

**Recounting Communal Violence and Countering Meta-  
Narratives: Relevance of Story-Telling in Amitav Ghosh's  
*The Shadow Lines* and *In An Antique Land***

**Raja Basu**

It all began in 1979, in Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines*, soon after the author began his work on Ph.D. when he had gone to attend a lecture in Teen Murti House Library in New Delhi. The speaker an Australian specialist on Asian affairs spoke on India's war with China in 1962 (Ghosh1988: 219). The author went down the memory lane of October 1962 and remembered the day, soon after the Pujas, at their new house on Southern Avenue. His father was supposed to take him and his mother to visit relatives, but he came abnormally late and had declared how Nehru had told the army to drive those 'Chinkies' back from "our border" (219). Ghosh's other friends who were sitting at the canteen, had their own associations of memory to outpour. Malik, one out of them said, "It was the most important thing that happened in the country when we were children" (220). All agreed, except the author, for whom "it was just a stupid little skirmish somewhere in the hills. It wasn't important at all. We wouldn't even remember if the Indian army hadn't taken such a beating. It didn't mean a thing to most people"(220). The text, thus, becomes a classic case of conflicting stories or contesting histories, on one hand that of the author's undocumented personal memory borne, and on the flip side, that of the documented historical textual ones of Malik and others.

Malik promptly asked smiling "You tell us then – what was more important than the '62 war?" The author replied "What about the riots..." "Which riots? said Malik. There are so many". "Those riots, I said. I had to count the years out on my fingers. The riots of 1964, I said".

To Ghosh, or, the adult narrator's bewilderment, everybody had gone blank, "What were the riots of 1964?" It dawned on the author then, that, they were all Delhi people and that, he "was the only person there who had grown up in Calcutta." The author added, "There were terrible riots in Calcutta in 1964".

"I see, said Malik. What happened?"

"I opened my mouth to answer and found I had nothing to say. All I could have told them about was of the sound of the voices running past the walls of my school, and of a glimpse of a mob in Park Circus. The silent terror that surrounded my memory of those events, and my belief in their importance, seemed laughably out of proportion to those trivial recollections (221).

Just because incidents are often not recorded does the value of it diminish? Even recording of an event in itself, as the New Historicists would like to put, depends on the ideological positioning of the person concerned. Here, compared to Calcutta, Delhi proves to be the centre, and as a space, represents the "real" India compared to Calcutta.

Here, the 1964 riots in Calcutta, is seen from the viewpoint of the child-focalizer of the first person narrator who naturally will always have a partial view and understanding of the events. Before getting into the details of the eventful day which was so significant and had shaped the author's childhood, Ghosh feels obliged to prove to Malik that those events were not a figment of his imagination but "real". He drags Malik to the library. But the author remembered neither the day nor the month as they did of the Sino-Indian war of October 1962 (221). But again, it was the 1<sup>st</sup> Test Match between India and England in Madras in which an injured Farouk Engineer was replaced by BudhiKunderan who went on to score a maiden century (198,222). Again, it is the associative power of memory and events that often latches several other events to the "important ones" and get etched on our memory often displacing the otherwise major ones (like the Sino-Indian war here) by dint of personal prioritizing of events. Thus, it becomes not just a question of writing a feminist or a subaltern history, but a viewing of the past through personal tinted glasses of understanding, and arranging of events that may vary radically, as it happens with Ghosh and his friends.

"What Postmodern theories about the writing of both history and fiction have taught us," as Linda Hutcheon says is that "both history and fiction are discourses,

that both constitute systems of signification by which we make sense of events and experiences (exertions of the shaping, ordering imagination)". In other words, the meaning and shape are not in the events, but in the systems which make those past "events" into present historical "facts" (Hutcheon1988:89). Thus there is not one truth but many truths (109). As Jameson says, considered as a transition between past and future, every present is at once a realization of projects performed by past agents and a determination of a field of possible projects to be realized by living human agents in their future(White1987:149). Ricoeur says, "What the historical narrative literally asserts about specific events is that they really happened, and what it figuratively suggests is that the whole sequence of events that really happened has the order and significance of well made stories"(177). While events did happen in the real empirical past, 'we name and constitute those events as historical facts by selection and narrative positioning"(Hutcheon1988:97). The past however is 'archaeologized' and it can be 'approached' only by "passing through its prior textualisations" (93). This is not unrelated to Collingwood's early notion that the historian's job is to tell plausible stories, made out of the mess of fragmentary and incomplete facts, facts which he or she processes and to which he or she grants meaning through emplotment (Hutcheon 1989:67). Hayden White, of course, goes even further and points to how historians suppress, repeat, subordinate, highlight and order those facts, but once again, the result is to endow the events of the past with a certain meaning(67). All narratives are like fictions that select, distort, frame, highlight and represent events from specific perspectives (White1987: 67-68). Thus, when one is going to "go to history", one had better have a clear idea of which history, and one should have a very good notion as to whether it is hospitable to the values one carries into it(164). Postmodernism focuses more on what history and fiction share than on how they differ. Both of them are highly conventionalized linguistic constructs in their narrative forms, both of them are inter-textual when deploying the past seeking help of earlier texts, documents (Hutcheon1989:105). History (discourse of the real) is made desirable or the discourse of the desire is imposed through a narrative of the imaginary or fictitious via emplotment (Mitchell1982:19). What takes place here in *The Shadow Lines* with the author, or his friends, is in no way anything different as they all view the past from their personal preferences.

Ghosh, Malik and others search, therefore, in the newspapers of the cricketing season of January and February 1964, and soon reach a headline 'Madras Test begins

Today' on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> January 1964(Ghosh1988: 223). But the news of riot is nowhere to be found. Even when they find it at the bottom of the page with a headline which said: 'Twenty-nine killed in riots' it turns out to be an event of Khulna, East Pakistan, and not Kolkata(223). Long after Malik was gone it occurred to the author that newspapers carry the news a day late and on opening the edition on Saturday, 11January, 1964 a huge headline followed: 'Curfew in Calcutta, Police opened Fire, 10 dead, 15 wounded.' Another headline at the bottom of the page said: 'Kunderan's day at Madras, unbeaten 170 in the first Test'. And right above it was 'a tiny little book item' in bold print with the headline: 'Sacred relic reinstalled', which said 'the sacred hair of the Prophet Mohammad was reinstalled in the Hazratbal shrine in Srinagar today amongst a tremendous upsurge of popular festivity throughout Kashmir'(224).

The sacred hair or the Mu-i-Mubarak – believed to be the hair of the Prophet Mohammad himself which was a sacred relic of Muslims was purchased by a Kashmiri merchant Khwaja-Nur-ud-din in Bijapur(near Hyderabad) in 1699 and put in the Hazratbal mosque. The mosque had become a great centre of pilgrimage and every year multitudes of people, Kashmiris of every kind, Muslims, Hindus, Sikh and Buddhists would flock to Hazratbal on those occasions when the relic was displayed to the public(224). But on 27<sup>th</sup> December 1963, 263 years after it had been brought to Kashmir the relic disappeared from the mosque(225). Over the next few days life in the valley seemed to close in upon itself in a spontaneous show of collective grief(225). It was an occasion to believe in the syncretic civilisation of the nation as people from all communities participated in black flag demonstrations. Though on 4<sup>th</sup> January 1964 the Mu-i-Mubarak was 'recovered' by the official of the Central Bureau of Intelligence after Prime Minister Nehru had ordered to find the missing relic(226). When the whole valley flocked on the streets in demonstrations of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs giving the celebratory slogan 'Central Intelligence Zindabad' in Khulna, 'a small town in the distant east wing of Pakistan, a demonstration that was marching in protest against the theft of the relic turned violent. Some shops were, burnt down and a few people were killed.' The author now also remembers another event that it was the day before that when May, Tridib, his cousin and grandmother had left for Dhaka to bring home Jethamoshai and Tridib must have got killed in the same riot of Khulna. For long, the narrator had harboured a grudge against his father, that, he had deliberately allowed them to go to Dhaka in spite of knowing about the disturbances there (227). But he realizes now that the editions of 1,2 and 3 January of a 'Calcutta daily' could never

hint at the slightest stirrings in Khulna, and thus, his father was not to be blamed(227). Neither did that same Calcutta daily carry any news of the events in Kashmir nor any trouble in East Pakistan(227). Ghosh shows, how often the general is interweaved with the personal, not just in terms of experiences but deeply entrenched feelings of resentment that one often harbours unknowingly against someone, or, one becomes a victim of events, which however personal, finds no response with the general news or events in general. Thus, there is the need to foreground memories and personal experiences, however undocumented, to not just fill in the gaps in the large totalizing meta-narratives of history that often accrues the tag of the 'real', quite ironically when it in itself is subjective and spatially varying, but also, to show how memories can function as counter-narratives or alternative narratives to the general totalized narratives that take on the role of contesting myths. Thus, the prioritizing of events, depends on the newspaper one chooses. Presentation or rather re-presentation of events would certainly alter. As a result, the Delhi based Malik had never heard of a riot to have taken place in Calcutta, a peripheral event, spatially speaking, keeping in mind where he was positioned. One of considerable national significance, like the war with China in the Delhi based newspaper that Malik must have read then, along with the narrator's other Delhi based friends, drowns other events and relegates them to non-events depending on media responses and coverages. On the flip side, for the narrator, the "big" Sino-Indian war was a 'stupid little skirmish somewhere on the hills.' Thus, in a national daily the Khulna Riots had featured as it was a happening of a neighbouring country, only finding space at the bottom with the Madras Test. Yet, the narrator's father who must have read a Calcutta daily was aware of the Calcutta riots, but unfortunately neither of the Khulna events nor the Hazratbal issue, which cost Tridib his life.

To return to the actual events that the boy narrator faced on 10<sup>th</sup> January, 1964 in Calcutta was that his mother regular on the morning news of the transistor radio missed out and so he went out to wait for his bus as usual(198). Two boys who did not turn up did not surprise the boy narrator because the first India-England Test was to begin in Madras that day and they might have stayed back for the commentary. But when the bus arrived its seats were empty and most of the boys sat at the backseat huddled together. However as they saw him the narrator exclaims, "it was my water bottle that had attracted their attention" (199). The others were carrying soda as one of the boys informed that he had heard from his mother that 'they had poured poison

into the Tala Tank that the whole of Calcutta water supply was poisoned'. They decided to enquire about it from Montu the Muslim guy. But at Gol Park he was not by the tube-well where he usually waited for the bus. The child narrator while crossing Montu's house in bus said that, 'stealing a quick glance down his lane I saw a gap in his curtain and I knew he was watching us (200). 'Soon after one by one, we unscrewed the caps of our bottles and poured the water out' (200).

Kakar in *The Colours Of Violence* says, how more or less the riot related stories follow an identical pattern. What he hears in 1969 in Ahmedabad is akin to what he had heard in Rohtak when a child. Thus he heard how the milk vendors were bribed by the Muslims to mix poison in milk, after consuming which four children were lying unconscious and two dogs had died. Again in another instance he had heard that Muslims had entered into grocery shops in the night and mixed powdered glass with salt(Kakar1995: 43). Similar accounts are to be found in ShashiTharoor's *Riot* as well, rumours that foment anxiety and lead to riots. Other reasons are the processions, Muslim *tazia* getting entangled in sacred *pipal* tree of Hindus or even hitting the cow that stood for a munch at the stand of a Muslim vegetable vendor triggering off a riot(56). In *Riot* too, as Kakar shows, taking processions, selection of routes close to the Muslim ghetto is seen as a major show of strength(59).

SudhirKakar helps us to analyse how the notion of a 'Montu', the Muslim guy or the 'other' is developed in the Hindu consciousness from childhood through images as 'beef-eater' though the British too falls in the same category but never constitute the 'other,' a defining antagonistic component of the Hindu self. The Muslim butcher in his 'blood-flecked undervest and lungi,' wielding a huge carving knife is a figure of 'awe and dread for the Hindu child' and generates a 'fear-tinged repulsion for the adult' (28). For Kakar even the walls of the Muslims' houses reeked of and were embedded with strong pungent odour of garlic, onion, ginger, coriander and cumin to cook mutton(33). Old men with henna-dyed beard smoking hookahs, sitting on cots, gossiping or women covered from head to toe with white or black veils were the early impressions of the author regarding Muslims(33). Kakar further adds:

The image of Muslim animality is composed of the perceived ferocity, rampant sexuality, and demand for instant gratification of the male, and a dirtiness which is less a matter of bodily cleanliness and more of an inner pollution as a consequence of forbidden, tabooed foods. This image

is an old one also to be found in S.C.Dube's thirty year-old anthropological account of a village outside in Hyderabad: 'The Muslims are good only in two things – they eat and copulate like beasts. Who else except a Muslim would even think of going to bed with his uncle's daughter, who is next only to his real sister?' (137)

To return to Ghosh's text, in the mathematics class of Miss Anderson the children heard sounds outside the high walls of the school, sounds that sounded like 'voices'. And then the boy narrator in *The Shadow Lines* recounts :

There is a uniquely frightening note in the sound of those voices – not elemental, not powerful like the roar of an angry crowd – rather a torn, ragged quality: a crescendo of discords which you know, because of the slippery formlessness of the fear it creates within you, to be the authentic sound of chaos the moment you hear it (201).

Who is the focalizer here? The child narrator, or, the adult-narrator? The fear is uniquely the child's but the analysis of it and mature control over language bespeaks of someone else's version. Even then, such narratives, in spite of the questions raised over their credulity as alternative narratives or micro narratives to the original event, in their uniqueness as 'voice' and imaginative quality hold relevance, a subject to which I will arrive in a little while. Recounting his own childhood experiences of a riot Kakar speaks of his own uncertainty how often about the 'knowing' that can hardly be trusted 'to represent reality or are even wholly mine' (Kakar 1995: 40). As has already been discussed, history proper, too, has often to arrive at such thresholds of uncertainty. Thus the intrusion of elder-narrator-focalizer is not unwarranted as many personal notions often get mixed with childhood realities that are painted by early impressions. Then, is not history too after all outputs of personal impressions given a sense of objectivity?

In *The Shadow Lines* too, the whole day remains etched in the form of blobs of paint in the memory like the BudhiKunderan day of the 1<sup>st</sup> India – England Test at Madras, the wait at the bus stand, the blue bus running as a serpent, Montu's imagined presence behind the curtain which strengthens the already ingrained fear of poisoning water by Muslims of Tala Tank, Miss Anderson's class and the uncanny sounds around school, empty paan-stalls and above all the abandoned rickshaw. It is more the absence than the presence, the fear of the abstract and formless that catches the imagination

of not just the child narrator, but even of Tublu's exposing the unique nature of 'voice' to which we will arrive in a while. Seen from the child narrator's perspective, the absence of the other two boys at the bus stand, or, the water bottle drawing attention of other boys in the bus, Montu's absence, press the point of poisoning of Tala Tank, and veers the events into the world of rumours of the adults. But the unnamed fear experienced by a child is the distinct 'voice' that goes missing in history books, or, newspaper reporting in small spaces, which actually means so much for the one who has personally experienced the whole thing. Similarly the complicated experience of the sound and the fear that is generated in the boy narrator in *The Shadow Lines* can't be expressed in such unique semantics unless and until the focalizer shifts to the elderly narrator. The act of representation in history is here metaphorically represented through such narratological and focalization shifts, as the uniqueness and meaninglessness of events get caught up in the web of narration and emplotment, drowning the 'voice' in the process.

The child narrator further recalls his experience as there was a holiday declared early the same day while returning from school:

We climbed into the bus in awestruck silence. This time, automatically, each of us picked a seat beside the window. As soon as the bus pulled away from the school we could tell something on those streets had changed in the couple of hours since we had last driven thoroughly through them: we saw that street twice every day, but now it seemed somehow unfamiliar. The pavements, usually thronged with vendors and passers-by, were eerily empty now – except for squads of patrolling policemen. All the shops were shut, even the paan-stalls at the corners: none of us had ever seen *those* shut before. Then the bus turned off into another, narrower street which we didn't know. The pavements were not quite as empty now; we could see knots of men hanging around at corners. They could look at our bus speculatively as we passed by. They were quite, watchful; they seemed to be waiting for something (202).

The child narrator's angst is palpable and yet inexplicable. The author provides us with yet another graphic of a riot torn city with which we all are pretty familiar.

Tublu shook my elbow and pointed at a rickshaw that had been pulled across the mouth of a narrow lane. The others saw it too and turned to

stare. We couldn't take our eyes off it, even after we had left it far behind. There was no reason for us to stare: we saw rickshaws standing at untidy angles in the streets every time we went out. And yet we could not help staring at it: there was something about the angle at which it had been placed that was eloquent of an intent we could not fathom: had it been put there to keep Muslims in or Hindus out? At that moment we could read the disarrangement of our universe in the perfectly ordinary angle of an abandoned rickshaw(203).

However the passage carries analysis of a specific situation where the boy narrator says regarding the unnatural angle of the rickshaw 'had it been...Muslims in or Hindus out' seems quite unnatural yet the gripping fear of a child is not out of place though the deep rooted expressions seem to be that of the adult narrator-focalizer. The boy like all of us had a mental map which was geometrically perfect Euclidean one which seemed to go berserk because of the disarranged angles of the lone rickshaw kept on the road. The point is that we are used to thinking in terms of neatly structured universe more so with children who walk with measured steps putting each step in the middle of the square blocks on a pavement that provides them with an amount of security. Even Thamma who returns to Dhaka years after, had her own map of Dhaka etched in her memory on the basis of nostalgia, familiar smells and constructions, is surprised on reaching the airport, and once driving through the city asks: "Where's Dhaka? I can't see Dhaka". (193,206). It is on the basis of such nostalgia and memory that mental mappings and understanding of spaces are done, and thereby fortified in mind, to which one seeks to return time and again to find that world intact, to draw security and sustenance undoing all other geographical and political markers. It is importantly this mental estimate of space to which Ghosh returns time and again, and such a world is beyond other communal, linguistic or social divisions, metaphorically represented by a dumb Fokir who pans borders of both the nations silently, oblivious of any other divisions in *The Hungry Tide*. Fokir's silence also refers to the otherwise mute nature of past events that are given meaning only by the deft manoeuverings of a historian. This world of Ghosh is non-regimented by geographical lines, where, 'the Dampier and Hodges line' becomes the folkloric line of DokkhinRai, and such mental worlds find their fitting corollary not in documented books of history, but in and through the orally woven stories and folklores. The distant past, be it that of occupying Sundarbans, or, that of the Partition, gradually take on the semantics of folkloric other

worldly past akin to myths, personal narratives, framed through tinted glasses of memories, where believing in the ‘unreal’ often has its strengths and positives.

When, at one point in *The Shadow Lines* the children confront the rioters who attack the bus with stones, and the bus driver turns and races the blue bus through an unknown street, the boy narrates:

None of us looked at each other. We could not recognize the streets we were careering through. We did not know whether we were going home or not (203)

This sense of feeling lost in the most familiar of places probably draws our attention to the ‘voice’, above the underlying events of riot, and hence the relevance of such micro-narratives. Deepak Mehta in his essay ‘Writing the Riot: Between the Historiography and Ethnography of Communal Violence in India’ had pointed out that riot narratives sanitize violence and try to put them into neat categories of narratives on communal strife, thereby totalising them. In the process, the voice is left out. Thus, the relation between speech and violence is not merely referential: descriptions on violence often point to free-floating signifiers prior to their binding. These free-floating signifiers are the voice without bearer (Mehta 2002: 213). Violence gets individuated in speech, which is relative, and varies from person to person who describe that voice of violence behind speech. Voice, thus, is disembodied and moulds experience of the speakers (210). The boy’s experience of fear is more a voice, as he grapples with an experience which cannot be set in any neat communal categories of violence. The nature of voice is ungrounded, displaced from the originary and essentially ‘virtual’ since the original never remains the same in its representation in speech. It is the individual experience of violence, its effect or leftover that regulates speech in the form of silence, assumption, reassurances, speculation and complains in individual speeches, which is more than the act of violence in itself is, and thereby generate multiple narratives, like the child narrator’s voice here, discreet from the master narratives’ totalizing tendencies.

Post positivists strive for an objectivity of knowledge. They accept all theoretical positions as essentially flawed yet accept such positioning, just as they strive for the said objectivity. The multiple positionalities and perspectives are seen as layers in a palimpsest where none of them are prioritized as complete or final or tried to be thrust into or left out of a totalizing discourse on Hindu-Muslim riots. It is a process of

learning through errors and a growth of an empathy, love beyond the constructed theorised identities and boundaries of caste, religion, language etc. Paula M. L. Moya and Michael R. Hames-Garcia in *Reclaiming Identity* have stressed such stances based on memory. Western philosophy essentially discards the claims of memory, intuition and emotion as fallible and irrational as compared to the empirical, rational, evidential, documented modalities of understanding. But for a moral realist, our values are more than just personal and subjective beliefs; they are crucial theoretical “prisms” or interpretive frameworks, ‘through which people view the world and make sense of their experiences and social location’ (Moya and Garcia 2000: 192). It is here that stories and what we might well call micro-narratives based on personal experiences that get the theoretical acceptance in challenging meta-narratives and retrieving multiple aspects of the same past. It is also in acknowledging these multiple narratives that we prioritize the ‘voice’ that spills over events during individual recounts defying to remain stuck in few official categories of violence and/or versions of communal riots as in Ghosh’s *The Shadow Lines* or Tharoor’s *Riot*.

To elaborate a little, we saw how rumours function during such riots. “Rumours”, points out SudhirKakar in *Culture and Psyche*, “lending words and images, however horrific, to the imminent threat of deathly violence against the self and one’s community, give rise to complex emotions, not only the feelings of dread and danger but also of exhilaration at the transcendence of individual boundaries and the feelings of closeness and belonging to an entity beyond one’s self (Kakar1997: 124).

The generating of the dichotomous ‘good’ self and simultaneous ‘bad’ image of the other, thereby, is an act of externalizing the enemy and stereotyping him/her, involves a progressive devaluation that is akin to dehumanizing the target, making the enemy non-human so as “to avoid feeling guilt about destroying ‘it’ in the riot that is imminent”(54,55).

Having said about the cohesive effects of rumours, how they bring people of a specific community close to one another out of fear that makes one transcend the limits of self and merge into a group narcissism of aggrandizement as well as protection, I would like to move into AmitavGhosh’s *In an Antique Land* where another child narrator on the same eve was staying on the other side of the border in 1964. The narrator’s father on an Indian diplomatic mission in Dhaka had to leave India and move into a mansion with a large garden always thronged with people and children

when the author was six years old. Such crowds came and went and only later on the narrator knew that they were refugees. That night so vivid in the author's memory he recalls:

My memory of what I saw was very vivid, but at the same time oddly out of sync, like a sloppily edited film. A large crowd is thronging around our house, a mob of hundreds of men, their faces shining red in the light of the burning torches in their hands, rags tied on sticks, whose flames seemed to be swirling against our walls in waves of fire. As I watch, the flames begin to dance around the house, and while they circle the walls the people gathered inside mill around the garden cower in huddles and cover their faces (Ghosh1992: 208).

The whole experience gathers a dream like quality as the aural experience is wiped off:

I can see the enraged mob and the dancing flames with a vivid burning clarity, yet all of it happens in utter silence; my memory, in an act of benign protection, has excised every single sound(208).

After anxious hours spent, nothing did happen. "The police arrived at just the right moment, alerted by some of my parents Muslim friends, and drove the mob away"(209). It is at this point that the two novels of Ghosh get merged:

I was to recognize those stories years later, when reading through a collection of old newspapers. I discovered that on the very night when I'd seen those flames dancing around the walls of our house, there had been a riot in Calcutta too, similar in every aspect except that there it was Muslims who had been attacked by Hindus. But equally, in both cities – and this must be said, it must always be said, for it is the incantation that redeems our sanity – in both Dhaka and Calcutta, there were exactly mirrored stories of Hindus and Muslims coming to each others' rescue, so that many more people were saved than killed.

The stories of those riots are always the same: tales that grow out of an explosive barrier of symbols – of cities growing up in flames because of a cow found dead in a temple or a pig in a mosque; of people killed for wearing a lungi or a dhoti, depending on where they find themselves; of

woman disembowelled for wearing veils or vermilion, of men dismembered for the state of their foreskins (209-10).

Thus, the negative group cohesion fuelled by rumours, or, childhood negative images of Muslims can be countered by such positive counter-narratives based on memory, micro-histories, which the author calls the voice that 'redeems our sanity', which has the potency to bring both the communities together and strengthen bonds between the communities even now in times of strife. In *The Shadow Lines* in the effort to dispel the wrongs of riot and to restore Hindu-Muslim relation, efforts were carried out on both the sides of the border:

It is evident from the newspapers that once the riots started 'responsible opinion' in both India and East Pakistan reacted with identical sense of horror and outrage. The university communities of both Dhaka and Calcutta took the initiative in doing relief work and organizing peace marches, and newspapers on both sides of the border did some fine, human pieces of reporting. As always there were innumerable cases of Muslims in East Pakistan giving shelter to Hindus, often at the cost of their own lives, and equally, in India, of Hindus sheltering Muslims. But they were ordinary people, soon forgotten – not for them any Martyr's Memorials or Eternal Flames(Ghosh1998: 230).

#### **Works Cited:**

- Ghosh, Amitav .*The Shadow Lines* 1988. New Delhi: Ravi Dayal Publishers,1998. print. ...*The Hungry Tide*. New York: Harper Collins, 2004.
- Hutcheon, Linda. *A Poetics of Postmodernism*.London:Routledge,1988. ... *The Politics of Postmodernism*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. London: Routledge,1989.
- Kakar, Sudhir. *The Colours of Violence*, New Delhi :Penguin Books,1995....*Culture and Psyche*, 1997. New Delhi: OUP, 2012print.
- Mehta, Deepak. 'Writing the Riot: Between the Historiography and Ethnography of Communal Violence inIndia' in ParthaChatterjee and AnjanGhosh, ed. *History and the Present*(2002),3<sup>rd</sup> imp. Delhi:Permanent Black,2011.
- Mitchell,W.J.T.(ed.)*On Narrative*. Chicago : Chicago University Press,1982.
- Moya, Paula M.L. and Hames-Garcia, Michael R. *Reclaiming Identity: Realist*

*Theory and the Predicament of Postmodernism* 2000. Hyderabad: Orient Longman Pvt. Ltd., 2003 print.

Tharoor, Shashi. *Riot*, New York: Arcade Publishing, 2001.

White, Hayden. *The Content of the Form*. London : The John Hopkin's Univ. Press, 1987.