



REMEMBERING 1992: SIX FILMS EXPLORE THE RIOTS OF MUMBAI AND ITS AFTERMATH

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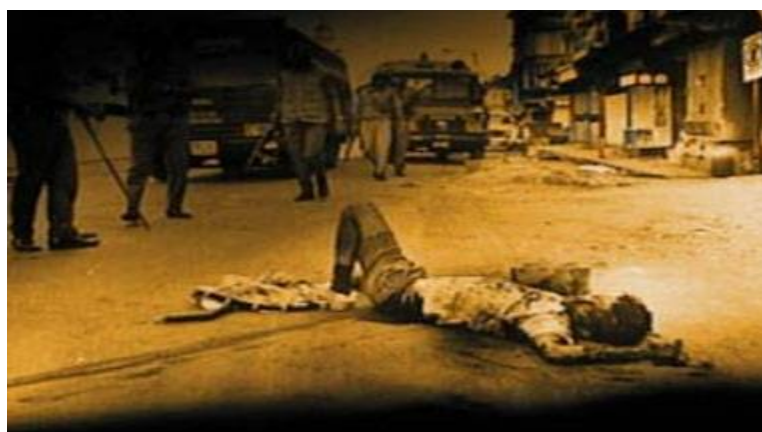
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PIYUSH GARUD WAS ONLY FOUR YEARS OLD WHEN HE WITNESSED FOUR ARMED MEN CHASING A LONE MAN DOWN THE STREETS DURING THE MUMBAI RIOTS IN 1992-93 AFTER THE DEMOLITION OF THE BABRI MASJID. TWENTY YEARS AFTER THE RIOTS THAT SHOOK THE 'MAXIMUM CITY' TO ITS CORE, HE HAS MADE A FILM ON THE AFTERMATH OF THE RIOTS CALLED 'AAKHRI PANAH - THE LAST REFUGE' WITH THREE OTHER CLASSMATES - WHICH HAS BECOME THEIR OWN WAY OF REMEMBERING THE EVENT. THE FILM IS PART OF A SERIES OF SIX FILMS, CALLED 'REMEMBERING 1992', WHICH WERE MADE TO MARK THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MUMBAI RIOTS - AN EVENT THAT HAS CHANGED THE CITY IN A LOT OF WAYS. THE FILMS, PRODUCED BY THE SCHOOL OF MEDIA AND CULTURAL STUDIES (SCMS) IN TATA INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES (TISS) ARE BASED ON THE AFTERMATH OF THE RIOTS AND REFLECTS ON VARIOUS ISSUES THAT ENGAGE THE PLACES AND COMMUNITIES AFFECTED IN THE RIOTS. PIYUSH'S FILM DOCUMENTS THE SPREAD OF GHETTOS IN MUMBRA - A PREDOMINANTLY MUSLIM COLONY THAT STARTED FLOURISHING AFTER THE BHIWANDI RIOTS IN 1984. SINCE 1992, PEOPLE DISPLACED IN THE RIOTS STARTED MIGRATING TO MUMBRA - MOSTLY MUSLIMS WHO FELT PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE IN A CITY WHERE THEY WERE TARGETED DURING THE RIOTS. HE SAID, "PEOPLE OFTEN REFERRED TO MUMBRA AS 'CHOTA PAKISTAN'. I WANTED TO UNDERSTAND WHY THERE IS A CERTAIN BIAS TOWARDS PEOPLE LIVING THERE." ACCORDING TO HIM, WHAT AFFECTED HIM MOST WAS HIS DAILY COMMUTE HOME TO KALYAN, WHICH IS A FEW STATIONS AWAY FROM MUMBRA. WHEREAS 'AAKHRI PANAH' LOOKS AT MUMBRA, ANOTHER FILM 'AMAN KI KHOJ' LOOKS AT ANOTHER AREA THAT WAS AFFECTED BY THE RIOTS - DHARAVI. THE FILM TRIES TO UNDERSTAND AND DOCUMENT THE WORK OF THE MOHALLA COMMITTEES- ORGANISATIONS THAT WERE FORMED IN THE SLUMS FOR FOSTERING COMMUNAL HARMONY AND INTEGRATION AFTER THE RIOTS. WOMEN HAVE PLAYED A VITAL ROLE IN THE MOHALLA COMMITTEE BY ORGANISING ALL-WOMEN IFTAAR PARTIES, AN ISSUE THAT HAS BEEN HIGHLIGHTED BY THE FILMS. ONE OF THE FILMS - 'FAROOQ VERSUS THE STATE' DEALS WITH THE CONTROVERSIAL CASE OF FAROOQ MHAPKAR, ONE OF THE KEY PERSONS WHO WAS WRONGLY ACCUSED IN THE HARI MASJID CASE, ONE OF THE MOST SERIOUS EPISODES OF THE MUMBAI RIOTS OF 1992-93. ANJALI MONTEIRO AND KP JAYASANKAR, WHO FILMED THIS

DOCUMENTARY, SAID, "WE DECIDED TO TAKE UP THE HARI MASJID FIRING, FOCUSING ON FAROOQ MHAPKAR'S STORY AS HIS STRUGGLE HAS IN MANY WAYS BECOME ICONIC AND IS SOMETHING THAT NEEDS TO REACH A WIDER PUBLIC." BUT WHY REMEMBER THE EVENTS OF 1992-93 ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY EVOKE SUCH PAINFUL MEMORIES IN MOST OF THE VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILIES? JAYASANKAR AND MONTEIRO, WHO ARE ALSO PROFESSORS AT SCMS, SAID, "IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT WE ARE HOSTAGE TO A TERRIFYING AMNESIA AND ABSENCE OF POLITICAL WILL THAT HAS RESULTED IN DENIAL OF JUSTICE TO THE VICTIMS OF COMMUNAL AND POLICE VIOLENCE IN 1992." FOR THE STUDENTS, MOST OF THEM WHO HAVE NOT WITNESSED THE EVENTS OF 92-93, IT WAS ALSO A PERIOD OF SELF-REFLECTION DURING THE PROCESS OF FILM MAKING. [SUJATHA SUBRAMANIAN](#), ONE OF THE FILMMAKERS OF 'AMAN KI KHOJ', SAID, "WHEN YOU SAY 'REMEMBER' YOU REMEMBER NOT JUST THE VIOLENCE, BUT ALSO WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THE VIOLENCE. MOST COMMUNITIES WENT THROUGH A PERIOD OF SELF-REFLECTION AND IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT AS WELL. "THE SET OF SIX FILMS ARE A PART OF A LARGER EVENT 'BOMBAY KI KAHANI, MUMBAI KI ZUBAANI' TO COMMEMORATE THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RIOTS. THE TRAILERS FOR THE 'REMEMBERING 1992' SERIES CAN BE SEEN [HERE](#).

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