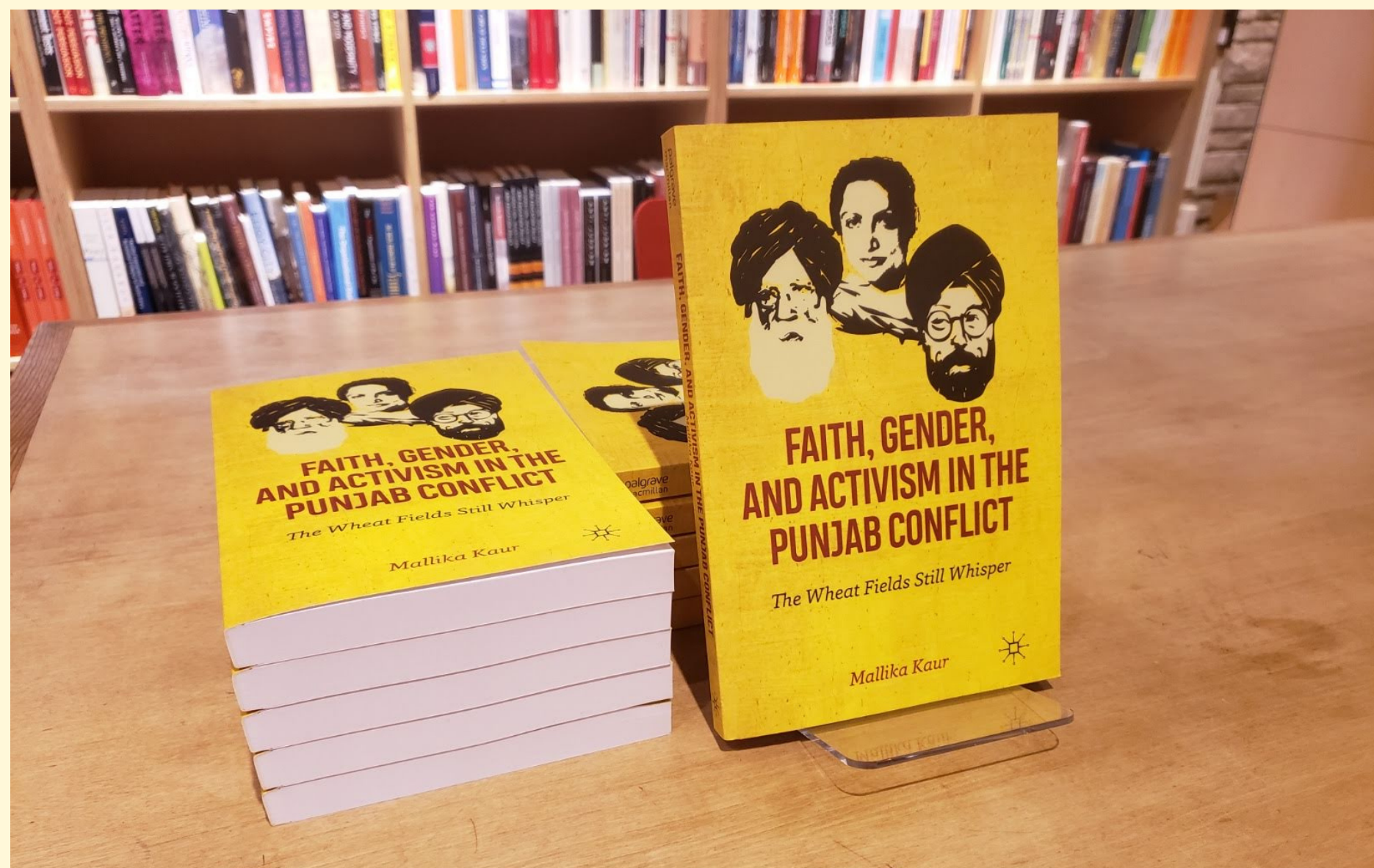


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BOOK REVIEWS:

"I read Mallika Kaur's beautifully written book at a gallop. Police raids, villagers' resistance, women's defiance, torturers, survivors, electoral violence, strategic silences. It's all here. But what is remarkable is how Mallika Kaur allows us to listen in on these lively, risky conversations as Sikh women and men unravel the Indian official story and together weave a more reliable, complex political narrative."

--- **Cynthia Enloe, Clark University, New York, USA**

"Deftly braiding oral history with recorded history, Mallika Kaur brings to the reader memories and tales of the long Punjab struggle with a painful, bracing immediacy. We listen as three ordinary - and not so ordinary - people describe how they chose engagement, not indifference; dignity, and humanity over collusion with state violence and corruption. A vivid reminder that beyond the statistics in human rights reports and the details of unending legal cases, lie courage, humor, caring, and simple commitment to truth."

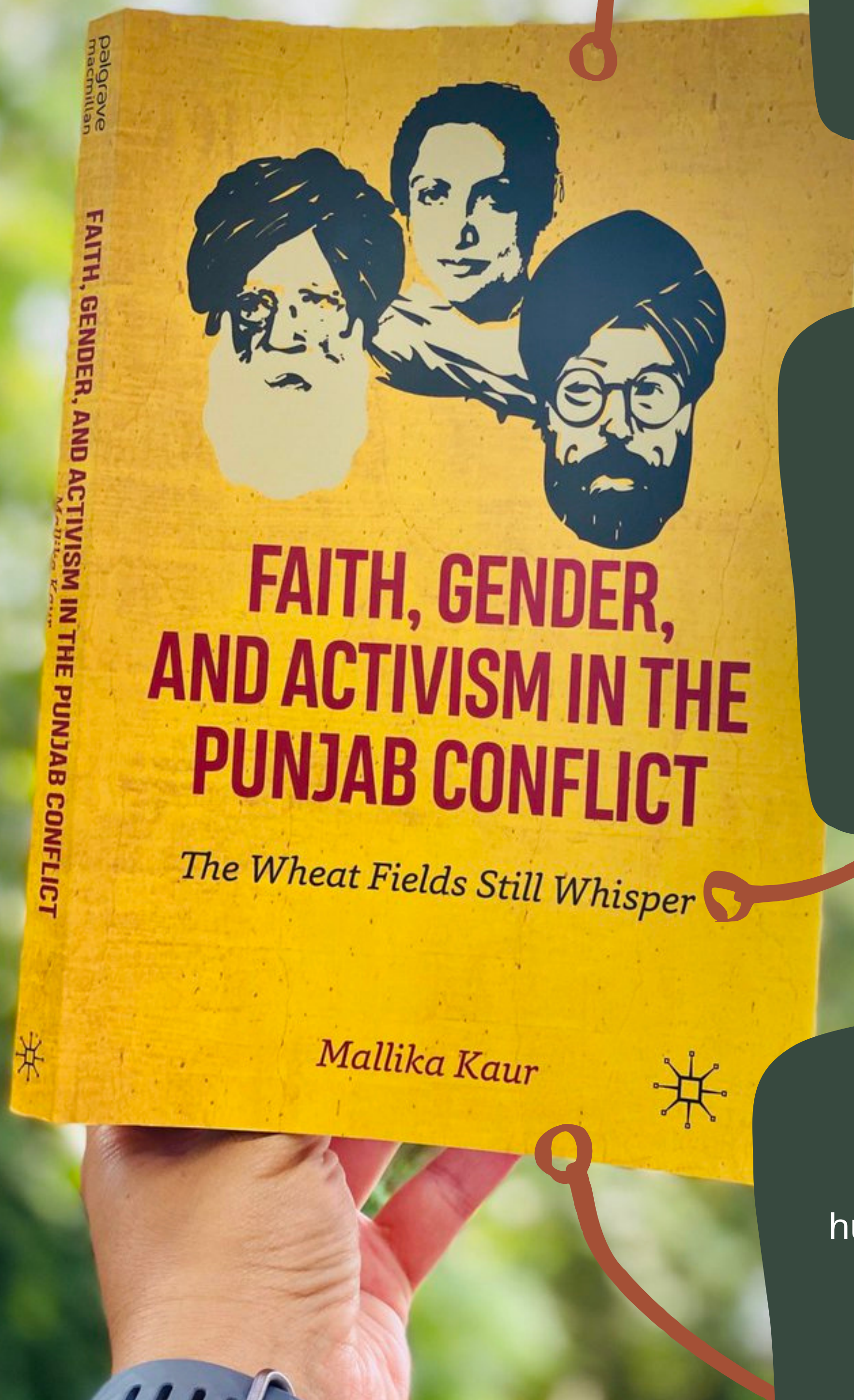
--- **Angela P. Harris, UC Davis School of Law, California, USA**

"There are many people who talk, but not many who listen. And fewer still who listen with patience, respect, and faith that each person is the best authority on their own experiences. So it's no wonder that many people who never told their stories or shared their records, opened their hearts and souls to Mallika."

--- **Paramjit Kaur Khalra, human rights advocate, Amritsar, Punjab**

MORE BOOK REVIEWS:

- [Human Rights Quarterly](#)
- [Contemporary South Asia](#)
- [Goodreads Reviews](#)
- [Sikh Research Journal](#)
- [Amazon Reviews](#)
- [International Feminist Journal of Politics](#)



FAITH

Of questioning the erasures, daring the official memory, respecting the varied attempts at resistance, and slowly untangling decades of cat's cradles to believe again in the Guru's mandate against dejection.

GENDER

Of varied & hybrid roles assumed by Sikh women; they negotiated violence and trauma amid multiple responsibilities, while defying the stereotypes of a monolithic identity. Even when the violence disproportionately targeted the male body, it provoked the policing of the female body, and profoundly affected the community's entire body politic.

ACTIVISM

Of noncombatants who challenged the violence that paralyzed most others. Of human rights defenders who still recognize human loss as a tragedy rather than bargaining chips: where no victim is canceled out by another based on their group affiliation. Of people who brought human rights into homes that didn't yet employ that phrase.

- Of the limited number of titles on the post-1984 decade, none are multidisciplinary creative non-fiction, at once rigorous and written for a general audience.
- Elders at the heart of the campaigns of the 80s-90s are passing on; this book preserves their life histories, and a community's history.
- Sitting on the volatile border and at the epicenter of water and agrarian crises as well as narcotrafficking, Punjab is in focus again. But Punjab's multiple upheavals that contextualize its present have seldom been told together, especially not by Punjabi Sikhs, and never by Sikh women.



- Violence that was rendered every day in Punjab calls for a telling accessible to the everyday reader. This book is accessible to anyone interested in but confounded by the diversity and disparity in the world's largest democracy.
- The book engages with decades of history, till the present-day, in a visual and visceral way, with inter-generational appeal: non-linear and fast-paced enough for millennials yet nostalgically captivating and revealing for an older audience.

“It is a book that defies concise methodological and empirical classification - a risky discursive strategy for a writer/scholar but one that Mallika Kaur masters in commendable fashion in writing such a beautifully-researched work of readable prose and analysis.”

—Dr. Jugdep Chima, Book Review, Journal of Sikh & Punjāb Studies, 2021