

Sea of Poppies: The Myriad Threads of Colonialism in Transit

Prasenjit Das
KKHSOU

Amitav Ghosh has been one of the most established and versatile of the Indian English authors of contemporary times. Although his popularity rests mainly as a fiction writer, it is very difficult to label and categorize his works. His first three novels clearly showcase experiments with a variety of forms and genres – for example, Magic Realism and the picaresque in *The Circle of Reason* (1986), family history in *The Shadow Lines* (1988), a combination of detective and science fiction in *The Calcutta Chromosome* (1996) and so on. His next novel *The Glass Palace* (2000) is often read as a realist and historical novel of the 19th century type. His experiences in Egypt, as part of his field research as a doctoral fellow, would in due course shape into *In An Antique Land* (1992). Besides, Ghosh's fictional works have exhibited a remarkable geographical spread. For example, he has taken India, the Gulf Region and Algeria for *The Circle of Reason*; India, Bangladesh and London for *The Shadow Lines*; India and America for *The Calcutta Chromosome*; Burma, India and Malaya, for *The Glass Palace* and so on.

Sea of Poppies (2008), the first installment of the IBIS trilogy, is a narrative set just before the First Opium Wars (1839-42) that foreshadows the colonial history in the East taking mostly three continents India, China and Britain. Since his childhood days in Calcutta, Ghosh got a unique opportunity to visit a number of South East Asian countries including Sri Lanka, Iran and Bangladesh, as his father was serving the Indian Army, and they had to move in and out of India several times. Thus, many of Ghosh's mature fictional works reflect on his interest and concerns over the history of South East Asia. *Sea of Poppies* is yet another significant novel of Ghosh which mostly deals with the affairs of India and China during the colonial regime. Ghosh feels very deeply about the colonial history of India as a 'text' to be deconstructed, deals diachronically about history, and has re-written about historical events to suit some deeper, more fundamental 'metanarratives' of India against the colonial grand narratives. Thus, Ghosh always seems to be obsessed with the sense of the past and the need for documentary proofs in writing about India. Besides, being a contemporary of the Subaltern Studies scholars, one can find traces of the Subaltern concerns in the novels of Ghosh in his attempt to produce an alternative historiography about India and about those excluded from the grand narratives of history. The narrators in the novels of Amitav Ghosh too often critique the ideological underpinnings of the Indian colonial history, through an evaluation of its colonial past and present and a reconsideration of Indian political history.

Ghosh as an Indian author seems to accept that 'truth' is only provisional and is located socially, and that there exists a plethora of stories to narrate this 'truth'. Hence, 'truth' needs to be deconstructed to reach at a contextually valid alternative meaning. The novels of Amitav Ghosh are marked by a rational explanation of established notions in society which is quite apparent in his early novels. But, Ghosh, a product of the Bengal Renaissance, also makes historical consciousness a part of his career as a writer as is apparent from a novel like *Sea of Poppies* which may be labelled as a historical novel. But, the ways Amitav Ghosh qualifies himself to be an 'Indian' has also been generating unprecedented interest in his life and works. It is undoubtedly his strong mental attachment with the details of Indian life and society which approves Indianness to whatever he narrates in his fictional works. Such attachment also provides an alternative to look also at the histories of the places he frequently mentions, and the people whose cause he frequently addresses in the novels. Thus, all of

Ghosh's mature novels, successfully extol the significance of a particular Indian location both as a site of Indian culture and as a space where identities get stuck and changed. But more than anything else, he seems to have asserted his Indianness in terms of his strong sense of an Indian place like Bengal in general and Calcutta in particular, as he claims that a location is intrinsic to a novel.

Regarding the importance of location in his novels, Ghosh has made some interesting observations. For example, in his essay "Petrofiction" states: "The novel is never more comfortable than when it is luxuriating in a 'sense of place'" (Ghosh, *The Imam* 79). The same attitude once again becomes explicit when in "The March of the Novel" he again states:

And yet the paradox of the novel as a form is that it is founded upon a myth of parochiality, in the exact sense of a parish—a place named and charted, a definite location. A novel, in other words must always be set somewhere: it must have its setting, and within the evolution of the narrative this setting must, clearly play a part of almost as important as those of the characters themselves. Location is thus an intrinsic to a novel. (Ghosh, *The Imam* 294)

Then, at the end of the same essay, Ghosh refers to the vastness and the cosmopolitanism of the fictional bookcase of his grand-father, and states that it is a paradox that those who love novels often read them because of the eloquence with which they communicate a 'sense' of place'. But the truth is that it is this loss of a lived sense of place that makes their fictional representation possible (303). This is an interesting revelation that helps to explore the significance of a place in any of the fictional works of Ghosh. Ghosh also states: "I suppose the thing that's been most important is Calcutta: it's a kind of constant that runs through all my books. Calcutta has been in some way the centre of my imaginative world." (Silva and Tickell, *Amitav Ghosh: Critical Perspective* 214). It is interesting also to note that Ghosh relates his notion of Indianness to his identity as a Bengali as he feels that 'identity' is always implicated in the representation of the self and the world around it. At the end of his essay entitled "Satyajit Ray", Ghosh celebrates his birth at Kolkata like this:

I was conscious also of an immense sense of privilege, of gratitude, that having been born at Kolkata I had, in some small way, been endowed with a special entitlement to Ray's Universe, gratitude at having had his work to illuminate my surrounding and my past. This is what the narrative arts do, at their best, they shape the world as they relate them. To this day Ray's work is one of the main anchors that moors me—often despite myself to the imaginative landscape of Bengal : to the essential terrain of my work. (Ghosh, *Amitav Ghosh* 8).

Thus, one can find many such assertions regarding the role a place like Calcutta plays in shaping the idea of India in most of his fictional works.

Sea of Poppies, the first book of Ghosh's projected IBIS trilogy, is based on the Opium War fought between Britain and China from 1839-42 over their conflicting views regarding business and diplomacy. This War is a crucial event in world history. IBIS is a schooner which previously served as a 'blackbirder' for transporting slaves. However, with the abolition of slave trade in 1807 by the Parliament of United Kingdom, such ships were used to patrolling the West African coasts by the British and American naval officers. Because, she was not swift enough to perform the proposed duty, it was sold to its present owner, Mr. Benjamin Burnham who instead used it for exporting opium. (11) Moreover, a

section of the British officers were desperate to make up the loss caused by the abolition of the slave trade, and desperately tried to replace the trade of carrying slaves with the business of carrying opium and the 'girmits'. Ghosh in *Sea of Poppies* explains the meaning of Girmits like this:

They are so called because, in exchange for money, their names were entered on 'girmits'—agreements written on paper. The silver that was paid for them went to their families, and they were taken away, never to be seen again: they vanished, as if into the netherworld... A boat will take them to Patna and then to Calcutta...and from there they will go to a place called Mareech. (71-72)

This story of the IBIS also unfolds many other related stories. One of the important stories being the exposure of the Indians to the mercenary motifs implicit in the British business design, and the subsequent transportation of the poor Indians to British occupied islands as plantation workers. Thus, Ghosh in this novel seeks to draw various patterns of colonial history in India. But the point I am going to make in this paper is that Amitav Ghosh, like in his previous novels, once again very boldly confirms his position as an 'Indian' writer by writing a novel about Indian and fictionally portraying the realities faced by Indians placed in some specific historical times, although the vastness of the issues raised and places referred in this novel add to its magnificence.

One of the most significant aspects of *Sea of Poppies* is that it confirms Ghosh's art of storytelling in the form of history and reminds us of one forgotten chapters in history—the history of Opium in India. This novel highlights many of the previous concerns of Ghosh as a novelist—such as the movement of people from one place to the other, the crossing of geographical boundaries, the impact of economic pressures on the common people, the questioning the past and so on. India in this novel emerges in terms of Indian history in a particular period of the early 19th century, 1838 to be more precise. But the historical background not only helps one to consider Ghosh's storytelling techniques but also to examine certain important facets of Indianness as well as Indian colonial history. In an interview with *Star Weekend Magazine*, Ghosh purposefully states the importance of history like he following: "It is enormously important to me; it is always very basic to my work, I am very interested in it; my books are built around it. History is absolutely fundamental to my work...I think the history of the last 200 years has been defaced largely because of it we have to reclaim a lot of it from the colonial archive."

After having a cursory look at the history of Opium in the 19th century, it is found that during the late 18th century, Afghanistan was the main producer and supplier of opium to Europe. But soon the East Indian Company under the British turned the fertile banks of the river Ganga in Northern India into poppy growing lands to run their factories from where they collected huge profits. Many factories were set up on the banks of the river and workers were even transported from the nearby places to work in the poppy fields as labourers. Despite the Chinese restrictions, the British continued their opium trade and the denouncing of Chinese free trade, led England to wage war against China. However, this background of the Opium-led War is beautifully used by Ghosh through a discussion of the history of Opium trade in India and the impact it had on the lives of the common Indians. It is not for nothing that one of the important settings of the novel is Ghazipur, a village fifty miles towards the East of Bengal, although frequent references to other Indian places like Patna and Calcutta are also used in the novel. But what makes Ghosh extra ordinary is also the way he

presents a gory picture of the impact of British colonial enterprise on the common farmers in places like Bihar.

As has been already stated, 'locatedness' is one of the most important points of reference in any of Ghosh's fictional works. The first two sections of *Sea of Poppies* "Land" and "River" are based on India. Regarding the inspiration behind this novel, Ghosh states in an interview with BBC: "What basically interested me when I started this book were the lives of the Indian indentured workers, especially those who left India from the Bihar region...Also all the indentured workers at that time came from all the opium growing regions in the Benares and Ghazipur areas." Hence, the novel is set in North India and Bengal of the 1930s. Ghazipur, presently in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, was well known for its Opium factories established by the British East Indian Company in around 1820. It is important to note that the village in which Deeti lived was on the outskirts of the town of Ghazipur, 50 miles East of Benares. (10) This information clearly sets the background of the novel. Deeti belongs to one of the several farmer families who supply the produce to a British-run opium factory in Ghazipur in colonial India. In the village, poppy cultivation is considered a perfectly legitimate agricultural work, especially by the businessmen who find it quite profitable. The poppies produced by villagers are sold to the Sudder Opium Factory in Ghazipur. The villagers speak colloquial Bhojpuri that provides us a feel of the place they reside in. All such details, from the beginning of the novel, beautifully provide a sense of place in the minds of the readers.

But the novel begins parallelly in parts of Bengal. IBIS, the former slave ship, dropped its anchor off Ganga Sagar Island in the second week of March 1838. This is also the time when the ship "waited to take on a pilot to guide her to Calcutta, that Zachary Reid had his first look at India." (10) Benjamin Burnham, in Calcutta, is a businessman and owns the schooner IBIS and intends to use it for opium trade for his extensive interests in India and China. The planter d'Epiany asks Zachary Reid to tell Burnham that he needs coolies in Mauritius and that he should do the needful. These are only a few of the state of affairs that the novel hint at, and as would happen in future, Deeti and many of the characters in the novels will be forced to be a part of the journey towards Mauritius. But the majority of the people who will be finally on board are Indian peasants belonging to the river side villages producing opium, often forced by adverse circumstances to seek a life elsewhere. In order to explore this background, Ghosh focuses on one of his important creations—the village woman called Deeti from Ghazipur. In the absence of any written records on such people, Ghosh fictionally re-creates the characters of Deeti to explore the untold stories that took place in India during the 19th century under the British regime. Then, in sufficient details, Ghosh provides an impression of the day-to-day life of Deeti and her family background. Elaborating on the utmost importance of poppies in their life the narrator states that once:

Poppies had been a luxury then, grown in small clusters between the fields that bore the main winter crops—wheat, masoor dal and vegetables...in the old days, farmers would keep a little of their home made opium for their families, to be used during illness, or at harvests and weddings; the rest they would sell to the local nobility, or to the pykari merchants from Patna. (29).

Ghosh too states in his interview with BBC:

One of the curious things I was not aware of was that there are many different ways of consuming opium. One of the ways was to eat it in a bowl. This was somehow the

commonest way of taking opium in India—either eating it or dissolving it in water...It was not traditionally the case that people smoked opium in India. Opium also was a part of social life—it was offered during certain ceremonies. So, it was a very complex picture. If there was any direct damage to India, it lay in the disruption of the agricultural timetable.

This is obvious from the story of Deeti's family where opium has a big influence. But there was yet another darker side of the Opium trade that relate to the plight of the workers inside the Opium factory and the hazards and insecurity faced by them. This has been revealed through Deeti's first-hand exposure to reality inside the factory when she entered there after her husband's illness. Due to the exploitation of the British the Indian farmers had to give preference to poppy production more than anything else, the poor farmers had to work in the factories at the risk of their lives, besides tolerating the inhuman torture of the white officers in charge of the factories. These are all untold stories getting prominence in Amitav Ghosh's narrative.

Further, as Ghosh had found out, India had become the largest opium exporter for centuries as it was essentially the commodity which financed the British Raj in India. This revelation came handy when we experience the over-whelming impact of opium on the lives of the characters in the novel through the author's own views in front of the interviewer of BBC: "I had very little idea about opium...I had no idea that India was the largest opium exporter for centuries. I had no idea that opium was essentially the commodity which financed the British Raj in India." For example, it was the Opium Trade which directly or indirectly destroyed Deeti's peaceful life. The innocent village woman Deeti finds it so strange to face the swift changes that were influencing the lives of the villagers although she later understands the trade values of Opium. Later it would be revealed that the same Opium trade would turn the Raja of Raskhali into an exile and would be shipped across the black water to Mauritius for a crime he never committed. Mr. Benjamin Burnham who wants to control the opium trade of the East India Company is behind all manipulations. He succeeds in extending his opium business to China, and the coolies and convicts on board the IBIS are connected with this trade. Bhyro Singh, the matchmaker between the opium addict Hukam Singh and Deeti, was also the person in charge of the collies and convicts on the IBIS. The point Ghosh seeks to make is that the colonial power diffused all class distinction, and through a reference made to a businessman Mr. Burnham helped Ghosh to discuss how Opium trade during the 19th century controlled the fate of almost all Indians.

Like in many other novels of Ghosh, Calcutta runs as a constant in *Sea of Poppies* too. IBIS is stranded at the Narrows at Hooghly Point, a few miles sort of Calcutta waiting to reach the city the next morning. There is also a reference made to another boat belonging to the Estate of Raskhali. Raja Neel Rattan Halder, the Zamindar of Raskhali is in the boat and is returning after a visit to his Estate, with his son, attendants and his mistress dancer Elokeshi whom the raja took along to show his zemindary. By refereeing to the Raja, Ghosh was trying to explore yet another facet of Bengal history—the rich landed families of Bengal. They spent most of their times in games and sports. They were orthodox Hindus and were careful about omens. But their luxurious life and indifference towards the affairs of the state were becoming the cause of their gradual downfall. When the raja saw the IBIS, he found it to be a sure indication of his turn of future. Just like Deeti had her 'vision' about the IBIS at the beginning of the novel, the raja too has some premonitions when he caught sight of the ship. Ghosh here is foreshadowing what was going to befall the Indians under the colonial regime. Compared to the common villagers like Deeti in Ghazipur, the life of the Raskhali

Rajas was luxurious enough. But soon they would be united under one platform following the turn of events. And although none of the people on board is aware, IBIS appears to be headed toward the Opium Wars fought between Britain and China over the British East India Company's monopolistic drug trade as would be made more explicit in the later two installments of the IBIS trilogy.

Sea of Poppies is an excellent example of how colonial regime gained its foothold over India. Raja Neel Ratan is finally robbed off his wealth by Benjamin Burnham, with whom he invested money, and to whom his father had given a foothold in Calcutta. Falling prey to the colonial enterprise, Neel committed the mistake of thinking himself to be equal with the British signing an important document, as part of a prior agreement, in Burnham's place. The result was that he was convicted of forgery, and Burnham seized all his property quite dramatically. Subsequently, Neel was to be transported to the island of Mauritius, awaited his deportation in Alipore jail. The details with which Ghosh explains everything help us to see Ghosh's involvement with the concerns of colonial history and the way he makes a fiction out of that experience. This novel also explores various other important facets of Calcutta. It is the geographical position of Calcutta that invited most of the English businessman to India. Besides, Calcutta was then the principal waterway through which Indian prisoners were shipped to the island prisons of the British empire like—Penang, Port Blair and Mauritius. As the narrator explains in the novel: "Like a great stream of silt, thousands of Pindaries, Thugs, decoits, rebels, head hunters and hooligans were carried away by the muddy waters of the Hooghly to be dispersed around the Indian ocean, in the various island jails where the British incarcerated their enemies." (76) But the important point is that such voyages also provided many job opportunities as many like Jodu could become company men.

Once again we are brought back to Calcutta through the stories of the two orphans—Paulette Lambert and Jodu—both of whom are finding it so hard to cope up with the new circumstances of their present life. They too have interesting life history in around Calcutta only to be gradually unfolded by the narrator. We are told that Jodu, a poor young boatman, after the death of his mother is in search of the ghat serangs who recruited lascars for deep water ships. By the 17th century, the 'lascars' were increasingly employed on British merchant ships as the Empire rapidly expanded and new trading routes were discovered. Highly demanded for cheap labour and seafaring skills thousands of lascars were recruited on timely basis by native 'serangs' or 'overseers' who were also responsible for their discipline and work. We are told that Jodu buried his mother in the village of Naskarpara some fifteen miles from Calcutta on the edge of the Sundarbans. Paulette, the daughter of an unconventional French botanist called Pierre Lambert who came to India as the assistant curator of Calcutta's Botanical Gardens, must become accustomed to the constraints of 'proper' colonial life with her new guardians, the rich, powerful and fervently evangelical Burnham family. After her mother's death during delivery, Jodu's mother became the wet-nurse of the new-born Paulette. After a turn of events, Paulette too resolves to escape to the seas. Kathleen Davis seeks to consider the many gardens referred in the novel and its profusion of botanical references, including Paulette's conception in the Royal Botanical Gardens of Calcutta. The botanical theme was to be expected, of course, in a postcolonial novel addressing the links of colonization, culture, and cultivation, of plantations and botanical gardens. Paulette's experience on board the ship provides another impetus to the higher status of the White in the name of the 'Laws of the Sea'. Zachary Reid would not allow Paulette, a white woman to travel on board. For he feels that IBIS will be sailing with

all lascars which implies that the only European will be its officer. This behaviour on the part of Reid reflects the way the English ruled.

But, perhaps the starkest criticism of colonial rule is however found in the speech of the French botanist Mr. Lambert, Paulette's father—the only white woman in disguise in the IBIS. Baboo Nobo Krishna Pander, tells Paulette what her father had said in fluent Bengali:

I have raised her (Paulette) to revel in that state of liberty that is Nature itself. If she remains here, in the colonies, most particularly in a city like this, where Europe hides its shame and its greed, all that awaits her is degradation: the whites of this town will tear her apart, like vultures and foxes, fighting over a corpse. She will be an innocent thrown before the money-changers who pass themselves off as men of God. (117)

Mr. Lambert was devoted to the cause of the Garden and the poor people, and had little savings when he was nearing death. He desperately wanted to save an amount so that his daughter could move out of India after his death, as he felt. His comment on the British rule in India exposes the rotten condition of colonialism, and Amitav Ghosh is at his best in dealing with this issue through the character of Mr. Lambert.

After reading *Sea of Poppies*, it becomes clear that, Ghosh with his minute observation of the particularities of Indian life has tried to define India in some concrete terms. At the same time, he finds it quite difficult to surmise the meaning of marginality, as in most cases the 'marginal' is seen to be taking important decisions. For example, Deeti is on board the IBIS not by any force but by choice. By providing an alternative reading of post-colonialism itself, Ghosh is perhaps trying to articulate the paradoxical discourse on marginality in post-colonialism which is yet another main intellectual rendering in Contemporary Indian Writing in English. However, one also needs to seriously consider the fact that Ghosh' narrativisation of India in his novels centres on specific periods, traditions, languages and cultures. Besides, Ghosh seems to have addressed not only the spatial dislocations of his characters but also the socio-cultural displacements following such dislocations. Consequently, his concerns are global and not simply 'Indian' as their main experience centres on the modern world of immigrants, refugees and all sorts of exiles. Thus, the depiction of the dislocated characters in Ghosh gains prominence if seen against the geopolitical background of the vast Indian subcontinent. A study of a novel like *Sea of Poppies* is useful in this context, simply because of the fact that Ghosh's representation of Indian history is closely connected with geographical locations and political economics of the time against which a multifaceted picture of the early 19th century Indian life emerges with particular references to the sentiments and emotions, food habits and medicines, marriage practices and funeral rites, etc. of the Indians in question.

In the context of the ambivalence between diasporic existence and national allegiance, the form of the quest narrative which is at once fictional, historical and journalistic, the novels of Amitav Ghosh adapt themselves to the symbolic structures often adopted by an expatriate writer. Ghosh serves an important purpose of writing about 'home' rather than the 'West'. Despite the visible influences of European formal aspects, Ghosh's quest narratives are ways to deal not only with the absence of roots but also the lack of an adequate language to uphold a sense of cultural belonging. What remains at this juncture is the 'subtexts' on which Ghosh seems to have given the greatest emphasis. Based on the blurring of the divisions between the fictional and the factual, all fictional works of Ghosh are well researched with a meticulous attention to specifics—like Opium trade in *Sea of Poppies*.

Furthermore, experiment for Ghosh becomes a crucial mode of bridging the gap between reality and fiction. This aspect of his writing relates to his refusal in 2001 to accept the Commonwealth Writer's Prize, when he was selected for the prize for his novel *The Glass Palace*. Ghosh opined that his rejection was based on his objection to the memory of the Empire implicit in the term Commonwealth. Another reason he cited was that the prize excludes the many languages that sustain the cultural and literary lives of these countries. Such a step taken by Ghosh clearly exemplifies his stand as a writer whose strong allegiances to India as a country is quite explicit in his views about India, its people and culture.

Today, contemporary Indian Writing in English rests on the critical and intellectual debates over sources, history, influences, formal aspects, narrative traditions etc. But the generic formation of the canon of Indian English writing and the evaluation of its aesthetic values, find themselves entangled with ideas of Nativistic articulation of identity. The expatriate Indian English authors like Amitav Ghosh, whose main literary language is English, find themselves in a privileged position to deal with such a situation. Although, the Western critical theories have rendered powerful influences on interpretation of a text, the tendency to explore the inner sources of criticism in India around 1970s and 1980s has resulted in a re-newed concern over Nativism. Ghosh implies that the multilayered socio-cultural set-up of India often produces multifaceted pictures of India which is explicit in his own fictional works. So, the 'textuality' of the Indian history and the consequent discourse of Indianness as shaped by them, becomes the centre point in any discussion done on the novels of Ghosh. His narrative mode, often seen through his tendency to tell stories about people 'placed' and 'displaced' at a historically given time, also makes his Indian 'identity' remain implicated in the representation of the self and the world around it. (Mondal 20)

There was a time when an Indian English writer often tried to demonstrate how just 'Indian' he or she could be while writing in an alien language. But, with an author like Amitav Ghosh, this tendency has been replaced by how well one represents Indian history and culture in one's writing. Moreover, in the crucial context of the gap between India remembered and India experienced, a re-examination of the meaning of the term 'India' has helped in bridging the gap to a remarkable extent. Ghosh's journalistic and historical quest narratives, have called for the notion of Indianness to be a part of experimental writing which is sought to be associated with the impulse to experiment with the condition of being 'liminal' and 'marginal' in an 'English' culture always having a special consideration for the 'Occident' like India in *Sea of Poppies*. And the narrativisation of India through the little narratives of the 'marginalised' Indians like Deeti and the ways their lives are framed against the grand narratives of Indian colonial history clearly prove this point to a significant extent.

References:

- Bahadur, Gaiutra. "A Passage From India". Book Review. *The New York Times* November 28, 2008. [<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/30/books/review/Bahadur-t.html>]
- Davis, Kathleen. "Cross-Dressing the Rose: Sly Allegory in *Sea of Poppies*." *History of the Present*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Spring 2012), pp. 86-94.
- Ghosh, Amitav. *Sea of Poppies*. New Delhi: Penguin, 2008. Print.
- Ghosh, Amitav. *The Imam and The Indian: Prose Pieces*. New Delhi: Ravi Dayal, 2002. Print.
- Ghosh, Amitav. "Finding the Centre". Interview. *The Daily Star*. Vol 7, Issue 9, February 29, 2008. [<http://archive.thedailystar.net/magazine/2008/02/05/interview.htm>]

Ghosh, Amitav. 'Opium financed British rule in India'. Interview. BBC. Monday, 23 June 2008. [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7460682.stm]

Khair, Tabish, ed. *Amitav Ghosh: A Critical Companion*. Delhi: Permanent Black, 2003. Print.

Mondal, Anshuman A. *Amitav Ghosh*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007. Print.

Silva, Neluka, and Alex Tickell, "Amitav Ghosh in Interview with Neluka Silva and Alex Tickell." *Amitav Ghosh: Critical Perspectives*. Ed. Brinda Bose. Delhi: Pencraft International, 2005. 214-221. Print.