

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION: NARRATING COMMUNAL VIOLENCE IN CONTEMPORARY INDIAN ENGLISH FICTION	1
1.1 Representations of Communal Violence in Indian English Novels: Subject Matter and Objectives	3
1.2 State of Research.....	6
1.3 Corpus, Approach and Structure	9
2. COMMUNALISM AND COMMUNAL VIOLENCE IN POST-PARTITION INDIA	12
2.1 ‘When a Big Tree Falls, the Earth Trembles’: The Anti-Sikh Violence of 1984	21
2.2 Hindu Nationalist Mobilisation and the Ayodhya Dispute in the Late 1980s and Early 1990s	25
2.3 ‘We Have No Orders to Save You’: The 2002 Anti-Muslim Violence in Gujarat	33
3. LITERARY REPRESENTATIONS OF COMMUNAL VIOLENCE IN INDIAN ENGLISH NOVELS.....	39
4. SETTINGS, TRIGGERS, CATALYSTS: DEPICTING THE CONTEXTS OF COMMUNAL VIOLENCE	51
4.1 ‘Wielding History Like a Battle Axe’: The Role of the Past and History Writing in the Production of Communal Sentiments.....	52
4.1.1 Writing Nonsectarian Histories of Sectarian Strife in Shashi Tharoor’s <i>Riot</i>	53
4.1.2 ‘A Live, Fiery Thing, as Capable of Explosion as a Time Bomb’ – History in Githa Hariharan’s <i>In Times of Siege</i>	61
4.2 Motives and Explanations for Communal Violence	67
4.2.1 ‘How Long Can He Live Off the Riots of ‘84?’ – Politics and Pragmatic Interests in Sujit Saraf’s <i>The Peacock Throne</i>	67
4.2.2 ‘Never Big on Religion or Politics’ – Chetan Bhagat’s <i>The 3 Mistakes of My Life</i> and the (Im)possibility of Neutrality	73
4.3 ‘When a Combination of Things Happens at Once’: Concluding Thoughts on Proximate and Indirect Causes of Communal Violence.....	79

5. NARRATING THE MOMENT OF VIOLENCE	85
5.1 ‘Don’t Listen to the Dead’ – Unreliable Narration and Magical Realism in Raj Kamal Jha’s <i>Fireproof</i>	86
5.2 Picturing the Moment of Violence.....	99
5.2.1 ‘You Had to See the Horror to Believe the Horror’ – Photographs in Jaspreet Singh’s <i>Helium</i>	100
5.2.2 Ekphrastic Strategies in Githa Hariharan’s <i>Fugitive Histories</i>	106
5.3 Concluding Thoughts: Modes of Narrating Moments of Violence.....	116
 6. THE AFTERMATH OF COMMUNAL VIOLENCE	 121
6.1 ‘Prisoners in Our Own City ... in Jail at Home’ – Borders and Displacement in <i>Fugitive Histories</i>	121
6.2 ‘The Past Refused to Become the Past’ – Collective Amnesia and Family Matters in Jaspreet Singh’s <i>Helium</i> and Shonali Bose’s <i>Amu</i>	131
6.2.1 Archiving Memories in <i>Helium</i>	133
6.2.2 Divided Families and Lost Family Narratives in <i>Helium</i> and <i>Amu</i>	138
6.3 Concluding Thoughts on the Aftermath of Communal Violence: Trauma, Memory, Grief.....	145
 7. ‘A DEPRESSING THOUGHT: ARE WE DOOMED THEN?’ – IMAGINING COMMUNAL HARMONY IN NARRATIVES OF VIOLENCE.....	 151
 8. NARRATING POST-PARTITION OUTBREAKS OF COMMUNAL VIOLENCE: A CONCLUSION	 162
 9. WORKS CITED.....	 172