

# Narrating Terror: The Sound-Image Montage in Literature and Cinema with special reference to Gurbinder Singh's *Chauthi-Koot*

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"Cinema's ability to capture the film-maker's vision draws the medium closer to the most foundational of the arts, poetry: [...] Cinema at its best turns into poetry" (Ghatak as cited by Burnett 10)

The above statement by Ritwik Ghatak, blurring distinction between cinema and literature as ontologically different categories, hints at aesthetic convergence between literature and cinema. Despite their superficial differences, literature and cinema share a common ground on the basis of: one, as narrative art forms; two, the importance of image in their aesthetics. Despite a long history of iconoclasm and detestation for 'image' in the Christian world,<sup>1</sup> it has relentlessly asserted its presence in human imagination through art forms like painting, sculpture, mosaic and films. The presence of image can be seen even in literary genres like poetry and novels,<sup>2</sup> as visuality contributes majorly to the aesthetics of literature as well. Even Plato's theory of imitation rests heavily on the idea of image, though his reasons for discussing this relationship were different. Plato, Aristotle, Quintilian and Cicero in their writings have contributed to the theory of image and representation in which image is understood in relation to *aesthesis*, *fantasia*, *cogitativa* and *memorativa*.<sup>3</sup> The gist of the argument is that image in no art form can be understood as a direct or linear representation of the world outside. It involves a process of distilling the inner image in the mind of the artist into an outer tangible representation. From the world of idea to imitation, Plato conceived a triad of image in which the persistence of image can be seen at three levels. Image is "an interplay between things in the world, mimemata (as a special kind of things in the world) and sensations/perceptions of things and mimemata (Sorbom 12). Image is, thus, central not only to pictorial or visual art forms, but also to poetry and narrative art forms too. From poetic image to novelistic image to the image in painting and cinema, image surrounds us in various forms. Image is all-pervasive; image is ubiquitous. To quote Rancière, "Image, properly speaking, are the things of the world" (Rancière 109). The above statement alters the conventional mimetic relationship between the image and the world on the one hand; and conventional perception of literature and cinema as ontologically different art forms on the other. Jacques Rancière's ideas on the 'sayable' and the 'visible' dimensions of the image, Eisenstein's theory of sound and image relationship in Vertical Montage and Michel Chion's idea of Audio-Vision destabilize the conventional understanding of the literary, the visual and the auditory.

"The sonic turn"<sup>4</sup> pays attention to the sonic or audio dimension of narratives. Many scholars (Claudia Gorbman, Elsie Walker, Rick Altman *et al*) have worked on film music

and sound in relation to film theory and narrative. Recent developments in audionarratology provide the tools to understand the role sound plays in a narrative discourse. Audionarratology, which belongs to the post-classical narratology phase, studies how the sound contributes to the production of space(s) and meaning in narratives across media. It explores the possibility of studying interface between sound and narrative in radio plays, stage performances, audiobooks, films, TV and other narrative forms. This paper attempts to explore the interface between sound and image in both literature and cinema. In the present paper, sound is not understood - one, merely at the level of music, but it also includes other dimensions of the sonic spectrum of a narrative in the form of diegetic or non-diegetic sound; two, sound is not taken as a medium specific entity as sound is understood to be one of the dimensions of literary narratives as well. This paper contributes towards audionarratology by exploring the Sound-Image interface in verbal narratives and in film adaptation with reference to Gurbinder Singh's film titled *Chauthi Koot*, an adaptation of two short stories by Waryam Singh Sandhu, a Punjabi short story writer.

The theory of image in its various forms has dominated the film theory. Owing to Eisenstein's montage, Orson Well's theory of deep focus, Andre Bazin's realist image, Bergson's, Roland Barthes's and Deleuze's ideas, the image in cinema has undergone various philosophical shifts. In film theory, 'seeing' was once thought to be equal to understanding. Ever since the sound was introduced in films, 'seeing' a film began to include the faculty of 'hearing' too. The argument is sound in cinema is not redundant or subservient to the visual of cinema; rather it is as important and essential as the visual is. Elsie Walker opens her book *Understanding Sound Tracks through Film Theory* by quoting John Currie that cinema is "overall 70% sound" (Currie as quoted by Walker 1). It indicates that important position sound has acquired while understanding the cinematic image, which requires equal theoretical attention. There have been some studies which focus on various aspects of sound in cinema such as the history of sound design (Whittington); taxonomy and diegesis (Percheron 1980); sound design for film and television (Dakia 2009) and relevance of Eisenstein's ideas on sound and image in feminist films (Ging 2004) and sound and image as image (Mayfield).

According to Eisenstein's definition, montage is an editing technique in which contrasting shots or sequences are juxtaposed to create an emotional or intellectual effect on the minds of the viewers. Besides, Eisenstein's famous five kinds of montage, there is another kind of montage that can be explored in cinema. The creative correspondence between sound and image, which results into the creation of meaning, in this paper is called as the Sound-Image montage. The Sound-Image montage in cinema is an interface wherein the sound complements the visual or the visual complements the sound to add to the meaning of the shot, which Michel Chion calls the Audio-Visual, an idea rooted in Eisenstein's theory of sound-image relationship in his later films. Sound-Image montage is not the conventional sound-visual synchronization, nor is it what William Whittington studies as sound design.<sup>5</sup> In films, the Sound-Image montage is the result of placing sound with visuals in a manner to enhance the emotional or intellectual response and convey meaning in a coded and subtle fashion. "Film sound can be used to connect inner and outer states in a less explicit way than do camera associations" (Hutcheon 41).

Literature, along with other dimensions, also possesses an auditory dimension. In literary narratives, the image or visuality is as important as musicality or sonic effects are important in poetry. Walter Sutton, referring to the debate between Ezra Pound and

Joseph Frank, deliberates the question of the ontology of literary image in poetry and novels.<sup>6</sup> In every narrative, there is an interaction between the visual and the sonic. The sonic dimension of literature is closely linked with the visual dimension and is a part of the form and function of a narrative. Michael Chion's discusses 'synchresis' as an automatic auditory imagination stimulated by the visual signs. As defined by Chion, synchresis is "the spontaneous and irresistible weld between the auditory phenomenon and visual phenomenon ... when they occur at the same time" (Chion 63). In literature, the sound is imagined even if there is no direct reference to it in the form of onomatopoeia. Jarmila Mildorf and Till Kinzel, while referring to Lewis's statement – "good reading is always aural as well as visual," (Mildorf and Kinzel Loc 476) – highlight that "on the purely textual level sound is inscribed in narratives and needs to be brought to attention" (Mildorf and Kinzel Loc 476). It is in this area that audionarratology provides useful and critical tools to understand "the sonic qualities of fictional texts" (Mildorf and Kinzel Loc 109/7027). The coded sound can be heard in other art forms such as literature or paintings - be it the music on the Grecian Urn that John Keats hears or the song of the solitary reaper in Wordsworth's poem or sounds of utensils and trains in modernist poetry; or in paintings such as Claude Lorrain's "Seaport at Sunset" (1639)<sup>7</sup>; or in Caspar David Friedrich's "Wanderer Above the Mist" (1818)<sup>8</sup>; or in Eugene Delacroix's "Liberty Leading the People" (1830). The argument is that as in painting, along with the visual is also present the imagined sound associated with the image. Both the imagined and the described sound, constitute an important element of narratives and contribute towards the narrative discourse.<sup>9</sup> The sound-visual interaction is integral to literary narratives, though its degree varies from narrative to narrative. However, in literature sound is not perceived by the olfactory senses as in literary narratives sound is imagined along with the visual, unlike films in which sound is present as an empirical sensory entity. The heard sound in films or the imagined sound in literature interacts with the visuals present in the narrative of the respective medium. The interaction between the two is integral to the overall aesthetic experience of any narrative across media. Both, the conceived image of literature and perceived image of films, occupy an auditory dimension which contributes towards creating meaning in the respective art forms.

Gurvinder Singh's *Chauthi Koot* is an adaptation of two short stories titled "Chauthi Koot"<sup>10</sup> and "Hun Main Theek Thak Haan"<sup>11</sup> by Waryam Singh Sandhu, a Sahitya Akademy Award winner Punjabi writer. Two stories by Waryam Singh Sandhu give an insight into the separatist movement of the 1980s in Punjab from two different points of view. Associated with the demand of a separate nation, the Khalistan movement in Punjab in the 1980s created a political question in front of India as a nation-state and a moral question in front of humanity. There were multifarious factors responsible for the emergence of the movement in the 1980s. Sekhon and Singh opine that while drafting the Hindu Marriage Act in 1950, the Congress party placed the Sikh community under the umbrella category of Hindus and the Anand Marriage Act of the Sikhs was replaced by the Hindu Marriage Act. The Sikh community perceived it as "refusal by the Congress party to recognize the independence of their religion" (Sekhon and Singh 45). Jugdeep S. Chima opines that the constant defeats of Akali Dal in the electoral politics; demand made by Jagat Singh Chauhan, a Punjabi expat; Akali Dal's constant demand for *Punjabi Suba*, organization of states along linguistic lines in India; violent conflicts between Sikhs and Nirankaris; assassination of Jagat Narain, the journalist; the rise of Bhindrawale and his arrest after Jagat Narain's murder were important reasons for the rise of the movement.

The movement which was against India as a State, divided the society of Punjab into Sikhs and Hindus. The period witnessed clashes between the Sikh and the police; the Sikh and the Nirankaris and several attacks on Hindu travelling in buses and trains. Many Hindu families became targets, who were kidnapped for ransom. Sometimes, Hindus were segregated, made to stand in a line and were shot dead.<sup>12</sup> Various such incidents of violence against the Hindu community gave the movement a communal complexion. In the popular perception, it created a binary of Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab resulting into a cleavage in the centuries-old syncretic culture of Punjab.<sup>13</sup> One of the effects of the period of extremism in Punjab was that everybody became paranoid of the other. Hindus were apprehensive of the Sikhs, the Sikhs were largely distrustful of the state armed forces, the police would suspect each Sikh to be a terrorist, which resulted into paranoia among the Sikhs in Punjab. People got divided along religious lines, and the State was suspicious of its citizen. Failure of the State to tackle the issue of violence perpetrated by militants gave Hindus a sense of insecurity. The gulf was widening not merely between the people and the State, but also among people.

Written by Waryam Singh Sandhu, "Chauthi Koot" and "Hun Main Theek Thak Han," give a sensitive portrayal of the period of terror as lived by people across religious identities. Going beyond the binaries of Hindus and Sikhs, these stories show that both Hindus and Sikhs were victims of the period of militancy. Narrated from the point of view of a Hindu man, in "Chauthi Koot" silence brings to surface the yawning vacuum, depleting trust and widening gap among people. Raj Kumar and Jugal Kishore are travelling together in a bus. In the narratorial voice of Raj Kumar echo with "reverberations"<sup>14</sup> (Kuzmèová 2013) of his inner thoughts which reveal episodes from his memory about his cousin who, fearing the violent atmosphere of Punjab, refused to come to Punjab for a wedding; anxiety and worry of his and Jugal Kishore's family members if they don't reach home tonight, and the thoughts of a wedding of his colleague's daughter he is supposed to attend the next morning and a folktale about the fear of losing life told by his grandmother. Raj Kumar's first worry is to reach Jalandhar so that he could catch the last train to Amritsar. His anxiety and fear make him count the number of Sikhs and non-Sikhs travellers in the bus. They hardly talk to each other, which signifies the fear lurking at the back of their minds as they both fear threat to their lives while travelling by bus during the late evening hours. The silence between them, sparse conversations and long narrations of Raj Kumar's inner thoughts show unnerving anxiety, lurking fear and silently brewing disquiet in their minds. In the interface between the auditory and visual signs in literature, the narrative shows the effects of violence and terror on the minds of the people. The narrative does not move along the environmental sounds but focuses more on the cantankerous anxiety in the mind of Raj Kumar, which is juxtaposed with the silence between two characters. With the narrative structure of multiple narratives within the main narrative, Raj Kumar's memory throw light on varied aspects of the period of violence in Punjab. Visual descriptions in the story divulge terror lurking in the mind of the narrator and his co-traveller. They have almost similar experience at the railway station, where they are trying their luck to catch a train. They meet a Sikh man, who is also going to Amritsar. Despite their common destination, there is a hesitation in each one of them to help a stranger with a different religious identity. When they manage to enter the guard's compartment while catching the last train to Amritsar, they find that four men were already sitting in the compartment. All of them looked at Raj Kumar, Jugal Kishore and the Sikh man, but said nothing. "Owing to anxiety,

haste, fear and terror, my head was going numb. I started looking at everybody's face intensely sitting in the compartment" (Sandhu 18, 19).<sup>15</sup> The narrative reveals Raj Kumar's inner thoughts and the fear in his mind after seeing two Sikh men in the compartment. Silence among travelers in the compartment adds to suspicion and fear. "I found that silence to be conspiratorial. Owing to such silence, people like them, sit quiet and like a *Cheetah* look for an opportune time to attack and kill" (Sandhu 19).<sup>16</sup>

"Hun Main Theek Thaak Han", on the other hand, tells the story from the point of the view of the Sikh community. The story begins with highlighting silence at night disturbed by the dog's barking. Extremists have asked the family to kill their dog, as its barking threatens them. Husband and wife are so traumatized that in spite of their being awake at night, they hardly talk. Their situation is such that silence haunts them and sound frightens them. They are terrorized as they are targeted both by the police forces and the extremists. The story also brings to the fore the Sikh community's hurt religious sentiments after the attack on the Golden Temple by the Government of India. Consequently, the distance between the Sikh community and the Indian state increases, and the question of the Sikh minority in the Hindu majoritarian state is raised afresh. This story juxtaposes silence in the house with the sounds like dog's barking or gunshots and tumult of people's protest on the streets of Punjab. With the use of silence and specific sounds that cut through the silence, the auditory dimension of the narrative creates the atmosphere of terror. In these two stories, the interface between visual descriptions and the noise of inner reverberations in the mind of the narrator or environmental sounds constitutes the Sound-Image montage creating an effect of terror. In "Chauthi Koot" by highlighting the onomatopoeic sound of train running over a bridge – *kharach kharach* – the narrative brings readers' attention to the yawning silence among travellers belonging to different religious identities in the guard's cabin. The lack of conversation is juxtaposed with the noise of thoughts and fear clamoring in the mind of the narrator and some environmental sounds, which makes silence in both the stories an effective device to narrate terror.

Gurvinder Singh graduated from Film and Television Institute of India in 2001. Later, Mani Kaul, the famous Indian avant-garde filmmaker became his mentor. The influence of Mani Kaul and other international filmmakers like Godard and Abbas Kiarostami is evident in his non-imitative cinema. In the film adaptation, these two stories are interwoven into a single narrative which allows the filmmaker to include the Hindu and the Sikh perspectives in one narrative. Gurvinder Singh's cinematic image does not rest on its denotative value. The image is not merely a tool of story telling in the sense it 'imitates' the outside empirical world. Challenging the Platonic concept of imitative image, the image in his cinema breaks the boundary of linear communication between the object and imitation to enter the zone of abstraction. Transcending the limits of denotation, it dwells on connotative value of each visual. Rather than being subservient to events, the image in his film is eloquent and evocative. The 'affect' that his image produces on the minds of the audience reveals the space within the character and also redefines the space around the characters. In the film, Gurvinder Singh's cinematic image plays heavily on visuals and silences. The use of close-up shots, looks of terror juxtaposed with a cavernous silence among different characters highlight the fear lurking in every character's mind and the mounting lack of trust among human beings. The attempt of the filmmaker is to create a cinematic composition, with the play of visuals and sound/silences, expressing the inner world of characters. It cannot be denied that the nature of cinematic image is such that cognition of a film begins with the sensory perception of the image and the

outer world; but in the hands of Gurbinder Singh the cinematic image opens up to possibilities of exploring the inner world of characters and the space between different characters. Watching the film is like to experience latent anxieties, fears and insecurities becoming tangible. The perception of the sensory image in his film finally leads to the conceptual affect, an idea conceived by the filmmaker. The inner conceptual image of the filmmaker, which is "crucial to the production process which can be seen as the creation of an outward perceptual object to become isomorphic to the inner image" (Sorbo 23), determines the form and function of the outward image in his film.

In the film, the use of diegetic, non-diegetic or extra-diegetic sound "constructs and enriches the diegesis" (Percheron 18). The first level narrative in the film deals with two middle-aged Hindu men, who have missed their last train to Amritsar. The sense of urgency is vividly written on their faces as they are anxious to catch the last train to Amritsar. Unlike the story, the film narrative does not reveal reverberations in the mind of Raj Kumar. They get down from a bus to catch the train and walk hurriedly towards the station. Before they could enter the station, the train starts. What we hear is only the sound of the train without seeing it. The scene cuts into another scene in which policemen are shown walking in a *synecdochic* shot (only their feet) with guns in their hands signifying the social and political environment of Punjab in the 1980s. At the platform, they meet a Sikh gentleman who is also going to Amritsar. A montage brings to surface the tension in the undercurrents of the narrative. These two men are sitting quietly on the railway platform bench, policeman is getting his boots polished, a poor man is smoking a *bidi*.<sup>17</sup> The hard-hitting silence in the scene is broken by the sound of the approaching train. They request the guard of the train to let them in. The guard of the train refuses to help them. When the train is leaving the station, they manage to slip into the guard's compartment. When they enter the compartment, they are shocked to see a couple of young Sikh fellows already sitting there, which increases suspicion in their minds. They all are looking equally terrified. Silence among travelers and the loud sound of the train highlights the void among them. The slow movement of camera and close-ups are used to highlight their isolated and terrorized state. As in every frame, each character is alone.

The narrative undergoes a temporal and spatial shift. Fading away sound shifts the scene to the second narrative which revolves around Joginder Singh. A Hindu couple visits their relatives at night. The husband wants to ask somebody the path as they have lost their way at night. He loudly announces his problem to the man who calls from inside the house. After some time the gate opens, and Joginder Singh comes out. Joginder sees them off to the boundary of the village and comes back home. While he is lying in his bed, he cannot sleep. Suddenly the dog starts barking. Soon a gunshot is heard. Joginder Singh is alarmed and terrified. He asks his family members to take the dog inside. He goes out and calls in the Sikh separatists moving outside. Four of them enter the house and jostle Joginder for not having killed the dog, as they have instructed him. In the scene, the camera shows the power dynamics between the ordinary Sikh family and the Sikh extremists. Before they are about to leave the house, Joginder stands at the threshold of the room and a member of the group gives him a threatening look.

In spite of the strong emotional bond with the dog, the next morning Joginder Singh mixes pesticide in a bowl of curd and gives it to the dog. All members of the family are sitting there and watching. Dog's death is averted when a team of CRPF comes and searches their house. They search every corner of the house. The Sikh family is caught between the militants and the CRPF. The dog which the militants want them to kill is

shot at by the CRPF soldier, which the dog miraculously survives. Shooting the dog is followed by a montage of dark clouds and a storm in the village. The montage shows dust rising in the village street, crops shaken by strong winds. Using frame within frame technique, the filmmaker shows the scene from the vantage point of Joginder Singh's room highlighting the window bars which signifies their state of captivity in their own home. Frightened by recent developments, Joginder Singh's wife wants him to kill the dog, which is difficult for them to do. One night, when the dog is barking incessantly, fearing that barking dog would invite troubles from the extremists, Joginder Singh hits the dog hard. The next morning, the dog is found lying dead in the courtyard.

The narrative comes back to the first level of narrative. All characters are sitting silently and an eerie silence prevails in the guard's cabin. The sound of the train running on the track is loud. Before the train reaches the railway station of Amritsar, all of them are dropped off by the guard in the outskirts of the railway station. Taking quick paces, Hindu travellers start walking immediately. They are frightened by the Sikh co-travellers walking behind them. After catching them the Sikh young men tell the Hindu travellers their story and request the Hindus to take them along. They fear that if they are found walking alone at night by the CRPF or the Police, they will be taken as terrorists, and might be shot dead. All of them start walking hurriedly with anxiety in their paces.

In the film, the dog becomes the central metaphor which brings to surface the multifarious nature of the Punjab problem. The question of killing a pet raises the fundamental question of morality in front of people caught in the quagmire of violence. The question reflects the crisis of human values in the times of conflicts, violence and distrust. The same loss of trust in human relationships is exhibited in the other story in the same narrative. Six men travelling together in the guard's compartment hardly speak to one another. Rather than adapting events in two stories with one to one correspondence, Gurvinder Singh in his film has focused on adapting terror, its impact on human psyche and relationships. The film does not offer a spectacle of violence; rather it makes the viewers experience terror at the level of mind. The aesthetics of the film rests upon a nuanced portrayal of emotions moving in the undercurrents of the situation. The film hits the viewers not because of melodrama or the flamboyant use of camera; rather because of the exact opposite of these elements. Long shots, lesser use of dialogues, long silences, slow-paced editing and accentuated diegetic sound, work together to create the effect of terror in the minds of the audience. The filmmaker gives more time to a situation in the narrative to let it produce an affect. By delaying the information, a style of filmmaking very close to "Mani Kaul's non-representational cinema" (Burnett 2013), the filmmaker explores emotions through the use of Sound-Image montage. Gurvinder Singh, a student of Mani Kaul, who was influenced by Bresson, like his mentor uses camera "to suppress and delay expressivity" and his style of filmmaking "withholds access to [...] emotional reactions" (Burnett 4) of characters, but without compromising on the narrativity in this film. The image in his cinema is not iconic giving information of the outer world; rather it is evocative. It unravels the underlying emotion, anxiety, fear, distrust of people caught in a situation. Gurvinder Singh has placed sound in the narrative at an equal footing with the visuals in the film. Sometimes, the filmmaker defies the conventional relationship of "audiovisual complementarity" (Walker 14) between the image and the sound. The sound of the train running on the tracks, the train crossing the bridge and other diegetic sounds are more pronounced than the usual. The aural and visual signs work in sync with each other to enhance experientiality of the narrative. Diegetic or non-diegetic aural

signs acquire their meaning while they are played along with the visual sign in the given context. It would be erroneous to ascribe a fixed meaning or function to any aural sign in this context as aural signs “can in principle assume any narrative function within a specific context” (Huwiler Loc 2278), but the Sound-Image montage in the film works to convey the sense of terror to the audience.

The play of silence is another important aspect of the Sound-Image montage as used by the filmmaker. The meaning in the film resides in the haunting silences. Emotions running in the undercurrents of the film become palpable through the use of diegetic sound and accentuated silence. Emphasis given to the diegetic sounds, minimalist dialogues and the use of silence with close-up shots enter into a creative interaction with the narrative of the film. Silence among co-travelers in the train, the sound of men’s footsteps, dog’s barking, Joginder Singh’s being terrorized by both CRPF and Khalistan forces, Joginder Singh’s silence, clamor of announcements made on the loudspeakers, people marching towards the Golden Temple while singing holy verses from the Guru Granth Sahib and other verses from Punjabi literature invoking the idea of the militant Sikh identity – through all signs of sound, through the presence and absence, in its acousmatic or visualized zone, the Sound-Image montage in the film enhances the meaning.

As Eisenstein describes, “art actually begins from the moment when a combination of sound and picture does not simply reproduce a connection existing in nature but establishes a connection demanded by expressive requirements” (Eisenstein 334). The Sound-Image montage in the aesthetics of Gurbinder Singh’s cinema dismantles the conventional structure and breaks away from the narrative patterns of mainstream cinema as well as (socialist) realism. The play of sound and silence contributes in slowing down the narrative time and adds to the spatiality of the narrative. By slowing down the narrative pace, the filmmaker creates an aesthetic effect and a higher level of narration and meaning. Sound in the film does not merely add linearized temporality to the narrative; rather it brings to the surface inherent tension in the situation. The filmmaker’s attempt is to adapt trauma with its psychological and social dimensions. The violence or terror lies in its psychological impact on the human mind, inter-personal relationships and man’s relationship even with animals. Gurbinder Singh does not construct his Sound-Image montage through linear synchronization between sound and image. The relationship between sound and image in his film is more of a structural unit performing the expressive function while narrating events. The *obraz* or the generalized image expresses trauma in cinema of which the Sound-Image interface is the central unit.

The image in cinema is “not content, but container” (Chion 67) of information and meaning. David Bordwell’s statement that a narrative mobilizes “all sorts of material properties of the medium, in a wide variety of manner” (Bordwell 2004: 207) gives space to open verbal and film narratives to the tools of audionarratology. Sound in literature and film engages the sense mode and “can actively shape how we interpret the image” (Bordwell and Thompson 181) in different media. The sound is not secondary to the visuals; rather it is one of the disparate elements colliding to make a new meaning, in Eisenstein’s terms. “Therefore his use of filmic music, unlike that in classic film, did not merely complement the image track as an add-on dimension, but was rather interwoven into a complex whole” (Ging 11). According to Ging, Eisenstein understands the difference between depiction and generalized image or *obraz* in cinema who believed that sound and image in cinema are bound with each other through the logic in inner synchronicity



and movement. The theoretical frame of audionarratology, Chion's 'synchresis' and extension of Sound-Image montage to literary narratives open aural dimension of literature to analysis. The auditory dimension of literary and film image is capable of stimulating new meaning to literary or cinematic phrases. This paper has attempted to understand the cinematic and literary image through its aural axis. Sound also performs the function of binding the visuals in temporal terms, adding meaning to the shot and also adding spatiality to the films. Literature being a verbal art form depends on the reader's imagination for its cognition and aesthetic experience. The mental images of literature "don't seem to be visual the way real pictures are; they involve all other senses" (Mitchell 507). Along with visual descriptions and images, various kinds of sounds embedded in the narrative come alive in the reader's imagination. Extending Elsie Walker's ideas on "film musicality" (Walker 2015: 4), audio elements in this paper are seen in relation to "all the interconnected elements" (Walker 2015: 4) of narratives. Narrator's voice, speeches by characters, their dialogues, loud cries, hush whispers, sounds of a vehicle and all forms of silences – all belong to the soundscape of a narrative.

The attempt has not been to understand a linear or direct correspondence between audio patterns of a narrative and visual representation; rather to explore potentialities of auditory signs in the narrative discourse. As Elke Huwiler, while commenting on the sound in radio plays, says that the sign system of voice cannot be "equated with the sign system of language, although the two are closely connected" (Huwiler Loc 2254), it is the same with aural and verbal signs in literature. In every narrative, the relationship between sound and visuals is unique. The sound-visual relationship in literature is different from that of in films. In film narratives, sound is perceived; whereas in verbal narratives, the sound is imagined. In literature, sound has no physical or empirical entity. It comes alive in reader's imagination, which is central to its existence and function in the narrative. In Waryam Singh Sandhu's stories, the visuality of each characters loneliness, fear, inability to connect with others and terror are central, which constitute the 'nub' of these stories, are enhanced further in the film by Gurvinder Singh. The filmmaker has woven two different tales told from two different perspectives into one narrative. Rather than performing the representational function, the Sound-Image montage in Gurvinder Singh's film narrates the emotional intensity of the situation. The use of film language in the film makes the image packed with thought and emotions making the composition evocative, yet intellectual. The use of flashback, close-ups, enhanced sound and its relationship with the visual, and play of silences are the basis of the Sound-Image montage in this film contributing towards cinematic translation of terror.

### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> This statement also invokes Robert Stam's counting of various reasons of contempt against the visual medium. For details, please see the Introduction of *Literature and Film: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation* edited by Robert Stam and Alessandra Raengo.
- <sup>2</sup> W. J. T. Mitchell, using Wittgenstein's ideas to theorize image, gives a brief genealogy and categorization of images in the essay "What is an Image".
- <sup>3</sup> These ideas have been borrowed from Sorbom's essay on Image. For details, please go to Works Cited.
- <sup>4</sup> For details, please refer to *Audionarratology*. Ed(s). Jarmila Mildrof and Till Kinzel.
- <sup>5</sup> William Whittington has studied sound design, a term introduced by Walter Murch, to describe the sound of *Apocalypse Now*. Whittington gives a detailed historical account of the origin of the term and its use in Hollywood. Whittington finds the roots of sound design in sound montage, which Whittington believes first featured in films by George Lucas.
- <sup>6</sup> Sutton raises the question if the whole work can be read as an image, which opens up the possibility of reading image not in parts of a work, but in the entire narrative.
- <sup>7</sup> The painting suggests the sounds of human activity in the evening at the seaport.
- <sup>8</sup> The painting signifies the Romantic quietude.
- <sup>9</sup> Bert Haanstra's *Glas* (1958) uses different two different kinds of sounds – one while showing the handmade crystal and second, while showing the machine made glass bottles. A. Thoma studies how Guy Debord's *Hurlments en faveur de Sade* inverts the image-sound relationship; the sound of boiling rice in Ritwik Ghatak's *Megha Dhake Tara*; Godard's use of sound in his films are famous examples which validate the point that sound is an integral part of the meaning in films.
- <sup>10</sup> The Fourth Direction (Translation is mine)
- <sup>11</sup> Now I Am Fine (Translation is mine)
- <sup>12</sup> The author of the paper lived in Punjab in the 1980s. Some incidents referred to in this paper are based on author's memory.
- <sup>13</sup> This idea is rooted in the historical context in which Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, three important religious communities of Punjab, have lived together. There are many cultural practices in terms of food, folk songs, poetry and music which are common among them since medieval times.
- <sup>14</sup> Ane•ka Kuzmèová's ideas on inner reverberations and outer reverberations have been used by Ivan Delarazi in the article titled "Voicing the Split Narrator: Readers' Chores In Toni Morrison's "Recitatif".
- <sup>15</sup> Translation is mine.
- <sup>16</sup> Translation is mine.
- <sup>17</sup> *Bidi* is indigenous cigarette, which is made of rolled leaf. It is shorter in size than a cigarette.

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