

VOICING RESISTANCE, TRANSCENDING BOUNDARIES: READING 'MY MOTHER INDIA'

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The present socio-political situation of the Sikhs in Punjab and other states cannot be understood without referring to the two decades, the 1980s and 1990s. The events in these two decades have played a major role in redefining religion. Equally true for other religions worldwide, there is an apparent transition in the role that religion played in the past and that it plays now. In modern times, religion has largely become a site for identity issues. Punjab in independent India witnessed a separatist identity politics due to several events like Operation Blue Star, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's assassination and the state-sponsored pogrom, followed by two decades of militancy and terrorism. These events constitute an inter-related loop that reshaped the history of Punjab, changing the social dynamics that suggested altered definitions of terms and ideas of religion, martyrdom, victimhood and saviour. This transition can be understood by studying the relationship of the state vis-à-vis citizens of a minority community.

In the same context, thirty-three years down the line, the 1984 anti-Sikh carnage¹ left an unforgettable impact on the minds of the survivors. The reason for this could be the long history of injustice that has continuously added to the woes of the survivors and victims all these years. Despite the fact that many innocent people were killed, the perpetrators and the major politicians involved in the killings remained scot-free (Singh, 2009: 152-155). The exact number of people missing and killed remain unknown; whatever little is known is only an estimated number. The People's Union for Democratic Rights (PUDR) report in 1992 registered 2733 people killed in Delhi (PUCL-PUDR, 1992: 1), which is an official number as recorded in the report; many killings in various cities around the country remain unaccounted for. As an after-effect, the survivors continue to live in a deplorable state till date. The incident has become a case of sheer neglect that serves as an example of a systemic breakdown of

the state machinery as the police refused to protect people and the medical institutions refused to render treatment to the Sikhs who were being attacked and injured during the pogrom. A field visit to Tilak Vihar colony of widows of 1984 anti-Sikh violence, Trilokpuri and other affected areas, demonstrate an attitude of neglect and ignorance of both government as well as the Sikh leadership towards the victims. Numerous cases filed in the courts by the survivors and the oral narratives of the survivors offer tales of untold suffering, history of neglect and indifference towards these members of the community.

While studying communal violence and its impact, the question whether violence can be studied in isolation is critical. 'Isolation' in this connection connotes reading in the context of a single community against which violence is inflicted, by ignoring its effect on members of other communities. Such an attempt would make the dominant/oppressive and the dominated/oppressed seem as neat categories but this neatness is a farce. It is evident from the oral narratives that neither all Hindus killed Sikhs (there have been several cases where Hindus had saved Sikhs during the pogrom), nor were Sikhs the only ones to get killed as many Hindus and people of other religions, who were sheltering the Sikhs or were living in Sikh dominated areas, were also killed.

The main objective of the present paper is to discuss how certain people, who do not belong to the community, become unnoticed subjects. Alternatively, the question that arises is: does mob-violence affect people belonging to the targeted religion, or a single caste, or does it affect others too? How do we define the victim? Is the victim always the insider who is directly hit, or are there outsiders too, who may feel the impact indirectly? With the understanding of the victim evolves an understanding of power relations, the position of the victim, the choices available to him/her and an understanding of suffering behind experience. The individual experiences are varied and so is the capacity to deal with them. Sandra Walklate suggests that 'under the conditions of what might be called "trauma creeps" these capacities have remained somewhat hidden from the view' (Walklate, 2017: 9).

The documentary 'My Mother India' (2002), directed by Safina Uberoi, focuses on the life of her mother, Patricia Uberoi, who married a Sikh Professor from Delhi University, Prof. J. P.S. Uberoi. It deals with how 1984 anti-Sikh violence affected their family. Patricia faced an identity crisis resulting from her experience of carnage. She had assimilated to an Indian way of life. She, later

on, was led to surrender her Australian passport due to the new policies that added to her self-inquiry centered on the concerns of belongingness. The year 1984 led to the separation of the family. The present paper engages with this film; it examines how a White woman in the postcolonial situation remains vulnerable and marginalized, suggesting a departure from the centrality enjoyed by the White in the colonial period. On the one hand, the impact of such incidences for research purposes remains limited only to the evident victims belonging to the same community. On the other, the documentary has a panoramic view of how such events influence people who may not apparently seem to have any semblance to the affected communities, but, the truth is that they are still important and integral members of the same community and any situation of sectarian violence has a direct effect on them despite the fact that they often go unnoticed.

It is often considered that an individual victim speaks as a collective representative for all victims, but for Patricia Uberoi, the crucial question is whether her suffering will be understood and received in the same way as that of other Sikh women. Or would she be an unclaimed victim? Patricia's experience combines a statement of truth as she bears witness to the times and to the reality of her own experience. Her narrative is also read as a testimony as she testifies the experience of others of her kind. The issue, captivately, gets extremely complicated in a discussion on witness and witnessing, particularly as to who bears a witness for the victims? Are the victims themselves witnesses or are the survivors witnesses? Patricia Uberoi is a witness to other victims of the Sikh families as a "tertiary victim" (Walklate, 2017: 8).² Nonetheless, she is also a primary victim who is left bereft of a witness. In her case, suffering is an individual's suffering and she alone bears witness to her own experience.

The Unnoticed Subject

Mass violence unleashed on certain communities results in community consciousness amongst its people. Interestingly, in the present study, the subject, who is from a different race and nationality, is directly affected by the community-targeted violence. Usually, the people of the Sikh community would be considered as the only victims but it is important to understand that there may be other people who struggle on the same account but the form of suffering may differ. Despite the fact that during the carnage the conflict was evidently visible between the Hindu majority and the

Sikh minority, many Hindus also suffered in areas where there was a Sikh majority and a Hindu minority.³ Some of these subjects remain unnoticed subject. Judith Butler suggests how certain particularities are pertinent in recognizing the subject in certain contexts. She defines these specificities as “frames”. She appropriately suggests that the subjects are recognized through the norms and these very normative conditions define the ontological existence of the subject (Butler, 2009:4). Since Patricia Uberoi may not seem to fit these general normative definitions of the Sikh community, she remains an unnoticed subject. The political representation of the people of the community stand out as the Sikhs display the turban, wear the long uncut hair or the five K’s as an identity marker (or some of them)but for Patricia Uberoi⁴ any such marker that provides a sense of belonging to the community is missing. Her belonging to the community is essentially determined by her marriage with a Sikh man. The identification to the community may have remained insignificant throughout her life, until they experienced the troubled times. Her White skin and blonde hair make her stand apart. This brings us to the critical inquiry of her identity as a Sikh or a White woman during the 1984 carnage.

For the community and the system, both legal and social, Patricia acquires a status of the “ignored” subject as she is neither a so-called directly-hit victim nor a non-victim. Her victimhood needs to be understood in the individual suffering she undergoes because of the anti-Sikh violence where the family had to remain in a hideout for several days. It is interesting to note how the term “victim” is defined and how Patricia embodies this definition. According to the 1985 United Nations Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for the Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power, victim means any person who has suffered harm, individually or collectively. “Harm” includes physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss or substantial impairment of their fundamental rights. The definition states:

A person may be considered a victim, under this Declaration, regardless of whether the perpetrator is identified, apprehended, prosecuted, or convicted and regardless of the familial relationship between the perpetrator and the victim. The term ‘victim’ also includes, where appropriate, the immediate family or dependents of the direct victim and persons who have suffered harm in intervening to assist victims in distress or to prevent victimization (United Nations, 1985: 3).

For Patricia Uberoi, the measure of suffering is similar to any other victim. There may not be physical injuries or the loss of life in her

family (though her father-in-law died around the same time because of illness and not the anti-Sikh violence), which several other Sikh families had to experience. But the psychological trauma, insecurity and threat to life was damaging for her.

Ernest Laclau uses the phrase “the death of the Subject”⁵ (Laclau, 2003: 428) in another context which in the present context aptly explains the conflict that the subject experiences when the subject is taken back to question her own human identity. Is it a matter of interpretation, occasion, threat or subjectivity? The entire process of communal/national othering makes her revisit her own identity, particularly in a place that has suddenly changed from what it actually was when she came in after marriage. At this point, she is thrust as an outsider, somebody who is forced to revisit her identity as an Indian (to which she finally submits by surrendering her Australian passport). Safina Uberoi, the director of the documentary and Patricia’s daughter brings out the complexity of the situation for an Australian woman who is in a minority in the following words:

It is confronting for an Australian audience to think what it is like for an Australian woman to be in a minority. Here, you are saying, ‘OK you are the other. Now come with me and see what it feels like.’ It also confronts Indians with the idea of foreignness. For Indians it’s also a double-edged sword. Foreign rule is something Indians feel proud of having overthrown in 1947 but they are also aware that Westernisation has remained a complex and complicated process in India (Simpson, 2002: 3).

In the same sense, conflicting identities seem to emerge for Patricia—they may be gendered, national or communal. Being married to a Sikh man who chooses to return to his religious identity by wearing a turban and beard, there is a formulation of the self, which is largely dependent on social experience. The meaning of self is derived from this social interaction where the self becomes an object and the vocabulary that functions as an image of “the other” is construed from the identity markers (like turban and beard) of religious significance. Thus, the individual (micro) interaction of the self arises from the social interaction on a macro level. Freese and Burke explain the origins of identity theory in social psychology as to how the person’s environment determines the microscopic interaction that functions on two aspects as: one, action and reaction; and two, interaction:

If persons and their environments mutually determine each other in a dynamical process of interaction, then a theory of microscopic

interaction must rest on two things: (1) a theory of the person, as both cause and effect, and (2), the manner in which interaction dynamics are organised as identity dynamics (Freese & Burke, 1994: 5).

For Patricia Uberoi, the stimulation of the individual self is proportional to social interaction particularly at the moment of the event. In this case, it is reactionary (effect) to the cause of social experience (1984 anti-Sikh violence) and the consequential threat to her family. Particularly, the times when mob violence broke out in Delhi on 31 October 1984, the family had to stay in a hiding at a friend's house for almost a week. As suggested in the film, the mob must have visited their house in their absence to find nobody home. The family returned almost after a week and that called for a change in their entire life thereafter. This experience instills a sense of loss, particularly emotional, accompanied with a great sense of insecurity. Patricia was troubled by the incidences around her, such as, the buses, moving towards the places where Hindus lived in majority, being bombed by the Sikhs post-1984 violence. Therefore, she decided to send her son to a boarding school in Australia, independently, even without the consent of her husband. This very act of sending her son away to Australia portrays the fact how fissures arise in extreme stressful conditions. For her, India was no more a secure place.

For J. P. S. Uberoi, the "othering" was in terms of the "communal other" as a Sikh man who had never worn any of the identity markers earlier but chose to display his Sikh identity through the turban post-event and made attempts to understand the Sikh faith thereafter. Ironically, Sikhism displayed democratic notions of a secular and composite culture. The basis of the Sikh belief system seems to have got lost in the gambit of political assertions both by the assassins and the assassinated as individuals. In an interview of the survivors, one of the victims wondered as to why the two Sikh men killed the Prime Minister that called for the brutal killing of several innocent people who were equally mourning the death of the Prime Minister like the people of other communities.⁶ Despite the fact that even Sikhs, like common citizens, were neutral and grieving the death of their Prime Minister, their lives were at stake just because they belonged to the community of the men who had killed the Prime Minister. As the nature of violence clearly indicated that it was a state-sponsored anti-Sikh pogrom, the nation, suddenly, had become the custodian of an individual whose death had to be avenged at the cost of hundreds of innocent lives, which included men, women and innumerable children. Uma Chakravarti explains this disconnect between the nation and its people in the following

words, as a complete breakdown of machinery where individual goals superseded the national interest:

They lost the sense of security that was considered an essential aspect of the watan's code towards them. The breakdown of the code between a watan and its people, and between different segments of its people, was the theme of the sense of loss experienced even by the middle class, otherwise comfortably positioned Sikh students. For Reena, a young Sikh school girl, the loss of companionship and camaraderie among friends and acquaintances, of being marked off as an outsider, made her feel very vulnerable (Chakravarti, 1994: 2725).

Similarly, many acquaintances and friends had turned against the Sikhs, blaming every individual responsible for the act of two assassins. In the documentary, Patricia's younger daughter Zoe had a similar experience where her classmate passed adverse comments to her justifying the reason for killing innocent people. This had an unforgettable influence on her mind. She was unable to forget those comments even fifteen years after the incident. Safina suggests that she wanted to bring out the experience of the person who individually experiences hate. Safina describes Zoe's experience as follows:

What Zoe says in the film is insightful. Her friend claimed she couldn't see that there was anything wrong with killing people who had done nothing wrong. Her friend said, 'I don't mean *you personally*' and Zoe replied, 'But of course you do. You mean me, and everybody else like me.' And that childhood experience brings tears to her eyes 15 years later when she's a grown-up person. That is the power of hatred (Simpson, 2002: 8).

A very powerful shot in the film where Zoe refuses to be excluded from the community is the act of challenging the hypocrisy that people often tend to display through use of phrases like "I don't mean you" (Simpson, 2002: 8) when they actually mean you. To put it rightly, it is an act of "being marked off as an outsider" (Chakravarti, 1994: 2722). This incident also suggests how instruments of hate inflict public in general and a deterritorialization (Deleuze *et al.*, 1983: 28) of communities is apparent. Though Deleuze *et al.* use this term in another sense, the concept is relevant in the present context in the way the communities are witness to a deterritorialized cultural experience emerging out of the political situation of the times. This situation tends to transform the relationships between communities influencing everyday cultural experiences, erupting out of a local event and transforming the city space into a hunting ground on the basis of identity markers.

The Mother Image and the National Imaginary

Though the film was made for an Australian audience it could never be detached from the Indian setting as it had a huge “historical contextualisation” (Simpson, 2002: 3). The documentary seems to address the possibility of reconstructing the self ideologically. It also offers an assessment of the past that is prominently available in the present, in a sense that life probably could have been different in case the 1984 carnage had not had such an impact on the family. Michaels aptly suggests that the past contributes to define an individual in the present. The events in the past not only influence the present but play a prominent part in defining the present as ‘they can become part of our experience and can testify who we are’ (Michaels, 2004: 139). In this case, this is largely made possible through documentary as a mode of narrative and memory that testify the life-shaping events. Bill Nichols claims that the formal mode of logical organization in a documentary ‘supports an underlying argument, assertion, or claim about the historical world’ (Nichols, 2001: 23). A documentary is different from a commercial film particularly with respect to the edits and cuts that is a mechanism to produce the desired effect, mostly fictionalizing that which may not be real. Nichols explains more lucidly that the organization of a documentary is assessed in ‘terms of the persuasiveness or convincingness of its representations rather than the plausibility or fascination of its fabrications.’

Similarly, Wallis and Pramaggiore suggest that the documentary medium plays an important role in asserting an argument that enables the scrutiny of the issue at hand. In their words:

Documentaries may also make other arguments: they may assert that the subject matter of the documentary is worthy of greater scrutiny (the issue has more sides than have been represented); that a social or economic practice has caused, is causing problems that need to be addressed; that a subculture is of interest because it resonates with culture at large (or, conversely, because it represents the profound diversity of humanity); that a forgotten but important cultural or historical figure needs to be given her or his due; that previous explanations of a historical event have not fully captured its complexity, or have deliberately ignored certain facts and viewpoints (Pramaggiore & Wallis, 2005: 251).

Therefore, documentary as a medium differs from the commercial film in the very matter of approaching the subject. Focus on Patricia is largely to represent that which is missed or may go unnoticed. It opens up possibilities of addressing greater complexities when one encounters questions of identity and human rights. What is powerful

in the documentary is the narrative scale that binds humour as a mode of diction with a serious and an important concern. Patricia's recovery is problematized when her own identity as an assimilated Indian contradicts her appearance as an Australian. Her memory retraced the social ironies beginning with a pun on the underwear drying on the clothes line to the crucial act of estranging minorities based on identity-markers. This narrative device as employed in the documentary is a powerful means of a critical inquiry into the mindset of a society that is malleable to political pressures and categorizes itself into several segments based on caste, religion, language, region or even race.

The subject of the film being a white-Australian woman, brings forth the crucial issues of migration and dissects the whole construct of nation. The very title "My Mother India" knits 'the representation of woman and nation' together where woman is 'the self-sacrificing maternal figure' as depicted in the 1957 film *Mother India* (Simpson, 2002: 8). This corresponds to the idea that the woman depicts the nation. In the present case, this whole notion is extremely complex, particularly when she has to give up her Australian passport in order to work in India, she feels she has somewhere been extremely violent on her own self. At this point, we return to the phrase "death of the subject" (Laclau, 2003: 428) that seems suicidal in nature. The situation is more complicated than merely this, as the subject is forced to commit suicide (in a more symbolic sense) and once again becomes the ignored, unnoticed subject. More debatable questions arise from this: (1) How can a woman of foreign origin depict India as her nation? This may be on an individual level but when connected to the societal units of family and community there is an automated connection with them. This could be understood from the fact that when the mob-attacks began in the city, Patricia was equally vulnerable (perhaps even more vulnerbale owing to her white skin) as any other Sikh woman. Her national identity/nationality got diluted at that moment. This raises an ironical question whether she can really symbolize India as a nation. Interestingly, her situation and presence ear mark the real India versus the projection of India as a secular nation. (2) Her assimilation to the Indian way of life and adopting the Indian dress and food habits convey an acceptance of both the people and national images on the part of the subject. But when she is percieved by the outsiders, their look transforms into a "gaze" pertaining to her colour and skin, and she is immediately ousted as an "outsider", a "foreigner". This may result in laying the geographical and political boundaries around her. Safina explains

that this depiction was inspired by the calendar images, a subject on which her mother was researching. She says:

And that's another reason why the 'Mother India' theme was very current in my mind because she was looking at the representation of women and nation coming through in popular imagery. In fact, in some of the calendars used, you can actually see a 'Mother India' figure in the foreground and a map behind (Simpson, 2002: 9).

In the construction of the figure of 'Mother India', the situation of the woman determines a reconstruction of what Veena Das terms as "masculine nation". She talks of this concept in terms of 'violation on the female body' but she raises a very important concern for women that is equally relevant here:

The violations inscribed on the female body (both literally and figuratively) and the discursive formations around these violations, as we saw, made visible the imagination of the nation as a masculine nation. What did this do to the subjectivity of women? (Das, 2007: 59)

For Patricia, the violations may not be physical but is apparently psychological. She moved to India after her marriage and fulfilled the expectations of the family as a typical Indian Punjabi wife, looking after her ailing father-in-law, much contrary to her own feminist mother-in-law who refused to see her husband during his illness and even on his death because of his behavior towards her during the Partition years. The treatment that Patricia received for her foreign-ness in India, redefined her own existence vis-à-vis the definition of the nation. At the same time, the formation of nation gets deconstructed with fixation of the "other" within it. "Fixation" suggests that the acceptance of the subject should have been in a natural manner in which the subject accepts the other (her husband, and his family and country). However, throughout, her foreign-ness gets reaffirmed either on account of her hanging panties on the clothes line, or issues arising around the panties during child plays⁷ amidst several conventional people living around. With these panties evolves the East-West dichotomy that leads to defining the inner and the outer spaces as feminine or masculine. The moment women intrude into the masculine spaces (even with a little act of the display of panties) they tend to get scandalized. Uberoi explains that other Indian women would never hang their panties openly as for them "...panties are their underneath. It's their most private place, the underneath, the inside. That's where I wanted the film to go—the inside of public experience" (Simpson, 2002: 2).

Uberoi seems to merge the public experience with the insider's account of an individual's life. The most traumatic experience for Patricia was surrendering her Australian passport. Though just a paper document, it knits multiple arrays of the "self" that holds a matrix of issues pertaining to an individual's identity. Veena Das brings out the authenticity of these documents with respect to the roles of the state and how this becomes a crisis for the subject:

The examples of FIRs, talaqnamas, sterilization certificates, ration cards, and hundreds of other such documents show how the state comes to be present in the everyday life of its subjects. Because it can be multiplied and literalized through documents such as court papers, certificates, and ration cards that can be genuine, forged, or even mimicked, it can enter the life of the community, but because the authenticity of these documents can always be put into question, the subject's identity can never be fully assumed in an encounter with the state (Das, 2007: 178).

Veena Das raises this issue in the context of the victims of 1984 anti-Sikh violence. Hence, by defining identities around documents, the individual's identities are inscribed as real rather than accepting the natural existence of an individual. Moreover, the state sanctions the existence, thereby acting as an agency of control.

“Justice Delayed is Justice Denied”

With this arises a crucial issue of representations and petitions made by the victims and sheer neglect of the state towards the matter. As the common saying goes, justice delayed is justice denied. The inability of the victims to prove the crime of the perpetrators due to absence of evidence cannot justify the rationality of the legal procedures.⁸ It is a well-known fact that the riots were a consequence of the assassination of Indira Gandhi that aroused the vengeance against the Sikh community. Many senior Congress leaders and probably some veteran film stars and other important personalities who were involved remain unidentified and unpunished. Not a single case in the court has brought justice. The widow's colony in Tilak Vihar is a site where, even after thirty-three years, eyes get wet while narrating the gruesome experiences of 1984, often termed as 'Chaurasi'⁹ that looms on as an infected wound. Despite the hopelessness in the eyes of the survivors, the words emit stories of suffering with little hope that someday someone might address their woes. Victims continue with a feeling of being orphaned and uncared for. Disillusioned but struggling with a sense of belonging towards those who have had similar experiences, the feeling of empathy underlines the

justification they search for the undeserving conditions that they all live in. *The Times of India* reported that, in the quest for justice, petitions by Sikhs on behalf of widows and victims have been filed in Australia in 2011 (21/10/2011) and recently in February 2015 (13/02/2015). This is particularly because section 268.117 of the Criminal Code Act 1995 provides that Australian courts have jurisdiction in cases involving crimes against humanity whether or not the offense was committed in Australia (Criminal Code Act 1995). Also, in 2012 a petition by M.P. Warren Enstch was moved in Australian Parliament to declare the anti-Sikh riots as genocide. In the petition, he said that 'as long as the violence continues to be referred to as "anti-Sikh riots" there can be no closure for the Sikh community' (India anti-Sikh riots: Australia petition to call it genocide). This openmindedness by the Australian legislation is a step forward towards asserting human concern above all boundaries of nation, race, class, creed or even caste. Particularly, when it is a question of violence, it is not related to particular sects alone. Such incidents need to be remembered and understood so that sensibility can be developed amongst people and to ensure that history does not repeat itself in any form to any body at all. The present times are very sensitive and othering is prominently visible in several forms. During 1984 anti-Sikh violence there was a complete breakdown of the system that would ensure justice. Perhaps, had the perpetrators been convicted, it would have set an example that may have averted the mob-violence that took place in later instances, such as the 2002 Godhra episode. Uma Chakravarti explains how the Muslims live in fear, anger and humiliation on several fronts:

... subject to everyday forms of humiliation in normal times and fear for their lives in the more 'extra-ordinary' situation of the riots. Today it is they who hide or flee to 'safer' places each time political events target them. They too know that the state will not protect them as they realise that the lives of some citizens are expendable. That, to my mind, is the real tragedy of Indian society today: that large numbers of people feel that they must find an object of hatred in order to define themselves and that the state is increasingly complicit in such a definition as it becomes more and more the state of the majority community (Chakravarti, 1994: 2726).

Thus, it becomes crucial that representations be addressed world wide and greater justice be sought to protect human rights at the global front, be it in matters of gender, race, caste, class or ethnicity.

Conclusion

Concerning matters of representation, this documentary is a testimony on a deliberately muted subject (Ghosh, 1995) as recently a couple of films (even thirty-two years after the event) were banned. Moreover, there have been almost three decades of silence on the matter; the subject has not been addressed by major writers. Insider's representations have been several but very few writers of prominence have supported people in this concern. Reasons can be several, ranging from writer's dilemma to political pressures. Amitav Ghosh highlights the issue of silence in his own case in the following passage, which very appropriately initiates the discussion about silence and writing:

And until now I have never really written about what I saw in November 1984. I am not alone: several others who took part in that march went on to publish books, yet nobody, so far as I know, has ever written about it except in the passing. There are good reasons for this, not least the politics of the situation, which leave so little room for the writer. The riots were generated by a cycle of violence, involving terrorists in Punjab on the one hand, and the Indian government on the other. To write carelessly in such a way as to endorse terrorism or repression, can add easily to the problem: in such incendiary circumstances, words cost lives, and it is only appropriate that those who deal in words should pay scrupulous attention to what they say. It is only appropriate that they should find themselves inhibited (Ghosh, 1995).

The documentary "My Mother India" deals with such a sensitive matter very ingeniously. It knits the individual concern with a larger concern not just of a community in a nation but also on the international front. The boundaries of nation get transcended by the Australian origin of the protagonist, Patricia Uberoi, who becomes the major subject prone to violence instated against the community to which her husband belongs. Since the documentary interviews people who are involved with Safina, several voices get projected. Safina remarkably brings to the outside world the experience of the inside. In her attempt to do so, she somewhere brings forth another way of seeing, of those who survived, of those who were different but were equally affected. She also highlights the fact that once the one, who survives, realizes who hasn't, he or she begins to feel incredibly guilty. Working with the survivors in the camp, she wrote experiences for those, who were illiterate, as evidences were to be sent to the Nanavati Commission. Listening to stories of people, she acquired a sense of guilt (of herself being saved),

the survivor's guilt: 'So to hear these stories, you think, I'm so lucky it's disgusting. I don't deserve to be the one whose father was not attacked. I don't deserve to be the one whose house was not burnt to ground' (Simpson, 2002: 12). More than three decades have passed, and healing is still slow. People await justice, grappling to make sense of their identity for themselves, questioning their viable existence in the state they continue to live in. Correlating the experience of Indian Sikh women and that of Patricia, who comes from another country and assimilates their experience of the 1984 violence, one can see that the two are not different from each other, as those who had been staying here have been "othered" by their own people just as Patricia is "othered" as an unnoticed subject.

Notes

1. In June 1984 after the Operation Blue Star in which the Army had attacked the Sikh shrine, the Golden Temple at Amritsar, it is believed that the Sikh bodyguards had assassinated the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in October 1984. In retaliation, lakhs of Sikhs were massacred in a four-day pogrom across India. Delhi, Bokharo and Kanpur were worst-stricken. Post-carnage, thirty-three years down the line, a history of impunity continues as the perpetrators have not been brought to justice.
2. Walklate suggests that there is a link of the tertiary victim with witnessing that allows the possibility of mediating and 'has the potential to make victim of us all'. Though Walklate relates it to media's portrayal, she suggests that it is an important means to discern the roots of "cultural victimology" (Walklate, 2017: 8).
3. Karnail Singh's account depicted how in certain areas Sikhs were in majority and they also attacked the Hindus as a revenge for what was happening in other places. Vanita Juneja also reported how her family had to leave Chandigarh on the night of carnage primarily to save themselves as the Sikhs were spotting all Hindus in the vicinity they lived in.
4. Agamben suggests that in Latin there are two words for "witness", first, "testis" (from which testimony is derived); second "superstes" meaning 'a person who has lived through some-thing, who has experienced an event from beginning to end and can therefore bear a witness to it' (Agamben, 1999: 17). Similarly, Patricia Uberoi in the context of the event is a "superstes" as she experiences as well as stands witness to her experience.
5. Ernesto Laclau uses this phrase in the context of multifarious subjectivity that emerges as a result of multiple identities in the contemporary world (Laclau, 1992).
6. Uma Chakravarti records the experience of a woman whose husband was killed by the mob despite the fact that he had been fasting in mourning since morning (Chakravarti, 1994).
7. Safina Uberoi in her interview narrates how once during Dushera an effigy of Ravana was made by children and when they carried it for burning, a panty from the clothes line got stuck in the crown (Simpson, 2002).

8. For details, see Kaur, 2016.
9. For details, see Kaur Chaudhry, 2017.

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