

**RACIAL OPPRESSION IN BANGLADESHI SHORT FICTION (SELECTED) OF
FAULT LINES: STORIES OF 1971**

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ABSTRACT: *The secession or liberation of East Pakistan in 1971, one of the most crucial events of the national history of the country, has been a central point of Bangladeshi literature and history. This study is a critical analysis of the selected portion of this large literary bulk. It endeavors to analyze Bangladeshi literature in English by delimiting its focus on the selected short stories of Fault Lines: Stories of 1971. The current study focuses the fictional representations of Bangladeshi writers only. These fictional representations have been critically analyzed by applying the theory of internal colonialism upon them. The application of internal colonial theory highlights racial oppression of the colonized, the Bengalis, by the colonizer, the West Pakistanis. The study shows an apt representation of the internally colonized people by the literary writers among the colonized. The study is an analysis of Bangladeshi Literature in English that is critical of the circumstances and conditions which led to the secession of East Pakistan.*

KEYWORDS: Indigenous Colonialism; Fault Lines: Stories of 1971; Colonizer; Colonized; Racism.

INTRODUCTION

Fault Lines: Stories of 1971 is an anthology consisting of short stories on the theme of 1971. It is a collaborative work of two editors, Niaz Zaman (Bengali) and Asif Farrukhi (Pakistani). Originally the idea came in the mind of Niaz Zaman who on her visit to Karachi in 2006 shared it with Asif Farrukhi. Zaman was of the view that younger generation in both Bangladesh and Pakistan, who had not experienced 1971, knew neither the hopes, the fears, the excitement, the trauma, the loss, nor the despair. According to her, in order to make them aware of their past, a book of short stories on the theme of 1971 should be launched. Both Zaman and Farrukhi agreed to collect material which would cover different facets of the events of 1971. The breakup of Pakistan and the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent state were assisted by violence and bloodshed. These writers strove hard to bring in to limelight the facts and figures of 1971. The reader is taken back to that tough and turbulent time. The stories are based on reality; therefore, it brings tears in the readers' eyes.

1971 has different meanings for both Zaman and Farrukhi. For Niaz, as Bangladeshi, it was a victory, liberation and creation of new nation. For Asif, as Pakistani, it was a double loss. As he puts it, "it is still a fractured landscape for me to begin with. More than liberty mine is the language of loss" (Zaman and Farrukhi xxi).

Postcolonial literature is remarkable in many respects as it emerges from erstwhile colonized societies. It brings into limelight the problems created by the 'self' for the 'other'. It also highlights how the other as community or nation has to decolonize itself. Postcolonial literature is characterized by its opposition to the colonization of all sorts ranging from imperialism to

internal colonialism. However, any literature that expresses an opposition to colonialism, whether it is imperialism, colonialism, neo colonialism or internal colonialism, if it is produced during a colonial period may be termed as postcolonial, primarily because of its oppositional nature. Postcolonial theory/literature throws light on vexed cultural and political questions of national, ethnic identity, racism, cultural and lingual imperialism during and after colonial period. The basic objective of this field is to allow the voices of once colonized people and their descendants to be heard. The lives of the suppressed people could only be uncovered if there is 'multiplicity of histories' not a single history. In this scenario not only the post-structuralists have discarded master narratives but anti-colonial intellectuals have also presented similar views. The postcolonial theorists emphasized on presenting history from the perspective of the colonized presenting an oppositional manner. Nayyar, a contemporary theorist, expresses it as:

I treat postcolonial writing as a literature that critically engages with a history of oppression, colonialism, (both external and internal) racism and injustice, but with a particular emphasis on issues of race and ethnicity. It is a literature of emancipation, critique, and transformation. (xiii)

Bangladeshi literature in English, obviously post-colonial in nature, reflects almost the same themes as are being explored worldwide by 'subalterns'. The Bengali fiction shows the violence exercised by the West Pakistanis on Bengalis and how the later became the unfortunate victims of internal colonialism. This was a painful realization by the East-Pakistanis and it kindled in their hearts a desire for freedom from the colonizers.

Colonialism is a universally condemned concept in the world. The colonial period is generally associated with national humiliation of conquest, military occupation and subservience to the imperial power. The idea of indigenous colonialism has complicated the concept of colonialism. The internal colony is defined in the following words:

An internal colony is a colony that exists inside the boundaries of the state which colonised it. Internal colonialism dismisses the 'salt water' thesis, which holds that colonies can only exist overseas. (Sornarajah 45-77)

The departure of British saw the partition of Subcontinent and the emergence of Pakistan in 1947. The people of Pakistan being Muslims had demanded a homeland in the name of Islam. The Two-Nation Theory laid the foundation of this struggle. The united Pakistan was single nation with dual reference as it consisted of both East and West Pakistan.

After the creation of Pakistan, divisions were found within the people of both East and West Pakistan. It has been a common perception that the West Pakistanis began to look at East Pakistanis as 'the other'. The people of both the wings had fought together for the creation of an independent country but the secession of East Pakistan in 1971 was the evidence of the fact that Pakistani people were unable to live according to the ideal standard of Two-Nation Theory. The people of united Pakistan had divided themselves into Sindhis, Punjabis, Pashtoons and Bengalis instead of being Muslims. These diverse and wide-ranging complex issues met a strange fate in 1971- the vivisection of Pakistan. The secession of East Pakistan was viewed from different angles by the Western and Eastern Pakistanis along with the Indians. The West Pakistanis considered it as the loss of a limb; the East Pakistanis considered it as liberation from suppression, exploitation and violence and for Indians it was a settling of old scores.

It has been a common opinion that the emergence of Bangladesh in 1971, is because of the biased attitude of the West Pakistanis. There have been conflicts between East and West Pakistan since the creation of Pakistan as is mentioned in *Fault Lines: Stories of 1971*.

The *Fault Lines: Stories of 1971* brings many aspects of those hard, troublesome and painful times. There is sense of loss, misery, humiliation and violence in these stories. The anthology portrays the loss of millions of lives symbolically where the harsh reality is never revealed and acknowledged.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study is based on the selected short stories which deal with the theme of 1971, the secession of the East Pakistan, in the back drop of internal colonialism. Therefore, the researchers, in this paper, shall review the relevant critical literature about three important issues- indigenous colonialism, the theme of 1971 and *Fault Lines: Stories of 1971*.

Indigenous colonialism has been witnessed and practiced particularly in post-colonial states. According to Fanon it is “a world cut in two” (38). Indigenous colonial world is a world divided into two and the drastic change in it, is, that the local masters become colonizers as they replace the foreigners and the native remains the colonized. The local-masters consider themselves superior to other natives because of their intimacy with the colonizers during their rule. These local masters continue to suppress the natives by imposing certain laws which go in their own favour and against the local population. Indigenous colonialism is very much like colonialism as it “in terms of the relationships between indigenous people and the colonizers, means a consistently maintained distance and difference” (Wisker 5).

Indigenous colonialism is considered to be an extended form of colonialism. The theory of indigenous colonialism deals with the study of the nature of exploitation. In an indigenous colonial world the exploitation by the local master is same in nature and spirit as “the exploitation of the native by the settler” (Fanon 36) and domination of one’s own nation/state.

Hicks gives a background of the phrase “internal colonialism”. He states that “early Marxist thinkers were among the first to use the evocative phrase ‘internal colonialism’” (1). Indigenous colonialism is done in the name of liberation or freedom and therefore it proves to be a shock to the natives. According to “The Dictionary of Sociology” internal colonialism is “a term used widely to characterize exploitative relationships between a ‘Centre’ and ‘periphery’ within a single nation-state or society” (Marshall 1998). It is about the domination of the ruling group of the same nation over their own countrymen to suppress and exploit them economically, culturally, politically and physically. The rulers violate all the rules and regulations and become the indifferent oppressors. Abercrombie et al define internal colonialism in the following words:

Internal Colonialism refers to political and economic inequalities between regions within a single society...the term may be used to describe the exploitation of minority groups within the wider society...the relationship between coloniser and colony is similarly unequal and exploitative in colonialism and internal colonialism... The members of the internal colonies may be distinguished as different by a cultural variable such as ethnicity, language, or religion.... The main difference between neocolonialism and internal colonialism is the source of exploitation. In the former, the control

comes from outside the nation-state, while in the latter it comes from within"(183)

The internally colonized people are used merely to serve the interests of the colonizers as they have no literal freedom politically, culturally, and economically. They are suppressed by the colonizers and no real steps are taken for their mental, cultural and intellectual development.

The freedom remains a dream for the natives, as only faces change but the same treatment is done to them. Freedom in this case is considered to be an extension of a colonial rule. Internal colonialism exercises the same in local perspective. The country is ruled according to the wishes of the rulers and political, cultural, lingual and ideological trends are imposed upon the ruled.

Indigenous colonialism is akin to neo-colonialism as far as suppression and exploitation of the colonized is concerned. Whisker writes about neo colonialism in the following words;

The ending of colonial or imperial rule created a short-lived hope in many newly independent countries that a properly postcolonial era would mean that those living in the newly independent lands – indigenous peoples, or First Nation peoples, alongside the settler in some instances- would govern according to their own values and rules, independent from their previous colonial or imperial masters. However, in many cases the infrastructure established by Western powers remained, as did the language – for the most part English and other Europeans languages, while continuing western economic, political, military and ideological influence predominated, labeled by Marxists as ‘neo-colonialism’ (6)

The same practice of suppression, exploitation and victimization of the colonized in internal colonial world continues without any check and balance. The absolute authority and power in the hands of the local masters make life tough, complex and intricate for the natives, the internally colonized. The difference lies only in the fact that here ‘local masters’ take the power instead of ‘foreigners’ and become the supreme authority. Internal colonial world is like “the colonial world that is divided into compartments” (Fanon 37). The colonized are exploited, humiliated, molested, victimized and suppressed by the colonizers without any check. This relationship is considered to be a worst one as it fosters hatred among countrymen.

The colonizers, everywhere in the history of the world, have exploited the colonized politically, economically and socially to the extent that the colonized feel helpless and humiliated. The attitude of the colonizers always reflect indifference because they are not ready to create sense of belonging towards the colonized rather they openly show that they, the colonizers, are meant to rule in each and every society. This attitude creates disparity among the general people of the society because it hurts the ego of them, the colonized, and hence they feel alienated, deprived and disgraced; resultantly, such deprived and neglected lot is ready to sacrifice each and everything they have for respect and recognition. The people of East Pakistan were no exception and when they felt deprived, neglected, humiliated and disgraced they had to put all they had at stake to demand for a separate homeland of their own. This was the result of the disparity created by the internal colonizers in the country. It is an established fact that people tolerate each and every atrocity but they do not tolerate humiliation and disgrace.

Hicks refers to Robert Blauner's article 'Internal Colonialism and Ghetto Revolt' in his paper and mentions four components which are common to both internal and external processes of colonization:

1. How the racial group enters into the dominant society... Colonization begins with a forced involuntary entry.
2. An impact on the culture and social organization of the colonized people which is more than just a result of such 'natural' processes as contact and acculturation. Rather, the colonizing power carries out a policy which constrains, transforms, or destroys indigenous values, orientations, and ways of life.
3. Colonization involves a relationship by which members of the colonized group tend to be administered by being managed and manipulated by outsiders in terms of ethnic status.
4. Racism: a principle of social domination by which a group seen as inferior or different in terms of alleged biological characteristics is exploited, controlled, and oppressed socially and physically by a superordinate group (4)

Racial differences flourish out of internal colonialism. The culture of the colonized in an internal colonial world is considered to be improper and unpractical and therefore is devalued and destroyed. People of the same nation-state are labeled as superiors and inferior on false grounds in terms of culture, language and ethnicity. This division is made for the continuation of the practices of disparities, injustices, suppression and above all violence.

Racism

The concept of race has been subject to much debate in recent decades. Robert Miles (1989) defines racism as an ideology that is both false (i.e. unscientific) and partial (i.e. supporting vested capitalist interest). He contends that through racist ideology social reality is disturbed, obscured and clouded by dominant social group who have an interest in hiding the exploitative nature of their relations with other groups (Miles 1989).

Racism is considered to be a combination of prejudice and power. Exponents of racial theory consider it to be an ideology of inferiority that devalues others and justifies inequality. Racism is an expression of the broader phenomenon of oppression and oppression is directly linked to the phenomenon of privilege.

Racism has two forms i.e. direct racism and indirect racism. Direct racism is an unequal treatment that results in equal opportunity. Indirect racism is an equal treatment that results in unequal opportunity. Racism and postcolonial theory are interrelated. They cannot be understood apart from each other. Racial categories like Black, white, Latino, Asian, Mulatto, Quadroon etc. are social constructions. They are produced by social relationships, cultural meanings, and institutions like law, politics, religion, and the state. Moreover, racism is considered to be a central aspect of modern social organization and modern forms of knowledge, like human biology, medicine and law. Memi rejects racist tendency on biological grounds and says "each biological feature is distributed at random among nations, ethnicities and classes" (4). According to Memi "the biological nature of human beings is constituted through continual admixture. Without insisting on the paradox, one could say that we are all of mixed origin" (12). "The

Africans', being black and 'The Europeans', being white, present the diversity. The divisions cannot be made on the basis of characteristics possessed and colour. So there is no justification, of any sort, for any type of colonialism to exploit human beings and divide them into different classes on lingual and cultural basis. Oliver Cromwell Cox's work, *Caste, Class and Race* (1948) also opposes the view that racism is a product of any inherent human tendency. According to him it is a fictitious concept. It originates in 'a practical exploitative relationship' and is used to justify the exploitation of one group by another.

Racism, far from being a problem of the past "continues to circulate and reproduce itself in multiple guises that not only marginalize and exclude particular minority out-groups, but also represent them as "other," "different," and "lesser than" the dominant in-group" (Augoustinos 43). Gannett says that "Race is social construct without biological foundation" (482). According to Vorster "Race" is a "group of people with the same physical characteristics and with notable cultural and social similarities" (296). Racism helps one to devise certain ways in which particular minority groups continue to be positioned as not only inferior, but less than human, in most cases.

This hierarchical construction of social groups in which particular groups are given high-order qualities and traits than others has a long history. Marthe Augoustinos says, "although notions of race and racial difference have been transformed over time to rely less on biological framings, remnants of these representations persist in ordinary (and scientific) sense-making practices to account for group differences and in representations of "us" and "them" (44)

No one gets the right to claim superiority in the name of pure race. This fake superiority exercised by some groups over others is used to legitimate the unequal distribution of society's resources. Internal masters do the same activity. Those at the top command their power and maintain dominance over those lower in hierarchy. Indigenous colonialism is similar to absolute authority. Local masters suppress and exercise complete control over the subjects. Local masters support and prolong their rule on the pretext and help of racist ideology.

Indigenous colonialism instigates racial differences or discrimination. The local masters make the subjects believe that they are inferior to them on racial and lingual grounds. The internal colonizers exercise complete control over the colonized. They do so in order to suppress and victimize them in the name of racism.

Theoretical Framework

The study is based on the theory of indigenous colonialism and is a descriptive one. Indigenous colonialism has been defined in *Postcolonial reader* in the following words:

All postcolonial societies are still subject in one way or the other to overt or subtle forms of neo-colonial domination, and independence has not solved the problem. The development of new elites within independent societies, often buttressed by neo-colonial institutions; the development of internal divisions based on racial, linguistic or religious discriminations; the continuing unequal treatment of indigenous peoples in settler/invader societies-all these testify to the fact that post-colonialism is a continuous process of resistance and reconstruction. (Ashcroft et al 2)

Ashcroft et al explain in the above definition that nations after gaining freedom are not free. They got only freedom in name but are deprived of the fruits of freedom. It is only a change of

masters from external to internal. They are treated as subjects by their own fellow countrymen. Therefore, certain issues like racism, cultural hegemony, political and economic exploitation and violence are treated, which come into limelight as a result of internal colonialism but only one characteristic of indigenous colonialism i.e racism is under consideration in the present research work.

The theory of internal colonialism has been applied to the selected short stories of *Fault Lines: Stories of 1971* in this study. The selected short stories have been examined in the light of the theory of internal colonialism, as explained above by Ashcroft. The analysis helped to discover racism in the selected short stories of *Fault Lines* written on the theme of 1971, which ultimately divided the society into different sections.

The material for this study has been collected through various sources like literary works on the subjects by scholars, historical description of 1971, reference books, journals and articles on the internal colonialism theory and racism.

ANALYSIS

The selected short stories of *Fault Lines: Stories of 1971* are about the lives of the Bengali people and are based on the theme of 1971. The fictional representations inform the readers that how Pakistan was divided into East and West wings and then subdivided on the basis of ethnicity, language and culture into Punjabi, Bengali and Bihari. Most of the people living in united Pakistan were the followers of one God and PBUH, and the homeland was won in the name of Islam. The basic teaching of Islam is that all are equal and no one has any superiority whatsoever over the other. The stories give a clear picture of the lives and the treatment meted out to the Bengalis- the East Pakistanis by West Pakistanis. The Bengalis were considered, taken and believed to be 'race' – the Bengali race due to their black/brown complexion and were maltreated by their fellow brethren, the West Pakistanis. They were considered inferior and therefore crushed and degraded and regarded as sub human. The following stories i.e *The Body*, *Lucky Escape*, *Nineteen seventy one* and *Going to war* bring into focus the otherness of East Pakistanis on racial grounds.

The Body

The story "The Body" is about the death of Shankar Da and its consequences on his family. Shankar Da is killed in recent riots and his family is whacked in a very tough and tight situation after his death. Kanai brings this sad news of the death of Shankar Da to Maaloti. He expresses remorse over the death of Shankar Da and also shares the decision of migration of his family members to safe place. Kanai tells Maaloti that all the dead bodies are in PTI building and it is quite difficult to identify a dead body because all the heads have been separated from the bodies. Maaloti along with her children reaches the building. The old man is in the building in order to take care of the dead bodies and to guide the relatives of the dead ones. She along with her children collects the dead body. They are broken hearted but even in such situation, they are terrorized and humiliated by the West Pakistani army. The soldiers check the dead body and during their checking the head of Shankar Da rolls on the road. The element of racism is depicted in the short story "The Body". The story shows that East Pakistanis living in West Pakistan are taken as 'the other'. The West Pakistanis endanger the lives of the people of the eastern part of

Pakistan. They are killed not for any crime, but for being Bengalis. Maaloti's husband has been killed by West Pakistanis. Kanai comes to her house and informs her about this sad incident;

The Pakistanis have killed Shankar Da. We should collect the dead body. Old Moslem told me that there are corpses stacked by the side of the PTI building. It looks like a market for dead bodies – so many people are going there to claim the bodies of their relatives. You can also find his body if you go there in time. (32)

Maaloti makes her children memorize few sentences, before going to collect the dead body of her husband, in order to keep them safe from the West Pakistanis:

I'm Kamal. I'm Muslim. I am a good boy whispered these words to himself all the way. Maaloti had taught him the words. He had memorised them well. He was a boy; he might be in trouble. And if anyone asked Bimola, she was to say that her name was Moyna. (33)

The story shows that the West Pakistanis considered the East Pakistanis as an inferior race. They exploited them in every walk of life. The working of the prejudiced mind in the back drop of internal colonial and racist approach is witnessed in the case of East Pakistan. The Bengalis are treated as an inferior race and hence sub human, too. The label of a different race is given and many heinous crimes are committed in the name of superiority, race, religion and ethnicity. The ruling class eschews all such terrible events and is concerned only with their own benefits. .

Lucky Escape

It is a story of the unfortunate people of one of the town in East Pakistan. The narrator of the story is a lady who was among these people. According to her, these people were afraid from the attack of West Pakistani army. In order to save their lives, they ran away in a group to a village. They ensconced themselves in the house of Sultan Bhai. Although Sultan Bhai was not a rich man and it was quite difficult for him to accommodate them, but he welcome them wholeheartedly. The lady gives minute details of the incidents that had happened to them because she witnessed everything very closely. These people left their town and took refuge in a village because of the fear of West Pakistanis but fortune had stored something different for them. The West Pakistani army attacked the village where they took shelter. This group hid in the under construction wall at the house of Sultan Bhai. The time during which the army stayed there was very difficult for them.

The hardships which the people of the town faced during that exodus highlight postcolonial features. The issue of racism has been mentioned very clearly in this story. The old Bengali woman shares her own experiences with public in conference of women's peace initiative. She says that she along with her family and many other people were going to a village in Dhaka for safety. The situation in East Pakistan was very tense and there was no law and order. All the people were afraid of bloodshed in the name of racism. They were discussing the current situation of the country. They ask each other in ire and anger "Heard about the killings in Dhaka? What killings? The killings by the Pakistanis? But why should Pakistanis kill us? We are also Pakistanis" (38). When the families reached at Sultan Bhai's home, they were still afraid of the arrival of army:

And the same questions, the same answers. Who are coming? The Pakistanis
The Pakistanis? But we too are Pakistanis. The Punjabis, the Punjabis are

coming. That they understood, though what a Punjabi was difficult to explain and why there should be the feeling of terror. (39)

The lady says that the West Pakistani soldiers asked for proof for being Muslims. They killed Bengalis not for any other reason but for being Bengalis.

The Pakistani soldiers had asked people for proof that they were Muslim, but these shooting soldiers wouldn't ask them to say the kalma. They would shoot and then perhaps realize too late, when they -uncovered-the dead by Dressy that the menial been circumcised. They were Muslims whom they had killed. But they wouldn't feel sorry. Their crime was that they were Bengali. Being Bengali was crime enough. Bengali and Muslim did not go together (42).

The racial oppression is highlighted in the story. The above lines show that the soldiers are concerned only with killing Bengalis. The hatred of the army officers for the people of East Pakistan has its roots in racism. The army oppressed the Bengalis on ethnic grounds and differences.

Nineteen Seventy One

This story throws light particularly on the treatment of West Pakistanis with Bengalis. A group of soldiers in the leadership of a major passes through a village. There is complete silence in the village because the villagers are in a nearby jungle for their safety. The soldiers stop in the village for the purpose of rest. They see a smiling man coming towards them. Later on they come to know that he is not a normal man but a mad one. They do not spare him because of his madness and hangs him to a tree. The other person who is present in the village is Master Aziz. He stuck in the village because of his domestic problem. His sister is having labour pain and she does not accompany them in their escape.

The news of the arrival of army spread in the village like fire in a jungle. The mother of Master Aziz and his uncle force him to meet the soldiers. According to them Master Aziz is an educated man, knows English and has the capability to handle the soldiers. Master Aziz is reluctant to go, but after sometime he decides to meet them. The major orders him to put off his clothes and stand naked in front of the soldiers. He asks him several questions about his loyalty, his love for Pakistan. At the end the major labels him a traitor. The major crosses all the limits of humanity and hurts the body and soul of an innocent man.

The element of racism is present in the story "Nineteen Seventy One". The story demonstrates that the West Pakistanis hatred for the Bengalis has its roots in racism. They suppressed and exploited them on ethnic grounds and differences. The cruel attitude of the local masters has been shown in detail in this story. They treated the Bengalis as their subjects and considered them inferior. This attitude of the internal masters is similar to that of the Britishers before the independence of the Indian sub- continent. The West Pakistani army considered themselves superior because they had power in their hands and with this power they exploited the Bengalis. They crushed their ego and self-respect.

Aziz master is humiliated by the soldiers not for any other fault but for being an inhabitant of the East Pakistan. The conversation between the major and Aziz master is a proof of that:

The major lit his pipe. He said something in a cold voice to someone in Punjabi or some other language. The man came over and slapped Aziz master

hard on his cheek. Aziz Master fell over on his back. Tied to the mango tree, Crazy Bodi said in surprise, “Oh, Master, get up then, get up” (60)

The humiliating attitude of the major towards Azizur Rehman is clear in the above lines. Aziz ur Rehman, being a teacher, is a builder of the future of a nation. His status demands respect and honour, but instead, he is humiliated and beaten.

The major asked as if nothing had happened, “what is your name?”

“Azizur Rehman”.

“Azizur Rehman , do you have freedom fighters here?”

“No”

“Everyone is Pakistani?”

“Yes”

“Well, that’s good. You yourself are a pure Pakistani, right?”

“Yes Sir.”

“If you’re all Pakistanis, then what are you afraid of? It seems to me that all the villagers have fled in fear. The women are all hiding in the jungle. Am I right?” (60)

At another point in the story the major asks Aziz master:

The major said, “Azizur Rehman , you are lying out of fear to save your life. Tell me the truth, and I will let you go. Do you like me?”

“No”

“Now we’re getting the truth. Do you want this to become Bangladesh?”

“Yes, Sir.”

“So, you’re a traitor. Traitors should be put to death. That is what I would like to do.” (61)

This attitude of the major clearly reflects racist element. Aziz master is insulted and the main reason behind his insult is his ethnicity. The Bangalis are taken as ‘traitors’ and this labeling too has racist element in it. This racial oppression adds to the seriousness of a crime. Aziz ur Rehman is innocent and has not committed any crime but his humiliation and torture establish the point that Bengalis are inferior and hence need to be kept at an arm’s length. .

Going to War

This story is about the young generation of the eastern part of Pakistan. Their suffering, mental state and way of thinking have been mentioned. Due to the barbaric pummeling of the East Pakistanis at the hands of West Pakistanis, the young generation became rebellious during these days. Everyone wanted to be a part of the liberation war. The situation was very tense but there

was no publicity of that on media. It made the young generation revengful. The Bengalis considered the secession of East Pakistan as the only panacea of these hardships.

Tokon, the central character of the story also wants to be a part of war. He does not join because of his family problems. He considers his family to be a hindrance in his way. He remains sleepless and speechless. He lost his concentration power. The only thought with which he is obsessed is “going to war”. He is of the opinion that, he will be satisfied only by joining the liberation war. The urge of young man to join the freedom fighters and his satisfaction over his final decision has been depicted. Young generation is considered to be the future of nation. The citizens of successful nation have books and pens in their hands instead of guns and bombs.

The desire of young man to fight against the internal masters has been shown in this story. The local masters left no stone unturned to exploit the Bengalis. They generated a lot of heat and acrimony between the people of eastern and western part of Pakistan. A huge gap was there between the Muslims of the East and West Pakistan. They were thirsty for each other’s blood. In this story, Tokon has strong determination to fight against West Pakistani army. The local masters dominate every field of life. They use every available resource to exploit the Bengalis. The reason behind the ghettoization of the people of the eastern part is the biased attitude of West Pakistanis. The basic function of media is to bring truth and reality in front of the public, but it does the opposite of that. Media lend full support to the West Pakistanis to destroy the hook, line and sinker of the East Pakistanis.

He listens to Radio Pakistan. Mrs. Shahnaz is singing away a song mocking the war of liberation. And on the news it is all about Bangladesh dissolving into dust. Enraged, he quivers from head to foot. Dissolved in dust, eh, is that how it is...? Let 25 days pass, then we will see about whose existence gets trampled to the ground. (114)

The story shows clearly the hatred of West Pakistanis for Bengalis. Although the creation of Pakistan was the result of the joint efforts of both East and West Pakistanis but now the situation is totally opposite to that. The circumstances are so tense that one cannot expect camaraderie from the citizens of the two parts of Pakistan. The rulers are so unabashedly skewed as to see no crime or sin in the massacre of hapless people. Their hatred has reached to that point where they are ready to dash one another to the ground as is mentioned in the above lines.

The story “Going to War” reveals the fact that the East Pakistanis are forced to enter a war which they don’t want. They have demanded equality, rights, identity and freedom in form and spirit which has been denied to them.

CONCLUSION

Thus the above discussion shows that indigenous colonialism triggers discrimination and racism in East Pakistan. The selected short stories of *Fault Lines: Stories of 1971* provide evidences and authenticate this notion. The East Pakistanis have been considered and treated as a different race on ethnic, cultural and lingual basis by the West Pakistanis. The East Pakistanis have been degraded from the status of nation to a race or an ethnicity. The West Pakistanis make false grounds over which the status of East Pakistanis as a different race is established and propagated. The colonized – the East Pakistanis have been deprived of cultural and lingual freedom, proper political representation, recognition and identity equal status and economic equality. All these factors being different aspects of indigenous colonialism exhibit the discrimination of the East

Pakistanis on racial grounds. The short stories depict that the East Pakistanis realize all these different types of exploitation and dare to stand and resist against suppression and discrimination. Indigenous colonialism is akin to all sorts of exploitation.

To sum up, the study has made it crystal clear that the East Pakistanis were marginalized on the basis of race and ethnicity, the factor that forced the Bengalis to claim for Bengali nationalism and to resist Pakistani nationalism. *The Fault Lines: Stories of 1971* presented all these issues in the light of the details of the event of 1971.

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