. Focusing on one's own faith has eliminated international religious harmony. Pakistan-India tension is intolerable. Religious fervour creates rigidity and intolerance of other religions. Sectarian violence-plagued Muslim-majority Pakistan. Sunni, Shi'a, Baha'i, Christian, and Jewish populations reflect sectarianism. Pakistan has many Sunnis. Sectarian violence has disrupted the nation. Remember that Sunni-Shia conflicts cause bloodshed (Ahmed, 1997, p. 188). Although there are internal difficulties, a Muslim Brotherhood-based nation seems unlikely. Such disagreements prevent Muslims from coexisting. This causes Pakistani sectarian violence. Pakistan's ethnic politics have hindered national fraternity (Ahmed, 1997, p. 188). Hence, national cohesion has eroded. Pakistan's political system collapsed due to East Pakistan's Muslim prejudice. Suleri's book *Meatless Days* discusses East Pakistan's breakup's ethnic reasons (now Bangladesh).

### **Pakistan's Military and Ethnic Politics**

Since it discusses Pakistan's ethnic politics and the involvement of the military elites, *Meatless Days* by Sara Suleri is discussed in the essay. Suleri is not the primary character despite the fact that it is a memoir. Suleri's life story "cannot be understood without reference to the narratives of others in her life," asserts Shazia Rahman. This suggests that we should let others define her (Ghosh,

2019, p.5). Oliver Lovesey argues that *Meatless Days* builds postcolonial subjectivity almost exclusively through talking about other people and discusses Suleri's function in the novel. Suleri is not the main character in her narrative (Ghosh, 2019, p. 5). When the memoir is presented in this manner, it is legitimate academically.

Due to the fact that "there are no women in the third world," the book primarily concentrates on oppressed women in Pakistan (Suleri, 2015, p.20). Suleri, who focuses on her own family, "narrates the tale of her family throughout the division that rebuilt the nation of Pakistan," to use Ray's phrase, "skillfully illustrates the group of women who have been silenced" (1993). (p. 49). The Begums, Suleri's family, are depicted as being abused as they store up meat for the coming days (Suleri, 2015, pp. 31-32). The wealthy [Begums] have the resources to stockpile meat during times of famine. The government's two-day weekly ban on meat eating, enacted "to protect the national supply of goats and cattle," is the source of the book's title. It is terrible that while proclaiming a restriction, the government cannot carry it out. It depicts the ostensible position of the Pakistani country, in which their national brotherhood is imposed on the artificial community, showing that Pakistani society is founded on stratification.

Tragic episodes connected to Pakistan's battle for independence are also included in the tale by Suleri (2015). Given the horrors and carnage connected with separation based on religious identity, she expresses her sorrow that her Dadi did not display any delight on Independence Day.

Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's reign included General Zia's Islamization of the nation to extend his military control. Muslim nationalism suffered following Pakistan's partition (Bangladesh). Suleri shows how East Pakistan (Bangladesh) seceded in 1971 due to political and ethnic marginalisation and the disillusionment of passionate

supporters.

Suleri explains how further difficulties emerged after independence, which was made worse by the atrocities of the divide. They are furious over the horrendous fatalities and devastation that took place during the partition as well as the sudden religious separation of United India. The fear and suffering caused by the deaths of innocent people during the Subcontinental Divide are shown in Suleri's (2015) film. Muslims and Hindus were driven to flee their homes when United India was partitioned. It was challenging for them to leave their homeland with their family. Nonetheless, choosing to go to Pakistan marked the beginning of a difficult new chapter in the lives of Muslims. The Pakistani people were overjoyed by the prospect of freedom, but their happiness was fleeting. Because of the elites' self-interest, which led to social and political injustice, discrimination, and poverty, it was trampled underfoot. As a consequence, Muslims in East Pakistan were split after the catastrophic war of 1971. Pakistan's failure to preserve national unity was one of the primary factors contributing to its desire to split. This is shown by the fact that "Indira Gandhi applauded the dissolution of the two-nation paradigm when East Pakistan became Bangladesh" (Suleri, 2015, p. 8).

Post-colonial leaders have ignored their people due to power disputes. Anti-colonial emotions were worthless after independence. Following independence, "frequently goes from this heroic and magnificent track, which is both productive and right and eagerly embraces the anti-national and consequently odious path of a conventional bourgeoisie, a dismally, inanely, and cynically bourgeois" (Fanon, 2004, p. 99). The national bourgeoisie failed to improve society or achieve its goals. Bhutto-Mujeeb conflicts are an example. These reasons support Fanon's claim of "a clear power struggle" since independence. Mujeeb and

Bhutto won. East Pakistanis protested believing the nation had abandoned them. Fanon wrote that "cracks in it explaining how easy it is for young independent countries to switch back from nation to ethnic group and from state to tribe—a regression that is so terrible detrimental and prejudicial to the development of the nation and national unity" have marginalised some ethnic groups

The discriminating use of power by the national bourgeoisie is mostly to blame for ethnic inequalities. It violates human rights and falls short of the hopes and aspirations of those who have fought for freedom. It causes the integrity of the country to decline. As the national bourgeoisie is helpless in this position, regionalism grows. Those in the wealthy parts of the country often ignore those who live in poverty in other parts of the country. As a consequence, the wealth gap between the rich and the poor widens. When individuals from various ethnic groups within a country go to battle with one another to protect their interests, tensions among the public inevitably rise. The national bourgeoisie in rising nations loses its "spirit of national unity" as a result of the "mask of neocolonialism" (Fanon, 2004, p. 101). In order to maintain military dominance via either a controlled democracy or military dictatorship, Pakistani military authorities assist the national bourgeoisie. General Ayub and other military dictators seized power in Pakistan after the split.

General Zia Ul-Haq arrived after General Yahya. Suleri was worried that because laws were being amended, Pakistan was ready to eat what little compassion the nation still had under General Zia. Bhutto had been totally put to death. There was a tremendous, unadulterated energy

It seemed as if the spectre of a population in Pakistan that had been brutally scattered in 1947 and again in 1971 had acquired momentum. According to (Suleri, 2014, p. 125), the Islamization process that took place



under General Zia had a significant impact on the plot of the novel. Islamist doctrine served as the foundation for the creation of Pakistan. The Islamic worldview is thus the most crucial aspect of this polity. The independence war was sparked by religious fervour, which is still evident today. Suleri observes that despite this, "I think we barely realised we were going to see Islam's exit from the country of Pakistan." Muslims in Pakistan could not be brought together by religion alone. The epic love affair between the public and religion, the embrace that gave origin to Pakistan, was over, whatever the noise that men would make about it in the streets. After the racial partition of the Indian Subcontinent in 1971, religion did not prove to be a strong unifying force that could unite the people by giving them a sense of shared identity. The political and military establishment of Pakistan took advantage of the fervour of its Muslim population. Ideology has been supplanted in Pakistan by dynasty politics and military tyranny. Given that he maintained his military dominance under the guise of Islam, General Zia is the ideal illustration of the military elite.

To prolong the term of his military rule, General Zia sought to Islamize the country. It is good knowledge that Islam had a key role in Pakistan's transformation into a Muslim country. Islam served as the guiding philosophy that brought Muslims together throughout the struggle for the emancipation of the Subcontinent. While there are several religious parties in the nation, their popularity is not as high as that of the major political parties. The military regime of Zia Ul-Haq, which ruled Pakistan for a longer period of time under that cover, is the finest illustration of how Islamization is used for political goals (Suleri, 2014, p.17). General Zia's military administration used Islamization to undermine Bhutto's democratic government in order to further his own agenda. According to Suleri, "Pakistani society was forcibly converted to

Islam under General Zia's rule" (Kanwal, 2015, p. 24).

Internal turmoil increased after Bangladesh's independence in 1971, decreasing support for United India's split. Suleri's father, Pip, is a newspaper managing editor. He loved Quaid e Azam's "design, speech, and attire," according to his coworker (Suleri, 2014, p. 113). Following the separation, Pip found a Pakistan he had never imagined. He hardly considered the military or civilian authority. He discovered a different Pakistan.

Due to martial rule and the restrictions put in place after Pakistan's split, Pip spent most of his time in jail (Suleri, 2014, p. 117). The parliament was abolished when freedom-fighting campaigner Pip was released from prison, and he was surprised to see martial rule and censorship in effect. This made him conclude that he had had enough editing for a while and should search for something else. The democratic system in Pakistan has been suppressed by the military government. Suleri (2014) claims that Pakistan was ruled by military dictators Ayub and Yahya with an iron fist. General Ayub ruled from 1958 until 1969. "When Pip emerged from jail and found General Ayub in power, Parliament was disbanded," Pip subsequently claimed (Suleri, 2014, p. 118). The Joint Opposition Parties represented "a huge range of public opinion" against his military dictatorship (Jalal, 2014, p. 115). Post-independence events support Fanon's criticism of the military aristocracy (2004, P.117).

As a consequence of conflicts between the several ethnic groups in Pakistan, ethnic exploitation has become a more significant problem. The nation's biggest issue continues to be ethnic politics. Because of the erasing of their history and the mockery of their language and culture, the Pashtun people of Pakistan, for instance, are subject to discrimination. The state requires Pashtuns to give up their culture and language in exchange for acceptance into

Pakistan's mainstream citizenry by erasing their Pashtun lineage (Taimur, 2016, p. 187). In comic performances, the bulk of Pakistani media depicts Pashtuns as crude and illiterate.

Under Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's orders, Pashtuns publicly accepted the fledgling country of Pakistan. It must be made known that the Khudai Khidmatgars "see Pakistan as their own country and swear that they would do their best to protect and preserve its interest and make every sacrifice for the cause" (Marwat, 2007). Pashtuns in Pakistan do not, however, enjoy perfect equality with other citizens. While society presents them in a manner that makes them feel out-of-date and unattractive, they are still trying to figure out who they are. The study discusses the marginalisation of the Pashtun ethnic group in Pakistan as evidence that ethnic politics exist there. The violence that erupted in 1971 was greatly influenced by ethnic politics as a consequence of East Pakistan, or what is now Bangladesh, being marginalised.

The psychological pain caused by the subcontinent's partition for reasons of religion is still extremely present in Pakistan. Unfortunately, the Pakistani government has not learned anything from the experience of East Pakistan's independence. The nation's politics continue to be tainted by racial tension and religious divides, which poses a danger to unification.

As Sidhwa's novel *Ice-Candy Man* reveals, religious intolerance and the attendant bloodshed during the split of the subcontinent are real. The story emphasises the sorrow faced by those left behind at a period when religious membership was used as a tactic to sever families and communities. According to *Meatless Days'* research, Pakistan's failure as a nation is due to its oppressive military rule and the following ethnic division.

## Conclusion

Nationalist emotions significantly benefited the independence movements. As colonialism has declined, new problems have taken their place. During the time of the partition, religious fervour led to conflicts between United Indians about their allegiance. The common religious convictions of the Pakistani people were insufficient to stop East Pakistan from seceding from West Pakistan in 1971. As Pakistan gained its independence, a new ruling elite emerged and started to misuse its authority. This exploitation has led to ethnic conflict and regional rivalry. The desire for national unity has been stifled by ethnic politics. The division of Pakistan into East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and West Pakistan was one of the worst effects of ethnic politics in that country (now India). The challenges that resulted from the religious division of the Indian Subcontinent are shown through *Ice-Candy Man's* research. Studying *Meatless Days* has made it clear how dangerous ethnically motivated nationalism is and how it has fueled the escalating violence in Pakistan. The book's analysis also reveals the military elites' unwanted dominance in Pakistani politics. Ethnic politics are the main political force in Pakistan. The political spectrum that includes the ethnic and religious minority has supported the neocolonialist organisation, which oppresses its own people under the cover of ethnicity and religion. Pakistan must have a government that is really democratic and responsive to the needs of all its inhabitants. Religious affiliation has a significant role in the marginalisation of minority communities, hence it is crucial that these groups have equal access to the nation's resources and possibilities. Lack of tolerance for diverse ethnic and religious groups is the root of Pakistani violence. No of their ethnicity or religion, every single person who lives in Pakistan is entitled to the same respect and legal protections.

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