IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION OF THE SIKHS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

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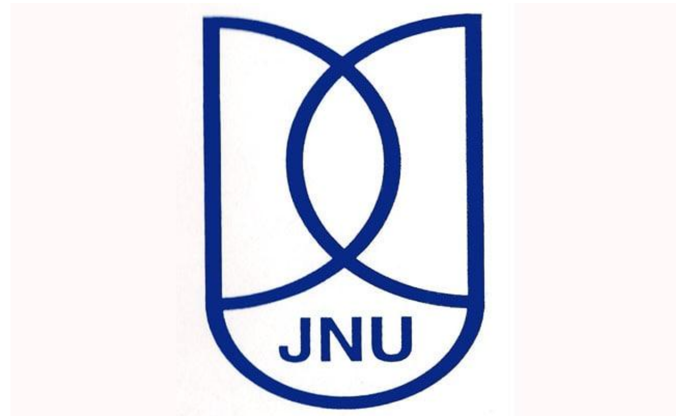

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled "Immigration and Integration of the Sikhs in the United Kingdom" submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

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This thesis is dedicated to

Late Mr. Manmohan Krishan Mahendru, a hardworking premier migrant

&

Abhishek Tripathi, for being in this journey with me

Each time a Sikh…leaves his homeland, it is to return to his most permanent tradition – that of roaming – Pettigrew

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UK	United Kingdom
BNA	British Nationality Act
ABI	Area Based Initiative
BSR	British Sikh Report
WSPU	Women's Social & Political Union
CUKC	Citizenship of the UK and the (non-independent) colonies
CICC	Citizenship of the independent Commonwealth countries
CIA	Commonwealth Immigrants Act
GB	Great Britain
US	United States of America
RRA	Race Relations Act
RRB	Race Relations Board
NCCI	National Committee of Commonwealth Immigrants
IWA	Indian Workers' Association
SAD	Shiromani Akali Dal
NF	National Front
JCWI	Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants
ONS	Office of National Statistics
LFS	Labour Force Survey
KJBI	Khalsa Jatha of the British Isles
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
LGBTQIA	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer Intersex Asexual

CFMB	Commission on the Future of Multi-ethnic Britain
CMEB	Commission for Multi-ethnic Britain
BNP	British Nationalist Party
BSA	British Social Attitudes
MLSS	Midlands Langar Seva Services
MBE	Order of Merit of the British Empire
IOC	Indian Overseas Congress

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1- Introduction

This thesis documents and analyses the experiences of immigration and integration of Sikhs in the United Kingdom. Following the race riots in the northern cities of England in 2001, a new strategy for integration, called community cohesion, was introduced in the British society. The aim of this thesis is to explore the integration process of the Sikhs and examine it in the context of this latest approach, which emerged as a successor to multiculturalism, the 'death' of which is held responsible for the renewal of racial tensions in the country (Kundnani, 2002). It also enquires whether and how Sikhs have affected the nature of inclusiveness in the British society.

There is a growing body of research on British Sikhs, which look at various aspects of the Sikh Life in the UK like their diasporic pursuit of home (Taylor 2014), the manifestation of caste system in the UK (Jaspal and Takhar 2016, Nesbitt 2011), realities of the so-called 'radicalization' of Sikh youth (Singh 2017), hate crimes and impact of Islamophobia on Sikhs (Sian 2013), Gurudwara engagement of Sikhs (Singh 2014, Singh and Tatla 2006) and also on race relations and multiculturalism (Singh and Tatla 2006, Bebber 2017).

Much of the post-war race discourse is around the black community (Sooben 1990) and since 2001, the year of race-riots, 9/11 and the declaration of the 'global war on terror, around the Islamic community. The impact of community cohesion has been analysed mostly around Muslims and the 'Muslim question' (Philips 2006). In the wake of Brexit, there has been an emphasis on low and unskilled labour migrants from other European Union member countries (Fox et al. 2012) and response to the refugee crisis (JDDH). In the face of every new situation or crisis, a dominant 'other' can be perceived and while there is no doubt that they must be located at the centre of the debate, the voices of other minorities in this multi-ethnic society, end up remaining, at best, in the periphery or simply unheard when discussing integration. This thesis makes the Sikhs, a significant minority in the United Kingdom, the centre of discussion.

It is often said and has been formally acknowledged that Sikhs are a very successful and well-integrated minority community in the UK but there are few studies which have analysed the overall process of this integration, including the 'lived experiences' of the migrants and there is no study so far that analyses the same with respect to the latest strategy – community cohesion. Additionally, it has been said that "it is likely that the impact of Sikhs on British society has been more pervasive than is often recognised" (Singh and Tatla 2006), indicating that there is scope for deeper academic engagement in this area, which would further our understanding of the world. This thesis is a step taken in that direction.

1.2- Research Context

International migration is one of the most important factors of global change. It happens due to various reasons - persistent inequality in wealth between rich and poor countries impel large numbers of people to move in search of better living standards; political or ethnic conflicts in some regions lead to refugee movements; and the creation of free trade areas, like the European Union, facilitate movement of labour. Migration is not an isolated phenomenon: movement of commodities, capital and ideas almost always give rise to movement of people and vice versa. Global cultural interchange facilitated by improved transport and the proliferation of print and electronic media have also increased migration aspirations. Conditions may be tough for migrants as they might experience abuse, exploitation and discrimination; but they are preferable to the poverty, insecurity and lack of opportunities at home.

Since international migration began to change the existing demographics, economics and social structures, its political salience has strongly increased over the last century. A new cultural diversity has been created in the countries of immigration, which brings into question the manner in which identities, especially those of migrants, are negotiated across differences with the existing polity of host countries. While international migration has been taking place on a large-scale since the 16th century with Europeans migrating to colonies across the Americas, Asia, Africa, and Australia, the reverse trend after the Second World War led to a heavy influx of immigrants into former empires like the Great Britain and France. These countries have, in turn, over the last half a century, experienced a variety of social movements from different groups emphasizing their ethnic, linguistic or religious distinctiveness.

They demand full and equal inclusion in society, while claiming the recognition of their identities in the public sphere. This has brought into question the assumption of congruence between political unity and cultural homogeneity into sharp relief.

Following decolonisation, the erstwhile British Empire was faced with the challenge of delimiting its borders and deciding who will be a British subject with citizenship rights. This was the beginning of the formation of the United Kingdom (UK) as a modern nation state, with exclusive citizenship rights to the people within its borders. In the initial decades, all people from the Commonwealth had the legal right to arrive in Britain, become a citizen and settle there. This resulted in large influx of migrants from South Asia and Africa, along with the white immigrants from the Old Commonwealth of Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

One of the largest and most conspicuous communities to migrate to the UK after the Second World War were the Sikhs. They were historically familiar with the West as their first encounter with Europeans happened when Maharaja Ranjit Singh, impressed by their military standards, employed French, British, Italian and German soldiers to train his army in European military discipline (Hasrat 1977). The British acknowledged the Sikhs to be a 'martial race' and following the annexation of Punjab in 1849 and the transfer of Maharaja Duleep Singh to Britain, as a ward of Queen Victoria, large number of Sikhs were employed in the British Indian army.

The earliest Sikhs who went to Europe in the nineteenth century were travelers of privileged class, who returned home after their sojourn. It was only by the end of the first decade of the 20th century that there were some permanent settlers in the UK, which was a choice emigration destination because of the colonial linkage and some degree of familiarity with the language. The first Gurudwara in UK was built in the year 1911 in Putney, South Hall, indicating a sizeable population of Sikhs in the UK at that time. Large number of Sikh soldiers fought for the British during the two World Wars. The Partition of the British India in 1947 rendered millions of Sikhs homeless and they migrated within India as well as abroad, primarily to the UK and North America. Following decolonisation and immigration, the ethnic composition of UK became increasingly diverse.

The UK was already an ethnically diverse polity but the large-scale immigration from former colonies resulted in a new kind of diversity, which was 'racial' and/or

religious and it came as a big challenge to the white Christian majority state. Through a process that would drastically change the character of the British citizenry, several communities and groups, having distinct identities, migrated to the UK to reside in a liberal democratic polity based on equality, Sikhs being one of them.

The physical manifestation of the Sikh religion has come under scrutiny many times. Turban, beard and the sheathed dagger are indispensable articles of the Sikh faith, the very basis of their 'Sikhness' and honour; but they violated the publicly accepted dress code of the host country. The first generation of Sikhs cut their hair and beard to assimilate but by the 1960's, especially with the arrival of the East African Sikhs, who were hitherto in very respected positions in those societies, the symbols and articles of religion were back. There have been a series of turban campaigns from 1959 to 1983, to ensure that turbaned Sikhs could participate fully in British public life, without fear of discrimination or persecution.

All of the above was happening in the context of immigration and integration policies of the state. Immigration to the UK was facilitated by the 1948 British Nationality Act, which conferred same status to all citizens of Britain and its colonies. However, from 1962 onwards, a series of new immigration laws began to take shape, which were increasingly colour restrictive. Assimilation was largely the norm for integration, which began to get challenged as diversity increased. In the year 1966, it was Roy Jenkins, the Labour Home Secretary who linked multiculturalism to integration in the UK. Multiculturalism was understood as a process of equal opportunity, accompanied by cultural diversity, in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance. Under the aegis of multiculturalism, places of worship and faith schools for various religions were instituted throughout the country.

By the 1990's, issues of ethnic segregation started building up. The 2001 Race Riots between the South Asian Muslim and White Christian communities was a watershed moment for British multiculturalism. This was understood to be a gap in 'integration' of the former community with the host community and that there was a 'white backlash' from the latter. This is when community cohesion made its way into the integration discourse, whereby differences are not just tolerated but even appreciated and positively valued, where people from diverse backgrounds have similar life opportunities and have a common sense of belonging to the nation. This is a very

context specific approach towards integration and both the national as well as local governments in the state are pursuing it, as is suggested by the many reports and their reviews that are brought out on the subject.

According to the 2011 census, Sikhs constitute 0.66 per cent of the entire population of the UK, numbering at 420,196. They are the third largest minority religious group of the UK. It has taken the Sikhs many decades to negotiate for their place in the society and economy of the country, and today, they are one of the well-settled minorities there, even referred to as 'model minorities' in 2013 by the then Prime Minister David Cameron. They have established themselves to the point where they confidently demand equal respect and equality of opportunity to practice their religion in private and public spheres.

1.3- Developing a Conceptual Framework and Review of Literature

This thesis aims to explore, through the experiences of Sikhs in the UK, the role of community cohesion in deepening their integration into the British Society and the role of Sikhs in making the British Society more inclusive. This section will discuss the theories and concepts that have influenced this study. It draws a conceptual bedrock from which the later chapters emanate. For that purpose, this section is divided into five parts:

1.3.1- Theorising Migration

Compared to other fields in social sciences, migration studies is a fairly new and upcoming academic discipline. It is necessarily interdisciplinary as sociology, political science, history, economics, geography, demography, psychology, cultural studies and law, are all relevant to understand migration and the processes that ensue (Brettel and Hollified, 2007).

> "Migration is hardly ever a simple individual action in which a person decides to move in search of better life chances, pulls up his or her roots in the place of origin and quickly becomes assimilated in a new country. Much more often migration and settlement are a long-drawn-out process that will be played out for the rest of the migrants' life and affect subsequent generations too." (Castles et al. 2014)

Castles et al. (2014) also state that migration must be viewed as intrinsic to the broader processes of globalisation, development and social transformation, rather than a 'problem to be solved'.

Geographer Ravenstein (1889) is one of the earliest contributors to the field of migration studies. In his two articles, he formulated 'laws of migration', whereby he analysed the economic reasons of migration and saw it inseparable from development. Lee (1996) said that migration decisions were calculated by the 'plus and minus factors of the receiving and sending countries respectively. This was similar to the 'push-pull' theory of migration (Mej'ia et al. 1979, Passaris 1989). Push factors could be high population growth and density, political repression and lack of opportunities whereas the pull factors could be high demand for labour, political freedoms, availability of land etc. However, it has not been considered a very strong tool to analyse migration as Skeldon (1990) argues that it is not clear how these factors combine and interplay to cause population movement. This theory is incapable of explaining phenomena like return migration and simultaneous immigration and emigration from one single place.

With the increase in labour migration in the second half of the last century, neoclassical migration theories were developed which perceived migration as a function of geographical difference in demand and supply of labour, whereby people were expected to migrate to where they could be most productive and earn highest wages. This theory was spearheaded by Harris and Todaro (1970) as they tried to explain rural-urban migration in developing countries. This was applied to international migration by Borjas (1989), who claimed that potential migrants base their choice of destination on individual cost-benefit calculations. Although the neoclassical theories provide a perspective to the phenomena of migration, they are criticized because the assumptions on which they are based seem unrealistic. The central assumption in this approach is that people are rational actors who take decisions based on how to maximise income and have perfect access to knowledge about wage differentials and employment opportunities in different places. There is no scope of accounting for structural factors like historical experiences and connections such as colonial ties, family and community dynamics etc. that play a major part in migration decisions (Portes and Borocz, 1989).

In the 1970s and 1980s, inspired by Marxism and dependency theory, an alternative explanation of migration was provided which came to be called historical-structural approach. Andre Gunder Frank (1969) argued that global capitalism contributed to the 'development of underdevelopment', which leads to income inequality, inducing

migration, in turn providing cheap labour for the capital, making the rich richer and increasing disequilibrium even further (Cohen 1987, Sassen 1988). This led to the development of a more comprehensive theory called the world systems theory, developed by Wallerstein (1974) which focused on the less developed ‘peripheral’ regions and ‘core’ capitalist regions. Both these theories were mainly concerned with internal migration. As international migration started gaining momentum, this theory was extended to view the ‘third world’ to be dependent on the ‘first’.

The above theories are considered to be pre-cursors to the Globalization theory. Globalization, which has mostly been portrayed as an economic process is also a political process that has given rise to a new form of imperialism, which gives power to the ‘core’ capitalist states through multinational corporations (Hardt and Negri 2000, Weiss 1997). This has significant migratory impacts as well and despite the claims of erosion of the nation state, it remains central to understanding migration. Policies on cross-border movements, citizenship, public welfare, social order, taxation, health services etc. which are formulated by the state, directly or indirectly impact migration (Castels et al. 2014).

These theories are also criticised because of their assumption, which is that that the pre-modern society comprised of isolated, static, stable and homogenised peasant communities that was disrupted by migration (Skeldon 1997); when in fact historical research has shown that those peasant societies were fairly mobile (Moch 1992, de Haan 1999). Additionally, these theories seem to blame capitalism for uprooting idyllic pre-modern peasant societies, but in reality, these societies were characterised by high mortality rates, famines, conflicts, epidemics and other forms of social inequalities.

Theories like the migration network theory, transnationalism and migration systems theory have developed to analyse how migrants’ agency plays a role in creating socio-economic and cultural structures that create feedback mechanisms which perpetuate migration. Migration network theory is about migrants’ creation and maintenance of social ties with other migrants and with friends and family back home, leading to social networks that facilitate more migration. Factors such as shared language, culture and a support system play a crucial role in initiation of migration (Massey et al. 1998, Skeldon 1997). These theories are crucial to understanding the meso-level

structures that the migrants create to sustain migration. In other words, they focus on the migrants' agency. However, they fall short in explaining exactly when a network is formed. Many a times, initial pioneers do not lead to networks which create a migration pattern (de Haas 2010) and some settled migrants are hesitant to help prospective migrants (Collyer 2005). They also do not explain the stagnation of these systems (Bocker 1994).

The migration transition theories fill the gaps caused by the meso-level theories and focus on the macro-level factors that affect migration. They look at the structures of labour market, interstate relations, inequalities and state migration policies. These theories see migration as an 'intrinsic part of broader processes of development, social transformation and globalization' (Castles et al. 2014) and conceptualize the changes in the patterns of migration over time.

It has been argued that theorizing migration is a futile exercise because of its extremely diverse and complex nature, but almost all social processes are complex by nature and that does not imply that there is no pattern to them, or their irregularities cannot be discerned. And while states do play a role in the initiation of the migration process, the theories discussed above – network, systems and transition – help us understand why that process tends to take on a life of its own often defying the states' endeavours to control migration through various policies. This is especially true for liberal democracies, like the United Kingdom, which have limitations to legal means of controlling migration, especially family migrants.

1.3.2- Challenges to Define National Identity: Immigration, Globalization, Diversity

Critical constructivists like David Campbell (1992) contend that creation of nation state and national identity are exercises in boundary formation. While nation states have a somewhat physical sense of the boundary, which themselves are contested at various sites like in the margins and impacted by a range of global factors, national identity is an abstract and fluid concept, which, as many critical international theorists have claimed, has a discursive nature. This section will discuss the process of formation of national identity and how it is constantly challenged by a number of factors, immigration being of prime importance in this regard.

According to Derrida (1992), contemporary international relations are based on entities whose internal realms must be distinguished from the external realm. These entities are called states. However, the criteria that are followed to make this distinction are not always unambiguous or well defined. It is comparatively simpler to identify who we are territorially, rather than psychologically and ideologically. In terms of forging a sense of belonging among the people within a nation, the concept of national identity is the one around which they can construct their "imagined community" (Anderson, 1983). National identity is terribly hard to define as it can be flexible and adaptable to changing scenarios as well as at one given point, the definition may not even encompass all those who, by some degree of historical incidence or law, are within the geographical expanse and under the sovereignty of a particular state. Global migration has emerged as one of the dominant challengers to the imagination of a homogenous state with clearly defined internal and external realms.

Many scholars have noted the absence of fixed and unchanging definitions when it comes to issues of national identity. According to Hobsbawm (1992) attempts to establish objective criteria for nationhood have failed because they try to fit historically novel, emerging, changing and far from universal entities into a framework of permanence and universality. He goes on to say that concepts such as ethnicity, common history and cultural traits are themselves ambiguous and shifting in nature. R.B.J. Walker (1993) has argued about the inherently unstable and contingent nature of identity and the boundaries separating the outside from inside. According to him, the praxis of fixing of national identities is a result of numerous multi-faceted tactics that work to ascertain a unity on the inside and shift diversity and disruptions to the outside.

Lynn Doty (1996) suggests that the inside should be conceptualised as a discourse, "a relational totality which constitutes and organises social relations around a particular structure of meaning". Discourse here is taken as defined by Laclau and Mouffe (1985), who claim that discourses work towards closure, creating the effect of an inside that is clearly distinguishable from the outside, but ultimately fail to escape the irresoluble tension between these two realms. Lynn Doty (1996) thus goes on to say that 'instead of conceiving the inside and the outside as dichotomous oppositions, it is more useful to think of them as both mutually constitutive and, at least potentially,

mutually undermining'. This is exactly what happens when large population movement happens from the outside to the inside realm, thereby challenging the self-definition of the inside.

Since national identity cannot be reduced to a single dimension around which it is constructed, post-modern theorists have suggested certain privileged discursive points, which partially and provisionally help in fixing of identities. It is suggested that:

> "It is at the margins that we can find the privileged discursive points that constitute national identity. However, somewhat paradoxically, it is also at the margins that the meaning of national identity is subverted; hence the continual need for production and reproduction. The international movement of peoples is one concrete site where the interior/exterior tension is particularly evident. The question of who is inside and who is outside the political community arises, as well as the criteria by which this distinction can be made. Human migration highlights the salience as well as ambiguities of national identity." (Lynn Doty 1996)

Therefore, despite the states' desire for it to be naturalised, national identity is a rather disputed and problematic concept. Gellner (1983) categorically stated that contrary to how nations would have us believe, the truth is that "nations as a natural, God-given way of classifying men as an inherent political destiny, are a myth." Hobsbawm (1992) has suggested that an element of social engineering goes into the making of nations and in many a case, it is not nations and nationalisms that make the state but the state that makes nations and nationalisms.

1.3.3- Evolution of the British Immigration Policy and Integration Discourse

Alexander Wendt (1999) said that "if we are interested in how the states system works, instead of how its elements are constructed, we will have to take the existence of states as given, just as sociologists have to take the existence of people as given to study how society works". In the case of UK, the state cannot be taken as given, because when the migration began, the country, in its own vison and approach was a devolving empire. It becomes important to analyse the process of UK *becoming* a nation state and its changing ideas of national identity over time. Questions arising out of long-term international migration, settlement and integration of people from diverse backgrounds into a single state makes it imperative to make a research design

that can connect the complex threads of reality and make it academically comprehensible.

Glick-Schiller and Wimmer (2003) have stated that the conceptualization of political governance of cultural diversity poses a challenge to the social sciences by taking territorially bounded, socially closed and culturally integrated societies as their basic unit of analysis, tending to ignore, naturalize or simply take for granted the nation-state as an institutional form of political modernity. They call it 'methodological nationalism'. This aspect also stems from a structural coupling of political organization and collective identity - the very core of modern nation state, which has deeply shaped our political vocabulary including notions such as constitutionalism, democracy and human rights. What international migration brings to question is this very notion of the coupling of statehood and national identity. 'Only after 19th century and emergence of nation states did internal and external migration become differentiated and questions began to arise as to how settlement of new arrivals or emigration from a country, impacted on a nation's citizens' (Nijkamp et al. 2012). It becomes imperative then, to see how concepts of constitutionalism, democracy and human rights have been reformulated as a result of mass migration.

The best illustration of this coupling of statehood and national identity is the institution of citizenship which formulated the relationship between the individual and state. It has two major elements: i) the rules of formal membership and individual rights through which individuals are incorporated organizationally into the state; and ii) the forms of national identification through which individuals are incorporated symbolically (Hannagan and Tilly, 1999).

The idea of citizenship in Britain is perplexing and has functioned in the shadow of its post-colonial hangover as suggested by Joppke (1996). The logic of British immigration policy was determined by the devolution of the empire. However, it was not only about the former colonies gaining independence. As Fomina (2010) discusses, that the issue of the path of the UK from being a world power, an empire occupying one quarter of the world, to becoming a nation-state with limited boundaries that had not only to delineate its borders but also decide upon who belongs to it and who does not. Britain was faced with the dire need to define who could exercise their political, economic and social rights on its territory. This shift was not

just a requirement of political modernisation, but also the fulfilment of the right of a political community to control its boundaries. 'Since it was fused with the creation of boundaries to define and encompass the British nation, immigration policy was necessarily restrictive and discriminating vis-à-vis members of its former colonies' (Joppke 1996), especially those of the New Commonwealth.

Post Second World War, when it became clear that the days of the empire were numbered, the UK had to redefine itself in the form of a modern nation state with delimited borders. It also became imminent upon the country to decide who will belong to the internal realm and who will remain external, i.e. an empire with over 600 million subjects around the world had to deal with the question of citizenship rights. Immigration policy development in the UK depicts "the particular mixture of paternalism and guilt that describes the country's post-colonial hangover" (Koopmans and Statham 2000). In 1948, the labour government, under prime minister Clement Attlee, adopted the British Nationality Act (BNA). This Act entrenched the right of all British subjects to enter the UK and enjoy all the social, political and economic benefits of full citizenship. The fundamental purpose behind this act was to ensure the uniformity of the British subject-hood and the possession of identical rights and privileges by all British subjects in the Commonwealth and the Empire. However, the biggest impact that this Act made, was in the history of migration into the country. This singular piece of legislation laid the "legal foundation for the transformation of Britain into a multi-ethnic society" (Hansen 1999).

No sooner than the Act was passed, the tidal waves carrying immigrants began to reach the shores of England. The first batch of 500 Jamaican immigrants arrived later in that same year on the colonial warship Empire Windrush, which had sailed to the Caribbean to drop soldiers. Neither the colonial officers at Jamaica, nor the port officials in England could stop them, owing to the right bestowed upon them earlier that year. Between 1948 and 1962, "over 500,000 new commonwealth immigrants (i.e. immigrants of colour) entered the United Kingdom. These individuals and their spouses and dependents that joined them in the 1960s and 1970s, constitute the bulk of United Kingdom's ... ethnic minorities" (Ibid.). Despite granting the right to enter the UK to all these people, when they actually exercised this right, the political elites were taken aback. Only two years later, when the immigrant population stood no more than 30,000, the Cabinet set up a special committee of ministers to explore the

means that might be adopted to check coloured immigration into the country, which came out with a report titled '*Immigration of British Subjects into the United Kingdom: report by a Committee of Ministers*'. In 1954, Churchill's Cabinet also invited the then Home Secretary and Colonial Secretary to prepare a draft bill restricting immigration (Ibid.).

The earliest immigration policies in the UK were formed in the shadow of its status as an empire but soon it became an instrument of party politics (Schain 2012). While Labour and conservative parties had cooperated in formulating the BNA, they were both quick to distance from it as the unforeseen levels of immigration began. The BNA was never intended to sanction mass coloured migration into the UK. It was an idealistic piece of legislation that, in the light of the Canadian Citizenship Act, intended to ensure that no British subjects lost their status as such. It was directed towards the maintenance of the paternalistic relations with the commonwealth. The 'rising tide' of coloured immigration led to an ever-increasing unease among the British masses regarding immigration. Everyday racism became a way of life and political agitations for its control began in places with large migrant populations. In 1958, riots broke out in Nottingham and Notting Hill. It was immediately assumed that immigration control was the answer to this problem which eventually forced the legislators to redefine 'Britishness'.

The fact that there was no immigrant regulation until 1962, almost two decades after the WW II, was largely due to the strong reluctance of British politicians to limit the immigration from the Old Commonwealth (Hansen 2000). Britain was keen on preserving good relations with its former colonies and ensuring that decolonisation was a peaceful process, which the imposition of harsh immigration control could impair. Stringent immigration controls would not only undermine Britain's leadership of the Commonwealth but also the foundations of the Commonwealth itself according to Layton-Henry (1984).

By the time the Commonwealth Immigrations Act 1962 was passed, the initial perplexity about whether or not to extend full citizenship to all commonwealth citizens had started to unravel. The second-generation immigrants had begun asserting their presence in terms of their differences. Malik (1996) enunciates this point by quoting and analysing speeches made by politicians like Enoch Powell and Margaret

Thatcher, who did not regard colonial subjects, now British citizens, as fully 'belonging' to Britain. The manner, in which immigration policy has developed in Britain over the years, has been called a particular mixture of paternalism and guilt (Koopmans and Statham, 2000).

The issue of immigration was invariably linked with the issue of dealing with diversity among the immigrants already present and coming, which is why there can be no discussion on immigration policies without integration policies and vice-versa. The Labour tried to maintain a liberal stand on immigration, but electoral struggles soon brought them in line with the conservatives and the British political class reached an unsaid consensus which was to limit immigration and increase cross-cultural integration within the boundaries of the state. A series of legislations called The Race Relations Act in 1965, 1968 and 1976 were passed in the parliament, which outlawed racial discrimination in Britain. While these acts have made an impact in many individual cases, they have had very limited and shifting scope due to the fluidity of the definition of race, as opined by Longpré (2011), who also claims that the race relations are essentially anti-immigration. Banton (1991) and Lustgarten (1979) have also dealt with the question of inherent discrimination in the British race laws. Monaghan (2014) opines that religious discrimination is institutionalised in the UK, owing to the series of statutory enactments in the 17th century whereby the British Parliament gave state preference to the protestant faith in the form of the Church of England, over all other religions, especially Catholicism.

While treating race as central to its treatment of migrants, other axes of discrimination remained in the UK's policies for immigration and integration. This can especially be seen in the documents that define the principles and values governing migration laws in Britain. 'Constitutions are at the centre of almost all contemporary legal systems and provide the principles and values that inspire the action of the national law-makers' (Durham et all, 2013). One of the basic contradictions that come into play when it comes to constitutional principles governing these policies is the place of religion in the constitution of laws and principles governing policy making. To what extent must the religious principles, practices and compulsions of immigrant communities be considered during policy making? Durham et al. (2013), succinctly pose the question in this way: What role is religion expected to perform in the fields

that are the object of constitutional regulation? Is the separation of religion and politics a necessary precondition for democracy and the rule of law?

The 1971 Immigration Act was supposed to usher an era of zero immigration, yet from 1964 to 1994 the flow of long-term international migrants to the UK proceeded at a broadly constant level, despite the Immigrations Acts in 1987 and 1988. Sales (2007) discusses how Asylum became the most important aspect of immigration legislation by the end of the 1980s. This was the case because of a variety of global factors, primarily the disintegration of the Eastern Bloc, followed by USSR. Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993 for the first legislation on asylum in the UK, which was followed by the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996.

With the beginning of the new millennium, Britain has entered a phase in its migratory history which has been called 'managed migration' (Ibid.). In 2005, the Labour government introduced a document titled *Controlling our Borders: Making Migration Work for Britain* which produced a strategy for asylum and migration whereby strict controls have been put in place to avoid abuse of its laws and resources. They also want to ensure that the British state stands to benefit from the potential immigrants (Home Office 2005). In 2006, the Home Office introduced a points based system for migration which replaces over eighty routes to work and study in the UK, with just five tiers – tier 1 for the highly skilled, tier 2 for skilled workers with a job offer, tier 3 with low skilled workers, tier 4 for students and tier 5 for temporary workers.

Over the years, legislations for integration have come into place and the Equality Act 2010 has repealed a number of them and is an attempt to bring about overall equality in public life in all citizens of the UK. Gedalof (2013) critically examines the Equality Act 2006 and 2010, in order to identify the underlying definitions and discourses of equality and diversity that they deploy. She analyses what definitions of 'equality' and 'diversity' provide the legitimating discursive structure within which debates about human rights, inequality and discrimination take place; and, marks out what this tells us about the understanding of the relationship of sameness and difference to equality, and the relationship between differences in government equality talk. She argues that, in both cases, gestures towards recognizing the central importance of difference and towards a more intersectional approach to those differences are

ultimately appropriated/undermined by the liberal terms within which these challenges are understood (Gedalof, 2013). What does this do to the identity claims of immigrant communities in Britain? Have the definitions of these new laws been more legitimating than those used in previous laws and policies?

The recent politics of Britain has been essentially anti-immigrant as is seen by the Brexit verdict, where anti-immigration feelings of the people were stirred to an extent that they voted out of European Union, without even realising what it entailed. Mulvey (2010) states that policies made in the past problematized immigration and created a sense of crisis. Therefore, the general public is hostile towards immigration especially at a time of economic slowdown. Carrying historical explorations of race policy development in Britain, there are some who argue against common wisdom that attributes policy outcomes to the role of powerful interest groups or to the constraints of existing institutions, instead emphasizing the importance of frames as widely-held ideas that propelled policymaking in different directions (Bleich, 2003).

Betz (1994) defines ‘populism’ to be beyond radicalism and rightism. He states that “unscrupulous use and instrumentalization to diffuse public statements of anxiety and disenchantment, and their appeal to the common man and his allegedly superior common sense” is the tactic of the populist politician. Pfahl-Traughber (1993) states that populism “appeals to resentments, prejudices and traditional values; and offers simplistic and unrealistic solutions to the socio-political problems”. Kitschelt (1995) identifies the anti-statist appeal of the populists which are usually directed against ‘big government’ and the ‘political class’. According to Meny and Surel (2000), populism is a multifaceted phenomenon where people are the ultimate source of legitimacy, the ‘people’ being interpreted sociologically – the people class, the powerless part of the society – the locus of citizenry at large. Populism sprung up as a lament for the poor functioning of democracy, not for its negation.

One of the major challenges that UK is currently dealing with is a rise in populist and extreme right-wing parties. It is of vital to look at the contemporary politics where the right wing is ascending into mainstream politics with anti-immigrant parties like the UKIP. And although their discourse is mostly around being fundamentally opposed to Islamic and economic migration, in the course of the research for this study, it will be interesting to find out their views about other minorities, like the Sikhs. Wodak et al.

(2013) gives an insightful analysis of the contemporary right-wing parties, their brand of populism and also the role of the new media in propagation of anti-immigrant discourses in Europe.

1.3.4- Managing Diversity

How does a liberal, democratic state, like Britain, that has witnessed widespread immigration of diverse racial, ethnic and religious groups, respond to the different ways of life, ideas of the good, and aspirations of migrant communities in the country? Koenig and Guchteneire (2007) analyse how public policy making has dealt with the claims for cultural recognition that have increasingly been expressed by ethno-national movements, language groups, religious minorities and migrant communities.

The traditional liberal democratic state has been seen to respond to the issue of diversity by arguing that equal rights be extended to all residents of a country. Theorists of the ‘politics of difference’, such as Iris Marion Young (1989) argued that this traditional idea presumes that particularity and difference between social groups in a country does not lead to a change of the status of these groups in the political public. She stated that the evaluations of inequality and injustice must recognise the salience of social groups as constituent of a society. According to her, equal treatment of individuals does not override the redress of group-based oppression, as it leads to assimilation.

Social groups are not just aggregates of people who possessed the same attributes such as skin colour but are defined by the sense of identity that group members have. How were these groups to be recognized and represented within a democracy when they started arriving? This became a pressing question with regard to the integration of diverse groups within democracies in the final decades of the last century. One major response to this question in Western political theory has come from theorists of multiculturalism [Song (2008), Blum (1992), Parekh (2002), Taylor (1995), Kymlicka (1989, 1995, 2001)] who argue that the liberal state must recognize the different claims of various social groups, including immigrant communities, and positively accommodate these through various methods, such as group-differentiated rights, in order to justly integrate different groups within its democracy.

At the heart of multiculturalism is the idea that differences that can be identified between the dominant community within a nation and the "others", such as minority communities, indigenous populations, or immigrants, must be recognized and accommodated. Culture came to be treated as an all-encompassing concept that could capture other differences like those of religion, language, ethnicity, nationality and race (Song, 2008). But not all differences can easily be conflated within an ambiguously defined axis of culture. Rather, each axis of difference would have particular characteristics of its own. One of the major expositions of this comes through in Blum (1992) where he points out the problems of conflating the axis of culture with other axes such as race as an axis of difference in methods of integration. While recognition of difference based on race would highlight victimization and resistance due to skin colour or other physical features, those based on culture would focus more on the marginalization of cultural life and expression of certain communities. While there may be points of overlap between the two, there may be many ways of addressing disrespected identities on the grounds of culture that have little to do with addressing differences in race, or vice versa.

While the use of the broad term of culture came to be influential within the public discourse on how to approach difference, the majority of laws approaching difference in Britain employed the axis of race rather than any other category, including culture. Despite this, Britain managed to develop a fairly complex body of laws and policies regarding positive accommodation such as policies that support separate schools systems, that fund media services in minority languages, that support minority community neighbourhood organisations, that allow modifications of uniform requirements or that provide for kosher and halal food in school cafeterias are all designated as 'multicultural' (Parekh, 2002). How do laws that base themselves around the axis of race evolve public discourse that can incorporate the claims of different axes, such as culture, religion, and nationality, in a liberal democracy like Britain?

In many ways, the laws and policies that Britain has developed towards immigrant communities also challenged the traditional idea of citizenship in Britain that stressed on homogenization of the polity by enforcing uniform laws across all citizens. Some of the justifications for this challenge were already established by the debate in multiculturalism developed by Canadian theorists such as Charles Taylor and Will

Kymlicka. Taylor (1995) argued that the uniform implementation of laws does not focus on what is foundational to the ways marginalized communities live their lives – their ideas of the common good, their tastes and moral perspectives. Rather, the treatment of equality as uniformity only leads to the institutionalization of values and norms of the dominant community in the country, and this inhibits many peoples' ability to participate in the political life of the country from their own perspectives.

But the debate surrounding multiculturalism did not merely justify its stance in the name of group rights. It also emphasized its multicultural stance, as a mode of enabling individual autonomy and self-respect. Theorists like Will Kymlicka (1989, 1995, 2001) argued that the axis of culture gives individuals a defining context for the choices they make. It provides them with the meaning which they can attach to different choices. Given this, individuals derive their self-respect from their cultural moorings which fuel the individual's judgement between different options that one can choose from. Because of this, people who do not have access to their own culture should be awarded protection for their culture in order to promote their self-respect and individual autonomy.

However, the question arose that if this argument had to extend to all who claim to be different from the dominant community? While some groups need protection because they have been deliberately marginalized in their own countries, did groups like immigrants, who "voluntarily choose" to relinquish their native culture by migrating to another country, deserve such protection as well? It was contended that immigrants must be held responsible for the inequalities emerging from such a choice, because immigration is a deliberately considered move, as opposed to extending positive accommodation to those who do not choose to be minorities in their country of birth (Scheffler, 2003).

But if this were the case, then ought immigrants to stay silent during any form of discrimination they face as a consequence of their difference from the dominant community in the host country? And even if they make claims, what is the kind of claim that they should make? Should these claims be in the form of integration in order to ease the procedural encumbrances they face or could they also take a more radical character, where immigrant communities themselves can set the terms of their

integration, not just in terms of procedure, but also in terms of their own cultural and moral normativities?

There are some who argue that immigrant communities are, and ought to be, more conducive towards procedural methods of integration that focus on fairer terms of integration, rather than the values that frame the terms of integration in the first place (Kymlicka 1995). However, multicultural theorists such as Parekh (2011) argue that liberal democracies like Britain have their own dominant public political culture that revolves around the constitutional and legal values of the democracy. If they wanted to justly integrate immigrant communities into their democracies, then these legal values could be a good starting point for a cross cultural dialogue, however, the contestations coming from the immigrant communities over these values ought to be taken seriously rather than being treated merely as claims for fairer procedures in laws and policymaking. Gedalof (2013) argues that in order to take these contestations seriously, a questioning of the definitions of 'equality' and 'diversity' in the public discourse over these issues must take place in order to mark out the relationship between differences in government equality talk and the claims of immigrant groups. Doing so would expose how the traditional liberal terms of the discourse have appropriated the intersectional approach that immigrant groups take towards difference.

The former British Prime Minister David Cameron gave a new dimension to Europe's understanding of multiculturalism in the contemporary era. He argued that immigrants in Europe maintain a parallel culture to the "mainstream," not mixing or integrating with the larger country, stating that: "Here, the incoherencies of the European anti-multiculturalist position become clear– 'liberal,' but not too liberal, 'tolerant' but not tolerant of difference." The "freedoms" Cameron espouses are conditional on being entirely subordinate to European values.

With much discourse around the death or failure of multiculturalism as an integration model for diverse immigrants, which followed the Race Riots of 2001, community cohesion has come to the fore. Pathak's (2008) work here is instrumental in highlighting the importance of multiculturalism and the need to go a step further. There have been a number of reports by the local as well as national governments of the UK, discussing the new conception whereby differences are not just tolerated but

even appreciated and positively valued, where people from diverse backgrounds have similar life opportunities and have a common sense of belonging to the nation. Studies were commissioned by the various departments of the state which brought out documents enunciating the basis of Community Cohesion. Some of them are the Cantle Report (2001) and the Denham Report (2001). Further, the Home Office brought out guidelines for the local authorities and their partners as like Community Cohesion Advice for those designing, developing and delivering Area Based Initiatives (ABIs) (2003) and Community Cohesion Education Standards for Schools (2004).

This new policy has come about especially with respect to the growing divide between immigrant and the local communities. However, any policy of integration affects all the other communities too, which have so far, established themselves well, for all practical purposes. What is the effect of the community cohesion on them? Are these communities, claimed to be 'model communities' really well integrated? Do they have unfulfilled demands?

1.3.5- Sikhs – A Transnational Community

> "Out migration has been a permanent feature of Punjabi Society since time immemorial: the tradition of wandering is so embedded that it can be traced in the earliest literature of the Punjabis" (Singh and Tatla 2006)

Punjab, the homeland of the Sikhs, the birthplace of their faith and home to their most sacred institutions, can be distinctly demarcated from the rest of India. Due to its geographical location, a land gateway to peninsular India, it has experienced continuous flow of foreign armies, never allowing for a lasting period of peace in the region. It has been invaded by Greeks, Turks, Persians, Moghuls and Afghans, giving rise to suspicion and hostility towards the unfamiliar and corresponding respect for valour and physical vigour. There has also been a reluctance to submit to political authority (Pettigrew 1975). The social structures prevalent in this region have also differed from that in mainland India, which can be most clearly seen in the way caste has been adapted here, which is not typical of how it is in the traditional Indian way (Ibbetson 1974).

Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak (1469-1539), who was influenced by the Bhakti movement. Most of what is known about the lives of the ten Sikh Gurus are based on

hagiographical records like the *Janamsakhis* (Mc.Leod 1980), *Gurbilas* and *Prakash* (Mann 2001), which describe myths, legends and miracles during the lives of the Gurus.

> "A number of legends and myths found in these pages are corroborated and strongly entrenched in the Sikh tradition and there is no ground to caste away the work as a work of no importance unless we are prepared to assign no place for tradition in building up historical literature" (Nayyer 1992)

According to the *Janamsakhis*, Guru Nanak undertook five *Udasis* (holy journeys, one in each of the four directions and one within Punjab) whereby he is said to have travelled as far as Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Kashmir, Tibet, Bhutan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka among other places in between. The lives and times of other Gurus have also been full of travels across the length and breadth of the subcontinent, sometimes voluntarily, as mostly in case of Guru Tegh Bahadur and sometimes due to the exigencies of medieval religious warfare, as in the case of Guru Gobind Singh. It is for this reason that Sikhs have very important and age-old landmarks across the Indian subcontinent.

In the modern times, Kaur (2011) argues that the Sikh diaspora, along with the Jewish diaspora, is perhaps one of the only religious diasporas in the world. Being one of the most important migrating communities of South Asia, Sikhs have been called as the "people on the move" (Talbot and Thandi, 2004) or "mobile people" (McLeod, 1997) as they play a very important role in contemporary global migration and have a culture and history marked by the willingness to travel, adjustability and adventurousness. Thandi (2012) notes that "the origins of the Sikh diaspora lie in service to the British empire – as soldiers, civil servants and skilled labourers; as a part of a colonial strategy to divide and conquer."

An enquiry into Sikh migration and settlement across the globe requires historicization. Grewal and Paul (eds.) (2005) discusses the role of the Sikhs under British rule in India which was quite unique as the British held the Sikhs in high regard. The Sikhs had fought in the favour of the British in the first battle of independence in 1857. Tatla (1995) gives a succinct account of Sikh migration under British rule. He states that before the 1880s, Sikh migration as indentured labour was relatively unknown and also states that at one point, when Sikhs were taken to fields in the West Indies, the Governor present there described the Sikhs as 'soldiers or

something of that sort' and declared them unfit for labour. A large proportion of Sikhs were taken to destinations like the Far East (Hong Kong, Malaya, British Guiana etc.) and East Africa as soldiers, security personnel and junior officers of the railways. As news of employment of this sort spread across Punjab, many Sikhs began to reach these destinations on their own. The ones who could not get recruited by the government, would secure jobs in the private sector and many would begin small businesses. By the end of the 19th century, Sikhs had arrived in Australia and New Zealand as well and around the same time, they reached North America. Leonard (2002) has given a very interesting account of the pioneering Punjabis, Sikhs among them, in California, which was the major agricultural hub and area of the earliest Sikh settlement in the United States.

Johnston (2014) gives a detailed account of one of the starkest incidents that marks the Punjabi people's resourcefulness, persistence and determination to travel on one hand and hostility and discouragement of the white colonizers on the other. In 1914, a Japanese ship by the name of Komagata Maru embarked its journey from British India to Canada, a land in realm of the empire, with 376 passengers, mostly Sikhs, on board. Upon reaching Canada, they were refused to disembark and were forced to make a return journey, all because of Canada's racist immigration laws. When the ship reached Calcutta port, it was fired upon and nineteen of the passengers were killed. As stated above, no migration story is one-dimensional, and even this entire incident played out with the anti-British *Ghadar* movement, in the backdrop. The Komagata Maru is an important chapter of voluntary Sikh migration during colonial times and one which has had the most lasting impact as well. In 2016, the Canadian PM Justin Trudeau issued a full apology for this incident.

Coming to the UK, the first Sikh to have arrived in the country is considered to be Maharaja Duleep Singh in 1854 (Ballantyne 2004). There is no record of Sikh presence in the UK before that. 'Towards the end of the nineteenth century, more Sikhs, mainly from wealthy aristocratic and civil servant families from the Punjab began coming to Britain. These were young students intending to further their education, or potential employees of the British administration in India' (Bance 2011). Bance's book of 150 years of photographs of Sikhs in Britain, among other things, gives a very interesting insight into the earliest Sikhs in Britain, many of them princes who came to study and achieved laurels in sports and other activities in

prestigious educational institutes like the Cambridge University. However, most of these Sikhs went back to Punjab after their stay. Bance (2011) also produces accounts of Sikh businesspeople particularly from the Bhatra community who were peddling and trading in Britain in the 1930s.

One of the most important contributors to migration of ordinary Sikhs during the colonial times was their participation in the two World Wars. Grewal and Paul (eds.) (2005) discusses the role of the Sikhs under British rule in India which was quite unique as the British held the Sikhs in high regard. The number of Sikh soldiers who fought in these wars was way above their proportion of the overall population of British India. Omissi (2012) gives a detailed account of this aspect. However, it was only after 1948, with the passage of the BNA, that Sikhs began migrating to the UK in large numbers. While it was mostly men who had migrated in the earlier days, families joined them in the coming decades. A major rise in migration of Sikhs also took place in the 1960s and 1970s, when the East African colonies began gaining their independence. Bhachu (1985) gives a detailed description of how people, who were settled in these places for over six decades were given just a month's time to leave. These colonial subjects chose to come to the land of their sovereign, the United Kingdom. The unbroken chain of migration to the UK have since been well established and many enclaves of Sikh settlement can be seen dotting the landscape of the Island nation.

It was contended (Cole 1994) that 'Europe's Sikh community outside Britain scarcely exists'. Latest research has shown this assertion to be not true. Sikhs have established themselves in most of the countries of the world today. Jacobsen and Myrvold (2011) inform that they are a growing community in all countries of continental Europe as well. This edited volume discusses Sikh migration and settlement in Sweden, Denmark, France, Poland, Finland, Greece and Ireland. Garha (2017) discusses the same issues in Spain. Hu-deHart and Lopez (2008) talk about Sikhs in Latin America and the Caribbean. However, it will not be incorrect to say that there is a lack of research on Sikhs living in many countries in the world.

There are 5 articles that can be clearly identified as the defining features of the Sikh identity, which are the inalienable symbols of Sikhism 5 K's - Kangha (comb), kada (armband), kes (hair), kirpan (dagger) and kachcha (underwear). Sidhu and Gohil

(2009) claim that Sikh identity is defined as much by external pressures and people than by the community themselves. The targeting of the Sikh turban in western societies is analysed by some, especially after 9/11, to capture how the event turned the course for Sikhs in the west. The turban made the Sikhs, confused to be Muslims, victims of many hate crimes. The laws on religious expression changed in some countries, including France, which had its repercussions for the Sikh community living there.

Singh & Tatla (2007) focus on the development of the British Sikh community. They draw attention to the issues relating to the 5 Ks and caste in the UK. This is an essential reading to get an in-depth understanding about Sikhs in Britain. They also give an account of the various turban campaigns that were held in the UK in the latter half of the 20th century. The fact that Sikhs identity has been considered a racial identity and there are no specific laws for protection of religious identities is also explained in this work. Bhachu (1985) provides a historical perspective to Sikh settlement in the UK and looks at some of the religious and cultural practices around caste, arranged marriage and dowry, giving a comprehensive ethnographic account of East African Sikhs living in Britain.

Although it is generally understood that Sikhs have been fairly well integrated in the British Society over the decades, Keegan (2011) argues that the Sikh community has had to adapt to its new home, either by conforming to or confronting contemporary attitudes. They have gone through processes of assimilation and acculturation, which have had a profound effect on how the British Sikhs practice their faith, which happens will other faiths in diaspora as well, where the adherents' practice does not necessarily follow the teachings. This results in 'nominal Sikhs', who pick and choose which religious teachings to follow.

Through his elaborate paper, Juss (1995) examines the case of Sikhs within the UK, with its lack of any specific law for the religious minorities. Holding it strongly against the state that treats the cases of discrimination against Sikhs through Race Relations Acts, he argues that with increasing religious diversity and the growing demands for rights from religious minorities, specific legislation needs to be made that ensure the rights of people as 'religious' minorities. A case like Mandla vs. Dowell Lee, which should have been a watershed moment in terms of securing

religious minority rights, failed, not only in ensuring no discrimination for other religious minorities but also Sikhs in other situations.

As is understood by the standard integration theory of migration, the first generation tries to obfuscate their identity whereas the subsequent generations, once they are economically more secure, start expressing their identity. So is the case with the Sikhs. Many first-generation men had to cut their hair and abandon other conspicuous articles of faith. Later, the questions of the turbans started. The most contemporary challenge to the expression of the Sikh identity that has surfaced is regarding the *Kirpan* – a short dagger that is one of the 5 Ks of the Sikh religion and is carried by the *Amritdhari* Sikhs. Juss (2012) explores this question in the western societies and highlights how the UK has taken the most accepting approach towards this seemingly dangerous object. The complexity of the issue is highlighted as the reader probes into how far the western societies will accept or permit the expression of religion and where shall that stop – maybe when it comes to carrying a dagger to school – or not.

Post 9/11, Sikhs have had to bear the brunt of the rising Islamophobia in the western world due to the turban and other facial characteristics, which appeared similar to the perpetrators of violence in that incident. Sian (2013) explains that in an attempt to distance themselves from being represented as or amongst Muslims, Sikhs have adopted many of the racial pathologies which are widely embedded within Western culture and its antipathy towards Muslims and Islam. Her article examines the consequences of Sikh attempts to distinguish themselves from Muslims especially when this distinction comes in the form of uncritical assimilation. She analyses the cost of such assimilation upon Sikhs and Sikhness arguing for the development of alternative or counter-hegemonic narratives principally centered on decolonisation rather than assimilation.

Shani (2005) discusses how in this era of globalization and fragmentation of populations, the religious minorities, instead of doing politics of nationalism (like the Khalistan movement) should focus on the politics of recognition, so that universally acceptable norms are set and discrimination based on faith, religion, ethnicity and other attributes can be best nullified.

The theoretical foundation of this thesis has been discussed in this section, giving an overview of dominant theories of migration, national identity formation, the evolution

of British immigration and integration policies, leading theories of diversity management in western liberal democracies and finally about the Sikhs – their migration and settlement in other countries, particularly the UK.

It has been highlighted through this review that there is a need for qualitative understanding of long-term migration patterns, to see how numerous variables interact to bring about the reality and its impact on the lives of people. It has been highlighted through the 'managing diversity' section that there are methodological barriers to understand various aspects of integration through positivist research techniques, which is why this thesis uses in-depth interviews to make the community cohesion analysis of identity, sense of belonging and the feeling Sikhs regarding being an equal citizen in the UK. It has been discussed how the idea of national identity is discursive and due to historical incidents, the idea of 'self' and 'other' keeps getting altered. The chapters of this thesis will analyse the Sikh position in this insider-outsider dynamic. The fact that integration is a complex phenomenon, involving economic, socio-cultural, psychological and many other aspects, this thesis includes as many factors as was possible, to make a well-rounded analysis.

1.4- Rationale of Study

International migration has become one of the most pressing concerns in the world today. Political projects and regimes are facing tremendous stress because of this singular issue. At this point, it is interesting to look at the broader picture. Migration is a fact since the beginning of time. However, the rise in the political salience of migration in the last few decades has brought some issues into sharp relief. The fact that migrants bring along with them distinct cultural, religious, linguistic and social traditions; giving rise to diversity that challenges the traditional congruence of nation state, a relatively new phenomena, and identity is one of the biggest challenges that the contemporary liberal and democratic nation state is grappling with.

1.4.1- Why study Sikh Migration?

There are approximately 25-30 million[1] Sikhs in the world today, making it the fifth largest organised religious belief after Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism.

[1] Only approximate number can be stated as many countries of residence of Sikhs do not have separate census category for them and are mostly counted among other South Asians or as Indians. In the UK,

Sikhism being one of the four world religions to originate from South Asia – Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism being the other three. Sikhs are among the most distinguishable people in the world, with their turban. Sikhs are also one of the most important migrating communities of South Asia. Talbot and Thandi (2004) have called them 'people on the move' and Mc. Leod (1997) called them 'mobile people' with a history marked by the willingness to travel, adjustability and adventurousness.

The country where one of the largest number of Sikhs reside outside India is the United Kingdom. It has long been considered as one of the most successfully integrated minority communities of the country. In the year 2013, the then British Prime Minister David Cameron declared Sikhs to be a 'model minority'. However, there has not been much research on the overall integration of this community, keeping the voices and lived experiences of Sikhs as the point of analysis.

It is important to note that Sikhs are not a homogenous community and that there are a lot of divisions within them, most importantly that of caste, which has led to a large variety of experiences[2]. However, for this particular study, where the vantage point is that of a migrant community's integration into a host society, it makes sense to take Sikhs as a community owing to the broad commonalities in their history, their religion and its requirements; and relationship with imperial Britain, which later became the country of their immigration.

Singh and Tatla (2006) claim that the impact of Sikhs on British society has been more pervasive than is often recognised. It is interesting that despite being one of the most visibly distinct as well as vocal minorities, Sikhs have never really been the immediate other in the British society. From the time of the docking of Empire Windrush in 1948 to the end of the last century, it was the blacks, around whom the race relations debate was centered and after 2001, it has been the Muslims. "(T)he debates about integrating newcomers have focused disproportionately on Muslims" (Taylor 2012). It would be fair to say that Sikhs have got little academic attention when it comes to immigration of diverse people and their integration into the British society.

Sikhs will be included as a separate category in the 2021 census for the first time. According to the 2011 census, there are 20.8 million Sikhs in India.

[2]There is also a growing number of Afghan Sikhs in the UK, but this thesis does not include their experiences.

The Sikh identity has historically developed around opposition from the powers that be. Two of the ten Sikh Gurus were executed by the Mughals and one died in combat. This, along with the militaristic traditions associated with the faith have made Sikhs fiercely protective about their beliefs and its observances. They stand up to any perceived injustice and have a history of mostly getting their demands met. On one hand, these fights for inclusion have impacted the Sikh community's integration into the British society, and on the other, they have impacted the British society as well. This thesis attempts to look at both sides of this story.

Another important reason for undertaking this research from an Indian standpoint, is the fact that there is not much information about the lived experiences of the challenges of migration and settlement of Sikhs in the countries of their immigration. Minority voices from the diaspora have not received much attention. Swain (2019) noted that the Indian diaspora is mostly imagined to be a Hindu diaspora because of sheer numbers. The large and powerful Sikh diaspora is often seen to be making demands for a distinct identity and a separate state. One of the strongest imaginations of diasporic Sikhs is that they are radicals and separatists. Chapter 5 of this thesis analyses this issue in depth and detail which will help build a nuanced understanding of the issue.

1.4.2- Why Study Migration to the United Kingdom?

At its peak, the British Empire held dominion over a quarter of the world's area as well as people (Maddison 2001). It ruled over people of almost all races, who fought and died for the British Crown in the two World Wars. The end of Second World War marked the beginning of the end of British empire. There was no blue-print or ready template which could be followed to become a modern island nation-state after being the most powerful empire for over two centuries. In due course, hundreds of thousands of people from all over the empire came to the UK to work and settle down. Hansen (1999) categorically states that the bulk of the ethnic minorities of the UK today is constituted by the people and the families of the ones who migrated to the UK between the passage of the British Nationality Act in 1948 and the Commonwealth Immigrants Act in 1962. Chapter 2 will analyse how this came to be and the journey of Sikhs in this context will be analysed in chapter 3.

This study will also explore the conditions, forms and consequences of devising democratic and human-rights-based public policy frameworks in multi-ethnic and multi-faith societies and the Sikh contribution to it. In the earlier decades of migration to the UK, assimilation was the norm, whereby immigrants had to co-opt the majority culture as far as possible. It was Roy Jenkins, the Labour Home Secretary, who introduced the concept of integration to the UK's political agenda and defined it as:

> "Not a flattening process of assimilation but as equal opportunity, accompanied by cultural diversity, in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance" (Jenkins, 1967)

This has been the bedrock of British Multiculturalism, which has many nuanced definitions, but which broadly means a policy or process whereby the distinctive identities of the cultural groups within such a society are maintained or supported. Minority community identities, like the Sikhs, became established under multiculturalism. However, it is blamed to have led to the racial segregation and compartmentalisation of different ethnicities and culminated into the Race Riots in 2001 in the northern cities of Oldham, Burnley and Bradford, after which. It was conceded to be dead.

It is important to note that by this time, a new concept, namely interculturalism had entered academic discourse around racial integration. A number of committees were set up by the then Home Secretary David Blunkett, to inquire into the race riots that had happened, one of which was chaired by Ted Cantle. The Cantle Report was the first time it was officially advocated to implement interculturalism in the UK to tackle the 'depth of polarisation' around segregated people living 'parallel lives'. This new concept of integration was called 'community cohesion and was defined as:

> "A cohesive community is one where there is common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities; the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued; those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods." (LGA, 2002)

A wide range of action guides have been produced in the UK for various stakeholders like schools, local governments, refugee integration and emphasizing common values

and action that need to be taken for cohesive communities. And while the Race Riots, which led to this shift in discourse, had happened between South Asian Muslims and the local white Christian communities, following 9/11, many Sikhs have been the target of hate crimes in the UK, as in the United States of America. This study fills the research gap by analysing whether the Sikh community has been affected by the policy change and what has been the nature of that change.

In 2016, the UK voted to leave the European Union with immigration being one of the main driving forces, if not the only one for pro-Brexiters. The vote, although a slight majority, exposed the deep chasms along race, ethnicity, class, geographical location and generational lines, that had taken form in the British society. Interestingly, the immigration question was directed to the eastern European people under the standard trope of 'they are taking our jobs', but the brunt of xenophobia was also faced by the people of colour, particularly south Asians, many of who were 3rd generation migrants. O'Toole (2019) claimed that 'Brexit is Britain's reckoning with itself' and that it 'is just the vehicle by which a fractured state has come to realise that its policies are no longer fit for purpose'. There has been a spike in incidents of hate after this and some of the Sikh experiences related to this will be shared in this thesis.

1.5- Research Questions and Hypotheses

As stated above, the main aim of this thesis is to investigate the immigration and integration experiences of Sikhs in the UK. There is a growing body of migration research that is looking into the matter of why and how some migrations lead to a migration system while others do not (Bakewell et al. 2011). This thesis will look at Sikh migration and explore through personal experiences of people, how they happened to migrate to the UK in such large numbers, and can this migration fall under the category of a migration system?

Integration has been deconstructed into structural and socio-cultural dimensions (Erdal and Oeppen 2013), where the former refers to the aspects that are easily measurable and more 'functional', like their educational level, employment level, housing, etc; and the latter refers to the more complex aspects of integration. These complex aspects can include, among other things, a sense of belonging in the country of migration, connect with the people, access to public services, emotions of being in a non-native country etc. which are very difficult to measure. The fact that community

cohesion expressly stresses on people of all backgrounds feeling appreciated, positively valued and foster strong relationships with others, clearly means that it is these complex aspects of integration that we need to assess and analyse to be able to see the outcome of the change in integration approach from 2001 onwards. In the absence of a prescribed form of measurement of community cohesion, this thesis is going to study lived experiences of the Sikh people of UK in order to understand how they feel and then make an analysis of whether their level of integration has seen improvement since the days of multiculturalism or not. The hypotheses for this study are:

1. Community Cohesion is contributing to the deepening integration of the Sikh community in the British Society, that began with the Race Relations Acts.
2. Through their struggles for the expression of their identity, Sikhs have made the British society more inclusive of diversity.

The table 1.1 below outlines the questions that have guided this research.

Table 1.1- Key Research Questions

S.no	**Research Questions**
1	Why did the Sikhs choose to migrate to the UK in such large numbers?
2	What are the challenges that the Sikhs have had to face for the expression of their identity in the UK?
3	What has been the role of 'Race Relations Acts' in the integration of Sikhs in the UK?
4	How has multiculturalism affected the Sikh community?
5	What have been the repercussions of 9/11 and 7/7 on the Sikh community in the UK?
6	What is community cohesion? Why was there a need to shift from multiculturalism to community cohesion for the integration of minorities?
7	How has community cohesion affected the Sikhs in UK?
8	What rules/laws/policies in the UK have been altered because of Sikhs?
9	How have Sikh struggles for integration affected other minorities in the UK?

1.6- Methodological Framework

"Interplay between philosophical ideas and empirical work marks high quality social research" (Alvesson and Skoldberg 2000).

This section gives a detailed description of the methodological framework guiding this research. It will begin with a brief background of the study. I explain how the research objectives are met most effectively by the use of qualitative methodology and explain the research design in detail – how the interviewees were located, the approaches of collecting the data and techniques to analyse it to meet the research objectives.

The aim of this research is to gain insight into the immigration and socio-cultural integration experiences of Sikhs in the UK, 1948 onwards. The reason for choosing this particular year is the passage of the British Nationality Act in 1948, which set in motion large scale commonwealth immigration to the UK. To analyse the long-term integration process effectively, it is important to capture experiences over a broad time-frame. For this study, a qualitative method approach has been considered appropriate, which includes secondary data and literature analysis as well as in-depth interviews. This study is based on in-depth interviews of 44 Sikhs and 15 White-British people, making it over 1800 minutes of face to face interaction with people of the working class, business class, women, academicians, media-persons, politicians, priests, police department and activists. Appendix 1 is a list of interviewees along with some details and the codes assigned to them, which will be used in this research, except in case where people have given written consensus for the use of their names. These interviews have been collected from various cities and towns in the UK and which have a high level of diversity.

1.6.1- Methodological Theory

The decision regarding how to study a social world depends on the assumptions of ontology and epistemology, which are integral to deciding the most suitable set of techniques. Ontology is concerned with the reality and what is out there to be known (Ritchie and Lewis 2003). Epistemology is about how the knowledge is produced (Moss and Moss 2002). The ontology and epistemology of this research has been influenced by the literature review through which the existing perception of the social

reality was observed, the research methods that were already applied for that discovery and the gaps and shortfalls that existed. The descriptive analysis that continues throughout the chapters of this thesis outlines the ontology – what there is to know – of this study. The epistemological position of this study is that of the social constructivist, which indicates that the knowledge of the world and how it is understood originates from how people construct the meanings of phenomena between themselves (Burr 2003) and that perceptions and experiences are 'mediated historically, culturally and linguistically' (Willig 2008). Social constructivists, in essence, believe that there are more knowledges rather than one knowledge. It is also assumed that social reality is a dynamic process which is ongoing as it is produced daily according to the knowledge and interpretation of people. The aim of this research is to discover this perceived reality of Sikhs, which will be co-constructed between them as the researched and myself as a researcher through a process which is called reflexivity and will be discussed in section 3.11.

1.6.2- Qualitative Method

For a research that is about eliciting experiences of people and analysing social phenomena based on that, it was the most natural choice to go for qualitative methods to address the research questions. Quantitative methods have limitations when it comes to revealing subjective experiences and complex lives of people, in case of this research, Sikhs in the UK. However, even in purely qualitative studies like this, it is suggested to use certain quantifications (Silverman 1985) while keeping in mind, that to be able to offer a sense of 'completeness' and present a 'comprehensive picture' (Poortinga et al. 2004), primarily qualitative methods have to be used. For this research, secondary quantitative data has been valuable for setting the background, to help gather information and add greater nuance in understanding. It has been used primarily to locate, identify and describe social position of the Sikhs in measurable terms. However, the main thrust of this research is qualitative in nature, as it allows for ambiguity regarding the interpretative possibilities and lets the researcher's own construction of what is explored become visible. Further discussion on the impact of the researcher on the research is discussed in section 1.6.9.

1.6.3-Reliability and Validity

Reliability of a result relates to the consistency of the measure of a concept – whether these results can be reproduced or not – and validity questions whether the devised method really measures a concept or not. However, the criteria that govern reliability and validity of quantitative and qualitative research are different as both these methods have evolved from different theoretical, philosophical and methodological positions, mainly positivist and constructivist respectively (Guba and Lincoln 1989).

In quantitative inquiry, reliability and validity are tested by checking if similar results can be produced under similar circumstances. In qualitative research, Creswell (2007) explains that the quality of research is about the suitability, adequacy and accuracy, of the research design constructed to measure the intended social phenomenon. He contends that validity, in social researches, concerns itself with alignment between data gathering and research design and how they allow for data interpretation to take place based on the specific procedure and conclusions to be drawn confidently. He suggests strategies for validity in social research like external evaluations where questions related to the credibility of the research can be asked. This was achieved by presenting preliminary findings of this research in seminars within the Centre as well as paper presentations at national and international level (See Appendix).

1.6.4- Secondary Analysis

A secondary data analysis was undertaken to serve as a baseline for the qualitative research procedure. The British Sikh Report (BSR) of 2015 was the first reliable and authoritative source of information about Sikhs in the UK. It included important statistics compiled by interviewing more than a thousand Sikhs, which was the biggest such survey conducted in the UK. It provided information such as places with highest concentration of Sikh settlement, family demographics, education and income statistics among other issues. Subsequent issues of the BSR have focused on various issues confronted by the Sikh community, and has played an important part in guiding this research. It was through the BSR 2015 that the areas of field work for this research were identified.

Apart from the BSR, there is a growing body of academic literature which is discussed in detail in Chapter 2 which provided the required secondary information

and data needed to analyse the information collected and to know how to identify issues from the free-flowing conversations that was characteristic of the interviews conducted.

1.6.5- Semi-structured Interviews

According to Legard et al. (2003), interviewing is believed to be one of the most important and powerful tools to gain an insight into the world of others. And since this research is based on experiences of people, a self-administered questionnaire-based survey was rejected in favour of a semi-structured interview. As mentioned above, the themes that were explored from these interviews were derived from the analysis of theoretical concepts. To measure a subjective concept like community cohesion, which comprises a number of variables, mostly to do with the way people perceive their realities and their feeling of belongingness, of living with/without discrimination etc. in-depth interviews seemed to be the way to go. For the sake of convenience and in order to get greater number of responses, an attempt was made to use self-administered questionnaires in the earliest phase of the field trip. They were distributed online to Sikhs whose email IDs were personally collected by the researcher and who had expressly agreed to respond, except they didn't. A couple of responses that were received lacked in depth and revealed that the respondents were not keen to write descriptively, which was what was sought. Thus, this method proved to be ineffective for the purpose of this study and it became clear that face to face semi structured interviews had to be the only way forward.

Semi-structured interviews are designed under a particular framework, but the open-ended nature of questions gives flexibility to the interviewees to spontaneously tell their stories with richness and detail (Oppenheim 2000), in their own words (Bowling 2009), and discuss topics of particular interest to them (Bryman 2009). Seidman (1992) also supports this method as it is primarily designed to facilitate the interviewees to explore the meanings of their own lived experiences in depth. "To go into something in-depth is to get a sense of how the apparently straight-forward is actually more complicated, of how the 'surface appearances' may be quite misleading about 'depth realities'" (Wengraf 2001).

Another advantage of conducting such an interview is that the participants have a choice to express themselves in a language of their choice, due to which, almost a

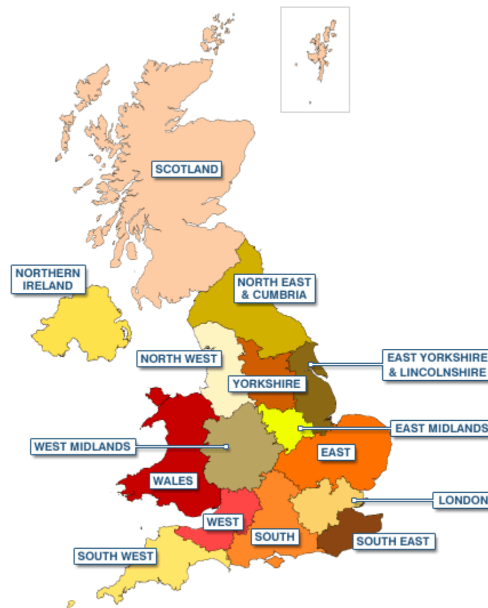
third of the interviews were conducted fully in Punjabi and the rest of them were mostly a mixture of English, Punjabi and Hindi. Kvale (2008) opines that the interviewer is the 'primary research instrument' in qualitative research and the interrelationship between the interviewer and the interviewee bears significance in obtaining knowledge. He stresses that the above places a strong demand on the researcher to be empathetic and creative to ensure quality of their research, the lack of which could jeopardize it. Talking identity, discrimination, religion, and other such personal characteristics is not a comfortable discussion to have, especially with a proud people like the Sikh. The interviewer had to build rapport and present herself in an acceptable manner to the subjects.

1.6.6- Selection of Areas for Field Study

Selection of areas where interviews would be conducted was a very important factor for this study. The field study was done over the course of 3 months in two visits to the UK, in the summers of 2017 and 2018. The BSR 2015 has shown, according to the 2011 census, that the areas with maximum Sikh population are Greater London and Birmingham in West Midlands. Leeds in the Yorkshire also has a significant Sikh population. Some parts of Wales and Scotland have sizeable Sikh populations as well, but because of the paucity of time and money, this study had to be conducted in England only.

However, apart from the cities and towns in Greater London, West Midlands and Leeds, Manchester in the North-West was also included as it has a very old history of migration and is considered to be one of the most diverse cities in not only the UK but in all of Europe. One more reason to add a short visit to Manchester for this research was that in May 2017, just a few days before the first field trip was due, a bomb blast shook an arena where popstar Ariana Grande was performing, taking 22 lives. What stood out with respect to this research were numerous reports of how Gurudwaras across the city had opened their gates to provide aid to the people who were stranded and gave free food and shelter to all. This study includes an interview with the *Giani* (the head priest) of one of those Gurudwaras.

Image 1.1- United Kingdom Regional Map



Source- http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/7747697.stm

Table 1.2 - No of interviewees from each region

Area	No. of Participants
Greater London (London, Southall, Hounslow, Including one from Slough)	16
West Midlands (Birmingham, Coventry, Smethwick, Warwick, Dudley, Wolverhampton)	13
Leeds	10
Manchester	5
Total	**44**

1.6.7- Sampling Strategy

In a qualitative investigation of this kind, it was important to determine the sample size, the sampling method and certain characteristics of the potential interviewees. This section will discuss each of the above.

1.6.7.1– Sample Size

There are several ongoing debates regarding the sample size in a qualitative research. Mason (2010) studied 560 PhD works and found that the number of participants in them was greatly varied, but the most common sample size was between 20-30. He suggested that one of the guiding principles while deciding on the sample size in a qualitative research should be the concept of saturation, meaning the point beyond which the researcher almost ceases to gather much new data. However, data collection in such studies depends greatly on the interviewer (Morse 2008). It has been suggested that a sample size as small as 6 could be enough to develop 'meaningful themes and useful interpretations' (Guest et al. 2006) provided there is a high degree of homogeneity among the group under study. Guest et al. (2006) have also argued that a sample of 12 is sufficient if the research aims to describe a perception, belief or behaviour among a fairly homogenous group.

Since this study is to view and analyse the processes of migration and integration from a long-term perspective, it required a stratified sample to determine the similarities and differences within groups with respect to specific dimensions. Therefore, the endeavour was to have representative voices of as many categories as possible.

1.6.7.2- Characteristics of the Sample

This study is done to document experiences of immigration and integration of the Sikhs settled in the UK and through them, draw inferences regarding the role of community cohesion in their integration experience. For this purpose, it was required that within the limited resources, voices representative of as many groups as possible should come up. Through literature review, it was identified that generation of migration is an important determinant of the experience and so is gender. Table 3.2 depicts these characteristics of the samples collected and organises them age-wise. Drawing up this table also revealed some of the limitations of this study, such as the very limited voice of the 3rd generation. It also highlights that the study includes a greater voice of the first-generation male migrants. It has happened due to two reasons. Firstly, this study is about immigration as well as integration and it is the first generation who has both these experiences. Secondly, as it was felt necessary to

contact people who were community heads, like holding a position in the local Gurudwara or being in politics, it was mostly men who were encountered. There was also a great variety of women in the second generation who were pioneers in various fields. Further details will be discussed in the chapters ahead.

Table 1.3- Characteristics of the Sample

Age Group	1st Generation		2nd Generation		3rd Generation		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
< 35 years	3	2	1	1	0	4	11
35 - 60 years	3	1	3	8	1	0	16
> 60 years	13	4	0	0	0	0	17
Total	19	7	4	9	1	4	44

1.6.7.3- Sampling Techniques: Random Sampling, Snowballing and Purposive Sampling

The main challenge for conducting the field work for this study was to find people to interview in a place that the researcher was not familiar with and had never visited. Before going for the trip, a map was designed to visit the various cities and towns that were identified as stated in section 3.7. The researcher began contacting Sikh student organizations and Gurudwaras through the medium of Facebook Messenger. Some responses were received, and interviews were set up. Only one Gurudwara in Leeds responded and welcomed the researcher to conduct the interviews with Sikhs who mostly come on Sunday for worship. This was a great clue, as subsequently, interviews were conducted on Sundays in Gurudwaras in Southall and Birmingham as well. Before leaving for the UK, the researcher was suggested to try and talk to anyone, anywhere who would be willing to talk. The advantage of studying Sikhs was that the men could easily be identified. However, in case of women, a number of times, the researcher happened to approach people of Pakistani origin because of the common language, Punjabi. At least half the interviews in this study took place via random sampling like this. Some of the chance encounters will be discussed in the chapters ahead.

The first trip to the UK, which took place during June-July 2017, was undertaken to attend two conferences as well, one of which was the International Sikh Research Conference at the University of Warwick. This provided the opportunity to identify interviewees by the snowball method, that focused on professional networks. Snowballing is a technique to find research subjects which requires making initial contact with a few subjects who lead to more and those in turn lead to more subjects (Atkinson and Flint 2001, Bryman 2009). This strategy was very effective to build trust with the first interviewee and subsequently contact some elite and busy professional individuals who would have been hard to reach by other means. This proved to be an effective strategy for this study.

In the later visits to the field, random sampling was no longer employed, and the remaining field work was done in a strategic manner. A purposive sample was taken based on the initial data analysis and samples were then collected in a non-random manner to achieve the goal of this study. It was in this stage that most of the community heads, politicians, media persons and academicians were contacted. It was also during this time that the interviews with White British people for the control of this study were conducted. With respect to meeting politicians (city councilors), all four of them (two Sikh and two White British) responded to emails that were sent to them directly and graciously gave their time for the interview.

The researcher was fortunate to be studying Sikhs because most of them who were contacted were happy to talk in detail and only a few rejections were faced, which was the opposite experience when compared to interviewing White British people. The Sikhs who did not wish to speak were mostly women and young adults. Their reasons remain unknown but a lack of trust and the fact that the researcher was Indian could have played a role. One or two men simply did not want to engage in deep conversations, so declined being interviewed. A very few unpleasant incidents also occurred but they are just a part of any field research, so were not taken personally.

1.6.8- Qualitative Data Collection Process

The interviewees, wherever they were contacted, either on the phone, or via email or in case of random selection, in any public place, were expressly told what the purpose of this study was. Participation was on voluntary basis and written consensus was taken from them to be able to use their quotes in the study. All but a few interviews

were digitally recorded. Notes were taken for interviews that were not recorded because of the unwillingness of the participant to record their voice. No two interviews were same. The question guide that was created for interview was used to fit experience of the interviewee rather than have a fixed structure (Lazarsfeld 1972). It did require a sense of skill in asking the right questions to the interviewees to trigger their memories and recount the sequence of events that happened in the past.

With regards to language, a large number of subjects chose to use Punjabi in-stead of English, for the interviews. As it has been noted that language is not just about expressing oneself, "it is through the daily interactions between people in the course of social life that our versions of knowledge become fabricated. Therefore, social interaction of all kinds and particularly language is of great interest to social constructionists" (Burr 2003). Whorf (1941) believed that it is a person's language that determines the way the individual perceives the world. Burr (2003) adds that "the way a person thinks, the very categories and concepts that provide a framework of meaning for them are provided by the language they use". As the researcher had only a single chance to speak to the subjects, to ensure maximum possible takeaway, she encouraged them to relax and speak their mind in any language of their choice and without fear of being mis-quoted or mis-represented.

1.6.9- Reflexivity in the Research Process

Research has traditionally been conceived as the creation of objective and true knowledge by following a scientific method. From what is presented as 'unequivocal imprints of reality' (Alvesson and Skoldberg 2000) such as data and facts, empirically grounded conclusions have been drawn, which have then led to generalizations and theory building. For the longest time, such approach has been used for social science research for examining both 'objective realities (social facts)' or 'people's subjective or intersubjective experiential worlds (meanings)' (Ibid.) Such positivist approaches began to be criticised from the 1960s onwards and Steedman (1991) pronounced that 'knowledge cannot be separated from the knower'. The researcher's position, contribution and role has been recognised as 'reflecting upon the ways in which our own values, experiences, interests, beliefs, political commitments, wider aims in life and social identities have shaped the research' (Willig 2008). In this sense, data and facts are made comprehensible and meaningful, by using her own sensory

impressions, constructions and interpretations (Alvesson and Skoldberg 2000). This research is based on reflexive interpretation of empirical data that has been collected via ethnographic engagement with Sikhs in the UK.

Researcher's reflexivity is the cornerstone of the process of interpretive research (Paulus et al. 2008) because in one way or another, the researcher is invariably implicated in the research process of all qualitative methodologies (Willig 2008). I believe that I was well placed to undertake this particular research project. Firstly, like the Sikhs in UK, I also come from a migratory background with roots in Punjab. My grandparents came to the eastern side of the border during partition of British India and settled in Jamshedpur, far removed from the land and cultural milieu of origin, like the British Sikhs. Secondly, I have experience of interviewing people regarding their reproductive health issues, which gave me a great deal of sensitivity and sensibility and enabled me to encourage my subjects to divulge information which they might consider highly sensitive in nature (Song and Parker 1995). Thirdly, my familiarity with all the three languages that Sikhs in the UK use, English, Punjabi and to a lesser extent, Hindi, was very advantageous during the research. I was well aware that discussions around personal issues are most effectively articulated in the first language and this belief of mine was often proven right when the interviewees began using their first language to recite poetry or explain a situation or a conversation. This rendered greater depth to the process of interpretation.

In order to make the subjects at ease with the conversation, I began all interviews by explaining the aims and objectives of the research and also by telling them categorically that I was not interested in their names and their personal identities, but in their experiences. I had to quell a number of doubts regarding my motive and sometimes even regarding the source of funding for the research. A climate of mutual disclosure was forged very carefully especially with elites, politicians and professionals. My position as a woman also affects this research, as Moss and Moss (2002) argue how the knowledge that comes out of a feminist research includes women's voices. Along with feminism, this research is also influenced by principles of anti-racist research. 'Anti-racist research does not just deal with social facts, it is also about how people interpret those facts, how the researcher interprets those interpretations, contextualizes them, and assists the subject in developing theoretical understanding of their lived experience' (Dei and Johal 2005).

Doubts were expressed regarding my research topic as it is well known that Sikhs have done very well in terms of their integration in the UK, but I was not satisfied with that straightjacketed approach of looking at the matter. This reflexive research is based on the understanding that:

> "Empirical research in a reflective mode starts from a skeptical approach to what appear at a superficial glance as unproblematic replicas of the way reality functions, while at the same time maintaining the belief that the study of suitable (well-though-out) excerpts from this reality can provide an important basis for a generation of knowledge that opens up rather than closes and furnishes opportunities for understanding rather than establishes 'truths'." (Alvesson and Skoldberg 2000)

1.6.10- Why Oral Testimonies?

This thesis relies on oral testimonies of people to make sense of their experiences of immigration and integration. This method has been widely used by historians, anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists and independent scholars, particularly to gather 'histories of nonliterate populations, or people who are considered marginal to the larger society' (Dillard 2018). However, for professional scholars, dissemination of history via formal written documentations have been more important in comparison to oral traditions and narratives. Paul Thompson (1978), in what is regarded as the foundational text in the field of international oral history, reminds that 'oral history is as old as history itself.' He goes on to say that it 'was the first kind of history' and that only in the recent times (1960s onwards), 'that skill in handling oral evidence has ceased to be one of the marks of a great historian'.

There is a methodological concern when dealing with memories of individuals. Butalia (1998) makes a strong case for using memories or experiences to understand a historical process. She states that:

> "Memory is not 'pure' or 'unmediated'. So much depends on who remembers, when, with whom, indeed to whom, and how. But to me, the way people choose to remember an event, a history, is at least as important as what one might call the 'facts' of that history, for after all, these latter are not self-evident givens; instead they too are interpretations, as remembered or recorded by one individual or another." (Butalia 1998)

This study is not for producing a grand theory based on similarity of experiences of people, rather, it is to 'allow the various memories and understandings to be explored

and examined in detail' (Nyhan 2016). Some of the alleged limitations of oral histories can actually be perceived as strengths in a study like this, where 'differing personal narratives and varying memories offer unrivalled opportunities to explore and understand communities and their relationships to the past; something that would not be possible when relying on more traditional text based historical sources' (Ibid.). Portelli (2013) claims that a good research based on oral testimonies do not end with recording, archiving and writing. They offer just one version of many versions, which over the course of time can be revisited, tested against other sources and reinterpreted. This is very much in line with the larger ambition of this project.

1.6.11- Qualitative Data Analysis

Transcripts are the 'raw material' of a qualitative research (Perakyla 2004), therefore the quality of the transcriptions have a strong bearing on the analysis that follows. Halai (2007) argues that the process of field texts to research texts becomes complicated in case of bilingual or multilingual data and the researcher must be conscious of the cultural decoding required by translation (Torop 2002). The audio recordings were transcribed by the researcher herself. In most cases the issues and incidents were translated into English, but it was done with care to not lose the meaning in the original language. In translation, it is almost impossible to get an 'exact equivalence'. Therefore, 'inexact equivalence' was aimed for, ensuring that the underlying meaning is conveyed (Crystal 1994). In places where the essence of a particular phrase was getting lost in translation, italicized original phrases are used throughout this thesis with the translation in brackets. There was a lot of material that was not relevant to this research but has been kept in reserve to be used to write papers in the future.

Transcription was followed by thematic analysis. 'A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set' (Braun and Clarke 2006). After becoming thoroughly familiar with the data, the research questions were revisited. Key ideas, recurring themes and important issues that arose from the interviews were listed. Using inductive method, patterns and categories emerging from the data were located (Patton 1990). The themes that developed included migration, settlement issues discrimination in jobs and public places, religion, family dynamics, caste

issues, politics, relations with India and transnationalism. Each theme was further divided into subthemes according to the available information. These themes and subthemes were then analysed, often using cues from the theoretical framework established for this research.

1.6.12- Ethical Considerations

Broadly speaking, the ethical issues in social research relate to objectivity, the appropriateness of the techniques used in the research process, whether the research is worthwhile and the treatment of respondents. The latter is considered to be the major ethical issue in any qualitative research (Blaikie 2000, Denscombe 2002). This was addressed in this study by making participation in the study completely voluntary, by seeking informed consent, and by providing confidentiality and anonymity except in cases where the respondents themselves gave written consent to be named. In addition, it must be made explicit that the data generated from in-depth interviews cannot be generalised as the aim is not theory building but giving an 'authentic insight into people's experiences' (Silverman 2011). The methodology has its limits in that the findings are contextually unique.

1.7. Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter one is this, the introduction, where a context is laid for this study and the research questions and hypotheses are enlisted. It provides the theoretical framework for this study. Migration and integration, the main concepts that guide this study are explored here. This chapter also outlines the methodological framework of this study.

Chapters 2, 3 and 4 constitute the main body of this thesis, which are based on oral testimonies and lived experiences of Sikhs in the UK. Chapter 2 embeds the Sikh experience of migration, discrimination and the struggles for the expression of their identity within the evolution of British immigration and integration history.

Chapter 3 discusses life of British Sikhs within the family and community. It is to highlight the issues that arise from within the community which might hinder the integration of Sikhs in the UK.

Chapter 4 is a study of the concept of community cohesion, the various debates surrounding it and finally an analysis of Sikh integration based on the principles of community cohesion.

The concluding chapter will present the overall findings of this study examine how this study has answered the research questions, test the hypotheses. This chapter will include some important takeaways as well as a discussion on the potential for further research into community cohesion. The limitations of this study will also be declared in this chapter

1.8- Summary

This chapter prepares the ground for the following research. We have discussed the context on which this study is based, the theories that have informed this idea, the rationale of conducting this research. It then lists the research questions and hypotheses as well as the detailed research methodology for conducting this qualitative research.

Chapter 2

BRITISH IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION POLICIES AND THE SIKH EXPERIENCE

2.1- Introduction

This chapter embeds the Sikh experience of migration, discrimination and the struggles for the expression of their identity within the evolution of British immigration and integration history. Alterman (2019) says that "a study of the past shows us that the only way to understand the present is to embrace the messiness of politics, culture and economics." He added that "there are never easy answers to pressing questions about the world and public life", therefore historicization becomes essential for a study of this kind, where numerous variables have combined in myriad ways to make the reality of today. This chapter answers, in whole or in part, many of the questions pertaining to this research, and it also sets the stage for the central analysis, that of the impact of community cohesion on Sikhs. An assessment of the British immigration policies and integration discourse with respect to the Sikhs seems to be an appropriate exercise in displaying the fluidity and discursive nature of national identity.

2.2- Prelude: Sikhs in Britain before 1948

"History locates us and helps us understand how we got here and why things are the way they are" (Alterman, 2019)

"It is often forgotten that Britain had an Indian community long before the Second World War, and that the recent arrival of Asian people in Britain is part of the long history of contact between Britain and India" (Visram 1986). This prelude discusses Sikhs in the Britain prior to the passage of the 1948 British Nationality Act. It is imperative to include these figures and groups of people as Sikhs in Britain today often evoke their memory or their imageries to emphasize their rootedness in the UK, which will be discussed in chapter 5.

2.2.1- Maharaja Duleep Singh

There appears to be no record of Sikhs in Britain prior to the arrival of Duleep Singh, in 1854 (Singh and Tatla, 2006). Even though his "reality was defeat and dispossession" (Bayly 1990), there are significant aspects of his life that have made

him achieve an "emblematic status of a global Sikh community" (Ballantyne 2004). He was the son of *Sher-e-Punjab* Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Maharani Jindan Kaur and was only 5 years old when he ascended the throne of Punjab in 1843. Following two Anglo-Sikh wars, Punjab, the last major independent kingdom in the Indian subcontinent, was annexed to British India in 1849. The eleven years old King was forced to renounce his claims to the throne as well as his treasury[3], which included the Koh-i-Noor diamond[4], now one of the prized Crown Jewels of the Unite Kingdom. Subsequently, he was separated from his mother and taken to Fatehgarh, where he lived under the tutelage of Dr. John Login, Scotsman and a devout Christian, and was baptized three years later. He subsequently obtained permission from the East India Company Court of Directors in London to come to England, where he spent most of his life.

Alexander and Anand (1980) give the fascinating and often grim details of Duleep Singh's life. According to them, Queen Victoria put him 'under her wings' as soon as he arrived, took great interest in his education and development and treated him as equal to the rank of a European Prince[5]. He went on to marry a Coptic Christian woman named Bamba Mueller[6] and fathered six children with her; the family stayed at the Elveden Estate in Sussex. He was popular for his extravagant lifestyle and for being an excellent shooter[7].

In the latter part of his life, he became more self-aware, visited India, reunited with his mother, re-converted to Sikhism, and developed interest in gaining his Kingdom back. To that end, he attempted a few maneuvers, some of which were crushed by the British and others didn't come to fruition due to the lack of real-political logic[8]. Prior to his death in Paris in 1893, Duleep Singh re-converted to Christianity and sought

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[3]The exact measure of the treasures of the Sikh Kingdom are hard to calculate but an original hand-written document is present at the British Library which enlists them and was shown in a BBC Documentary "Lost Treasures of the Sikh Kingdom", where the presenter, James Lewis calls it to be "one of the greatest treasure collections in history". This also included the golden throne of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

[4]the ownership of which is claimed to this day by the governments of India and Pakistan, while it lies on display in the Tower of London

[5]He was called the 'Black Prince of Perthshire', Perthshire in Scotland being his first residence after coming to Britain. A movie of by the name 'Black Prince' based on the life of Duleep Singh released in 2017.

[6] Of German and Abyssinian decent

[7]At one point, he was considered to be the fourth best shot in England.

[8] He tried to gain support from other kingdoms of that time like the Russians, to join him in attacking the British on Indian soil. He could not gain supporters for this endeavour.

clemency from the Queen, which was granted to him. He was buried alongside his wife and son in the Elveden Church. He is an icon for the new generation of British Sikhs and his legacy provides an enduring symbol of the British attachment of Sikhs and yet the potential for dissonance and rebellion (Axel, 2001). Section 4.4.3.4 discusses how British Sikhs in Britain engage with the memory and symbolism of Duleep Singh.

2.2.2 - Sophia: Princess, Suffragette, Revolutionary

This is the title of probably the only full book published as late as 2015 that provides a detailed insight about the life and times of Sophia Duleep Singh, grand-daughter of *Sher-e-Punjab* Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the sixth daughter of Duleep Singh and Bamba. She was also the Goddaughter of Queen Victoria and was grooming to be a London socialite, exhibiting her pet dogs at the Ladies Kennel Association and wearing Parisian couture and appearing in high society magazines. She was also a keen cyclist. Sophia and her sisters Bamba and Catherine were well known among the London gentry. However, a trip to India, where she encountered the poverty and other horrors of life under the British Rule, observed the nationalist struggle up close and met with Lala Lajpat Rai and Gopal Krishna Gokhale, changed her life forever.

Upon her return to England in 1909, she joined the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), which was a Suffragette movement led by Emeline Pankhurst. Having a 'princess' in its ranks gave the movement a fair share of publicity, which was to be quite beneficial. This was a very radical move by Sophia because women of royalty, by norm, did not participate in plebeian political matters. Some of the notable things that she did were selling *The Suffragette* newspapers outside her posh Hampton Court residence; throwing herself at the car of the then Prime Minister Herbert Henry Asquith while holding the placard 'give women the vote'. She became a member of the Women's Tax Resistance League who stood for "no vote, no tax" and was summoned to the court for not paying her taxes, where she famously stated that 'taxation without representation is tyranny'. She was a pain for the authorities who could simply not arrest her due to her position, even at a time when suffragettes were being jailed and hunger strikers were being force-fed. King George V was so vexed to by Sophia's actions - refusing to pay taxes, participating, popularizing and agitating

for the suffragette cause - that he once exclaimed, ‘have we no hold on her?’(Anand 2015).

Following many years of struggle, in the year 1918, the Representation of the People Act was passed which gave women over the age of 30 and of property, the right to vote. This was partial victory and it would take another ten years before the Representation of People (Equal Franchise Act) would be passed in 1928, which gave the vote to every woman above the age of 21, regardless of property ownership. Sophia became a member of the Suffragette Fellowship and remained its member till life. Sophia’s actions boosted the cause for the Indian women’s suffrage as well (Ahmed and Mukherjee 2011).

Following her return from India, Sophia also supported the India *Lascars*[9]whose living conditions really moved her, by helping them in setting up a Lascar Club in East London. During the Second World War, she volunteered as a nurse with the Red Cross and attended wounded Indian soldiers, many Sikhs among them. Anand (2015) states that it was a moment of great shock and pride when those soldiers learnt that this woman in nurse’s uniform was their great Maharaja’s granddaughter. Her desire to be cremated after death and her ashes scattered in the land of her forefathers was fulfilled by her sister Bamba.

> “As far as her place in history is concerned, Sophia was perhaps her own worst enemy. She never sought glory and disliked speaking in public. Before her death, when asked to contribute to her entry in Who’s Who, Sophia Duleep Singh’s was one of the briefest in the book. Under ‘interests’ she wrote just one line: ‘*The Advancement of Women’*(emphasis added)” (Anand 2015)

In 2018, a series of stamps were issued to commemorate the centenary of the Representation of the People Act 1918 and Sophia received the first of its kind of acknowledgement by the British state for her contribution in the struggle for women’s emancipation. A £1.57 stamp was issued showing Sophia selling *The Suffragette* outside her Hampton Court ‘grace and favour’ residence, one of the most iconic pictures of the movement, depicting her irreverence to the British crown and authorities when it came to women’s rights.

[9] Groups of sailors from the British colonies east of Cape of Good Hope who would man British ships on the high seas.

2.2.3 - Other Princes

All of Punjab was never united under the Sikh kingdom of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. There were a number of small independent principalities like Nabha, Kapurthala and Patiala, which attained the status of princely state under the British Empire. The titular Maharajas and Princes of these states frequented England for political work, education and pleasure (Visram, 2015). The most prominent among them was Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala, who was a regular visitor to Britain[10]. It was due to his patronage that the first Gurudwara in Britain was built in 1911 (section 3.4). He was a cricketer and had toured as the captain of the Indian Cricket team as well (Singh and Tatla 2006). He was in attendance at the Imperial War Conference in UK in 1918, as the chancellor of the Indian Chamber of Princes, he represented India in the League of Nations Assembly in 1925 and the Indian States delegation at the Round Table Conference in London in 1930. He educated his children Bhalinder Singh, Bharitinder Singh and Kumudesh Kumari Sahiba at Cambridge and his son Padaminder Singh at London University (Bance 2007). The Maharaja of Nabha was Jawaharlal Nehru's contemporary at Harrow and the Maharaja of Kapurthala was also entertained by the Royal Court (Singh and Tatla 2006).

2.2.4 - Elite Students

The Government of India Act 1919 was passed in order to expand Indian participation in the Government of India by allowing recruitment of Indians in higher level government jobs. This allowed for a steady stream of affluent Indians, many Sikhs among them, to come to England to study at prestigious institutions at Oxford, Cambridge or the Inns of Court School of Law to train for the legal profession or Indian Civil Services. Some of the noted Sikh individuals to have studied in English universities at that time were Kapur Singh, Patwant Singh, E.N. Mangat Rai, Mulk Raj Anand and Khushwant Singh, who went on to pursue illustrious careers in India. However, Singh and Tatla (2006) state that "very few left a lasting impression of their life at the heart of the Empire". The distinguished Sikh Scholar Kahan Singh of Nabha had also travelled to England while assisting the Sikh-British administrator

[10]Interestingly, every work that discusses his visits to England (Singh and Tatla 2006, Bance 2007) expressly mention that he used to stay at the Savoy Hotel in London. Savoy has a cult status in terms of its history, celebrity guests that have stayed there and its impact on art, music and popular culture. The Sikhs claim their rightful place in this nook of history as well.

Max Arthur Maculiffe[11] in his seminal work on Sikhism. Teja Singh, one of the main driving forces behind the construction of the first Gurudwara in the UK had also come to England as a sponsored student in 1907. Like the princes, these students were also mostly transient visitors who left Britain after completing their education.

2.2.5 - Soldiers

Following the annexation of the Sikh Kingdom, the British recognized the valour of its people, designated them as a 'martial race' and recruited a large number of them in the British Indian army. These soldiers were among the earliest visitors to Britain from Punjab, who were called for various parades and ceremonies.

> "Sikh regiments paraded for Queen Victoria's golden Jubilee (1887) and diamond jubilee (1897), and for the coronations of King Edward VII (1902), George V (1911) and George VI (1937)." (Singh and Tatla 2006)

About 100,000 Sikh soldiers fought for the British in the First World War, serving mainly in France, Belgium, Greece, Turkey, Palestine, Egypt, Sudan and East Africa. A 2018 film by the name of Sajjan Singh Rangroot is the first adaptation of Sikh soldiers in combat action during the Great War. The wounded were brought to England for recuperation and were mostly treated at the Brighton Pavilion in Sussex, which was adapted as a hospital for Indian soldiers. This was where Sophia Duleep Singh, then working as a nurse with the Red Cross, visited them. In the Second World War, Sikh soldiers were deputed mainly in South East Asia. Shivdev Singh, Mohinder Singh Pujji and Manmohan Singh saw distinguished service in the Royal Air Force as well (Omissi 1994). Following the partition of Punjab and 1948 BNA, many of these soldiers chose to come to England for work and while interviewing British Sikhs for this thesis, a number of respondents traced their lineage to Sikh soldiers who fought for England during the World Wars.

2.2.6 - Peddlers

Peter Bance (2007) claims that by the 1930s, there were a few hundred Bhatra Sikhs who had settled in various parts of England, Scotland and Wales. In 1939-40, there were 37 Sikh peddlers registered in the Glasgow City Council (Macfarland, 1991). The Bhatra Sikhs are said to have made a niche for themselves in the peddling trade,

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[11] Macauliffe was a British civil servant who had converted to Sikhism. He translated the Guru Granth Sahib in English and also published his seminal work called The Sikh Religion in six volumes.

which was earlier dominated by Jewish and Irish people. This small community which was spread throughout the country was self-supporting and closely knit by the ties of kinship and interdependence. In 1939, they formed the "Changa Bhatra Naujwan Sabha UK" with headquarters in London's East End. Peddling was an easily accessible trade and anyone over the age of 17 and a good character could apply for a license under the Peddlers Act 1871. In an oral testimony, a Bhatra Sikh person in Manchester recalls:

> "my father had settled in Britain in the 1930s; he would assist anyone new to England, at one time…anyone coming over from India would stop in Manchester and stay for 21 day…to make a peddler's license. Father would supply them with food and accommodation and set them up in the business…He was a salesman in clothes, drapery, ladies underwear, perfumes from France and various other items of that nature" (Fitzgerald, 1986, 42)

Along with the Bhatras, a steady flow of Sikhs from the Doaba region had begun during the inter-war years, which would eventually be the area from where most Sikhs would migrate to Britain.

2.2.7 - Shaheed Udham Singh

Violent resistance to colonial rule was not uncommon in British India but it was only twice that something of this nature was executed in the heart of the empire. Madan Lal Dhingra, a Punjabi Hindu who had come to England for education, assassinated Curzon-Wyllie, an official of the India office in 1909. He was sentenced to death (Datta, 1978). The other and more sensational assassination was that of General Michael O'Dwyer in 1940. Udham Singh was present in Jallianwala Bagh when on the orders of the former, troops opened fire on a big crowd of people that had assembled on the day of *Baisakhi*[12]to protest the arrest of two freedom fighters. Between 500-1000 men, women and children were killed and the incident remains, to this day, one of the significant events in the Indian freedom struggle.

Udham Singh had joined the freedom movement and even though he lived incognito a lot of the times, his association with Bhagat Singh's revolutionary group, the Indian Worker's Association and the Ghadar Party[13] have been recorded. Stadtler (2012)

[12] The Sikh New Year
[13] A revolutionary anti-colonial struggle started by Punjabi migrants in North America

gives a fascinating account of the network of Indian resistance movements in Britain and abroad tracing it through the life of Udham Singh.

While the background of both Dhingra and Singh varied, they both showed that Indians "were able to come to Britain and express their anger" (Mukherjee, 2009) at the colonial rule. Both gave impassioned speeches during their trials and expressed clearly that they were happy to die for the cause of their country.

On one of the discussions on Operation Bluestar, a respondent invoked the memory of Udham Singh and noted:

> *"She (Indira Gandhi) must have been naïve and unaware of Sikh history. A Sikh never forgets injustice. If a young man can come all the way from India and kill Dwyer in Caxton Hall…those Sikh boys had the opportunity, so they took it. Some say it is wrong, some say it is right. If not those two, I feel any other Sikh would have done it. Sikhs are very easy going. If someone opens their arms to us, we open our arms as well. But if someone does this (gesticulates strangulation), then we have our two hands as well."* (SMA35)

"Udham Singh's assassination of O'Dwyer is exceptional" (Stadtler 2012) and his action resonates with the Sikh community even to this day. Also, it is interesting to note that Caxton Hall, the location of this assassination is also known for holding many suffragette meetings. A suffragette memorial is constructed right outside it. This represents the Sikh connection in two seemingly unrelated episodes in the history of the UK.

This section shed light on the presence of Sikhs in the UK before 1948. Sikhs, though not very large in number then, had made their presence felt- from the royal courts to the battlefields as well as the streets – as rights activists and peddlers.

While there were about 20 to 30 thousand 'coloured' people from the British Colonial Territories'[14] before 1948, majority of whom were settled in Liverpool, Cardiff, Manchester and East End of London, the country was largely white and Christian. This changed with the passage of the British Nationality Act of 1948 which is the singular piece of legislation that laid the "legal foundation for the transformation of Britain into a multi-ethnic society" (Hansen, 1999). The next chapter

[14] A document was prepared by this name by the Colonial Secretary Arthur Creech Jones in 1950.

2.3- British Nationality Act: Transition from Empire to Nation State

The Second World War ended in 1945withUnited Kingdom suffering terrible loss of life and property. Soon after that, Canada passed its Citizenship Act in 1946, separating the Canadian citizenship from British subjecthood. The independence of other British colonies was imminent, and the United States of America had replaced the UK as the world's number one power. It was at this crucial juncture that the 1948 British Nationality Act was passed by the British Parliament - an Act that would literally change the face of the country forever.

As it entered the imperial age Britain did not alter the feudal idea that everything within the realm of the Lord belonged to the Lord. Hansen (1999) states that the only precedent for such a conception was the Roman Empire, where citizenship recognized no borders within the empire[15]. The Old Commonwealth countries – Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Rhodesia - were viewed by the British elite with great affection[16] and were central to the foreign and economic policies of the country. The Canadian Citizenship Act was a "revolutionary departure for a country fully in the Commonwealth to define its own citizens in terms that differentiated them from all British subjects" (Walker 1962).This made a big dent in Britain's self-understanding and aspirations towards relations with the colonies, which, in the face of descending power, it hoped to develop as a Commonwealth, whereby it would assume a position of being first among equals.But the binding capacity of a common code could only be effective when applied to all members of the Commonwealth.

The Canadian initiative had the potential to encourage dominion nationalism[17] and it became incumbent upon Britain to come up with a new arrangement to safeguard its position. Mann (2012) claims that the situation was complicated as the English-speaking countries of the Old Commonwealth still regarded themselves as British and the charting out of their individual citizenship acts were illustrations of the bi-cultural nature of those countries. Nevertheless, in 1947, a Commonwealth Conference was held in London, where it was agreed that the member states would retain elements of

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[15]*Civis Romanus Sum*, meaning 'I am a Roman citizen' was a term used for free movement across the Roman Empire. British statesmen would often invoke *CivisBrittanicus Sum* in defence of the indivisibility of British subjecthood and also as a sentimental expression.

[16] As a lot of their residents had migrated from the UK and many people had their kith and kin living in those countries.

[17] And indeed, it did, because Australia passed the Nationality and Citizenship Act in 1948.

Commonwealth citizenship while being free to legislate for their own citizenship (Wilson and Clute 1963).

The empire that ruled over a quarter of the world's population, at this historical moment, legislated who it had dominion over, who belonged to the realm, who would be its full citizen – who would be *British*. The British Nationality Act was passed by the Parliament of United Kingdom in 1948 and came into effect from 1st January 1949. This was based on 6 categories of citizenship which, as Karatani (2003) states, were:

a) Citizenship of the UK and the (non-independent) colonies (CUKC)
b) Citizenship of the independent Commonwealth countries (CICC)
c) British subjects in Ireland
d) British subjects without citizenship[18]
e) British Protected Persons
f) Aliens (all those who did not come under a-e)

People falling under the first two categories were given identical rights.

> "Their status as British subjects allowed them freely to enter the United Kingdom, to secure employment immediately, and (in the case of CICCs), to naturalize without difficulty. British subjects in the colonies and Dominions were entitled to stand for parliament, to vote in elections, and to work for His Majesty's Government. The privileges of the colonial subjects were the most extensive; they were, in statute and in practice, British citizens." (Hansen, 1999, 79)

No sooner than the Act was passed, immigrants began to reach the shores of England. The first batch of 500 Jamaican immigrants arrived later in that same year on the colonial warship Empire Windrush, which had sailed to the Caribbean to drop soldiers. Neither the colonial officers at Jamaica, nor the port officials in England could stop them, owing to the right bestowed upon them earlier that year. Between 1948 and 1962, "over 500,000 new commonwealth immigrants (i.e. immigrants of colour) entered the United Kingdom. These individuals and their spouses and dependents that joined them in the 1960s and 1970s, constitute the bulk of United Kingdom's ethnic minorities" (Hansen, 1999, 68). Estimates state that there was a net intake of 472,000 Commonwealth citizens between 1954-1962.

[18] For old Dominions without citizenship laws

Despite granting the right to enter the UK to all people of the Commonwealth countries, when they exercised it, the political elites were taken aback. While both Labour and Conservative parties had cooperated in formulating the BNA, they were quick to distance themselves from it as the unforeseen levels of immigration began. The BNA was never intended to sanction mass coloured migration into the UK, in fact, its purpose was not migration at all. It was done with a completely different set of objectives. It was an idealistic piece of law that, in the light of the Canadian Citizenship Act, intended to ensure that no British subjects lost their status as such. It was directed towards the maintenance of the paternalistic relations with the old commonwealth. The then Lord Chancellor William Jowitt went as far as saying that the importance of the law was not material but symbolic, rather 'mystical'. "Politicians from all parts of the political spectrum entrenched in 1948 the right for over 600 million people to enter Britain at will; they expected but a handful of them to do so" (Hansen, 1999, 89). Due to its impact, it is counted as the foremost legislation when discussing modern day Britain's immigration laws.

That the large-scale immigration resulting from 1948 BNA was undesirable became known to the political dispensation as soon as it started. When 'Windrush' arrived with 500 Black people from Jamaica, the British Government was, in fact, surprised and George Isaacs, the then Minister of Labour, had remarked in Parliament that he hoped 'no encouragement will be given to others to follow their example'. Yet it took fourteen years for the British Parliament to even begin restricting immigration and in the meantime, the population of non-white people increased ten times. Katznelson (1973) divides the time between the passage of 1948 BNA and the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act (CIA) into two phases: the 1950s as the 'pre-political consensus' phase which culminated, in 1961-1962 into the phase of 'coherent politics of race'.

Immigration policy development in the UK depicts a "particular mixture of paternalism and guilt that describes the country's post-colonial hangover" (Koopmans and Statham, 2000). On one hand, in July 1949, the British "Cabinet discussed for the first time the possibility of limiting the 'time-honoured principle' that all British subjects have the right to enter and remain in the United Kingdom" (Hansen 1999); in February 1951, the cabinet set up a committee which came with a report titled 'Immigration of British Subjects into the United Kingdom: report by a Committee of

Ministers' which explored ways of controlling coloured migration; and in 1954, Churchill's Cabinet was deciding on drafting a bill to restrict immigration and place it before the parliament (Hansen 1999).

On the other, it was not very easy for Britain to make apparent its apprehensions regarding Commonwealth immigration due to its international posturing as being committed to multi-racialism. It took time to come up with the solution to the problem of how to lawfully differentiate between the Old (white) and New (coloured) Commonwealth, because free movement of the former was not unwelcomed at all. Both Conservatives and Labour shared their suspicion of coloured immigration but they had a reputation to live up to and higher ideals to behold as the imperial power, while they still could. Despite all sides of the political spectrum having the belief that some controls had to be put in place, in 1951, a ministerial committee recommended against it while stating "the United Kingdom had a special status as the mother country, and freedom to enter and remain in the United Kingdom at will is one of the main practical benefits enjoyed by British Subjects, as such" (as quoted in Hansen 1999). So critical was Britain's position in the world stage, that despite immigration mounting as a domestic problem, good relations with the Commonwealth countries had to be maintained. As late as 1958, a junior minister at the Home Office made the following speech:

> "This country is proud to be the centre of an inter-racial Commonwealth…which is the greatest assortment of peoples of all races, creeds, and colours the world has ever seen. As a result…we have always allowed any of the people in what was the Empire and is now the Commonwealth to come to this country and go as they please." (As quoted in Saggar 1992, 70)

As the second wave of decolonization and independence of new states in the Caribbean, Africa and Far East were underway by mid-1950s, the conservative government of Harold Macmillan was "pursuing a new phase in British foreign policy, attempting to move from a familiar imperial role to a new role based on the leadership of Commonwealth of independent and equal nations" (Saggar 1992). At this juncture, quite dramatically racial disturbances took place in Nottingham and Notting hill in 1958. This placed the immigration issue under the spotlight and gave the state much needed window of opportunity to alter its hitherto magnanimous stand.

As was discussed above, immigration was very much a contentious issue, but the foreign policy constraints of a devolving empire made it extremely difficult to deal with. Since the mid-1950s, a small number of Conservative backbenchers, Cyril Osborne and Norman Pannell chief among them, had started raising concerns about disease and criminality associated with immigrants which did not gain much traction within the house, but nevertheless became a talking point. "It is time someone spoke out for the white man in this country" (quoted in Foot 1965) Osborne said in Parliament in year 1958. Following the riots, politicians from all parties began to express that domestic policy needed to address issues of citizenship and immigration and to improve the relations between the white and already established immigrant communities – an idea that carried on for the next couple of decades.

In the past 70 years, immigrants and their identity – colour and the gaps in their integration - have been some of the most emotive subjects, due to their disruptive effect on a homogenous British national identity in the UK. It is then curious to note that at a point when the empire was devolving and the country had to make sense of their descent from power over a quarter of the earth, it was, albeit for a brief moment, these very immigrants who became a source of idealistic pride,

> "In a world in which restrictions on personal movement and immigration have increased we can still take pride in the fact that a man can say *CivisBritanicus Sum* whatever his colour may be, and we take pride in the fact that he wants and can come to the mother country" (Henry Hopkins at House of Commons in 1954, as quoted in Hansen, 2004)

BNA, the singular legislation responsible to completely alter the citizenry of the UK has had its share of criticism. Bevan (1986) has characterized it as misguided idealism, Hennessey (1992) called it legal expediency and Goulbourne (1991) claimed that the BNA was an attempt to restrain nationalism. It has been labelled from being excessively generous (Freeman 1979) to totally absurd (Roberts 1994). The immigrants who chose to come to the 'mother country', would soon become "symbolic of a time that the nation lost faith in itself and stopped believing in its essential greatness" (Malik, 1996, 185).

2.4- Early Migratory Experiences of the Sikhs

From a strictly legal point of view, it would not be exactly accurate to use the term Commonwealth 'immigrant' because the people who migrated from the

Commonwealth countries, were actually citizens exercising their rights of citizenship. So, while countries like Germany and France could flirt with the idea that their 'guest workers' would eventually return to their country of origin, it was absolutely clear that the Commonwealth migrants of the UK were there to stay. "That the vast majority of the UK's 'immigrants' were citizens, a legacy of the 1948 legislation, makes its postwar migration experience unique in Europe, if not the world" (Hansen 1999).

The BNA was passed shortly after the partition of British India and the independence of two nation-states, India and Pakistan. One of the worst affected areas of partition was Punjab and Sikhs were among the worst affected people. There was a small Sikh presence in the UK before 1948 that consisted mainly of Bhatra Sikh peddlers and soldiers who had stayed back after the World Wars. Some people from the Doaba region had also started coming in the 1930s. Singh and Tatla (2006) claim that the number of permanent Sikh settlers at this time would have been between 1000-2000. They say that the majority of them lived isolated lives and congregated on Sundays or special occasions at the Shepherd's Bush Gurudwara, which was set up in 1911.

As the requirement for labour increased in the postwar rebuilding years, it is likely that the Sikh residents in Britain began communicating to their kith and kin regarding employment opportunities. Helweg (1986) mentions that letters were sent home that informed about the abundant prospects to make money and described in vivid detail the modern way of life in England. These links were instrumental in encouraging thousands of Sikhs to leave Punjab, which was terribly affected by dislocation. It is also worth noting that Sikhs have always been a people keen to migrate and had established small but settled communities in many countries during the colonial times itself (see section 2.6).

The immigrants soon found jobs in factories where there was labour shortage due to the post-war economic boom. Apart from the help from family in the earliest days, some imperial links also proved useful for recruitment of Sikhs. For instance, the manager of Woolf Rubber Factory in Southall had served in a Sikh regiment and was enthusiastic to welcome Sikhs to work there (Marsh 1967). Soon some localities, due to the proliferation of industries, attracted huge migrant populations, Sikhs among them. Some of these distinct areas were West London, where the Heathrow airport

was the major job provider and continues till date to be one of the largest employers of Sikhs in the country. The East End of London with its rag trade and light manufacturing businesses and the Ford Motor Company in Dagenham; Gravesend where there were paper mills, rubber and cement works; textiles, steel and heavy manufacturing in Yorkshire; and iron foundries, heavy manufacturing, light engineering and transport in West midlands became areas of Sikh settlement (Singh and Tatla 2006).

Rose et al. (1969) suggest that in the 1950s and 1960s, about three quarters of Sikhs unskilled, manual, low-paid jobs, often working irregular hours or at night. Helweg (1986) says that Sikhs were perceived to be 'hard-working' and they "accepted jobs the English thought undignified…employers liked to hire them". Most of the earliest Sikh migrants never learnt English "*not because (they) didn't want, but because there was no time for anything except work*" (SMA39). They would communicate with their *gaffa* (boss) at work via a middleman called *batoo*. Very soon, a supply-chain network for Sikh workers was established that went all the way to Punjab and these *batoos* doubled as job-brokers as well as local landlords for the new migrants. The people who migrate, bring with them a whole range of cultural milieu with them and this period witnessed an emergence of bribery culture, a very intrinsic part of South Asian way of doing things. Intermediaries were paid a weekly cut or a one-off amount to land jobs and the system was eradicated by the help of trade unions (Duffiled, 1988).

2.4.1- Men's Experiences

While the BNA granted Commonwealth citizens the right to settle and work in Britain, there were unofficial controls on the ground. For a long time, the Indian government did not issue passports to ordinary people. Due to this many Sikhs travelled to Pakistan, changed their name, cut their hair and got passports made. Mr. Tarsem Singh Sandhu[19], in a discussion about why Sikhs had to cut their hair in the early days of migration to the UK confirmed the above assertion made by Singh and Tatla (2006) and said that:

> *"The exigencies of the job market in England was there but one of the main reason for the same was also to get a passport from Pakistan. People did not care for*

[19] Of the 1967 Wolverhampton Turban Campaign.

issues like legality. They just wanted to anyhow get to England. If you can find the historical data, you will see that in the earliest years, there were more immigrants from Pakistan as compared to India, which was why brown people started being called Paki. We might think we are different, but to a white man, we are all the same… Regarding the turban, it just became a thing in the villages of Punjab. As soon as anyone got their papers confirmed, lokki kes qatal karan chal pende si *(people would set out to get their hair cut).*" (SMA43)

This shows how pioneer migrants were willing to work around laws and make changes that are fundamental to their very being just so that they could migrate to make their lives better. Another factor that Mr. Sandhu's statement highlights is that assimilation was not unilaterally directed by the host society's norms and part of it was also due to the migrants' own agency. Singh and Tatla (2006) state that the men would come clean shaven from Punjab itself and would sometimes get to work immediately upon arrival. Mr. Sandhu and the two respondents below shed a new light on the hitherto understanding of the turban issue, opening it up to fresh enquiry:

"I didn't have kes *back then. It was cut in India itself. Almost all Sikhs worked in the foundries. It was tough life and work was very dirty. Iron used to make the place very hot, we would be covered in grime after work and had to bathe every single day. There used to be no showers in the houses back then. Some foundries had their own showers, but I had to go to a common bathing place in Grove Lane. It used to be so cold outside and would snow for months. One had to struggle to keep clean. Being clean shaven was practical and convenient. I grew back my* kes *after I retired from work."* (SMA30)

Image 2.1
Both the men quoted here carried, in their wallets, two photos of themselves. A younger, clean shaven one and an older one with *kes*. Both showed them voluntarily and very excitedly.

"No, I didn't cut my hair for work or anything, I had built my own business soon after coming here. I cut my hair for fashion. Because when I would look at my other mates, I felt I looked odd, it used to take me so long to tie the turban and get ready, and when I danced, I felt out of character. I would say now that I had a bit of a complex back then. We were a few boys from army background, and one day

we all cut our hair together. Once we'd done it, what could our parents say." (SMA35)

By the early 1950's, British economy was on a steady recovery path and demand for labour to work in foundries, textile mills and construction increased dramatically (Cairncross 1985). There was a steady flow of Commonwealth immigrants, Sikhs among them during these years. Most of the early migrants were single men, who returned home to marry, or relatives arranged for a bride to be sent to England. Life in the *vilayet*[20] was extremely tough, both in terms of work as well as the living conditions, with limited scope of recreation. Quoted below is the oral testimony of an early Sikh migrant. This experience can be generalized for a great proportion of early migrants and even the later generations, during interviews, have similar stories to tell about their fathers and grandfathers. In the BBC Radio 4 series based on the life stories of early Asians "Three Pounds in My Pocket", a number of stories tell a similar tale as below:

> "*I lived in a house with three rooms and 12 beds, and we were 24 of us staying there. The day shift people slept during the night and when they went to work, the night shift people slept during the day. We used the public shower to clean up and would spend some of our free time drinking in pubs and playing darts and cards. Everyone was just saving up…most to buy our own homes in this country and few to go back to India*." (SMA39)

The distinct Punjabi masculinity and machismo culture of Sikhs co-existed with a sense of alienation in the hostile work and living environment as well as the cultural unfamiliarity. At pubs every evening, the men would remember home and contrast the fields of Punjab with the severities of industrial life. In inebriated state, they would compose songs of issues that would concern them. Some examples from Shamsher (2002) are:

> "The factory awaits us like sultry sister-in-law
> She does not allow flirting without paying for overtime
> Brothers, extra pay packet is just like a forbidden kiss"

The following song would be for men who worked night shifts and had young wives,

> "The wife complains,
> Alone I am at night
> For all you care is Pounds,
> Those white currency notes

[20] Foreign country

While I tremble at night alone
During the freezing winter
With my youth wasting away
My man collects overtime wages
Oh What a cruel fate in England!"

Disillusioned with the harshness of life, few men went back to India:

> "*When I went to India to get married, I didn't come back.* Sava saal main othe rya *(I stayed there for 1.25 years), my first child was also born there but then the taunts started. People began saying things like why have you come back, why are you not going back, did you do something wrong in England…but I did not relent. I had no intention of coming back. The people, however, did not stop and even my in-laws began saying things like we got our daughter married to you so that she could see England,* te tu ethe-i pasar gaya ae *(now you are not moving from here)…so eventually I had to come back. My wife started working in a sewing factory, we had two more children. We saved up to buy our own house and moved out of my father and brother's place. Then the kids began to go to school and the question of returning to India for good just vanished into thin air. Life is good here; we have a lot of facilities, but I have always hated the weather. Ever since my retirement, I have been to India every year during the winters and stay there as long as I like, 3-4 months, 2-3 months.*" (SMA30)

The above experience is typical of a diasporic life. The meaning of home and belonging is always a dynamic process for the diaspora. According to Herbert (2012), "home is both 'lived' and 'imagined'" and is constituted through multiple relationships with people and places (Mallett 2004). Taylor (2014) has very effectively examined the pursuit of home within a diasporic British Indian Punjabi community. He says that feelings of comfort and estrangement can be felt concurrently for the same location. This accurately describes the diasporic Sikhs' feelings with respect to both the UK and India. Dr. Darshan Singh Tatla, one of the pioneers of Sikh studies and whose work is copiously quoted in this thesis, embodies this same feeling and spends half his year in Smethwick and other half in his village in Punjab.

2.4.2- Women's Experience

Migration research, with a few notable exceptions, has not paid enough attention to women's experiences. "The current share of women in world's population of international migrants is close to half" (Morrison et al. 2008), but there is a striking lack of gender analysis in migration literature, which focusses mostly on economic and labour market variables. Kofman et al. (2000) have argued that the few researches

that do focus on women's migration patterns and experiences, mainly do so by analyzing them as companions of men and not as separate individuals. They go on to say that such researches assume that women have similar experiences as men and women's agency is seldom explored. This thesis attempts to have a balanced presentation and analysis of the experiences of men and women.

An interview, with a woman who migrated with her family as a child, really depicts how sometimes women are, in fact, bereft of any individuality and agency:

> "*Why I didn't go to school, I really don't know, my parents would be able to answer that. I used to just help my mother with the household work. I didn't learn English, but have not faced any problem, because my husband or kids accompany me everywhere. I never went anywhere alone. I am happy and comfortable*." (SFA29).

However, with the passage of time, as Sikhs realized that they were here to stay, the objections to women gaining employment gradually gave way. Food and clothing industries were the biggest employers of Sikh women. Below is the testimony of an octogenarian woman, which gives a glimpse into the lives of early women migrants, who had to do hard domestic labour along with a regular job. When asked about her early life in England, all she could remember was how difficult it was to live without modern gadgets, later, the availability of which must have had transformational impact on her life. She also must have been economically exploited but seemed happy with the benefits she got after retiring:

> *"When we came here in 1959, there was nothing here. No fridge, no washing machine, nothing. We used to go to a public place to wash clothes. There used to be machines to dry clothes there only. Nobody had cars back then. There was no gas fire. We used coal fire. The first thing we bought was a fridge, then heater to make tea. But no washing machine for a very long time. Now we have everything, the council even puts free central heating for people who cannot afford. Old people get lots of benefits. Just imagine, back then, there was no liquid soap, we used a washing bar, like a* desi *soap. But now there is everything.*
>
> *I used to work in a tailoring factory and my husband worked as a weaver in a chair manufacturing factory. Earlier, we were not aware of any benefits, no woman was aware of the laws. We only knew we had to work, get our stamps and then pension. Now, our girls are educated and work in social services. They tell us about the law and how to do things. They even give benefits to the people who don't know about them"* (SFA38).

The latter part of her experience resonates with the following observation:

> “Asian women are the worst of all British workers. They are at the bottom of the heap. They come unprepared, easy victims to unscrupulous employers. They don’t know the language so their choice of jobs is limited to the worst and least skilled; they don’t know their rights and so can be intimidated, they don’t have much information about other, better-off workers so they can be paid poverty wages…neither their husbands and families, nor white trade unionists nor middle-class Asians are keen to help them.” (Wilson 1978)

Despite the exploitation, these opportunities gave Sikh women a new-found autonomy as the testimony below suggests:

> “It used to be amazing at the end of the week to be paid, to have money….at home, money meant food…land, but here, the shops were full of the most amazing commodities and…these things were within reach” (Ibid.)

The economic independence of women was viewed with a sense of resentment among men and has been recorded in folklore:

> “*ari ari ari*
> Waiting at the bus stop for bus no. 207
> Awaits the woman whose name is Kartari
> Say no word, brothers, for she is no ordinary woman
> Works at Heathrow
> Pockets a large pay packet
> As she befriends her gaffa.” (Tatla 2002)

While in the early days this would have been the case, most of the men that were interviewed by this researcher, whose wives must have worked, acknowledged that they both worked and saved up to buy a house, the most vital commodity at the time.

2.4.3- Experiencing Discrimination

Immigration from the both Caribbean and the Indian subcontinent was taking place but the primary axis of ‘other-ness’ was the Black identity. Most literature discussing Britain’s race politics and ethnic issues of this period, and of later decades as well, like Sooben (1990) and Saggar (1992) primarily focus on the Black communities. While there can be various reasons for it, including the fights that broke out between black immigrants and white men in Liverpool between 31st July and 2nd August 1948, 8-9 August 1949 (Spencer 1997) and the Notting Hill and Nottingham riots of 1958. Modood (1994) categorically explains why this has been disadvantageous to the cause of the Asian communities.

He explains that focusing on only one identity “obscures the cultural antipathy of Asians and therefore of the character of discrimination they suffer” (Modood 1994). It

falsely indicates that all the racial minorities have something in common and generalizes the Black experience to be that of others as well, bypassing the distinctive needs and concerns of Asians. He goes on to say that while the Blacks can take pride and mobilise around this identification, there is not much scope for Asians to have a sense of 'ethnic pride' to be able to rally around this identity. He asserts that "advocates of 'Black' have tried to impose it on Asians…with the result that the majority of Asians continue to reject it.

It is well known and well documented that racist sentiments began to rise as soon as mass immigration from Commonwealth countries began. Foot (1965) historicizes this racism and claims that it was the same social situation and elicited similar political response as when the Jewish immigration from Russia and Eastern Europe started in the beginning of the century, leading to the 1905 Aliens Act. This time, it was directed towards another set of migrants. 'No Blacks, no Dogs and no Irish' was a very common sign that could be seen throughout the West Midlands and London on properties for sale, rent or outside restaurants, pubs and places of public utility. Here, it was understood that despite not finding a mention, it was meant for the Asian communities as well. Mossman, the BBC journalist, while narrating a documentary film exposing racism said "so far in Britain, few things could have been so ill-prepared as immigration" (Woods, 2016).

The white working class was absolutely shocked with this 'influx' of coloured people. With all the apparatus of information dissemination, the state did nothing to prepare them for it, but as discussed above, they themselves were under the assumption that the BNA was just an idealistic legislation and did not expect the ensuing immigration. The robust economic logic of the situation, where workers were indeed required to work in the factories and rebuild cities, was lost on the working class people, who just believed that the immigrants were there to take their jobs, to enjoy welfare off this land and in some cases, they reckoned, to lower their wages. Brown (1995) makes a thorough analysis of the positive role of immigrant labour in the postwar economic boom in Britain, while also stating how on one hand, the capitalists benefitted from them but on the other did close to nothing to dispel the racist ideas that were rampant in the society.

Coloured people got only the toughest physical jobs irrespective of their qualification or talents. They were forced to live in cramped houses in poor neighborhoods because the landowners wouldn't rent to them for the fear of degrading their property. Only one of them shared:

> "*I was a very good athlete and volleyball player. I would defeat these English lads just like that, but they never supported my sport and I spent my life working in foundries. Who you are meeting now could have been a class A sportsman of this country*" (SMA39)

One of the striking aspects of the pioneer Sikh migrants was that most of them brushed off questions about being discriminated against or being unfairly treated, just as they would when asked the exact reason for their migration[21]. It is quite opposite of the amount of details they are willing to share about some of the episodes of their personal lives. Part of the reason could be old age and fading of memories. Their responses to questions regarding discrimination fell typically in one of the four patterns:

a) Denial- "There was no problem at all" was the most common response and they moved on to talk about something else or looked at the interviewer for the next question.
b) Familiarity- "We were all friends, blacks, whites and us", which is not unlikely given that people from all races worked together in factories.
c) Empathy- "How would you feel if someone came to your house?" Here, they admitted that there was casual racism like they got called out on the streets or didn't have access to all the places; but it was something that they understood, especially because in time, things changed for the better after the passage of Race Relations Acts.
d) Pride- "After this they never dared to do it again" was the response of two of the male respondents who claimed to have gotten into a physical fight with whites who tried to harass them at work.

[21] Most Sikhs were also unwilling to share the exact nature of circumstances that led them to migrate. They would just say, "*odder the halaat te tuhanu pata-i ae ki si*" (you must be aware of the circumstances that were prevalent back home at that time). Scholars of memory and forgetting could explore how some parts of the full story are obliterated from memory and all discourse.

These responses where from early migrants who chose to either not discuss discrimination or discuss it only in a way that it didn't make them come across as a victim opens new vistas in immigration psychology. For a proud people like the Sikhs, it must be vital for them to employ motivated forgetting and memory repression (Weiner 1968), which basically means that "the submergence in the unconscious of information or knowledge possessed, because of the danger hidden in that knowledge for the psychological equilibrium of the individual" (Rapaport 1946).

There is, however, another psychological perspective to this, that "religions are philosophies of life to help human beings choose their ways of living and open new frontiers of consciousness for them" (Pirta 2013). In this context, the high spiritedness, that the Sikhs are identified with can be attributed to the concept of *Charhdi Kala* (the art of ascension), an expression for the frame of mind that a Sikh must accept and practice[22]. It loosely means a positive, buoyant, and optimistic attitude towards life and the future:

> "The theory of *Charhdi Kala* teaches love, patience, tolerance, kindness, honesty, forgiveness and develops high moral standards in life. It also provides inner strength to fight the negative forces in life. The greatest boon of *Charhdi Kala* is that it makes us positive in life. We rejoice the loving, friendly, positive atmosphere of *Charhdi Kala* which helps to make us socially co-operative, educationally up-right and economically sound and hardworking." (Singh 2004)

Sikh elders speak very highly of the British people and are proud of the life that they have made out for themselves in this country.

> "*Earlier they used to hate us, but not anymore. They hated us because they would think that this is our country, where have these people come from, you know. But now, they help a lot. Let me tell you,* Gore *(the whites) help more than* Apne *(own people).* Apne irshya karde ne *(our own people are jealous of each other)*." (SFA38)

By 1961, as pressure to limit immigration mounted on the Conservative government, word was out in the immigrant communities that strict controls were going to be put in place. The number of migrants in 1961 and 1962 rose sharply as people began calling their family over in the fear that this was their only chance of reunion. However, while the new immigration act did curtail the rights of Commonwealth citizens to enter the UK, they did not outlaw family reunion, which remained a legal right to entry, and was the reason for higher than before immigration even after 1962.

[22] It is principle laid down in the *Sikh Rahit Maryada*, the Sikh code of conduct.

Table 2.1- Indian Immigration to the UK, 1955-1966

Year	Number
1955	5,800
1956	5,600
1957	6,600
1958	6,200
1959	2,950
1960	5,900
1961	23,750
1962	22,100
1963	17,498
1964	15,513
1965	18,815
1966	18,402

Source: E.J.B. Rose et al. (1969)

2.5 - 1962: The Beginning of Immigration Controls

By the end of the 1950s, organised opposition to immigration began sprouting at the grass-roots level across UK. The Birmingham Immigration Control Association emerged in 1960 and came into prominence in 1961 when they ran a campaign leading up to the presentation of a private members bill in the House of Commons seeking immigration control. Cyrill Osborne made this presentation and later that year, along with Pannell, confronted the Home Secretary regarding the same matter (Foot 1965). McKenzie and Silver (1968) claim that over four-fifths of all manual workers called for the government to introduce controls over black immigration. “Not only was a strong majority in favour of introducing control, the majority also attached a greater degree of importance to the issue than ever before” (Saggar 1992)

It was clear to discern the national mood by the second half of 1961. On the one hand the Conservative Party members were transmitting grass-roots level contentions up to the highest level of government, on the other, this domestic situation managed to magnify the level of immigration to an unprecedented level as families rushed to join their men or other family members. This reinforced the need for control. A Conservative Party conference in October 1961 wholeheartedly recommended a motion in favour of immigration controls with immediate effect. “Having concluded

that there remained no further political reasons for the *laissez-faire* immigration policy, the Conservative Home Secretary, R.A.B. Butler, introduced into the Queen's speech a commitment to bring in statutory controls on Commonwealth Immigration" (Saggar 1992).

The Labour Party, under Hugh Gaiskell, opposed this very firmly and stated that the move would "undermine his party's enduring commitment to socialist internationalism" (Deakin 1968). The most important aspect of the 1962 CIA was that it "reversed the formal equality embodied in the 1948 Act, differentiating between the rights of British and Commonwealth citizens" (Sales 2007). Free entry was made limited to only those who were born in the UK or had passports issued by the British embassy. The racial intention began to get clear and "formal rights thus started to move in line with the constructed identity of Britishness" (Ibid.). William Deedes, the Conservative MP involved in the passage of the CIA later wrote that "the restrictions were applied to coloured and white citizens…though everybody recognized that immigration from Canada, Australia and New Zealand formed no part of the problem" (quoted in Saggar 1992).

Through the 1962 CIA, Commonwealth entry to the UK became restricted to people who had employment vouchers issued by the Ministry of Labour, their direct dependents and students who were supposed to leave when their course ended. There were three categories of work vouchers: "A for those with jobs in Britain; B for those with skills; and C for unskilled workers looking for work" (Sales 2007). The number of C vouchers was kept limited as it was expected to bring maximum 'coloureds' in Britain. Additionally, the Act gave immigration officers the power to question and/or turn back the would-be immigrants. However, once accepted, there were no internal controls and it was a route to permanent settlement.

2.6 - Populism Commences: Peter Griffiths in Smethwick, 1964

Smethwick, an industrial town that first came into prominence in late 18th century with the setting up of the steam engine factory by James Watt, was a hub of iron and steel smelting and heavy equipment factories. In the post-war period, a large number of Commonwealth immigrants, particularly Sikhs arrived here for work. At the time, many factories were shutting down and the town was facing a housing shortage. It

was at this point in time in 1964, that Peter Griffiths of the Conservative party launched the first well known populist campaign in UK.

Smethwick was represented by the Labour party's Peter Gordon Walker five times since 1945. He had started living in London as he was also member of the Shadow Cabinet, while race relations plummeted, and housing problems began to soar in Smethwick. At such a time, Griffith's slogan "if you want a nigger for a neighbour, vote labour" and the fact that Walker was increasingly absent from his constituency that needed his attention, brought electoral victory to Griffiths. It also helped that Walker had opposed the 1962 CIA. Griffiths had sneered at his labour rival, "How easy to support uncontrolled immigration when one lives in a garden suburb". After his defeat, as Walker walked out of the town hall, Tory supporters shouted at him, "take your niggers away". This was the first successfully conducted litmus test for populism, where strong sentiments towards complex problems of deindustrialization and housing shortage were diverted towards securing a victory for a candidate, who had no real solutions for these problems, but a diversionary tactic of anti-immigration to bring him electoral benefit. Immigrants provided as the perfect 'other' to direct the dissatisfaction of the majority population towards and win an election, without solving real problems.

Although immigration was a concern for many politicians, this blatant show of racism shocked the entire country. Newly elected Labour Prime Minister Harold Wilson infamously declared that Griffiths would be treated as a 'parliamentary leper' (Saggar 1992), drawing flak from all sides. This election put Smethwick under so much limelight that, on his trip to England, Malcolm X, American black rights activist, came to visit this town. His visit was not marked by much fanfare or uproar but the then Sikh leader of Indian Workers Association (GB), Avtar Singh Johal, organised a gathering with him and took him around Smethwick. Johal said that it was an act of linking the racism they were facing to the civil rights movement in the United States.

2.7 - The 'Liberal Hour'- Beginning of Anti-Discrimination Legislation

The passage of 1962 CIA vindicated the racial biases of the British people. Even though the Labour had opposed it, when they won the general elections in 1964 by a weak margin, they did not repeal the 1962 CIA, signaling "a convergence of the Conservative and Liberal Parties in favour of immigration control" (Sales 2007).

Griffiths' successful campaign had made it clear that immigration was an electoral liability and Labour had to shift its policy agenda towards improving 'race relations'. Labour party's 'no control' policy had to be altered after the Smethwick result and the party needed to give cognizance to its support base, that largely consisted of workers, who were the most vocal opponents of immigration. Katznelson (1973) argued that from the time of passage of the 1962 CIA to the narrow election victory of Labour, the politics of race attained a coherence as in the parties were able to articulate their position on the matter for the first time and decided to forge a new race consensus.

The Labour Party's election manifesto in 1964 had a promise to move forward with legal redressal against racial discrimination. This was a breakthrough because "the use of law in this area had been widely thought of as being unfeasible; and…the issue had not been considered sufficiently popular to warrant pioneering legislation" (Saggar 1992). The issue was brewing for some time, as Fenner Brockway, a leading Labour backbencher had been introducing a bill to outlaw racial discrimination since the 1950s and the Labour party annual conference was voting with two thirds majority to commit to this cause in its manifesto since 1962 (Ibid.). The fact that such laws were being passed at around the same time in the United States of America (USA) also provided a much-needed drive for the same in the UK. A new political consensus had developed in Britain, whereby immigration had to be controlled and integration of the existing people from different racial backgrounds had to be fostered and that the latter was contingent upon the former. The Home Secretary Roy Hattersley said that "without integration, limitation is inexcusable; without limitation, integration is impossible" (Holmes 1988). As soon as he took office, prime minister Harold Wilson began signaling that the government was serious regarding improving race relations. He appointed a new minister for Race Relations, Maurice Foley, who was sent on a nation-wide fact-finding tour to investigate what could be done in the matter. The Home Secretary, Frank Soskice, announced that the government was serious to honour its pledge made in the manifesto to "legislate against racial discrimination and incitement in public places" (Hindell 1965). The government seemed to be intent on the matter and expectations were high in anticipation of what was to come. The 'liberal hour' had begun.

The first anti-discrimination legislation, called the Race Relations Act (RRA) was passed in the UK in 1965. It outlawed discrimination based on 'colour, race, or ethnic

or national backgrounds' in 'places of public resort', that included hotels and restaurants but not private lodges or shops. It did not, however make discrimination a punishable offence and relied on voluntary change of behaviour of the people. In case of disputes, it was expected to be mutually settled under the aegis of Race Relations Board (RRB). Only in cases of 'incitement of racial hatred', people could be taken to court. The law was so weak that the BBC headline on the very next day was "New UK Race Law Not Tough Enough".

The Act was criticized "for its 'softly,softly' approach towards the problem of discrimination" (Saggar 1992). In fact, the Act was altered in its earlier stages of drafting, whereby a proposal for criminal penalties for racial discrimination was changed to a conciliation-based approach. The RRB did not have the authority for investigation or intervention that would have made it effective and was just a platform for negotiations. A very pressing deficiency of the Act was that it was not applicable to important aspects of life like housing and employment. Some scholars like Banton (1985) claim that this act laid the foundation for enacting stronger laws in the future and that it was a big deal to bring Conservatives and Labour on the table to discuss racial discrimination as a problem and to debate for a solution. However, critics say that "the Act merely served to racialize British politics by placing emphasis on legislating *for* race relations rather than *against* racism" (Miles and Phizacklea 1984)

Shortly after passing a rather deficient RRA, the government published a White Paper titled *Immigration from the Commonwealth* which was dedicated to the two major issues of related to the matter – immigration and integration. For the latter, it recommended the establishment of the "National Committee of Commonwealth Immigrants (NCCI) to coordinate on a national basis, efforts directed towards the integration of Commonwealth immigrants into the community" (Saggar 1992). This was a very important policy intervention at the grass-roots level to develop good race relations with the help of local level bodied coordinated by the NCCI. The second and the less publicized aspect was the massive immigration controls that it suggested. The number of work vouchers were to be reduced from 20,000 to 8,000 per year and category C voucher was to be completely done away with (Ibid.). Through this white paper, Labour party made its new stance for immigration controls clear, only three years after it had vehemently opposed it.

Roy Jenkins was made the Labour Home Secretary in 1965. Shortly upon assuming charge, he made known his intention of focusing on building up on the 1962 RRA and to ban racial discrimination more widely. A few months into office, he made a speech to the NCCI whereby he pronounced his vision for an integrated multicultural society in Britain. He famously stated that "Integration is not a flattening process of assimilation, but rather as equal opportunity accompanied by cultural diversity, in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance" (as quoted in Sales 2007). This challenged the traditional view of integration – assimilation – which was the disappearance of cultural difference and complete embodiment of the majority (here white Christian) culture by the minority population. Jenkins' vision placed a big challenge for the policy makers to device legal instruments that would directly or indirectly aid in preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of the immigrant communities. According to many critics, this is the most significant legacy and glorious moment 'the liberal hour'.

Even as the UK was taking steps towards a new consensus of limiting immigration and deepening integration, and in a way moving away from its imperial past, the East African crisis began to unfold. Gujaratis and Sikhs were among the largest Asian communities that had settled in the East African British colonies of Uganda, Tanganyika and Kenya. As these colonies gained independence, they began *Africanization* of their countries, which basically meant getting rid of all colonial vestiges, including the non-black people who had directly or indirectly become a part of their society due to the British empire. Kenya gained independence in 1963 and in 1965, it announced that all Asians living there should either take up Kenyan citizenship or leave. The Kenyan Asians had British passports with lifetime permit to live in Kenya but when a time to choose one arrived, they decided to come to the 'mother country' as they still had the right to do so, even under the 1962 CIA (Mattausch 1998). The UK was reluctant to take in so many of them and requested India to take some of these people in but apart from the very wealthy and the very old, not many people exercised that option. 1968 was a particularly turbulent year in many ways and also marked the beginning of the end of the 'liberal hour'.

2.8 - 1968: 'Rivers of Blood'

> *"When a rocket goes into the sky, the stars burst out. This time they are not going to fall to the ground, they are going to stay up there"* (Powell 1968)

On 20th April, 1968, Conservative MP from Wolverhampton constituency Enoch Powell, the Shadow Secretary of State for Defence, made his (in)famous speech in Birmingham. This speech, popularly known as the 'Rivers of Blood' speech, is regarded as the most racially incendiary speech in post-war United Kingdom. The then leader of the Conservative Party, Edward Heath, dismissed Powell from the shadow cabinet on the very next day. This gave rise to spontaneous mass movements across Britain. Overnight Powell's popularity soared, and he received over 100,000 letters (Whipple 2009) in support of his thoughts. Although his party took a firm stand against Powell, the Conservatives greatly benefitted and won office in the next general elections. This speech marks a watershed moment in British history of immigration and race relations. The speech has all the elements of classic populism. Powell's dismissal made him a martyr and a cult figure in the eyes of his followers, which, for a populist could be the best next best thing to winning. Powell was known to be an anti-immigration politician but his verbal discharge, first in Walsall[23] and then in Birmingham, in 1968 was a culmination of a number of incidents that happened concurrently or in short succession to each other.

Powell made his first visit to the United States in 1967, at the peak of the civil rights movement. City after city in the US was marred by racial tensions and often violence. Upon his return, Powell told a journalist that "integration of races of totally disparate origins and culture is one of the great myths of our time" (quoted in Hirsch 2018). On April 4th, 1968, Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in Tennessee. Riots broke out in dozens of American cities where thousands were injured and a number of people killed. Sixteen days after the death of King, Powell made this speech, where he announced – "that tragic and intractable phenomenon which we watch with horror on the other side of the Atlantic...is coming upon us here by our own volition and our own neglect" (Powell 1968). This comparison of the British immigrant situation with the American civil rights movement was quite successful in stirring fear in the minds of people.

[23] Similar speech was made shortly before the 'Rivers of Blood' at Walsall, another West Midlands city. The 'Rivers of Blood' was made in Birmingham.

Another issue that coincided with this period was the expulsion of Asians from East Africa and their arrival in Britain. Throughout the 1950's, the annual influx of Irish immigrants far exceeded that from the Commonwealth. Earlier, the British did harbour strong aversion to Irish immigrants; their rights were also seriously limited as compared to the Commonwealth immigrants, who entered the UK as full citizens. However, with the rise in the latter, the entire premise of 'insider and outsider' changed and the nodal point or the dominant signifier became that of race. When the East African Asians, equipped with their passports issued by Her Majesty, began to arrive in Britain, the populace of UK was left shocked and angry. The government also tried to control this movement at the source, but to no avail. The Asian people had British passports and thus, all rights, under the Immigration Act of 1962, to enter Britain, lest they were to be rendered stateless. Even though they were state subjects of the UK, they faced terrible ordeals in their bid to reach the country, impediments that no white person would ever have to face. With their coming in, the general anti-immigrant discourse gained a sense of urgency. Phrases like 'the sheer weight of numbers', to 'keep the flow within limits', 'flood of immigrants' and 'the necessity to control the tide' and similar metaphors that summoned up images of chaos, disorder, and the loss of control (Lynn Doty). The discourse around proliferation of crimes and disease spread by the immigrants was also on the rise.

The third critical factor that moved Powell to make his speech was the progress of Race Relations Bill in 1968. The Act that had been passed in 1965 was quite limited in its approach and hence it was amended to include the outlawing of racial discrimination in housing, employment and public services in addition to the provisions made in the earlier act. It also established the Commission for Racial Equality which had the twin mandate of promoting racial equality and enforcing laws against discrimination (Saggar 1992). At Walsall, Powell argued that the Bill was a measure to undermine the British liberty as "the opposite to equal treatment of all persons within the realm". In effect, Powell wanted the native British to retain their right to discriminate, as to not be able to discriminate would be an infringement on their personal liberty and the logic of free market. He attacked the bill in his Birmingham speech, by calling it 'the very pabulum' needed for letting 'dangerous and divisive elements' to flourish". The stars that burst out from Powell's rocket-

speech are still lingering in the British sky as his legacy lives on among the leading anti-immigrationists in the country, who are not few in number.

2.9 - The Trigger: Transport and Turbans

Reeves (1989) has made an in-depth study on Wolverhampton and noted the role that the Sikh turban campaign played in prompting Powell to make his speech. Brooke (2007) comments that the Sikh bus drivers issue dominated the immigration debates to an unprecedented degree and that "ignoring Frank Reeves study of Race and Borough Politics in Wolverhampton, historians have only made passing reference to the Sikhs". This vindicates what Singh and Tatla (2006) have said that the role of Sikhs in the British society is much more pervasive than is often acknowledged.

There is a great deal of inertia when it comes to bringing about paradigm shifts in the political discourse and changing the status quo on a large scale. It always takes a trigger to shake this political inertia. Taking example of the Second World War, although tensions between the then powers were at near breaking point, it was the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand of the Austro-Hungarian Empire that is attributed to have triggered the War. Similarly, when it comes to Powell, The entire milieu around him was rife with issues of race that were working in tandem to bring him to a point to make the fiery Speech in Birmingham but the thing that triggered him to finally do it was the Sikh turban campaign in his own constituency, Wolverhampton.

Like Smethwick, Wolverhampton was also a hub of post-war Commonwealth immigration. A large proportion of Immigrants from India were followers of Sikhism, a religion in which, one of the essential elements is that they never cut their natural hair and wear it in the form of a turban. In the early decades of their migration, many Sikhs had to cut their hair in order to assimilate and not to cause impediments to getting jobs. Field study with some such Sikhs reveal that the pain that they felt while getting their hair cut was like being amputated. Turbans are the very basis and essence of 'Sikhness' and there is no greater dishonour for a Sikh than to cut their hair. They were a recognised martial race during the British *Raj* and have fought both World Wars in large numbers, without helmets. So, having to cut their hair to assimilate and secure employment was something that could not go unchallenged for long, especially after the legal recourse provided by the RRAs. By the 1960's, a number of turban

campaigns were organised in factory level and Sikhs had started to win the right to wear the turban.

Giani Sunder Singh Sagar, commonly known as Giani ji, a Sikh bus-garage worker from Manchester, applied for the post of conductor with the Manchester City Council's transport department in 1959. The application was rejected on the grounds that his turban violated the dress code of the company. He offered to wear a blue turban with the badge of the transport committee but that too was turned down. Involving the local Gurudwara, Sagar launched a campaign which took almost seven years and four full council debates to be resolved. In October 1966, when the council finally decided to allow the wearing of turbans, Sagar had crossed the recruitment age for busmen, but the victory set a precedent for others to follow (Beetham 1970).

In August 1967, Tarsem Singh Sandhu, a bus driver with Wolverhampton Council, who had been employed as a clean-shaven Sikh, returned from sick leave wearing a turban. After one round around the city wearing the turban, he was sacked from the job for violating the code of conduct. Like Sagar, he also started a campaign which spread like wildfire and involved local, national and international political actors. Enoch Powell and the Labour party were on one side and the IWA (Indian Workers' Association) and the SAD (Shiromani Akali Dal) on the other. The local opinion was divided with some newspapers claiming that the Sikhs should realise that this is not India but England (Beetham 1970). After a couple of protest marches, a 66-years old ex-soldier from East Africa, Sohan Singh Jolly, declared to immolate himself on 13th April 1969 if the transport authorities do not change their stance against the turban. This led to the involvement of the then Indian High Commissioner, Shanti Sarup Dhawan, who met the transport authorities and explained to them about wider ramifications if a suicide was committed. The mayor of Wolverhampton called this situation a blackmail but changed their rules regarding the turban on 9th April 1969, mentioning that they were 'forced to have regard to wider implications'. The Rivers of Blood Speech was made in the thick of this protest.

Powell had been deputed in India in the 1940s and though he really liked India, there was one thing that he had noted - India was a country with many communities and that was a serious impediment in it becoming a united concrete nation. His biographer has also noted that India had made an enormous impression on him. He

believed that it was easier to integrate the West Indian Immigrants as compared to Indians and thus viewed Indian immigration with greater caution. Powell had attacked Indian communalism in his 1946 India report as well and being concerned about national homogeneity and unity, he was aware of the implications that Indians in very large number could pose in Britain (Brooke, 2007). For the Sikhs, the turban campaigns were a movement for right to religious expression and equality, as a full citizen of a liberal democratic state; but for Powell, it was a manifestation of communalism, which he had noted in India two decades ago, in his own country. It was something that he could not stand by and watch, so he raised the issue of Sikh protests for the turban in both his speeches, at Walsall as well as in Birmingham. He concluded the latter speech with, "...to see and not to speak, would be the great betrayal".

2.10 - Racialization of Immigration Policy and Expansion of Race Relations Act

Due to the ineffectiveness of the 1962 CIA in combatting influx of East African Asians, and the mass support that was generated by Powell's speech, it became incumbent upon the government to introduce more measures to restrict coloured immigration. The racialization of immigration policy was formalized by the passage of 1968 CIA, which introduced the concept of 'partiality' in British immigration discourse. According to this Act, the right of abode in Britain was limited to:

> "a) Those entitled to citizenship through birth, adoption, naturalization or registration, or with a parent or grandparent entitled to citizenship, or; b) Citizens of Britain and its colonies who had settled in Britain and resided there for five years" (Sales 2007)

While a large number of people settled in the Old Commonwealth had British parents of Grandparents, it was unlikely for citizens from the New Commonwealth. Thus preference of white immigration was explicitly institutionalized in the British immigration policy. While there was considerable opposition to the 1962 CIA from non-Conservative circles, this time it was the Labour government that had passed this law and "virtually all leading politicians now subscribed to the view that the denial of entry rights to British nationals was a necessary and desirable thing to do" (Saggar 1992).

Largely riding on controversies over immigration, the Conservative Party came back to power in 1970, with the aim to end primary migration from the (New) Commonwealth and "bury the immigration issue" (Ibid.). The 1971 Immigration Act[24] "extended the distinction between patrials and non-patrials introduced in 1968, placing the latter on virtually the same footing as aliens" (Paul, 1997)[25]. Now, people from the New Commonwealth could only enter if they possessed work permit for a particular job, and entry did not automatically give the right to settlement (Fekete 1997) reducing their status to that of contractual labour. Despite the dependence on Commonwealth labour, particularly in health and education sectors, the 1971 Act, that came into force on the day UK joined the Common European Market, marked the shift towards the policy of recruiting labour from Europe (Sales 2007). It is ironical that 35 years later, European immigration became the epicenter of another upheaval in the UK - Brexit.

Every time the British politicians would change the definition of who could be British and who would be excluded from it, a new challenge seemed to be around the corner, forcing them to reconsider or make exceptions. This time, it was another East African country, Uganda, where Idi Amin, the new dictator of the country, gave Asians settled there since colonial times only 90 days to leave. There was intense strife as their British passport no longer gave people the right to enter and settle in the UK. Essays in Twaddle (1975) give a detailed and various accounts of the experiences of Asians during this period, replete with madness at the embassy and struggle to get vouchers, all the while confused as to why they even needed to undergo the trouble when they were British subjects all through. The testimony below highlights how many people of Indian, rather various origins, have known no other sovereign but the British:

> "*I was born in India under British rule. My parents took me to Africa when I was one and from there, we came here. We were under the same government there as well as here and came on our own right. We didn't come through any 'under the table' channel. I was born in 1934 and the British left India in 1947.* 'Assi charon passey British hi rae' *(from whichever vantage point you look we have always been British)*" (SFA37).

Over 27,000 East African Asians came to the UK (Mattausch 1998). Similar incident happened with a slightly smaller number of Asians from Malawi in 1976. In all the

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[24] Note that the word Commonwealth was dropped from the name of the new Act.

[25] Whitewashing British:Race and Citizenship in the Postwar Era (Paul, K), Ithaca, Cornell University Press

cases, UK ultimately had to relent and let a large number of people come in, lest they leave all those holders of Imperial British passports stateless.

Labour returned to office in 1974 and worked towards improving race relations as well as tightening immigration controls. Another RRA was passed in 1976 which was stronger, especially with respect to the powers given to the CRE. The most important new feature of this RRA was that it, for the first time recognized indirect discrimination along with direct discrimination. 'Direct' discrimination occurs when one person treats another person less favourably than others and does so on racial grounds[26]. Poulter (1986) states that in practice, this is hard to prove because the perpetrators invariably deny such blatant discrimination. For this reason, the 1976 RRA included 'indirect' discrimination[27] which included subtle discrimination, involving rules and practices which seem neutral and applicable to all people, but upon close examination, ended up discriminating against particular people. While the immigration control was stronger and more effective, the enforcement of RRA was relatively weak. In that regard, what Jones (1973) said seems quite accurate that "it is easier to be rigorous in controlling immigration since this negative policy is more tangible than the aim of promoting 'good race relations". This overall racist milieu had its implications on the society.

Mid 1960s onwards, the British economy was on a decline and unemployment was on the rise (Pemberton 2004). This gave rise to discontents among the working-class people and invariably gave a boost to extreme right wing racist and anti-immigrant party, National Front (NF). Many urban industrial towns, most of which also housed sizeable Sikh population faced a number of riots in this period. Gangs of men with white supremacist ideas raved the streets in these areas, occasionally confronting Black or Asian groups. In 1976, an eighteen years old engineering student Gurdip Singh Chaggar, a Sikh, was stabbed to death in Southall, following which, there was a protracted social movement in the area. Anti-Nazi league and Southall Youth movement were white and minority organizations respectively that came up against the NF. Riots shook Southall again in 1979 and this time, an anti-racism protestor Blair Peach, a New Zealand national, was killed in mob violence. While there was some degree of conviction in the case of Chugger, nobody was implicated for the

[26] Race Relations Act 1976, Section 1(a)
[27] Race Relations Act 1976, Section 1(b)

death of Peach. In 1981, Asians, mostly Sikhs, burnt down the Hambrough Tavern in Southall where an Oi! gig was happening and there was a large gathering of skinheads[28]. Riots also took place in Handsworth[29] in 1981 and 1985. The racist sub-culture that was brewing had started to find violent public expression. This "gradually transformed the local politics of these authorities as they attempted to implement a more effective equality of opportunity that targeted service delivery, symbolic recognition of difference and, above all, more representative local authority employment at a time when unemployment was rising" (Solomos and Singh 1990).

2.11- The Thatcher Era

While most of the Conservative dispensation went against Enoch Powell after his speech, Margaret Thatcher never made any bones about how much she admired his contribution to the country. In the run up to her election, Thatcher had infamously said that the British people were afraid of being 'swamped' by people of an alien culture. Remember Britain is a country known for its gentle manners and words such as the above were considered in really bad taste, but Thatcher had to out-do her extreme right-wing opponents to consolidate her votes, so she did (Nelson 2014). It was not too much of a surprise that once in power, Thatcher would ensure that race would be high on her political agenda and that there would be major shifts in immigration policy.

In 1981, a new BNA was passed that reconstructed the basis of British citizenship. It abolished the status of CUKC which was established in the 1948 BNA and established three tiers of citizenship. First were the 'British Citizens' who had the right to abode, second were the 'Citizens of Dependent Territories', who had citizenship in an existing dependency and third were 'British Overseas Citizens', who had no right of abode (Sales 2007). This act removed the *ius soli* citizenship (automatic right to citizenship to whoever was born in the UK), and confined it to those whose parents were living in the UK and not subject to immigration restrictions (JCWI 2006). Greater scrutiny for marriages were introduced as women lost the

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[28] Oi! is an English working-class sub-culture music genre that evolved in London. This is not particularly a Nazi or skinhead genre but attracts such audiences. After the Chugger and Peach murders, Southall had a very racially sensitive atmosphere. Asians alleged that the crowd, while making their way towards the Tavern broke down some Asian-owned shop windows and misbehaved with women, which was why they all gathered and the violence ensued.

[29] A predominantly minority neighbourhood in Birmingham

automatic right to British citizenship upon marriage, while men still retained it, till it was removed for both sexes on grounds of sexual discrimination (Sales 2007). As was discovered during the field visit for this research, a lot of spouses were being brought in from 'back home' and to check that, the 'primary purpose' rule was introduced which empowered the immigration officer to refuse entry to a person whose main intent seemed to be immigration and the genuineness of the marriage was questionable. However, JCWI (1997) noted that the real targets of this law were coloured people and in one instance, 69% of husbands from the Indian subcontinent were refused entry in the year 1990 while Australian spouses could enter freely. The 'primary purpose' rule was abolished in 1997.

Despite all the controls so far, family reunion had remained an unconditional right, that ensured a steady stream of coloured immigrants. 1988 Immigration Act withdrew this clause and introduced new rules for swift deportation. Visa requirements were introduced for the first time for Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nigeria and Ghana in 1986 (Solomos 2003). The racialization of British Immigration Policy was complete. Henceforth, the immigration from the New Commonwealth happened only in select sectors, based on employment, with growing restriction on rights to residence and access to state benefits (Sales 2007).

By the end of the Thatcher era, there had been an overhaul in the immigration policy and most imperial era considerations were gradually eliminated. However, the people who had already entered, along with their families, now formed a sizeable minority and owing to the rules anti-discrimination Race Relations Acts, they stopped taking discrimination like their earlier counterparts. Empowered by laws that favoured multiculturalism, they asserted their rights to express their identity and be accepted as a full member of British society, even if that involved making special concessions or arrangements for them, as in case of Sikhs.

2.12- "I was like stone in their eyes": Sikhs and British Multiculturalism

The physical manifestation, rather embodiment of the articles of their faith sets Sikhs apart from others. The very genesis of *Khalsa* (the pure one) at a time of religious persecution happened, so that a person who is 'pure' would not shun his/her religion when faced with the enemy. The value associated with it and the lifelong efforts taken to maintain the articles of faith strengthen the conviction of Sikhs and imparts a

purpose to their life, which is beyond the material[30]. In a way, it was to make a Sikh stand out in the crowd, as someone who will fight against injustice meted out to them as well as others. However, the expression of their identity and embodiment of faith and its values was not guaranteed by the western, liberal, democratic state, in which accommodation or difference was a new phenomenon.

"Wherever Sikhs have settled in large numbers, sooner or later one demand has always come to the fore: the right to wear a turban" (Singh and Tatla 2006). They have always been "*like stone in the eyes*"[31] of anti-multiculturalists like Brian Barry (1999), who argued that "Sikhs, whose relatively small overall numbers in Britain is offset by their concentration in a small number of parliamentary constituencies, have been remarkably successful at playing this game" of getting special concessions for themselves. According to him, Sikhs have become an exemplary case of special-interest group, that have always figured out a way around the general rule making. Singh and Tatla (2006) say that "Drawing on the dilemmas for public authorities raised by the Sikh dress code that requires the wearing of turbans, kirpans and beards, multiculturalists have been at pains to argue for a broader vision of liberal democracy, one which is capable of accommodating religious and cultural diversity". Section 2.8 discussed the first two big turban campaigns which were held in the UK, where bus drivers in Manchester and Wolverhampton won the right to wear the turban to work. However, that did not ensure that Sikhs everywhere else became free from discrimination.

To the English people, the early Sikhs who arrived appeared "strange" and "Barbaric" (Aurora 1967) and were refused housing and employment because of their looks. Sikhs soon realised that they had to dispense with of the most essential part of their identity, their hair, in order to have any degree of success in the new country:

> "those who migrated here in the 1950s found that they could only secure a job if they were clean shaven. This was rarely openly demanded by an employer, but Sikhs soon learnt that they might present themselves one day wearing a turban and be refused, only to be accepted the next day if they applied clean shaven.

[30] Miri piri is the Sikh concept of life, where the temporal (miri) and the spiritual (piri) co-exist.

[31] During the interview being conducted in English, SMA32 said that because of his rebellious attitude for standing up for his and other's rights at his workplace, he was 'like stone in the eyes' of his bosses, which is direct translation of a hindi/Punjabi proverb – "*Aankh mein kirkiri hona*" – which means being an 'irritant'. It is very interesting to see how he chose to best express himself via this proverb translated in English. This could be generalised when it came to the Sikhs, as they started standing up for their rights in a variety of areas.

> This message was quickly passed on to the relatives who followed" (Beetham 1970,11)

A Labour MP from one of the West Midlands constituency, John Stonehouse had indicated that Sikhs could be integrated into the British society only upon the condition that they abandon their turbans. Enoch Powell from the other end of the political spectrum also echoed the same views, proving once again that when it came immigration and integration, the commonsense across party-lines was similar (Bidwell 1976). Very few Sikhs could manage to keep their turbans and young boys wearing them to school would be bullied for it. Taylor (1976), in a survey of Sikh youth in Newcastle conducted in 1968-69 found that only four out of twenty-six men wore the turban. Khushwant Singh noted that:

> "…whenever Sikhs are scattered among other people, the attachment to tradition declines and the rate of apostasy rises. This is most evident in the Sikh communities in foreign lands. In the United States, Canada and England the number of *keshdhari* Sikhs is extremely small and ever-diminishing" (Singh 1966, 304)

This view of Singh is not accurate because Sikhs who have cut their hair at any point in their lives are usually acutely conscious of their action and its religious implications and many are filled with a sense of shame that is hard to overcome. "Caught in the conflict between religious identity and economic interest, they submitted to the material need, but only at the cost of suffering a sense of spiritual degradation" (Aurora 1967). In fact, the aorta of one of the biggest turban campaigns in the UK was precisely this feeling.

In the very beginning of his interview, Tarsem Singh Sandhu divulged hitherto unrecorded personal details, the prelude to his campaign in Wolverhampton:

> "*When I reached here in 1962, my* mama *and* chacha *(uncles) caught hold of me and cut my hair. In those days, the barbers here would refuse to touch Sikh's uncut hair, so the friends or family "*kainchi la dendese*"(would use the scissors for the first time), cut the hair and then the barbers would trim it properly. It was a trend and happened with everyone. You know, people had taken loans, sold their family gold or lands to reach England and the main concern was just to get a job as soon as they could. Boys would sulk for a few days but then others would cheer them up, "why do you keep sitting in your room, come let's have a beer" and gradually, we would mix with everyone else. However, me and my family's roots were very deep into Sikhi. I could not take the cutting of my hair lightly but in case of my father, it was worse. He just lost his self-confidence. When he was leaving from India, my father's* chacha *had told him, "*kaka tu bahar challeya, te jake vaal na katayin. Je tu

> vaal kataye tetu tang hovega*" (son, you are going abroad, but don't get your hair cut. If you do, you will be disturbed). My father could not get this out of his head, he would keep thinking, "*main vaal kataye, main tang aan*" (I cut my hair, I am disturbed). He worked in the Goodyear tyre company and there he met a like-minded man, who didn't tie the turban but kept is hair tied in a ponytail and had a beard like some English men did. He also longed to wear his turban. They both got in touch with their local MP and somehow got permission to wear their turban from their employers, who thereafter refused to hire any more Sikhs. Now they began thinking that "the two of us have tied the* pagh *(turban), but what about the others. Let us figure out a way that other Sikh men who want, can also wear the turban". At that time, the bus department was the biggest employer of Sikh men in Wolverhampton and all were clean shaven. That's how my father came up with the idea that if we could make one of our boys wear the turban in the transport department…maybe a movement could start. The two of them went around for about a month, looking for someone who would be prepared to take on the issue, but they didn't find anyone. One day, they were sitting in the house and discussing the matter and that's when I told them, "*lokki ken ge - lokkan de munde phasa-te, te apna ghar baitha ae*" (people will say that you got another's son caught up in the matter whereas your own son is comfortably sitting in the house". They said, "what you are saying is right, but you yourself will have to answer for this". I was just an adventurous lad, switching from one job to the next and had also set up a business. In 1967, I applied for a position in the bus department and got accepted, worked for three months there, took a week-long sick leave and when that got over, arrived on the job with my* pagh*."* (SMA43)

The rest, as they say, is history and is briefly discussed in section 2.8 here. Reeves (1989) and Beetham (1970) give very detailed analysis and account of this episode in British history, which also became a primary trigger for Powell's racist explosion in 1968. What is interesting is that he quit the job some months after winning the right to wear the turban meaning that Mr. Sandhu took up this job just for this purpose. When he stood up, thousands of Sikhs all around UK, who were resigned to living with the guilt of having cut their hair found the courage to stand up for their right to expression of their identity in their own workplaces. "The obstinacy of various local authorities led many Sikhs to rededicate themselves to orthodox practice and several mass baptisms of adults occurred as a result" (Poulter 1986). For the Sikhs in Britain, the days of assimilation were over.

A sizeable proportion of East African Asians were Ramgarhia Sikhs[32]. This community had long experience of surviving successfully as a distinct religious minority under British colonial rule in Africa and was confident of its position as such. This also contributed in changing attitudes of Sikhs in Britain. By mid-1970s:

[32]Gujaratis being the largest East African community.

> "More men are growing their beards than before, and to be a Sikh is taking on greater pride. As people grow older and the community progresses through time, there is a resurgence of ethnic pride, and being a Punjabi Sikh Jat (*sic*) is taking on a higher meaning and greater significance for individuals and the society as a whole" (Helweg 1979,140)

Emboldened by the success of the turban campaigns in Manchester and Wolverhampton, an increase in their numbers as well as a new and better RRA (1976), community leaders were ready to move towards the demand for greater legal protection and to acquire rights that were enshrined by the law of the country that they were citizens of. The community soon faced another challenge in the form of the 1972 Road Safety Act.

Section 32 of this Act made it compulsory for all motorcyclists to wear a protective headgear. Sikh groups made representations to the Ministry of Transport, but they were not heard, and the Act came into force on 1 June 1973. The then Minister of Transport, Conservative John Peyton took the view that it would become difficult to enforce the rule if it did not uniformly apply to everyone. Moreover, there was majority support for the rule, particularly in view of the high numbers of serious head injuries recorded (Poulter 1986). This led to Sikhs deliberately flouting the new law and being convicted in large numbers. G.S.S. Sagar, the first man to start the turban campaign in Manchester in 1957 was active here too. He purchased a moped and drove around the city, being ticketed for non-compliance of the new law, paying fines and spending jail time as well[33]. He became iconic once again for his tireless agitation and was made the head of 'National Turban Action Committee', which was formed by Baldev Singh Chahal. Chahal himself decided to contest the 1974 general elections from Ealing, basing his campaign on this single issue. He had also been convicted for riding a motorcycle without helmet earlier and made his appeal on three grounds in the High Court:

> "Ministry of Transport had failed to consult adequately with Sikh groups; that the Minister had been remiss in not taking into account the public policy implications of the Race Relations Acts of 1965 and 1968; and that the Act was in contravention of 'of the guarantee of freedom of religion enshrined in the European Conventions on Human Rights'" (Singh and Tatla, 2006, 129)

His application was dismissed and the Chief Justice, Lord Widgery declared that:

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[33] His original moped was on display in the Manchester University library along with the pamphlets that he was distributing on his campaign trail.

> "No one is bound to ride a motorcycle. All that the law prescribes is that if you do ride a motorcycle, you must wear a crash helmet. The effect of the Regulation no doubt bears on the Sikh community in this respect because it means that they will often be prevented from riding a motorcycle, not because of English law but by the requirements of their religion" (as quoted in Poulter, 1986, 293)

Labour came to power in the 1974 general election, with Sidney Bidwell as the MP from Ealing, a constituency with substantial Sikh population[34]. In 1975, he presented a private member's bill, which was discussed by a Standing Committee and in the House of Lords. Five main issues were raised. First, lengthy discussions were had regarding the status of the turban in Sikh religion, whether it was truly a requirement or only a custom. Opinions shared among the members ranged from "absolutely no doubt whatsoever that the turban is an essential part of the Sikh religion" to "merely a custom, not one of the basic tenets as the *kirpan*" to "just another modern instance of the tendency of very small minorities to buoy up their status by establishing some privilege" (as quoted in Poulter 1986). The central issue of the debate came to tolerance and religious freedoms and parallels were drawn with existing rules like halal meat for Muslims. It was also noted that exemptions to motorcycle helmets for Sikhs was already in place in some countries like Singapore, Malaysia and Australia.

The second issue was whether right to religious issue was more important than equal treatment in the implementation of road safety promoting measures. This was the most difficult part of the debate because it brings the equality before law and religious rights in contravention to one another, presenting a classic dilemma that all multicultural societies face. The third concern was regarding others masquerading as Sikhs to abuse the law but was understood that this would not be difficult to discern.

The fourth point of discussion was the Anglo-Sikh military tradition whereby it was recalled how thousands of Sikh soldiers fought the two World Wars without safety helmets and continued to serve in the modern British Army without it too. One Lord Mowbray mentioned that "In our hour of need we did not press the matter of headgear on the Sikhs, it would be downright ignoble to press it now" (as quoted in Poulter 1986, 296). Lastly, it was acknowledged that after much struggles, Sikhs with turbans were beginning to gain acceptance among employers and this law would jeopardize

[34] The same place where Baldev Singh Chahal contested from. He lost his deposit, but his candidature and campaign furthered the debate.

their job prospects in many fields such as postal services. In 1976, the Motor-cycle Crash Helmets (Religious Exemption) Act inserted as a new sub-section into the Road Traffic Act 1972 declaring that the regulation "shall not apply to any follower of the Sikh religion while he is wearing the turban" (Road Safety Act, S 32 (2A)).

However, the creation of a specific exemption for turbaned Sikhs has made the relationship between the criminal law and civil liability unclear, raising the question whether a Sikh without helmet getting injured in an accident is eligible for full insurance coverage or not. This matter has been very contentious and remains un-resolved to this day. It also came to the fore some years later as Sikhs fought a protracted battle against the requirement of wearing crash helmets at construction sites. After years or deliberation, two detailed sections were added to the Employment Act 1989. An excerpt from that is:

> "Any requirement to wear a safety helmet which would, by virtue of any statutory provision or rule of law, be imposed on a Sikh who is on construction site shall not apply to him at any time when he is wearing a turban." (as quoted in Poulter, 1986, 320)

The 1976 RRA recognized and outlawed indirect discrimination for the first time. Sikhs have fought several legal battles using this law, but it first had to be established that Sikhs were a distinct race and could seek protection under the RRA. The iconic case in British race history *Mandla vs. Dowell Lee* provided the perfect opportunity for this discussion that eventually expanded the legal definition of 'racial' groups in Britain.

In 1978, Sewa Singh Mandla sought admission at the Park Grove School in Egdbaston for his son, Gurinder Singh Mandla. The Headmaster A.G. Dowell Lee refused to admit the student on the ground that his turban was against the school dress code. Mr. Mandla lodged a complaint with the CRE, which recognized that it was a matter of indirect discrimination and decided to support the matter through the means of law. In the first instance, the county court dismissed the complaint claiming that Sikhs did not constitute a 'racial group'. This started a long debate whereby the definition of 'ethnic', as it would mean in English law, was deliberated upon. It was at this time, that the unscientific nature of the concept of 'race' was also put on record.

'Racial group' in RRA was described as "a group of persons defined by reference to colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins" (RRA 1976, Section 3[1]). Lord Fraser of the House of Lords gave a very important speech while discussing this issue:

> "My Lords, I recognize that 'ethnic' conveys a flavor of race but it cannot have been used in the 1976 Act in a strict racial or biological sense. For one thing, it would be absurd to suppose that Parliament can have intended that membership of a particular racial group should depend on scientific proof that a person possessed the relevant distinctive biological characteristics (assuming that such characteristics exist). The practical difficulties of such proof would be prohibitive, and it is clear that Parliament must have used the word in some more popular sense. For another thing, the briefest glance at the evidence in this case is enough to show that, within the human race, there are very few, if any, distinctions which are scientifically recognized as racial" (as quoted in Poulter 1986, 303)

He then gave a detailed description of his understanding of the characteristics of 'ethnic' identity:

> "For a group to constitute as ethnic group in the sense of the 1976 Act, it must regard itself, and be regarded by others, as a distinct community by virtue of certain characteristics…(1) a long shared history, of which the group is conscious as distinguishing it from other groups, and the memory of which it keeps alive; (2) a cultural tradition of its own; (3) either a common geographical origin or descent from a small number of common ancestors; (4) a common language, not necessarily peculiar to the group; (5) a common literature peculiar to the group; (6) a common religion different from that of neighbouring groups or from the general group surrounding it; (7) being a minority or being an oppressed or a dominant group within a larger community" (as quoted in Poulter 1986, 303-304)

Lord Templeman had the following to say about Sikhs as constituting a distinct race:

> "The evidence shows that Sikhs satisfy these tests. They are more than a religious sect, they are almost a race and almost a nation…As a nation the Sikhs defeated the Moghuls and established a kingdom in the Punjab which they lost as a result of the first and second Sikh wars (sic); they fail to qualify as a separate nation…because their kingdom never achieved a sufficient degree of recognition or permanence. The Sikhs qualify as a group defined by ethnic origins because they constitute a separate and distinct community derived from the racial characteristics I have mentioned" (as quoted in Poulter, 1986, 307)

The headmaster in his appealed on the basis of equality, whereby same rule would apply to all pupil in the school. It was argued that the "school was seeking to minimize the external differences between boys of different races and social classes, to discourage the competitive fashions…, and to present a Christian image of the school to outsiders, including prospective parents" (Poulter, 1986). The headmaster's action was declared unlawful in 1983, by which time Gurinder had already completed

his secondary schooling but a very important point of principle had been established. By the time the case came to completion, on the home-front, the secessionist movement for a separate Sikh country was on the rise, which also might have had some part to play in the overall understanding of the public position of Sikhs. This case got resolved in favour of Sikhs at a very opportune time, because following the Operation Bluestar in 1984, many erstwhile *mona*[35] Sikhs began to grow their hair and keep their turban. A great number of young school-going boys were also made to keep their *kes*, who, owing to this case, could no longer be discriminated against in school admissions:

> "*We went to India in 1984 and when we returned after seeing what was going on in Punjab, my father decided that he and I will both grow our hair. I was in junior school. On my first day with a* pagh*, father brought me to school, he spotted another Sikh boy who was much older to me and told him to watch out for me. I hung out with the big boys as long as they didn't pass school. Nobody bullied me, but there were a lot of questions about it, which I was happy to answer*" (SMC13)

It needs to be understood here, that once a law is in place, not everyone becomes aware of it and begins following it immediately and when it comes to racial prejudices, sometimes people like to see how far they can push it. *Mandla vs. Dowell Lee* did not completely eliminate discrimination against Sikhs but it began a discourse. In 1981, *Commission of Racial Equality vs. Genture Restaurants Ltd*, the club did not allow entry to a prominent member of the Sikh community, Indarjit Singh, because of their 'no headgear' policy. In 1984, a similar case *Gurmeet Singh Kambo vs. Vaulkhard* took place in the northern county of Newcastle. In both cases the actions of the defendant were declared unlawful.

It is not only the turbans, but also the beards that have come under objection in certain workplaces, like confectionery factories. In *Singh vs. Rowntree Mackintosh Ltd*, a cream making factory and *Panesar vs. Nestle Co Ltd*, the industrial tribunal ruled that the concern for hygiene was prime and the interest of the public was best served by taking all precautions against contamination. They also noted that beard was not the only potential cause for infection, but the company was entitled to have regulations against any well recognized risk. This ruling was upheld by the Employment Appeal Tribunal and the Court of Appeal (Poulter 1986). Apart from the cases that have reached the court, there have been innumerable incidents of racism whereby without

[35] Clean shaven and hair trimmed

any reason, people have been refused employment[36] or their deserved job[37] or promotion. These cases prove that there are still limits to the exemptions that Sikhs have been granted and also depict that there is no overarching law yet that once and for all settled the debate. New challenges keep emerging – to Sikhs for their religious expression and to the state for its accommodation of difference.

2.13- The Era of Asylum and Managed Migration

In the 1980s, all over Europe, asylum applications started to increase, especially so, towards the end of the decade because of the fall in the Eastern bloc and eventually the USSR. While applications in Britain were at 5,300 in 1988, it rose dramatically to 15,600 in 1989 (Schuster and Solomos 1999). Sales (2007) argues that it was also the case because other channels of primary migration were cut off, leaving asylum as the only route through which entry could be secured. Singh and Tatla (2006) say that thousands of Sikhs sought political asylum in the UK following Operation Bluestar and the insurgency in Punjab which led to the loss of about 30,000 lives. They also say that most of them were essentially economic migrants who, with the help of a vast network of travel agents came to Europe as *kabootar* (illegal), arriving though informal channels such as boats or lorries, often via Pakistan or Ireland. In one shocking case in 1996, two brothers, Vijay and Praveen Saini, travelled in the undercarriage of a British Airways flight from Delhi to London. While Praveen miraculously survived, Vijay froze to death in -60-degree Celsius temperature. A lot of people began to overstay as well, as in the following case:

> "*We both got married and got our student visa to come here. My husband started to work illegally in construction, and I had our first son. My visa has expired but he has managed to extend his. I am pregnant with our second child and we have no plans of leaving. Here we have a good life because we actually get paid for the hard labour we do. Can you imagine us having a decent life if my husband was a construction worker in India*?" (SFA3)

Singh and Tatla (2006) categorically state that it is hard to make an estimate about the number of Sikh people living in UK illegally, but "a figure of 40,000 to 50,000 would

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[36] A lady by the name Ishpreet Kaur Flora applied for a job as I.K. Flora. (Flora is a Ramgarhia Sikh surname). She was called for the interview but when she reached there, she was told, "*we were expecting Ms. Flora*" to which she replied, "*I am her*". The interview soon got over and she never heard from them again.

[37] There are numerous cases where well-educated men who came in the late 1970s and 1980s, as grooms to British brides but had to do manual labour because they couldn't get any other job. Respondents SMA32 and SMA42 had master's degree when they came but had to work in factories for considerable time before getting a break into the field of their own choice.

not be unreasonable". They service the local black economy and work on lower than minimum wages, always in a bid to become permanent or to move to Canada or USA. At present, Sikhs arriving on asylum are primarily from Afghanistan, who are escaping religious persecution. The UK has an evolving and ever more restrictive asylum policy discourse as well, which Sales (2007) discusses in detail, and the Home Office is always on the lookout to reject asylum to people. In 2019, a number of Afghani Sikh asylum seekers' application was rejected because they 'could not find any assessment or test to confirm that they were Sikhs'.

David Blunkett, the Labour Home Secretary, announced in 2001 a fundamental reform in the UK asylum and immigration policy, signaling a beginning of 'managed migration' based on economic requirements of the country. '*Secure Borders, Safe Haven*' was the White Paper published in February 2002, which highlighted, yet again, the need for stricter immigration controls. Another government document titled *Controlling Borders: Making Migration Work for Britain* was published in 2005 and this stated the three sound principles of the approach to be taken in the area of immigration:

> "it shows how we are going to enforce strict controls to root out abuse. It will ensure Britain continues to benefit from people from abroad who work hard and add to our prosperity. And, importantly, it puts forward solutions to a difficult issue which are clear, workable and in the best interest of this country." (Home Office, 2005)

Four of the interviewees for this research had arrived in Britain in the era of managed migration. SMA2 came as a student of hotel management and moved on to work in the hospitality industry and SMA7 worked at a bank in London after completing MBA from University of Birmingham. SFA11 was a single woman who had hustled her way into the country straight at the professional level, with no family or other support. The fourth was a 65 years old man whose relative had bought some land and called him over to work on his fields. He said:

> *"Buzurgaan nu citizenship aaram naal mil jandi hai, sannu koi kuchh nai kenda. Asi ena de job laen layi nai aaye aan na* (the old people get citizenship very easily. Nobody says anything to us because we don't come to take their jobs." (SMA31)

This goes on to ascertain what Singh and Tatla (2006) say "As immigration controls have become stricter (sic), Sikhs have found more ingenious ways to circumvent them."

2.14- Conclusion

This chapter gives an overview of the immigration and integration discourse in the UK, along with the experiences of Sikh immigrants with the changing circumstances. The immigration laws started with being completely open for all the people of Commonwealth. With every passing legislation, it began to get more and more restrictive and finally reached the current stage of needs and skills based managed migration. How and why Sikhs came to the UK following each of these major legislations is detailed in this chapter. The evolution of integration policies has been in the opposite direction. The immigrants in the earliest days were expected assimilate into the host society but starting from the passage of the first RRA, Britain took steps towards positive accommodation of diverse people and became a multicultural state. The accommodation of differences of Sikhs, however, did not come without long drawn out struggles, some of which are detailed in this chapter.

Chapter 3

Community and Family Life of British Sikhs

3.1- Introduction

It is a tendency of integration policies or discussions to look at a particular community as a homogenous whole and then assess its interaction and integration viz-a-viz other communities. Ratcliffe et al. (2008) criticise the lack of sensitivity towards the various types of social networks that impact cohesiveness of communities and internal dynamics are an important facet that is often overlooked. This research recognises that awareness about life within the community is "critical to understanding the nature of community cohesion or disharmony, since it is a site where citizens experience everyday lived experience through a multitude of networks" (Ratcliffe et al., 2008, 4). To make an effective community cohesion analysis, it is imperative to know how communities and families have organised themselves for four reasons: (1) it informs the community's position in national and international issues; (2) it informs how they interact with other communities; (3) it highlights the issues arising from within the community that might be posing a gap in deeper integration with the society at large, (4) brings endogenous discrimination into the forefront, which often sets group rights and individual rights of citizens in contravention to each other. This chapter discusses the internal realm of British Sikh lives, each section discussing a vital aspect which bears significance for the overall analysis of Sikhs and community cohesion.

3.2- Demography and Social Profile

Structures symbolising the presence of New Commonwealth immigrants and their descendants has become a permanent feature in Britain's landscape. Magnificent gurudwaras, mosques and temples have been established in many of the cities and towns which are places worship for these relatively new Sikh, Muslim and Hindu British citizens. Roger Ballard has called this phenomenon "colonization from below" (Ballard 2003). The presence of Sikhs, with their physical features and attires, has become a distinctive feature of contemporary Britain and 'Little Punjabs' have emerged in many pockets, especially in England. In this section, we discuss the demography and social profile of this community.

3.2.1- Population

The UK census included religion as a category of identification for the first time in, as late as, 2001. Prior to this, the population figures of Sikhs have been more like ‘guesstimates’ rather than the exact figures, primarily relying on the assumptions based on the number of people who identified themselves as ‘Indian’. Most migration from India to the UK is from Gujarat and Punjab, so it was expected that 40 per cent of those enumerated as ‘Indian’ would be Sikhs. Brown (1984) suggested that “two-fifths of the Indian ethnic population are Sikh, whilst a little less than a third are Hindus, with Muslims accounting for a third of this population group”. There was, in general, an overestimation of Sikh population, which was confounded in 2001, when the Office of National Statistics (ONS) enumerated Sikh population to be 336,179 or 0.59% of the population of the country. The Sikh community leaders did not imagine it to be less than half a million. The census 2011 results showed that there were approximately 430,000 Sikhs in the country (see table 3.1). This is still an approximation because Scotland and Wales figures are estimated.

Table 3.1- Sikh Population according to census 2011

Region	No. of Sikhs
England	420,196
Wales	2,962
Scotland	7500
Northern Ireland	200
Total	430,858

Source- BSR 2013, 9

Despite the evidence, some community leaders believe that there is a substantial under-representation of the number of Sikhs in the Census. Singh and Tatla (2006) speculate that this might be due to three reasons. Firstly, as many community elders suggest, almost a third of the Sikhs in Britain are Dalits. A large number of them might have decided to not state Sikh as their religion due to their differences with the dominant Jat Sikh community. However, it is hard to say this with certainty because Ravidasis and Mazbis, the main Dalit Sikhs remain reluctant to dissociate from the Sikh identity. Secondly, there are many Sikh illegals, who are excluded from citizenship rights, but participate fully in the community’s economic and religious

life. Finally, it is very likely that the census missed recording a significant number of Sikhs because they were in transit, either to Punjab or to other places in the diaspora. Nevertheless, unless these issues are resolved, the official figure is the most accurate reflection of the population strength of the community.

3.2.2- Geographical Distribution

Table 3.2- Sikh Population by Region, 2001

Region	Total Population	Sikh Population	% of Total
London	7,172,091	104,250	1.45
West Midlands	5,267,308	103,870	1.97
South East	8,000,645	37,735	0.47
East Midlands	4,172,174	33,351	0.80
Yorkshire and Humberside	4,964,833	18,711	0.38
East	5,388,140	13,365	0.25
North West	6,729,764	6,478	0.10
North East	2,515,442	4,780	0.19
South West	4,928,434	4,614	0.09
Scotland	5,062,011	6,821	0.13
Wales	2,903,085	2,015	0.07
Northern Ireland	1,685,367	219	0.01
Total			

Source- Singh and Tatla 2006, 62

As discussed in the previous chapter, settlement of Sikhs was greatly determined by the availability of work and the pre-existing settlement of Sikhs which provided the network and support for new people to migrate. Three quarters of the Sikh population is concentrated in areas where the post-War industrial boom took place. Table 3.2 shows the areas of Sikh concentration, which are London, West Midlands, South East and East Midlands. Leeds, Bradford and Huddersfield have sizeable population of Sikhs as well, which places Yorkshire and Humberside among the top five areas with maximum Sikh population. In the table, we can also see that none of the places have over 2% of Sikh population, but Sikhs have made their mark and in the diverse

landscape of these areas, Sikhs hold a prominent position. In Scotland, only Glasgow has a sizeable Sikh population and their presence can be traced back to the early 20th century, when many Bhatra Sikhs took to peddling trade (section 2.2.6). Minor presence is also there in Cardiff in Wales and Belfast and Londonderry in Northern Ireland.

Table 3.3- 'Little Punjabs': Local Authorities with the Largest Sikh Concentrations, 2001

Local Authority	No. of Sikhs	% of Total Population
Slough	10,820	9.09
Hounslow	18,265	8.60
Ealing (Southall)	25,625	8.51
Wolverhampton	17,944	7.85
Sandwell	19,429	6.87
Gravesham (Gravesend)	6,379	6.66
Redbridge	13,022	5.46
Coventry	13,960	4.64
Hillingdon	11,058	4.55
Leicester	11,796	4.21
Birmingham	28,592	2.93

Source- Singh and Tatla 2006, 63

Further, table 3.3 shows the areas with largest concentration of Sikhs. These areas have been commonly called 'Little Punjab' or 'Mini Punjab'.

> "The Sikh enclaves that dot the country…are integrated by Sikh commercial, social and political networks…(there) are community-based bus services which link Punjabi internal travel between these localities" (Singh and Tatla 2006, 63)

All these areas have prominent markers of Sikh presence. The famed Sikh entrepreneurship is on display in many of these cities' high streets, with absolutely any item imaginable from India - *desi* clothes, jewellery, food items, trinkets to decorate home based prayer areas etc. Smethwick high street recently got a bronze statue of a Sikh soldier marking their sacrifices in the first World War. Southall has become the premier settlement of Sikhs, where they were active in the anti-race struggles in 1960s and 70s. There is a bilingual sign at the train station which reads 'Welcome to Southall' in English and Gurumukhi (see image 3.1). For the same

reason as Sikhs, these areas large populations of other New Commonwealth migrants as well, painting a beautifully diverse picture within the 'mother country'.

Image 3.2- The Bilingual Signage at Southall, July 2017

3.2.3- Education and Employment

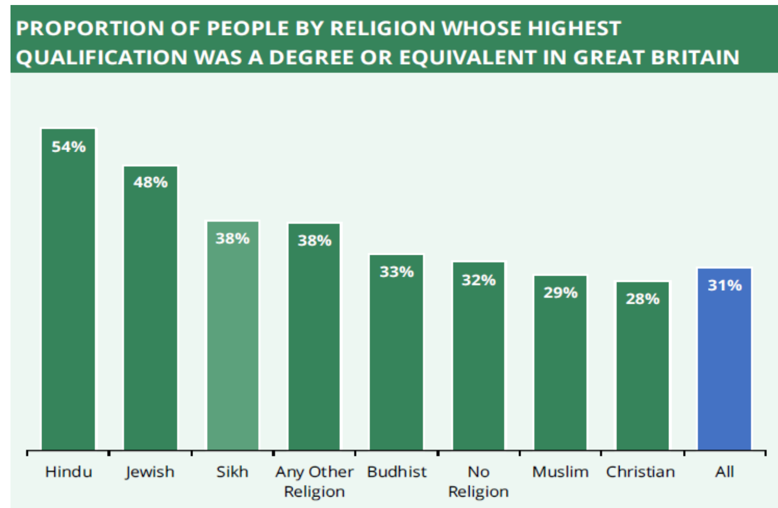
In the British census, ethnic enumeration of Sikhs is done under the category 'Indian'[38] and education and employment data are based on that. There are very few sources of data that give information specifically for Sikhs and the ones that are present, depict wide discrepancies. According to the Labour Force Survey (LFS)[39] for the fourth quarter of 2018, 38% of Sikhs have a university degree of equivalent qualification (See figure 3.1). This is 7% above the national average which stands at 31% (Priddy 2019). In contrast, according to the BSR 2019, which is an exclusive survey of 2500 Sikhs, this figure stands at 65%, little less than double than that of the LFS[40].

There are claims that these general figures do not reveal everything. The high levels of educational attainment, even above the national average, largely represents the third or fourth generation Sikhs and that the educational levels of over 34 years olds is dismal. "In the 35-44 age range, (it is) almost co-equal with Muslims, and those in the 45-55 and 55-64 age groups are among the least qualified of all religious groups"

[38] Sikhs have been campaigning to include 'Sikh' as an ethnic category in the 2021 Census.
[39] Conducted by the Office of National Statistics (ONS), UK.
[40] The reason for this could be a methodological issue stated in the BSR 2019 which is that there are fewer respondents of old age as compared to the young people.

(Singh and Tatla 2006, 158). It is clear that the first and second generation entered the labour market with lower levels, or no qualification and the subsequent generations are not only bridging the gap but are indeed outperforming than the national average.

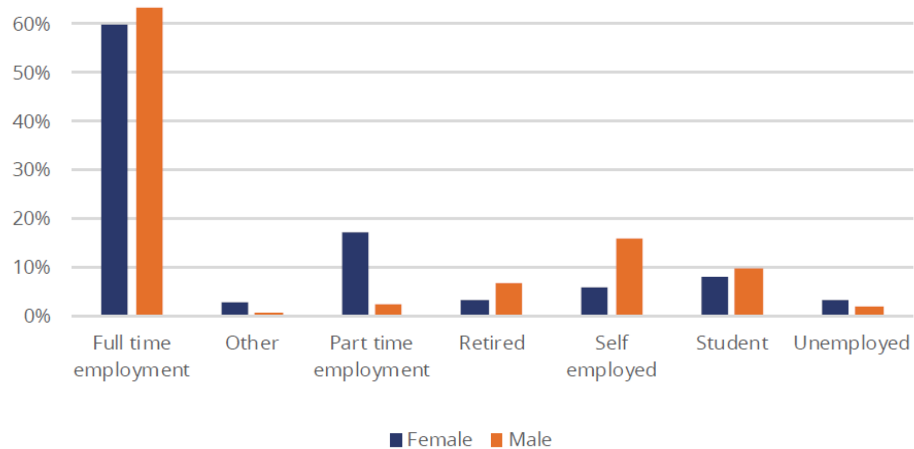
Figure 3.1



Source- Labour Force Survey, Q4 2018 (Taken from Priddy 2019)

According to the BSR 2019[41], the employment rate of the Sikhs is 84%, 8% more as compared to the country's average of 76%. Majority of these are full time employees with women being employed in part time jobs more than men (see figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2- Employment Type by Gender



[41] It will be fair to assume that this is an overestimation, considering the same in education data.

Source- BSR 2019, 21

Singh and Tatla (2006) claim that Sikhs are mostly employed in middle to lower level in the services sector and their representation at the top remains well below the national average. Most Sikhs are employed in manufacturing, transport, distribution and hotels and restaurants. As compared to the Hindus and Muslims, the community lags in performance in the services sector. The reasons for this can be explored by greater engagement with the community's historical and socio-cultural background.

There have been several studies like Modood et al. (1997) and Mason (2003) which have discussed the 'ethnic disadvantage' that minority communities face in education and employment. These studies took Indians as one ethnic category which included Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. However, Khattab (2009) made a path-breaking quantitative analysis whereby he has shown that there is a marked difference between different groups of people within the same ethnicity but belonging to different religion. His study considers twelve categories of minorities and looks at 'religious or cultural penalty' and not simply 'ethnic penalty' (Heath and McMahon 1997) that communities have to pay with regards to social participation. His research has revealed a number of distinct patterns for Sikhs; (1) in education of 16-24 age group, Jewish White-British, Christian Black-Africans and Hindu-Indians perform best, followed by Muslim-Indians and Sikh-Indians; (2) but, the opportunity for progress of Sikhs towards higher education is limited and is only slightly better than all the four Muslim categories – Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and White[42]; (3) overall, Sikhs are disadvantaged in both education as well as employment as are the Muslims from Pakistan and Bangladesh. Indian Muslims fare better and are comparable to Indian Hindus. Singh and Tatla (2006) summarize the Sikh education and employment status very effectively:

> "British Sikhs are often portrayed as the 'new Jews': a hardworking, deeply religious community. This picture generally overlooks the fact that British Sikh settlers came mainly from preliterate, rural society and entered the labour market…at its lowest level, as unskilled manual workers. As such, they have striven hard to match the national profile in education and employment, and after four generations still lag some way behind the national norms. Sikhs are clearly not Britain's 'ethnic high-flyers', but neither are they its 'ethnic underclass'." (Singh and Tatla, 2006, 164)

[42] This includes Muslims from Eastern European States.

Having discussed the demographic and social profile of Sikhs, we move to understanding the Sikh way of life, which will inform further analysis.

3.3- Evolution of the Sikh Way of Life

According to Bhikhu Parekh (2008), "for believers, their religion is the source of their world view and values, the ground of their being, their ultimate frame of reference, and governs all areas of their lives". He continues that "every religion aims to guide the individual in the organization of his or her personal and collective life and provides a set of moral and political principles". Therefore, to be able to discern why Sikhs do certain things, the way they do them, it is important to know briefly about the evolution of the faith through the lives of the ten Gurus, which provide the 'ultimate frame of reference' to Sikh lives.

Guru Nanak (1469-1539), the first Guru of the Sikhs, settled in Kartarpur after his *udasis*[43]. A large number of Sikh practices and beliefs began here. Guru Nanak's hymns took the form of devotional singing in a congregational setting, called *kirtan*. He defined the threefold discipline of the divine – *nam*, *dan*, *ishnan* – to chant the name of the one true god, to do charity and to observe purity. A true Sikh was to conduct *seva* (service towards society), practice regular *satsang* (true fellowship) and live and pray among the *sangat* (holy fellowship). One of the most widely recognised Sikh practice, *langar*, was also established during this time. *Langar* is an inter-dining convention which is based on equality of status and caste among the people as everybody sits in a *pangat* (straight rows) and shares the same meal, something that was and still is revolutionary in a caste society. Langar promoted the spirit unity and belonging among the followers of Guru Nanak, who "gave practical expression to the ideals which matured during the period of his travels and combined a life of disciplined devotion with worldly activities, set in the context of normal daily life" (Mc. Leod 1968).

The second Guru, Angad Dev (1504-1552), established his headquarters at Khadur Sahib, on the banks of river Beas, depicting that Kartarpur was not to be unique in itself but rather a model to be followed. He established the status of the *Bani* (divine word) and is also attributed to the codification of the Sikh scripture Gurumukhi (from

[43] Spiritual journeys.

the mouth of the Guru), which was used to compile the Sikh scripture. From this period onwards, it was clear that a distinct faith, with its own script and scripture was being established. The third Guru, Amar Das (1479-1574) is attributed with providing the rituals and hymns to be used for ceremonies like birth, death and *Anand* (divine bliss), meant to be recited in happy occasions like marriage. He also began the tradition of large congregations on the occasions of *Vaisakhi* and *Diwali* (which was later named *Bandi Chhor Diwas* by Sikhs because the sixth Guru was released from prison on this day).
Guru Ram Das (1534-1581), the fourth guru, founded the holy city of Amritsar (the nectar of immortality), on the land which was granted to him by Emperor Akbar (Forster 1798). He worked extensively on the Sikh *ragas* and composed the wedding hymn, *laavan*. He also introduced the concept of *dasvandh*, whereby Sikhs were required to contribute a tenth of their earnings to the community. It was Guru Ram Das who, for the first time pronounced who was a Sikh:

> "He who calls himself Sikh, a follower of the true Guru, should meditate on the divine Name after rising and bathing and recite *Japji* from memory, thus driving away all evils and vices. As day unfolds, he sings *Gurbani*; sitting or rising he meditates on the divine Name. He who repeats the divine Name with every breath and bite is indeed a true Sikh (*gursikh*) who gives pleasure to the Guru" (From Var Gauri, Adi Granth: quoted in Pashaura Singh 2004)

The fifth Guru, Arjan Dev (1563-1606) built the Harmandir Sahib in Amritsar and began the compilation of canonical scripture, the *Adi Granth* (original book), which advocated the doctrine of the *Akal Purakh* (The Timeless One). Mc. Leod (2003) states that the Adi Granth served to enhance the clarity of definition which distinguished the Sikhs from people of other faiths and Guru Arjan Dev declared that "we are neither Hindus nor Musalman" (from Bhairau, Adi Granth: quoted in Pashaura Singh 2004). Mc. Leod (2003) said that by this time, "the *panth* possessed a line of Gurus, a growing number of holy places, distinctive rituals and its own sacred scripture. There could no longer be any question of vague definition nor uncertain identity."

Within eight months of emperor Akbar's death, his son emperor Jehangir ordered the capture, torture and execution of Guru Arjan Dev. He was highly sceptical of the growing socio-political influence of the Guru (Pashaura Singh 2005) and the support he gave to the Emperor's son rebel son Khusrau (Mc.Leod 2009). There is no

documentary evidence of the manner of his death, but it is believed that it was done by placing him on a red-hot plate and pouring hot sand on him. This event is recorded in Sikh culture as the 'first martyrdom'. This event marked a watershed moment in Sikh history and Smith (1981) rightly points out that it contributed to the growth of Sikh self-consciousness, separatism and militancy.

The Sixth Guru, Hargobind (1594-1644), determined to defend the claims of conscience by infusing a militant spirit in the Sikhs. As they became acutely aware to the dangers posed on their existence, along with religious concerns, worldly affairs like self-defence became an important concern for Sikhs. Guru Hargobind began to consolidate an army and got full support from his followers of all castes. His hagiography by Sohan Kavi, *Gurbilas Padhahi Chhevin* gives detail about the ceremony of *dastar bandi* (tying of the turban) and donning of the swords *miri* and *piri*, symbolizing temporal and spiritual authority respectively. He also laid the foundation of the *Akal Takht* (the seat of the Timeless One), which was constructed higher than the Mughal throne, openly repudiating the Mughal sovereignty and placing his religious sovereignty above the political one. The seventh Guru Har Rai (1630-1661) started the tradition of *Akhand Path* (non-stop recitation of hymns) and the youngest Guru, Har Kishan (1656-1664) gave the message of eternal *seva*, even at the cost of his own life. Gurudwara Bangla Sahib is built in the place of his passing.

Tegh Bahadur (1621-1675), the ninth Guru wrote many hymns for the Adi Granth. His ideals of a just society instilled a spirit of fearlessness among his followers. He wrote "he who holds no fear, nor is afraid of anyone, Nanak, acknowledges him alone as a man of true wisdom" (from the Adi Granth: quoted in Pashaura Singh 2004). He travelled across the subcontinent and spread the holy word. Today, small pockets of Sikhs in remote areas of Assam, Bangladesh and Bihar trace their religious origin from the time Guru Tegh Bahadur arrived there. As emperor Aurangzeb was in a proselytising rampage, Guru Tegh Bahadur arrived in Delhi. Upon refusal to convert to Islam, he was beheaded at the site of Gurudwara Sisganj. His execution is considered to be the 'second martyrdom' in Sikh tradition and it involved "larger issues of human rights and freedom of conscience" (Singh, 1982, 104). It is said that the Sikhs who witnessed their Guru's execution "shrank from recognition, concealing their identity for fear they might suffer a similar fate" (Singh 2004, 88)

The tenth Guru, Gobind Singh (1666-1708) “resolved to impose on his followers an outward form that would make them instantly recognizable” (Singh, 2004, 89). On the day of Vaisakhi, 1699, he initiated five of his cherished disciples called *Panj Pyare*, who would form the nucleus of the newly formed institution of *Khalsa* (pure) (see image 3.4). This initiation ceremony involved consuming *amrit* (sweetened water stirred with double edged sword) a practice continued till date. Guru Gobind Singh established the *Rahit* (code of conduct for Sikhs) whereby he sanctified the hair with *amrit* (sweetened water) and strictly prohibited the cutting or shaving of bodily hair. Those who chose to join the order of the *Khalsa* were understood to be reborn and had to assume a new identity – *Singh* (lion) and *Kaur* (princess) – which made everyone an equal as well and of a high stature. He also introduced the *panj kakkars* – the 5 Ks – *kes*, *Kachera*, *Kirpan*, *Kada* and *Kangha* (hair, underwear of a specific type, a dagger, an armband and a comb). This fearlessness in expressing their faith, upholding their identity and greater consolidation of the Sikh *panth* even in the face of the execution of their Guru was a big blow to Aurangzeb, who had failed to intimidate them. Thereafter Sikhs faced Mughals in many battles, where the Guru lost his four sons. Before his passing, he terminated the line of the Gurus, and installed the *Adi Granth* and the eternal Guru of the Sikhs, which thereafter is also called *Guru Granth Sahib*.

The beliefs and practices that Sikhs follow developed gradually through the lives of the Gurus. While some of them like *nam japna* pertain to the very personal lives of people, there are many communitarian aspects like *seva*, *langar* and large congregations during festivals that invariably have an impact on the larger society that Sikhs become a part of. It is interesting to see that the embodiment of the artices of faith which was initiated at a time when Sikhs were fearful and shrugging from their identity, eventually became symbols of courage and fearlessness for Sikhs, who, despite being such a small minority, have managed to confront governments all over the world and secured their right to maintain them.

Image 3.4- A Painting titled 'Guru Gobind Singh: Master and Disciple'[44] in Guru Nanak Gurudwara, Smethwick; July 2017

3.4- Community Building in the United Kingdom

In the beginning of the twentieth century, Britain was a hub for elite education for Indians. Teja Singh, a Sikh student, was sent through religious sponsorship to become familiar with 'challenges to the Sikh faith' and was enrolled in Cambridge in 1907. He established the first Sikh association in Britain called Khalsa Jatha of the British Isles (KJBI) in 1908. At the time, the small Sikh population in Britain would collect at London in the India House or a hired hall for key events in the Sikh calendar. Teja Singh became the moving spirit behind acquiring a property in London to serve as a Gurudwara. At first a house was rented for two years, but then an appeal for funds was made in Punjab which received an enthusiastic response. With the help of donations from the Maharaja of Patiala, a house at 79 Sinclair Road, Shepherd's Bush, was leased for 63 years. Following some repairs and adjustments, it was inaugurated in 1911 by the Maharaja of Patiala himself. It soon became the focal point for Sikhs in the UK. Singh (2006) notes that many students were supported by the Gurudwara and its congregation in their adjustment to British life and it became the first point of contact for Sikhs arriving in Britain thereafter. In the UK, "the first Gurudwara, like the first Sikh had princely origins: for almost fifty years, it remained the only recognised communal centre" (Singh and Tatla 2006, 72).

[44] The plaque below the painting reads – 'Vaisakhi, 1699 CE, Anandpur Sahib, Punjab, Mughal India: In the dark days of human bigotry, oppression and suffering, Guru Gobind created a universal order of men and women to stand up to tyrants and nurture the good. Guru Gobind Singh started the baptism of Amrit and thousands of Sikhs drank the nectar from the Beloved Ones. He gave a new hope and strength to the oppressed. Having initiated the first entrants of the Khalsa with water of the double-edged sword, he humbly asked his five beloveds to allow him into their ranks. Great, great is Guru Gobind Singh, exemplar of humankind, himself both the Master and disciple of his saints! He swept away timidity and cowardice from the hearts of ordinary people. The Guru said, "When I make the sparrows hunt hawks and a single Sikh fight a legion, only then shall I be called Guru Gobind Singh'

With the increase in the number of Sikhs 1950s onwards, there has been a sustained rise in the number of Gurudwaras. Currently, there are about 300 gurudwaras in the UK (Talwar 2013), majority of them in England and Wales. In 2003, Sri Guru Singh Sabha Gurudwara was inaugurated in Southall. It is said to be the largest Gurudwara outside India[45] and has become a premier symbol of Sikh presence in the UK and a cathedral of multicultural Britain. Across the 'Little Punjabs' in UK,

> "Gurudwara movement has followed a common trajectory: initially the renting of a house or a hall for communal gatherings (1950s/1960s); the purchase of larger, inner- city premises (1960s/1970s); the construction or modification of the existing premises for all-purpose gurudwaras and the creation of separate institutions by disgruntled factions within the original founding body or by castes (1980s); and, more recently, at the turn of the new millennium (1990s/2000s), the emergence of imposing grand 'new cathedrals'" (Singh and Tatla 2006, 72)

As stated above, 1980s onwards, the gurudwaras acquired caste diversity, a characteristic of the subcontinent of the faith's origin. This also indicates that people from other castes and regions of Punjab had started migrating to the UK, which was hitherto a forte of the Jat Sikhs, primarily from the Doaba region. This is true, especially for the Sikhs of the Ramgarhia caste, who primarily arrived as 'twice migrants' (Bhachu 1985) from East Africa. While there is not so much an untouchability issue in the way caste manifests among Sikhs in the UK, there is a strong issue of hierarchy, with the Jats occupying the top spot. Apart from caste, there have been many other factional issues like conflict between the 'old timers' and the 'new arrivals', 'orthodox vs. modern', local rivalries etc. that have led to the proliferation of Gurudwaras – "*Sab nu apni chaudhrayi karni hondi ae* (everyone wants to be the head)" (SMA14). With the rise in multiculturalist policies in 1980s and 1990s, an intimate nexus was formed between the Labour Party and the minority religious groups, where the latter gained access to public goods, funds and institutional representation in lieu of votes for the former (Singh 2004). While Gurudwaras have been traditionally centres of congregation and prayer, and to impart religious and Punjabi language education among the *sangat*, there has been an exponential rise in the variety of services provided by some big gurudwaras – like advice centres, care for the elderly, sports centres etc. An illustrative example is:

[45] The Gurunanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha Gurudwara in Soho Road, Birmingham also claims to be the largest gurudwara outside India.

"*Once in 1977, when the gurudwara was in the Church (see image 3.5), as was the norm every Sunday, one person got up during the congregation and asked for donations from the* sangat *for some work that was to be done in the gurudwara. I raised my voice and said, "why are you asking for the hard-earned money of the people? Why don't you try and get some government funding?" The head of the Gurudwara said, "why don't you join the committee and do this work?" So, five of us friends, we joined the committee. In two years, I became general secretary of the gurudwara but when 1984 happened, people began getting very orthodox. It was very much in trend. They raised an issue that only Amritdhari*[46] *Sikhs will be part of the Gurudwara committee, so we left. By then, we had got a lot of money from the city council and the cultural centre next to the gurudwara is made entirely out of that money. This gurudwara, here, was made after 1987, it was earlier only a social centre. But we made the sports centre and the main building, all out of council money and only paid for the land so that it could be in our name and not counted as city council land."* (SMA32)

The Gurudwaras being discussed above are located on the Chapeltown Road in Leeds, which has another new property converted into a gurudwara, making it three on the same road. The first Gurudwara is a Jat dominated one called the Sikh Temple (image 3.5). The second one is a Ramgarhia Gurudwara and the third was built recently by the Bhatras,

"*Bhatras, who are caste-wise considered low, are the biggest businesspeople in this country. Very wealthy community, nobody works with their hands. They all have properties and houses. Once they felt humiliated by the Sikh Temple management, and overnight collected 150,000 pounds, bought that house on Chapeltown Road and made it into their own gurudwara*" (SMA32)

Image 3.5- The Sikh Temple, Leeds. (Left- The Church building which was converted into gurudwara in late 1960s; Right- the new Gurudwara premises), June 2017

The management of one of the biggest gurudwaras in the UK deny that the Jat dominated gurudwaras practice caste discrimination by saying the following:

[46] *Amritdhari* Sikhs are the ones who have been initiated into the Khalsa, by the taking of Amrit and always embody the 5Ks. *Kesdhari* Sikhs are those who keep their hair but not necessarily all other Ks. *Sehejdhari* Sikhs are those who do not even keep their hair but believe in the Sikh faith.

"*Caste system has been around for centuries and we brought it here with us. But we here are the Singh Sabha. If you are a Singh, it doesn't matter what caste you belong to, you can be a part of this temple. At this point we have a* giani *(priest) and a* sevadar *(attendant to the Guru Granth Sahib) from the Ravidasia community. But if you go to a Ravidasia or a Ramgarhia gurudwara, you can only be a part of the congregation, nothing more. We believe in the* Panj Pyare[47]*. In the Guru Granth Sahib, there is Ravidas* bani *(sayings), and everybody else's* bani*, even Muslim* bani*. It is for everyone, the entire humankind. So, if you are a Sikh, you are welcome on board*." (SMA35)

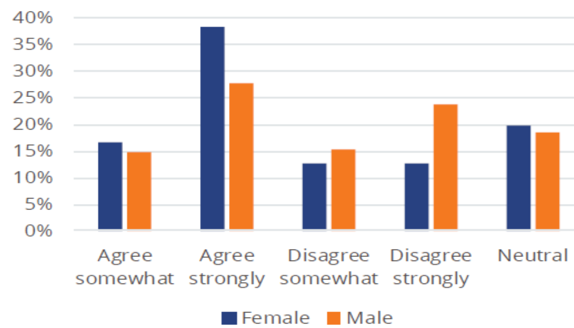
Although Sikhism formally disregarded the caste system (introduction of *langar* being one of the most important aspect in that regard, because caste hierarchy is quite prohibitive when it comes to co-dining with the lower caste), the continued persistence of it, not only in Indian Sikhs but also in diasporic Sikhs reinforces the belief in a common saying – '*jati kabhi nahi jati*' – caste never goes. There are many instances of caste discrimination that take place in the gurudwaras at all levels, many times obliquely, often pushing people away from their pursuit of faith:

"*I stopped learning Punjabi because they would always call me* chamaraan di dhee *(daughter of a tanner, one of the so-called lowest castes) at the Gurudwara where we had Punjabi classes, and now none of my children know how to do path or read Punjabi, because I never sent them to there to learn Punjabi*." (SFB18)

The BSR 2018 reports that only 13% of Sikhs considered caste to be important and 80% of both and men and women are in favour of marrying outside of caste. However, when it comes to marrying outside the community, this level drops to 55% in men and 73% in women. There have often been protests, sometimes taking a violent turn, by Sikh vigilante groups when they come to know of a non-Sikh getting married to a Sikh in a gurudwara (Philips 2016). During interviews, most respondents favoured inter-religious marriages but at least half of them considered that it should not happen in the gurudwara. The BSR 2018 shows that the proportion of those who agree to *Anand Karaj* (marriage by Sikh rituals) between Sikhs and non-Sikhs is greater than those who disagree, and, in the latter, the proportion of men is higher than women (see figure 3.3).

[47] It is believed that the *Panj Pyare* who were the first five to be initiated into Khalsa belonged to five different castes, including the so-called lowest ones.

Figure 3.3- Opinion Regarding Anand Karaj with Non-Sikhs

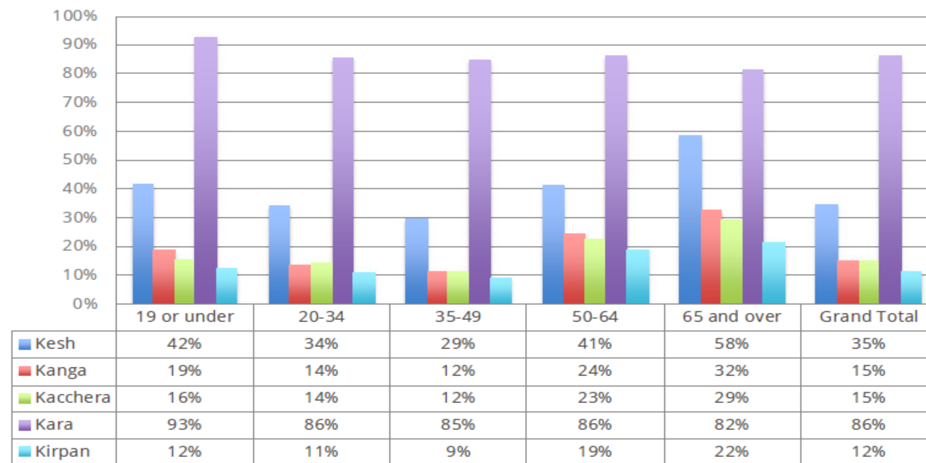


Source- British Sikh Report 2018, 40

Aside from work, the beginning of engagement of Sikhs in the western liberal democratic state of UK has been through their movements for the expression of their identity. Today, Sikhs have the right to observe their articles of faith in the UK in almost all facets and areas of civil life. Figure 3.4 gives a glimpse of the observance of the 5 Ks of Sikhism as practiced by British Sikhs. *Kara* seems to be the most commonly observed K (85%), *kes* being a distant second (46% men and 22% women). 50% men wear the turban as compared to 3%. The K with the lowest compliance rate is the most controversial and non-benign of all these objects – the kirpan (15% men and 8% women). There is, however, a gradual rise in observance of the 5Ks among the under-19-year-old Sikhs. It has been recognised that the exigencies of the modern western world leave a void in the hearts and minds of diasporic people. Especially so in case of 3rd and 4th generations, the millennial Sikhs, who do not inherit memories of a homeland where they fully belonged and face 'othering' in some way or the other in the place where they are born and live (Dusenbery 2014). Religion gives them a sense of belonging and certainty. Also because of the complicated relationship with India, a lot of young people are becoming firmer in their religion as compared to the previous generations. The BSR 2018 showed that 32% of the total respondents indulged in daily spiritual practice (recitation of the *japji sahib*[48]).

[48] "Japji Sahib is the prayer in the beginning of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib and was composed by Guru Nanak. It is considered as the most important *bani* as it contains the *mool mantra* (root statement) of the faith"- BSR 2018

Figure 3.4- Observance of Individual Ks by Age- Percentage of total



	19 or under	20-34	35-49	50-64	65 and over	Grand Total
Kesh	42%	34%	29%	41%	58%	35%
Kanga	19%	14%	12%	24%	32%	15%
Kacchera	16%	14%	12%	23%	29%	15%
Kara	93%	86%	85%	86%	82%	86%
Kirpan	12%	11%	9%	19%	22%	12%

Source- British Sikh Report 2018, 24

The priest in a Gurudwara is called a *giani* or *granthi*. Today, *gianis* in most UK gurudwaras are young men brought in from India who find it difficult to connect to the 3rd and 4th generation Sikhs and are inept to spiritually deal with the problems that they face in this country. A *giani* from Manchester gave the following testimony:

> "*You must understand, people who go to college do not become priests. We are from poor background. I studied till class 9 and then joined religious education. My father was also a granthi and so is my father in law who brought me here to the UK on a priest visa*[49]*. When I came here, I was surprised to see so many young people here very close to religion and sang the shabads*[50] *so well. These are very high-class people, but they are very devout in faith. Some even did granthi's work as part-time seva. But they are all well-educated and get well-paying jobs elsewhere, so why should they do this work professionally. People like me are brought in, we are given quarters to stay within the gurudwara, and our food is taken care of from the langar stock. Apart from that, we don't get paid very much. Despite that, I have no complains. I love my job and it has brought me great respect and fame. My wife has found a job in a garment store and kids are enrolled in English medium schools*" (SMA14)

However, the Gurudwara managements do not agree that it is a question of money why gianis from India are imported and there are no or maybe a very few UK-born Sikhs working as full-time gianis. According to one of them, "*the reason for getting gianis from Punjab is that we want the gurudwaras to retain the originality and authenticity of home. The discipline of gianis from Punjab cannot be matched with the ones who grow up in the UK*" (SMA41). Dr. Opinderjit Kaur Takhar, who started the Centre for Sikh and Punjabi Studies at the University of Wolverhampton in 2018,

[49] Tier 2 Minister of Religion Visa
[50] The words of the Guru

recognises that there is a growing interest in Sikhism among young Sikhs but also raises her apprehensions regarding gurudwara engagement, underscoring a need for alternative new-age form of religious socialisation with them:

> "*In this country, children are encouraged to critically analyse and question what they read. That doesn't mean that they want to just denounce it or tear it apart, but they want to know more. These young people want to get deeper into discussions like, for example, we say that the divine (*Wahe Guru*) has no form, and yet we believe that Guru Nanak talked to him, how could that be? However, our gurudwaras, not all, but most, do not know how to deal with it. Therefore we are starting the Giani Professional Development Course at our centre. We will orient them with the kind of issues that our youngsters face when approaching religion, with the cultural awareness, the gender equality that exists in the society that they have come in, to work on their communication skills etc. We want better youth engagement with the gurudwaras that the community has built with so much zeal, otherwise they will become empty spaces like churches. We will work on seeing that gianis are DBS checked.*" (SFB26)

Today, over 56% of the Sikh population of the UK is British born (Singh and Tatla 2006), and most of them are young, millennial Sikhs. According to Singh (2014a), young Sikhs primarily go to the gurudwara, 'to learn about Sikhism', 'to do seva', 'out of habit', 'to attend family functions' and 'to pay respects to Guru Granth Sahib ji'. Apart from that, a growing number of them are also going to the gurudwara to learn the Sikh music (kirtan, tabla and *vaja*[51]) and the Sikh martial art – *gatka.* Some of the bigger gurudwaras directly or in association with other organisations, conduct Sikhi camps, where many young Sikhs can engage deeply with their religion and identity. Gurudwaras are also instrumental in organising carnivalesque processions during festivals, mainly on Vaisakhi and Gurupurab[52]. Many 'Little Punjabs' organise *nagar kirtans* (city-wide religious processions) where hundreds of Sikhs participate (See. Image 3.6). With the advent of the internet, its impact on religious transmission among young Sikhs has been significant. They are engaging with their faith through the various websites like sikhsangat, sikhiwiki and everythings13. With respect to online platforms for dissemination of Sikhi, Singh (2014b) lists ten main topics of search and discussion:

> "1. discuss taboo subjects; 2. obtain answers to questions about the Sikh tradition; 3. explore differing practices within the Sikh tradition; 4. access repositories of kirtan and katha; 5. examine English translations of Sikh scriptures; 6. obtain orders from the Guru Granth Sahib (hukamnamas); 7. find out about Sikh events; 8. access event archives, recordings, and instructional

[51] harmonium

[52] Birthday of the Gurus

> videos; 9. purchase Sikh resources, including books, photographs, and clothing; and 10. understand the legal position of Sikh articles of faith." (Singh 2014b, 86)

A modest attempt at trying to guage awareness about Sikhs among the majority community was done for this research. While more than 90% of the respondents were aware of the existence of Sikhs mentioning about the turban, *langar* seemed to be the second most popular aspect that was widely known. The fact that any and everyone could enter the Sikh temple and have warm food for free is something that literally warms the people's hearts in this otherwise cold country.

Overall, the Sikh community is well-established and proliferating in the UK. Singh and Tatla (2006) have argued throughout their work how Sikhs have historically been divided among themselves because of geographical and historical pressures and that reflects in their settlement in the UK as well. Nesbitt (2014) and Takhar (2014) give a very comprehensive account of the *sant* culture[53] and sects that are manifested in the diaspora. With all the traditional as well modern apparatus like the internet at work, over the years, "the rate of growth (of Sikh institutions)…has not decelerated; if anything it is yet to reach its peak, let alone a plateau" (Singh and Tatla 2006, 76). This does not preclude the various issues related to Gurudwara management – transparency, democratization, male dominance and occasional incidents of violence inside the gurudwara, many of which have also been reported in the national news.

3.5- The British Sikh Family: Continuity, Change and Challenges

"Immigrants live much of their lives in the context of family" (Foner 1997, 961). A number of studies have been undertaken that highlight the role of family and kinship networks in facilitating the process of migration, finding gainful employment and adjusting to life in a new country. Foner (1997, 961) says that "family is a place where there is a dynamic interplay between structure, culture and agency – where creative culture building takes place in the context of external social and economic forces as well as immigrants' premigration networks". The realm of family life of immigrants is a very dynamic process, as indeed all cultural life is. Thus a coming together of cultural aspects of the sending country, of the mainstream culture of the host society and the specific conditions that people, as immigrants face and interpret

[53] Following of a living preacher called sant (saint)

in the latter engenders a new kind of society and traditions, with its own unique characteristics (Thomas and Znaniecki 1996).

Singh and Tatla (2006) give a detailed account of the family and its changing dynamics in the British Sikh scenario. The early migrants to the UK were from a rural background and many of the manifestations of the evolving family structure and its undercurrents are in that context. The family consisted of a husband, wife, children and in many cases also parents of the husband, who were expected to be taken care of. Purchasing one's own home has been a priority among British Sikhs, probably due to the rural psyche of owning land, leading to a high rate of home ownership among British Sikhs. BSR 2014 reported that over 87% of British Sikh households are homeowners, with only 1% claiming housing benefits. The household income of British Sikhs is also quite high, averaging at about 40,000 pounds per year. The average household size is 4, with over 47% being multi-generational households. There is still a strong prevalence of joint family, although it is gradually fragmenting.

One of the enduring characteristics of the British Sikh society and family is patriarchy, which manifests in myriad ways, from limiting women's agency in terms of educational attainment to their social policing. Although there is an incidence of these features in both men and women's lives, it is disproportionately higher in case of the latter, despite the fact that the followers of Sikhism very proudly proclaim that their religion upholds gender equality.

During interviews for this research, without a single exception, all second and third generation British Sikh women mentioned that they could not socialize with their friends and peers because they were not allowed to go out with them. The only variation was that some of them were not allowed at all while some could be out till a 'modest' time. They all resent that such rules never applied for their brothers, who could be out partying all night, even at the cost of worrying parents greatly. The very fact that despite worrying, parents would still let the boys go out and not the girls, is quite telling about how deeply entrenched patriarchy is, that disallows parents from questioning the movements of their sons. In many cases, this made girls quite resentful, even of their religion, which would often be used as a tourniquet to control them.

> "*I am more comfortable being a Sikh now, than I ever was before. Earlier, I used to begrudge my religion because they would just tell us that 'you cannot do this' or 'you cannot go there' because we Punjabis/Sikhs don't do it this way. We were made to believe that it was our religion that did not permit us to meet boys or go*

out, so I resented it. I went to a Sikhi Camp when I turned eighteen and that was when my perception of the faith changed. I learnt for the first time that there is gender equality in our religion. I experienced the tranquillity and humility of our faith and that was when I realised that religion and customs were two different things. For instance, in Punjabi culture, we celebrate Lohri[54] *when a son is born but we don't party when a girl is born. You see, its about culture and not religion. To know why culture functions in this way, we need to look at the first-generation Sikhs, like my nanaji*[55]*. He took a breath of the Punjabi air in the 1940s and jumped on a ship to England. He is still inhaling from that same balloon filled with the air of 1940s Punjab. What he doesn't realise is that outside that balloon, everything has changed.*" (SFB12)[56]

The above testimony is illustrative of what Foner (1997) argues, that while "there is no such thing as timeless tradition, immigrants may come to think of life in their home societies in these terms". Similar concerns exist when it comes to some of the rituals like marriage. In the UK, during *laavan*, all the men from the woman's side – brothers, father, uncles – stand around the Guru Granth Sahib and place their hand on the back of the bride as she circles the holy book with her partner. When it was observed that the same was not happening at a Sikh wedding in India, this researcher inquired from an *Amritdhari* lady who was assisting the process. She said that such a thing used to happen long ago as it indicated that the men are sending away their daughters, but with the changing times, we no longer believe that it is appropriate. We now purport that the woman is getting into matrimony out of her own volition. This illustrates that the immigrant society, in the apprehension of not losing out on their culture, continue to practice rituals that have become anachronistic in the home society.

When women of 2nd and 3rd generation were asked about being discriminated against, their most potent memories are based on the axis of gender, emanating from within their families and communities, rather than ethnicity. The latter is limited to occasional racist comments in public places, which has had no real bearing on their lives, as being British-born UK citizens, they are aware of their position as such as well as the reality of racism. The discrimination that they had to face from within the

[54] A Punjabi festival celebrated on 13th January. It marks the beginning of the end of harsh cold winters and arrival of longer days. A bonfire is lit around which people sing and dance.

[55] Maternal grandfather

[56] The respondent lost her father when she was very young and despite being good at studies and sports, she was married at a very young age. Today, she is over 40, mother of 4 children and has recently enrolled in a PhD programme at Cambridge University, where is working on Bhatra Sikh women.

family and community had a much stronger impact on their lives and world view. One woman who belonged to a so-called lower caste highlights this endogenous discrimination:

> "*I have been called 'Paki' a few times and after Brexit, a man once shouted 'go back to your country' at me in Asda*[57]*. It didn't bother me at all and in fact the white people around me looked very embarrassed when the latter happened. But the amount of humiliation I faced from within the society for belonging to a lower caste and later the stigmatization I experienced for being an unwed mother of my children, surpasses that. And I am not even talking about the discrimination that my extended family faces in our village in India. I don't think there is any place we can be free from discrimination, only the degree varies*." (SFB18)

However, "quite apart from the cultural and socio-demographic features of the immigrant group, external forces in the new environment shape immigrant lives as they provide new opportunities and constraints as well as new set of values, beliefs and standards" (Foner 1997, 969). Due to economic conditions and opportunities, Sikh women have started gaining a semblance of authority in the with respect to their parents and spouses, as they started to contribute to household income. One thing that is uniform across all societies is that when the position of women changes primarily due to economic reasons, a tectonic shift in the traditional family set-up takes place. It could be because an essential constituent that forms the bedrock of traditional family is the subordination of women who are delegated to do household work and rear children. A bank employee in London states:

> "*My sister never had the freedom I got because she was not ambitious and married young. There are so many things that my parents let me do which they would have never allowed her, for example, my mother came from Birmingham to London to set up my house where she knew I was going to live with my boyfriend. We got married later, but that's a different matter. Also, her husband does not allow her to trim her* kes *but as you can see, I have layers and my husband never interferes in such matters*." (SFC10)

When it comes to marriage, the British Sikh community has the second highest rate of marriage at 55% which is above the national average - 48% (BSR 2015, 29)[58]. The divorce rate among Sikhs is quite low - 5% as compared to the national average at 9% (Ibid.). Singh and Tatla (2006, 170) note that "because of the innate conservatism of new migrants, there was a tendency to marry at a very early age – a tradition still pervasive in the British Sikh society today". Marriages were invariably arranged

[57] A chain of British supermarket retailers.
[58] Highest is Hindu community with over 60% marriage rate.

through family and kinship networks in Punjab. There were many reasons why people opted to bring over a spouse from India – kinship obligations (whereby a relative of friend would propose someone, in many cases that person could be a migration aspirant), desire to maintain traditional character of the family or simply due to the difficulty of finding someone from the diasporic community. The most interesting response in this regard, displaying her agency, was one of the second-generation immigrant mentioned that, "*I wanted a man from India, a real Singh, with a* pagh *and beard. These clean-shaven Sikh boys in Britain didn't even look like men to me. I just kept rejecting all proposals from here because I was not attracted to any of them*" (SFB20). There exists an important body of anthropological work on the patterns of marriage of the British South Asian community (Ballard 1990, Charsley 2005), which examines the historical, cultural, colonial and religious contexts of marriage migration. Foner (1997) notes that one of the main reasons for the transmigration of cultural patterns across borders, albeit in modified form is the prevalence of these dense ethnic networks, institutions and ties, leading to what Guarnizo (1997) has labelled "multilocal binational families". However, while the earlier alliances of UK Sikhs with India were successful, over the generations, it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain. It could be because of the differences in people's mentality, expectations and worldviews, as one respondent notes:

> "*A vichola settled our wedding and we went to Punjab and brought my wife over here. In the beginning, there wasn't any palpable issue. We weren't super-happy but we were functional and had our two kids. However, we just kept falling apart. And now we don't talk at all. Its all mechanical. I am the quiet one and she bursts out sometimes. I don't blame her; it is a very hard situation. We both love our kids and divorce doesn't seem like an option for us, but I am actively seeking some partnership now as I am emotionally very lonely, and I hope she finds someone too*." (SMC13)

Singh and Tatla (2006) mention that the popularity of Punjab for marriage is falling as the people in the diaspora are trying to find partners from the diaspora itself and many marriages are taking place between UK, Canada and USA Sikhs. This makes the Sikhs a 'multilocal multinational family' with ties in more than two countries.

Prevalence of violence and abuse in NRI Sikh marriages is well documented and reported. Thandi (2013) highlights the issue of 'NRI bride abuse' and gives a varied look into the motives behind these matters. He mentions that the focus in such cases has been very one-sided – woman from rural Punjab getting married in the diaspora and being abused, whereas almost with same frequency, other permutations and

combinations also take place – woman from diaspora marries a man from Punjab and indulges in abuse, men or women marry just to migrate and upon reaching the destination, leave the spouse – and the likes. Forced marriages have also been very prevalent in South Asian communities, but Qureshi (2015) notes that the case is much lesser in Sikhs as compared to Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities. Access to social services and presence of better laws in the new country of immigration assist the victims of abusive relationships and forced marriages to come out of situations that might not be conducive for their well-being (Whiting 1984). A Sikh woman who runs an NGO in Southall, showed me a suitcase which had a duvet, two sets of free-size clothes, undergarments and toiletries; and said:

> "*We primarily support women facing abuse at home and have at least three women from the BME*[59] *communities reaching out to us every week. They are physically and mentally in deep distress when they escape, and mostly have nothing on them. Only a few have the time and opportunity to sneak some money. We give them these suitcases and have them hosted in some of our volunteers houses and soon get them access to social and legal services. Most of the issues concern alcohol abuse and fake marriages done for immigration. I started doing this work because my father would beat my mum all the time and we spent our entire childhood in fear. One day, I ran to the payphone and called the police on him. That was the day I decided, I will no longer take this sitting down*." (SFB22)

The much-publicised case of Kiranjit Ahluwalia is testimony to the problem of domestic abuse, which is often coupled with alcohol abuse. While drinking is prohibited in Sikhism, alcohol abuse is a well-recognised problem prevalent among Sikhs in Britain. Various studies (Cochrane and Bal 1990, McKuigue and Karmi 1993) have shown that heavy drinking as a problem is most rampant in Sikh men, surpassing White, Black and other Asian communities. Kumar et al. (2018) reported in the BBC that "for many British Punjabis, alcohol abuse is an open secret. Alcohol consumption is glamorised across different aspects of Punjabi culture and shame stops many seeking the help that they need." A poll conducted by BMG Research in 2018 revealed that over a quarter of British Sikhs acknowledged that they have a family member with an alcohol problem. According to this poll, even as nearly 40% of Sikhs do not drink, 50% of them have been under pressure to drink on social occasions. Half of the respondents remain fairly worried regarding anyone finding out about the

[59] Black, Minority, Ethnic. A term that has been adopted to include all minorities of colour since the race understanding has developed in the UK from the time when Black was seen as the only axis of otherness.

alcohol problem of their family member. The issue of *izzat* plays a big role in this matter and is in a way retarding any intervention that might be of help. Gradually, the Sikh society is stepping up from recognition to building sensitivity. Many Gurudwaras have started *seva*-based rehabilitation to members of the community. Keval and Keval (2015) have conducted a fascinating study on the nexus between spirituality and de-addiction. The NHS website gives a long list of organisations that can be contacted in case of an issue like this, but how many Sikhs are taking that route remains to be researched. During this research, nobody with an alcohol problem was encountered but a large number of respondents, while sharing their experiences, mentioned someone with an alcohol problem causing stress in the family.

Box 3.1

During field trip for this research, I had a chance encounter with a Sikh man in his early 40s, who displayed a mixture of reasons – broken family, identity crisis – that could have led to his deplorable mental condition. At first sight, he seemed to be a professional, fairly well-dressed with a laptop bag, seated on the sofa in the hostel lobby in Birmingham. I approached him and asked if he would give me an interview for my research. He introduced himself as Timothy Singh Khalsa and agreed to talk to me. We went for lunch at a restaurant where he began talking incoherently. He did not let me ask him anything and kept speaking, sometimes very loudly. His father was an alcoholic who used to beat his mother. She divorced him, subjecting the family to much dishonour. He was married with two children, but his wife had left him and taken the children to the US. He then went on a self-aggrandizing rant as to how he was a Khalistani and the Indian and British governments were after him, how they were placing microphones recording his voice and movements in every place he went, how he was once jailed and they tried to drug him and he refused. He even showed me his case papers, which was when I realised that his name was not Timothy Singh Khalsa but normal Sikh name with Singh as his surname. I did not raise the matter with him. In the nationality column, he had written 'Khalistani'. He then showed me a manuscript of a book that he claimed he had written to expose the Indian and British government's role in Operation Bluestar. A quick glance at it made me realise it was full of incoherent sentences, identical to the ones he was speaking. A long time passed before I could excuse myself from him, not before he began loudly abusing and laughing at some White British people at the restaurant. This remains one of the most harrowing experiences during my field work, and that is saying something, considering I was once offered a pound by an old Sikh man outside a gurudwara, when I approached him to talk to him, because he thought I was begging!!!

There is a growing awareness regarding mental health issues in the Sikh community and like alcoholism, this is also a taboo subject and Sikhs do not openly admit to it. Interestingly, while only 10% women and 5% men admitted to having been diagnosed with mental health issues, almost a third of them admitted to knowing someone else

who was diagnosed (BSR 2018). The main article featured in the BSR 2018 was on mental health and British Sikhs. Dr. Johal historicised the prevalence of mental health among the first migrants when they struggled with the pressures of a new industrial life coupled with distance from loved ones and rural lifestyle. She then discusses about its prevalence in today's world, especially with the coming of the social media culture. She also discusses mental health in the light of Sikh theology and argues how *nam japna* and *seva* are very effective to keep mental balance in life which is filled with worldly vices like *kam* (lust/desire), *krodh* (anger), *moh* (attachment), *lobh* (greed) and *ahankar* (ego/pride). A group of Sikh clinical psychologists employed in the NHS have also started a research cum support website, sikhyourmind.com, whereby they share resources, information and guidance to empower the community in case of such issues.

With respect to physical disability, there is a growing movement among the British Sikhs to make places of worship more disable friendly. As of now, most gurudwaras do not permit wheelchairs to facilitate people with disabilities (PWD) to pay their respects to the Guru Granth Sahib, attend family functions or just sit and listen to kirtan. BSR 2019 notes that 50% of all disabilities among the British Sikh people is physical in nature, and yet a lot needs to be done to ensure their inclusion. The Equality Act 2010 made it illegal to discriminate against anyone based on the physical condition but traditionalists in the gurudwaras claim that the *Akal Takht* does not permit bringing in chairs inside the durbar hall. They also mention that the *Sikh Rahit Maryada* requires people to sit cross legged in the gurudwara and that the Equality Act does not imply on the codes of religious conduct (Barfi Culture 2018). However, this is increasingly met with challenges from within the community as people demand better support from the community, improvement in the level of awareness and sensitivity towards disability, ending stigma associated with it and to make places of worship inclusive and accessible to all (BSR 2019). On the contrary, the gurudwaras in India are gradually becoming disable friendly, providing ramps, electric vehicles and wheelchairs for the devotees. Mishra (2018) reported that Gurudwara Bangla Sahib is the most disable friendly place of worship in Delhi. This is another example of endogenous discrimination and has maximum impact on the elderly people of the community, the ones who came and began setting up these institutions at the first place.

Change is the only constant in an immigrants' life, even as they reach the final years of their life. While households used to be multi-generational earlier, with the elderly getting adequate care, support and company from their children, there is a fast-paced move towards nuclear families as the latter move away to build their own families. The BSR 2018 reports that the Sikh elders preferred staying with extended family, followed by their own home and a retirement village. Care homes are not popular among British Sikhs. With pensions, savings and properties, most elderly Sikhs are financially secure. Like all elders in the UK, they also receive free healthcare and some other benefits in specific places like free bus pass in the Midlands. However, there remain a number of issues that they face. BSR 2013 reported that 68% of elderly people face a language barrier and cannot fully interact or participate in social life without assistance. When they arrived, there was no time to learn the language. They lived in close-knit community circles and continued to just work hard and it is now that they are facing trouble. While some gurudwaras have taken the initiative to provide for activity rooms for elders to connect and socialize, much more needs to be done for them. One of the major problems that they are facing in this age, with fragmented families, coupled with language barrier, disability, inability to frequently go to India by themselves is loneliness. After a very spirited interview, one of the respondents in her 80s said she wanted to give me a personal advice and said, "*If at all you can manage to stay in India, even with a little less food and fewer clothes to wear, just stay.* Ethe baut kall-pana ae *(it is extremely lonely here)*" (SFA38).

Another minority-within-minority is the case of LGBTQIA Sikhs. Roughly around 1980s onwards, western liberal democracies began having open recognition and conversation about different sexual orientations. Laws like the Equality Act 2010 in the UK and European Union Equal Opportunities Directive to Outlaw Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation (2000) have given legitimacy to sexual minorities and enabled them to come 'out'. This has come as a challenge to the 'hyper-masculine' Sikh society, where traditionalists see such 'anti-human tendencies' emanating from 'sick minds' which need to be stopped (Singh and Tatla 2006). When a Same Sex Marriage Bill was introduced in the Canadian parliament in 2005, the Akal Takht declared that such marriages were against the *Gurmat* (Guru's will) and that the Sikh code of conduct does not allow that. The UK has shown strong support to the LGBTQIA movement which has enabled quite a few gay Sikhs to come 'out' and

campaign for a need to recognition of sexual difference in the community. One of the most prominent voice on the issue is that of Manjinder Singh Sidhu, who makes videos to spread awareness and increase acceptance of sexual minorities, despite facing a lot of backlash and threats from his family. His videos often feature his mother who supports him (Kainth 2017). Jasbir Singh, a keshdhari Sikh is another prominent gay rights spokesperson, who has been involved in many campaigns and organizations to spread awareness and give the members of the community who might be gay, a safe haven to open up. He bases his thoughts on his faith by claiming that. "I have not found anything in Sikhism that condemns homosexuality. However, one thing that the religion has always preached is supreme tolerance and equality for all. Guru Gobind Singh Ji himself said '*manas ki jat sabhe ekhi pechanbo*' – 'all of mankind is but one'" (Singh 2005)

3.6- Conclusion

This chapter begins with presenting the social profile of the British-Sikh community – the population, areas of settlement, education and employement. It then moves on to describe, through the lives of the ten Gurus, about the Sikh way of life. It is here that we learn about the embeddedness of some of their practices and beliefs, which will then give us perspective to see their actions in the context of community cohesion in the next chapter. Further, there is a brief overview of the Sikh family and community life, whereby many issues such as caste, gender, sexuality, old-age and disability are discussed through which we understand the endogenous discrimination that Sikh people in the country face, and which has the potential to hinder their integration according to principles of commuity cohesion.

CHAPTER 4

COMMUNITY COHESION AND SIKHS

4.1- Introduction

In the previous chapters, we discussed the evolution of the immigration laws and the changes in policies pertaining to accommodating the increasing diversity and tackling racism resulting from NCW immigration in the UK. We also discussed the immigration of Sikhs, their struggles for expression of their identity as well as for full participation in public life, and the community and family life that they have established for themselves in the country.

So far, it has been observed that the immigration policies that started with being completely open for all the people in the commonwealth, moved on to become increasingly colour restrictive and finally took a turn towards skill and needs based migration. With respect to 'integration' of immigrants from diverse backgrounds who were subjected to racism in every walk of life – housing, employment, access to public places and services – and expected to assimilate in the early years, things started to take a fresh turn with the arrival of the discourse of multiculturalism . While there is no exact starting point of multiculturalism that can be located; in the context of the UK, it will not be off the mark to say that the institutionalisation of multicultural ideals began with the passage of the first RRA in 1965 and thereafter, broadened with every RRA. The manifestation of multiculturalism, as we observed in the case of Sikhs' struggles for expression of their identity, was not automatic or top-down. Many ground-level struggles led by the minority communities contributed to making the UK a more accommodating polity. However, as the diversity in the country began to deepen by the last decade of the previous century, it is alleged that the ideals of multiculturalism began to display their inadequacies. In 2001, a new strategy for diverse communities to 'get along together', called community cohesion, began to take shape.

This chapter begins with discussing the conditions that led to the shift in the 'integration' policy of the UK from multiculturalism to community cohesion. We then discuss the main arguments around this new idea, which is very subjective and difficult to measure. Following that, the question of 'integration' of Sikhs in the context of community cohesion is analysed.

4.2- Onwards to Policy Change

This section discusses some important events that contributed to the development in the race discourse in the UK and finally the riots led to the change in state policy from multiculturalism to community cohesion.

4.2.1- The Rushdie Affair

One of the characteristics of concepts and theories pertaining to human society is that there are no clear-cut absolute definitions or answers. There are only discourses. Multiculturalism is one such discourse with variations depending on who is talking about multiculturalism, in what context and from where. Very broadly speaking,

> "The core concept of multiculturalism is citizenship…a form of membership, a relationship with each other which has to be expressed within an ethical, principled framework. The law, legal entitlements and legal protections are part of that…this ethical framework is informed by key ideas like liberty, equality, fraternity or unity and democracy. In liberal theories, citizenship is principally understood in terms of the relationship between the individual and the state and so citizenship is primarily thought of as a right against the state. But there are more republican conceptions of citizenship…in which a vertical relation between an individual and the state is complemented by a horizontal one between citizens. Citizenship, then…is the ethics of civility, the ethics of how we relate to each other as citizens and not just rights against the state." (Speech by Tariq Modood transcribed by Antonisch 2015, 11)

In this sense, multiculturalism focuses on the fundamental concept of equal citizenship, which rests on non-discrimination, i.e. citizens should not be discriminated on the basis of race, gender, ethnicity, disability and other such dimensions. In the above speech, Modood contends that this concept of equality creates two classes of citizens, one who are unproblematic, full, normal citizens and the other, who have some kind of problem, which needs to be resolved in order to become like the first. This is in a way how assimilationists understand equality. Multiculturalists, however, claim that in addition to non-discrimination, minorities also must have the right to "have one's difference recognized and supported in both public and private spheres" (Antonisch 2005, 12). Multicultural citizenship entails that minorities also have a claim on national and civic identities. Just like the majority creates a sense of its evolution as a community by claiming a historic identity, the minority also must join in, broadening the understanding of national identity and actively participate in its constant making and remaking.

The 1982 *Mandla vs. Dowell Lee* was a significant moment for British multiculturalism. It marked the end of racial dualism and the beginning of ethnic pluralism (Modood 1993), indicating that the hitherto perception of the society that revolved around the axis of Blackness and Whiteness was inadequate and there was a need to broaden this self-understanding of the British polity. It was soon followed by the Asian ethnicity assertion to the CRE, against the imposition of 'Black' identity on all minorities. The recognition of difference and understanding of diversity in the British state was deepening. So far, the state had developed formal discourse with opposing, understanding and accommodating the Irish and the Jewish people[60], the Black people[61] and the Sikhs[62]. However, a large proportion of the NCW migrants were Muslims, who had hitherto not had a direct conflict with the state and were neither protected under the RRA nor had formal recognition or institutional accommodation. The Rushdie Affair happened in this backdrop.

In 1988, noted novelist Salman Rushdie published a book in the UK, Satanic Verses, in which there were parts that subverted some of the Islamic beliefs and were also loosely based on the life of Prophet Mohammed, which is *haraam*[63] in Islam. This precipitated a political crisis as Muslims across the country marched in protest against the book, calling for it to be banned. The issue soon gained a transnational character as Muslims across the world vehemently opposed it and the Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini issued a *fatwa*[64] against Rushdie, calling out for his death. The Thatcher government gave him personnel protection and shifted him to undisclosed safe houses every few days but politicians across the spectrum expressed shock and discontent at the mass opposition of the British Muslims, who were against the book but did not necessarily support the *fatwa*. The state and civil society ruled out any ban, based on liberal principles of upholding freedom of speech, and called out for Muslims to understand and respect the 'host' society and not isolate themselves from its 'culture'. Television and newspapers were quick to profile the British Muslims as 'fundamentalists' and unanimously condemned them (Pipes 1990). (Asad 1990) argues that the response of the British society was disproportionate considering that

[60] Older immigrant communities, prior to 1948, issues related to immigration focussed on the Jewish and Irish migration; the 1905 Aliens Act was passed to restrict Jewish immigration.
[6161] Who were central to the British Race Relations discourse.
[62] Who had started asserting their right to embody their religious symbols, primarily the turban
[63] Blasphemous
[64] A religious indictment based on Sharia (Islamic law) issued by recognized authority

there was no law and order concern related to this, as there had been in many other issues related to race –from riots to murders – which was not uncommon in the UK and had taken place many times before (see section 2.9). He also says that the backlash from the liberal elites was primarily because of "the politicization of a religious tradition that has no place in the cultural hegemony that has defined British identity over the last century particularly as that tradition has come from a once-colonised society" (Asad 1990, 462).

Following this episode, many commentators began to express their doubts about multiculturalism and renewed a discussion on being 'proper British'. Assimilatory views began to be expressed as public intellectuals and politicians began denouncing multiculturalism. One of the most prominent opposition came from the prize-winning author Fay Weldon as she declared,

> "The uni-culturalist policy of the United States *worked*, welding its new peoples, from every race, every nation, every belief, into a whole: let the child do what it wants at home; here in school, the one flag is saluted, the one God worshipped, the one nation acknowledged." (Weldon 1989, 32)

This brought the term 'tolerance' of difference into sharp relief and highlighted the limits of that toleration, which was exposed to be contingent upon the will of the group who is doing the tolerating. This group is the more powerful section of the society, the unproblematic citizen as mentioned above, and can withdraw its toleration if it so decides, thereby laying a stronger claim of citizenship as compared to the identity under question. The response of multiculturalists to this crisis was that instead of being rooted in the rhetoric of absolutism when it comes to freedom of speech and condemning Muslims, it was important to have a "dialogue with Muslims about what the problem is, why are they angry, why do they feel hurt? Don't condemn, don't resort to an absolutist, unrealistic conception of freedom of speech, listen" (Antonisch 2015, 15). Modood (1993) argued that based on the 1982 decision regarding the turban, it would be appropriate to recognize the importance of religion in the self-identity of Muslims and develop respect and establish authority of some of its basic unalterable tenets. The Rushdie Affair underscored the need for thorough examination of the fundamentals of the Islam[65] and to understand and accommodate it in the liberal

[65] The fact that Prophet Mohammed cannot be depicted in art, or his life subverted in any way in literature is blasphemous in Islam, in fact is one of the biggest acts of blasphemy. The Charlie Hebdo murders, one of the most horrific religiously motivated massacres in the Western Hemisphere happened due to this very reason.

society, as they had done with Sikhs in *Mandla vs Dowell Lee*. This, however, remains an unfinished project till date as the western societies and Islam continue to be incompatible on various fronts. It is indeed one of the biggest enduring challenges for the scholars of identity politics.

Fifteen years later, a similar incident happened, only this time, it was the Sikh community which was at the center of it all. In 2004, A play titled *Behzti* (dishonor), written by the British-Sikh playwright Gurpreet Kaur Bhatti, which showed scenes of rape and murder in a gurudwara, by the *giani*, was deemed deeply offensive to the Sikhs. They surrounded the Birmingham theatre where it was being staged and protested that the play be cancelled. Upon the rejection of their demand, Sikh groups marched inside the theatre and created panic. The play had to eventually be cancelled and Bhatti had to move underground for her safety as she received death threats. Such are the times when the limits of multiculturalism and liberalism are tested. In July 2019, a *giani* in Auckland was charged guilty of sexually abusing children inside the gurudwara premises (Saxton, 2019).

4.2.2- Institutional Racism in the UK

With the arrival of coloured migrants after the passage of 1948 BNA, the initial racist responses towards them was categorized as xenophobia, a natural fear of strangers; but soon, the race riots and politicisation of race issues for electoral gain began. 'Integration' of the newcomers was mostly viewed as assimilation unless Roy Jenkins intervened with his multicultural ideas and introduced the RRA. The 1965 and 1968 RRA, however, were more reliant on conciliation rather than prosecution and the problems recognised were rather simplistic – the 'host' society needed to reduce prejudice and support multiculturalism as the new immigrants faced cultural problems and needed to be given their 'cultural space'[66] (Bourne 2001).

As early as 1960s and 1970s, the black community was pre-occupied by concerns related to a racist police force[67], a biased justice system, a discriminatory educational

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[66] This researcher believes that the Sikh struggles of expression, in Manchester and especially Wolverhampton, of their religious identity contributed to the development of this view.
[67] In 1965, Joseph A. Hunte published a report titled 'Nigger Hunting in England?', which gave details of police misdemeanours against the immigrant population. The 1969 *Mangrove Nine* case also highlighted this issue.

system[68] and racist immigration laws. In his classic essay titled 'Race, Class and the State', Sivanandan argued that the immigration policies of the UK:

> "took discrimination out of the market-place and gave it the sanction of the state. They made racism respectable and clinical by institutionalising it. But in so doing they also increased the social and political consequences of racism." (Sivanandan 1976)

That the British people were racists was formally accepted when the RRA were passed, indicating that there was a need to curb it. However, what is often missed by countries with diverse populations is that the notions of racism and discrimination that are prevalent in the society get carried forward to state institutions as people belonging to this very society are the one that comprise it. Despite ample evidence, it is not easy for any state to accept that its institutions are flawed in any way. The passage of RRA did not manage to stop the slew of big and small race riots across Britain. As the post war economic boom had ended by the 1970s and unemployment (which was nearly double the national average for minority populations) was on a rise, clashes between the coloured people and White British youth became frequent especially in the inner cities, which had been post-war manufacturing hubs but were now crucibles of discontent (Rhodes, 2018). The Black population in West London was highly skeptical of the police force following the Mangrove Nine[69] case and that culminated into the 1981 Brixton riot, where over the course of two days, Black youth clashed with the Metropolitan Police Force, leading to a considerable number of injured persons and damage of property running into millions (John 2006).

Thatcher's Conservative government set up a committee under Lord Scarman, to enquire into the matter and make recommendations to that effect. The Scarman Report, while acknowledging that there was definitely an existence of 'racial disadvantage' in the British Society, denied that there was any institutional racism. The Report categorically stated that the 'direction and policies of the Metropolitan Police are not racist' and that 'racial prejudice does manifest itself occasionally in the behaviour of a few officers on the streets', maintaining that such behavior could only

[68] 1971 book by Bernard Coard titled 'How the West Indian Child is made Educationally Sub-normal in the British School System discussed this matter in detail.

[69] The Mangrove was a Caribbean restaurant in Notting Hill, West London, which had become a hub of Black cultural and political activity. It was also frequented by White radicals, artists and musicians and authors. The police grew suspicious of it and began raiding it in 1969. A group of nine Black activists were arrested and in a much publicized trial, they challenged the legitimacy of the judicial process, thereby leading to the first judicial acknowledgement of racism within the police force.

be seen when ‘an officer was young, inexperienced and frightened’! (Behrens 1982). Bourne (2001, 10) argued that “Lord Scarman’s report was critical – both for the way it set back the analysis of racism and for the conditions created for a very dubious set of anti-racist programmes in the decade-and-a-half to come” and called it ‘the Scarman whitewash’.

In the year 1993, the murder of Stephen Lawrence became cause célèbre in the matter. Lawrence was a teenager born to Jamaican parents who had migrated in the 1960s, who was stabbed to death in a racially motivated attack at a bus station in South London. Following a botched police inquiry, failure to prosecute the muderers, and popular outrage, a public enquiry was conducted by Sir William Macpherson. It is the report of this enquiry, popularly known as the Macpherson report which for the first time officially and unequivocally accepted the reality of institutional racism:

> “It is incumbent on every institution to examine their policies and the outcomes of their policies and practices to guard against disadvantaging any section of our communities . . .There must be an unequivocal acceptance of institutional racism and its nature before it can be addressed.” (Home Office, 1999)

The report made 70 tangible recommendations for handling police racism, as well as investigating and prosecuting in cases related to racism. It also directed liaising with victims’ families and talking the youth out of racism. The report made headlines as newspapers across the political spectrum hailed the verdict:

> “‘Watershed for a fairer Britain’ (*Evening Standard*), ‘An historic race relations revolution’ (*Daily Mail*), ‘Dossier of shame that will change the face of Britain’s race relations’ (*Daily Mirror*), ‘Racists won’t win’ (*Sun*), ‘Never ever again’ (*Express*), ‘Findings should open all our eyes’ (*Daily Telegraph*), ‘Damning verdict on Met’(*Yorkshire Post*)” (Bourne 2001, 7)

The Macpherson report has had far reaching consequences by introducing ethnic recruitment and retention as well as equality performance targets for the police force and other institutions as well. On one hand, a lot of progress seems to have been made in the wake of this report, Bourne (2001) and Lea (2000) argue that on the other, the state has been introducing new forms of institutional racism, for example suspending the rights of defendants in cases of minor thefts, assault and criminal damage, to opt for trial by jury, when it is well known that the minorities are more likely to be charged with such cases. Kushnick (1999) brought out a detailed report titled ‘Over Policed and Under Protected’ to highlight these racial biases which gives statistical evidence to that effect. It states categorically that BME people are 7.5 times more

likely to be stopped and searched and 4 times more likely to be arrested than white people. It also mentions that while 90% of cases concerning the murder of white people have suspects, only 60% of cases concerning the murder of BME people have such level of investigation as to produce any suspects.

Bourne (2001) therefore contends that while Macpherson succeeded in institutionalizing institutional racism, he left out state racism altogether, which gives members of a racist society and superstructure to continue with its backdoor racism via racist immigration laws, sus laws, deportations, deaths in custody and many such manifestations of racism which continue unabated. She states that racism cannot be eliminated unless state racism exists and that 'state racism contaminates civil society'. In 1997, Ricky Reel, a Sikh youth was murdered in a racially motivated attack and his murderers have not been found till date (Taylor and Baksh, 2013).

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act which was passed in the year 2000 broadened the RRA 1976 and was a positive step towards lessening the deep rooted institutional racism. It brought under its ambit many of the hitherto left out aspects pertaining to the state apparatus. It expanded the powers of the CRE and outlawed racial discrimination in public authority functions, bringing police and private players providing public service under this law. It made the chief police officer under whose command personnel would commit such discrimination liable under the Act.

4.2.3- The Future of Multiethnic Britain: Parekh Report

With increasing diversity as well as the population of British born children of immigrants and their rising discontents, it became incumbent upon the well-meaning part of the society to make sense of the idea of the British state/nation and re-imagine it in a way that accorded equality to all who were citizens of this country. In order to "produce a high-profile, public document which would make a range of practical policy recommendations to construct Britain as a confident and vibrant multicultural society at ease with its rich diversity" (McLaughlin and Neal, 2007, 910), the Runnymede Trust established the Commission on the Future of Multi-ethnic Britain (CFMB) in 1997 which was chaired by Lord Bhikhu Parekh. The CFMB came out with its report which is commonly called 'The Parekh Report' in the year 2000. This report was released at a time when few, if any, countries were left to claim a

homogenous national identity and Canada had officially declared itself a 'multicultural' state (Ahmed 2000).

The report expressly stated that the hitherto held ideas of British national identity were outdated and a serious re-thinking was needed which would include the minorities as 'British' and no longer as 'immigrants' implying an outsider status to them. It received a great deal of backlash where several media agencies proclaimed that the report, which itself was chaired by and released in the name of a South Asian public intellectual, concluded that 'being British is racist' (McLaughlin and Neal 2004).

Notwithstanding the reaction of the media and consequently the public, it has been acknowledged that the Parekh report is an important piece of work to make sense of the world, in which nation-states are increasingly becoming more and more diverse and the ideas of nation and nationalism, primarily based on a common language, culture and history of belonging, are under duress. In this regard, it has been rightly argued that the "story of the Commission and the report contain a transnational and tenacious topicality" (McLaughlin and Neal, 2007, 911). We discuss, in this section, some of the salient points of the report, which are pertinent to this research.

As has been argued over the course of Chapter 2, the self-understanding of what Britain is, began to slowly but surely change over the time after the Second World War, as its imperial power began to decline and gradually disappear. Its economic and military prowess also fell and concurrently, its membership of European Economic Community and mass migration happened. The CMEB report said that "Britain can respond by trying to turn the clock back…digging in, defending…old values…or…it can try to create more…inclusive and cosmopolitan images of itself" (Uberoi, 2015, 512), and endorsed the latter view.

Broadly speaking, conservative nationalists view the nation as a 'natural organism' where members of the same 'stock', among other things, share a common descent and fate. They believe in the eternity of nation – "one that is the same for current members as it was for their ancestors and will be for their children" (Scruton, 1990, 306). According to them national identities are natural and can either be conserved or let die, but there can never be a remaking of it. Liberal nationalists like Renan (2001), Kymlicka(1995), Miller (1995) and Tamir (1993) believe that the members of a

nation share an understanding that they wish to live a 'collective life' and suggest that any divisive part of their history should be forgotten in order to achieve that. The Parekh report did not favour any of the above views and stated that historical episodes of injustice and discrimination cannot be forgotten and in fact, form an important part of the history of the people at the receiving end, the minorities. The report often referred to Britain as a 'state' and 'post nation' and is ambiguous and skeptical about it being called a 'nation'.

However, 'nation' has been defined in the report as a "community of communities and…of citizens" (CMEB, 2000, 56), ensuring that the "British people included in their understandings of Britain not just 'individual' citizens but those who see themselves as part of racial, religious, cultural, regional and other groups" (Uberoi, 2015, 512). The report called for developing among the people, a 'mental image' of Britain that was inclusive of minorities as that would help normalize minorities, reduce fear of them and subsequently discrimination against them. In this sense, the report discussed 're-imagining' the understanding of Britain, so that it can include minorities.

A number of recommendations were made to develop this re-thinking among the polity. Public disputes such as the turban campaigns in the earlier decades and Rushdie Affair more recently in a way compel people to think and discuss about the country's multicultural reality and that was the first step towards developing a consensus to include cultural minorities in the national imagination (CMEB, 2000, 52). This highlights the importance of protests and brings to mind the writing on a plaque at the Museum of Ethnology in Barcelona, which reads: "Human groups periodically celebrate their own existence. Public spaces are scenarios that are transformed at festive times. And celebration is a strategy of reaffirmation , and therefore it sometimes takes on the appearance of a rejection of the established order – but it is a channel of criticism that is restricted, by time, by space and by the persons involved. Festivity and protest are articulated by means of objects that are a permanent testimony to cultural change".

It was also recommended that Britain must declare itself multicultural, just like Canada, and later Australia, did. Efforts needed to be made to teach children about British multiculturalism, thereby legitimizing and promoting the idea that Britain was

a community including different cultural minority communities (CMEB, 2000, 276). Another important recommendation was that through public funded education in arts, the various truths about the Empire and discrimination, which is largely absent from public discourse, should be revealed, which would help in phasing out the idea that solely white people are British and that they are superior to others. It was deemed important also to highlight how different people have different relationship with Britain according to their regional, religious, colonial, historical and cultural context, and that they see Britain differently than the majority community, at the same time, contributing to the understanding of national identity in their own way (CMEB, 2000, 103).

The report also gives importance to 'people's sense of national identity and belonging' and discussed the understanding of Britain referring to the idea of 'political community'. Parekh (1994) sees a political community as a group of people concentrated territorially, who accept a common mode of conducting their collective affairs, which include common institutions, procedures, values, norms and often a common language. It is often observed that people belonging to minority communities claim that they are 'British', or that they feel 'British':

> "When a person feels this way, they feel their political community shapes what they are…because its legal, political and educational institutions regulate their behaviour and condition their notions of what is acceptable and normal. They are partly, yet unavoidably, shaped by their political community. Thus…while political communities are shaped by their members, their members are also shaped by it." (Uberoi, 2015, 515).

However, Parekh (1995) made it clear that everyone belonging to the same political community would not automatically mean that there is a sense of sameness among people. The report instead described Britain as a 'post-nation' (Habermas) and suggested that Britain is a political community too culturaly diverse to constitute a singular nation, but because its legal and political institutions have shaped so many lives, people begin to see themselves as British, oftentimes hyphenated with their another identity – eg. British-Sikhs. The report does not outrightly reject the idea of national identity and recognises its utility in people's self-understanding as well as that of the political community that they are a part of. The "value of national identities for a particular political community stems from how its members must, from time to time, conceive collective goals and challenges that they will meet together (Parekh, 2000, 196). Uberoi (2015,520) argues that the Parekh report provides an "*outline* or

sketch for us how we can begin to think about the importance of national identities without nations, nationalisms and without being nationalists".

4.2.4- 2001 Race Riots

Barely a year after the Parekh report, calling for deepening of British multiculturalism was released, riots broke out in some northern towns and cities of England.

> "The first outbreak of serious disorder was in Bradford on Sunday 15th April. This was followed by those in Oldham, on 26-29 May and Burnley, on 24-26 June, and finally the second outbreak in Bradford on 7-10 July. Serious disturbances also occurred in Leeds on the 5th June and Stoke-on-Trent on the weekend of the 14-15 July." (Denham Report, 2001, 7).

All these areas were industrial hubs, for instance spun cotton in Oldham, traditional textile and heavy engineering in Burnley, which employed relatively low-skilled labour. Post-1950, high concentration of South Asian immigrant population, particularly from Pakistan and Bangladesh had settled there. These immigrants filled in the gap in labour supply that had occurred as there was a rise in expectation related to the working conditions across the country and it became difficult and unprofitable for owners to recruit White people (Oldham Report, 2001, 8). Even as the South Asian Muslim population settled in these areas, there was hardly any relationship between them and the White people, because the former preferred to stay within close-knit traditional groups and were mostly working night shifts; and the latter claimed that they would rather not have the Asians around (Ibid.). As the industrial growth retarded and many factories began to get closed down, these areas became concentrations of a high degree of disadvantage and dispossession.

Independent fact-finding committees under David Ritchie (Oldham), Lord Tony Clarke (Burnley) and Lord Herman Ouseley (Bradford), were set up by the Home Office to inquire into these riots that had led to hundreds of injuries and millions of pounds of loss in property. Table 4.1 gives details about these riots.

According to the Denham Report, which was a consolidated document drawing from the independent reports submitted by the independent inquiries, all the affected wards were amongst the 20% most deprived regions in the country, and some were placed in the lowest 1%. The average incomes in these regions were amongst the lowest in the country and there was very poor rate of educational attainment. Participants in these riots were primarily young people falling in the age bracket of 17-26 years and

belonged to both ethnic groups - White Christians and South Asian Muslims of Pakistani and Bangladeshi descent. Disturbances occurred in areas which were fractured on various lines – racial, cultural, religious, generational – and there was very little contact or dialogue between people across these divides. The disorders took place on the margins of minority neighbourhoods and far-right group activities promoted by the British Nationalist Party (BNP) had been reported in many affected areas. The prevalence of drugs and crime was also noted (Denham Report, 2001).

Table 4.1

	BRADFORD EASTER	BRADFORD JULY	BURNLEY	OLDHAM
No's involved in Disorders	Approx 100	400-500	400	500
Injuries	No police injured 20 members of the general public	326 police 14 members of the general public	83 police 28 members of the general public	2 police 3 members of the general public
Cost of damage	Estimated at £117,000	Estimated at £7.5-£10 million	Estimated at over £0.5 million	Estimated at £1.4 million

Source- Denham Report, 2001, 7

While it was clear that the main issue was economic disadvantage and lack of general well-being, these riots were labeled 'race riots'. Ted Cantle, in his independent report, coined the term "parallel lives" indicating the segregation between different ethnic communities and stating that these lives never touched each other or developed any meaningful interchanges (Cantle Report, 2001, 9). Lord Clarke, while reporting on Burnley described the state of affairs in the town – dilapidated housing and other buildings, 40% of households dependent on state benefit, low health standards, high levels of teenage pregnancy, mental illness and alcohol and drugs abuse, high crime rates – and said that even though Burnley was not a city, "it experiences all of the chronic problems associated with inner city deprivation" (Burnley Report, 2001, 3). After his discussion with various stakeholders in Burnley and a full-fledged enquiry, he concluded that:

> "I am convinced that what was described as a 'race riot' was in fact a series of criminal acts, perpetrated by a relatively small number of people. Certainly racial intolerance played a significant role in those disturbances; the

> confrontations that took place were clearly identified as aggression and violence by both white people and those from within the Asian Heritage communities. However, in my view, the label of 'race riots' does the people of Burnley a grave disservice." (Burnley Report, 2001, 4)

The opinion of Lord Clarke notwithstanding, the terms 'race riots', 'parallel lives', 'segregation' gained currency and a need to rethink the integration policies of the UK, which were so far dominated by the multicultural discourse, arose. It is alleged that the activities of Asian youth were disproportionately condemned and those of the White groups, led by the far right BNP were dismissed as being typical of extremists. The racial explanation of the event evaded bigger questions on the state of the economy and rather brought to the fore a distraction, someone to blame, something other than the workings of the capitalist economy to fix (Slade, 2015). It was at this juncture that Ted Cantle coined the term community cohesion.

4.3- Community Cohesion: A Discussion

It has not only been challenging to define community cohesion but also to maintain the consistency of that definition. In its brief and convoluted history, the concept "can be seen to reflect the shifting pre-occupations of government thinking and policy" (Slade, 2015, 50). From being a strategy for people to get along with each other (Lynch, 2001) to integration and assimilation (Communities and Local Government, 2008(a)) to preventing violent extremism (Communities and Local Government, 2008(b)), community cohesion has been invoked in various forms and contexts.

Very broadly speaking, Cantle's description – "…people who live in a local area getting together to promote or defend some common local interest" (Cantle Report, 2001, 14), that echoes with the definition given by the Institute of Community Cohesion[70] – a state of harmony or tolerance between people from different backgrounds living within a community – is useful for this research. Community Cohesion was intended to lay emphasis on acquiring a 'national identity', which was expected have the potential of 'super glue' for the diverse and often divided communities (Wetherell et al., 2007). Focus was on developing a sense of belonging and common vision to increase integration and cohesion of all the different communities into a (British) whole (Worley, 2005).

[70] This Institute was established in Coventry (West Midlands) by Ted Cantle, to provide a new approach to diversity and multicultural thinking in the UK.

The goals of community cohesion drew upon a range of implicit rather than explicit ideas (Lowndes and Thorp, 2011). It is then important to see what is likely to promote such cooperation among people. The concept of 'domains of cohesion' is helpful in this regard. According to that, "a cohesive society draws on common values, a civic culture, social order and social control, social solidarity, reductions in wealth disparities, social networks and attachment to places and identity" (Kearns and Forest, 2000, 2119). In order to mitigate the problems arising due to separateness and difference between communities operating in parallel lives which "do not seem to touch at any point, let alone overlap and promote any meaningful interchanges" (Cantle Report, 2001, 9), extensive reviews of planning and strategy was recommended for all local areas, with special focus on housing, education and intercultural/interfaith dialogue. Additionally, an attempt was made to promote improved political and civil leadership.

The Community Cohesion Pathfinder Programme was a major government initiative which focused on the 'social capital' approach to increase levels of intercultural communication with anticipation that it would positively impact community cohesion (Ratcliffe, 2011). Khan (2007) explains the social capital theory as based on various forms of interaction that take place in the community. They are of two major types – 'bonding' and 'bridging'. The former refers to the social ties within a community and the latter refers to the same across various community groups. The Institute of Community Cohesion developed numerous 'best practice' materials and toolkits to develop 'bridging' like the 'Swapping Cultures' project (DCLG, 2007), which were adopted by several local authorities.

In 2008, Cantle returned to his 2001 report and reviewed its recommendations. By this time, 'interculturalism' as a successor to multiculturalism was gaining academic ground in European thought circles. Cantle (2008) re-explored the patterns of prejudice, identities and cohesion strategies for the future, arguing that new perspectives for understanding multiculturalism and cultural difference needed to be developed. He also argued that differences in multicultural societies are complex and multi-layered and stated that class, ethnic and faith divisions were all separate and independent and all exist at the same time. He maintained that preservation of group identities served an important function for the people but the resulting separation led to parallel lives, marked by layers of differences on the axis of language, belief,

education, employment, leisure, housing, lifestyle and social structure like gender, family roles and equality. The thrust of his approach was again to build strategies to address parallel lives. He argued that to begin doing that, it is essential to assess the existing layers of differences that exist and then aim to "narrow those which perpetuate fundamental areas [of difference] whilst maintaining genuine cultural distinctions with the aim of developing a common approach to the values that underpin citizenship" (Cantle, 2008, 94).

Cantle suggested that the objective should not be either of the two extremes – assimilation or separate co-existence – but a kind of agreement over acceptable and unacceptable differences. It is for this reason that dialogue and cross-cultural contact are of utmost importance so that the ignorance and lack of understanding between them could be dispelled, leaving little room for the racists and extremists to demonise minority communities and spread myths and false information about them (Cantle, 2008, 188).

The 'race' riots had been quite unsettling for the Labour government and reminiscent of the civil disorders of the Thatcherite era (McGhee, 2005). The matter got exacerbated with the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York City that took place on 11th September[71], 2001 and when UK experienced its own attack by Islamic terrorist group. On 7th July 2005[72], a series of coordinated suicide bombings shook the transport system of London that took 52 lives[73]. Following this, a parallel community cohesion discourse began to develop, which focused on dealing with violent extremism and terrorism, with a focus on the Muslim community. With the 'war on terror' rhetoric of President Bush gaining traction worldwide, in Britain too, increasingly, the essential elements such as class and other inequalities that were the root of tensions between people were overlooked and focus was getting concentrated on encouraging people with different ethnicities to just get on with each other.

The earliest understandings of community cohesion revolved around concepts like citizens from all backgrounds having similar life opportunities, having an awareness of their rights and responsibilities and developing trust among themselves and with

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[71] This event is called 9/11.
[72] This event is called 7/7.
[73] Where 32 were diverse people with British Nationality and the rest 20 belonged to 17 different countries.

the local bodies and state institutions, which were expected to act fairly towards them all. Post 9/11 and 7/7, a parallel discourse emerged, "to develop communities that are cohesive, active and resilient to extremism" (Communities and Local Government, 2007, 7) and the official position was that the Muslim community "must be at the centre of the response to violent extremism…need to ensure community cohesion…strong, organized and empowered communities are better equipped to effectively reject the ideology of violent extremism." (Communities and Local Government, 2008b, 12).

As the social context around race and ethnicities changed with the so-called race riots, 9/11 and 7/7, multicultural policies were discredited as having failed to respond to the new challenges. Politicians, opinion polls, as well as voting behaviours indicated that a new plan was needed to figure out how to live *in* diversity, and not just *with* diversity (Antonisch and Matejskova, 2015). Community cohesion based on interculturalism was accepted to be the answer. However, it has three broad areas of contention. Firstly, its inexact and amorphous nature has created methodological problems, making it difficult to assess its impact, success or failure; secondly, the definitions/explanations/approaches that exist, leave room for a wide range of criticisms and finally; its focus on the Muslim communities not only makes the position of the policy unclear about other minorities but is also sometimes counterintuitive in promoting cohesion of the Muslims themselves. We will discuss each of these issues briefly.

The problem with community cohesion is the "underdevelopment of methodologies that can narrow separateness and difference and develop the essential bedrock of common values" (Slade, 2015, 59). Indeed the 2001 Cantle report provided 69 recommendations directed at the central and local governments to device a comprehensive programme for community cohesion, and many local bodies, public service providers and the central government itself have come out with scores of strategy documents have been published by all of them. However, research has shown that while these strategy papers are excellent vision documents, "insufficient attention has been given to the practicalities of engaging communities themselves" (Slade, 2015, 59).

Community cohesion surveys have been generally done via a fixed questionnaire approach with tick box options. Ratcliffe et al. (2008) question the validity of such 'snapshot' cross-sectional surveys and argue that the terminologies like 'background and belonging' and 'community' used in these surveys are too vague and broad to permit any meaning to these indicators. Any assessment of community cohesion needs to incorporate a range of broad and narrow based variables to be able to make sense of the vast complexities that exist. The authors stress that simple indicators like age, faith, economic class and gender alone do not tell much, except lay a context upon which more information is needed to build an analysis. They stress on the need to develop indicators that go beyond simple descriptors and to necessarily incorporate factors like social networks created by the social capital, bonding and bridging, that characterizes a community and the role of place, where every day lived experience happens. They also categorically state that quantitative methods simply cannot capture the subjective experiences of people, which is what matters when attempting to analyse a complex concept like community cohesion.

Coming to the second point of contention, there are a range of issues that have been pointed out by various researchers. First, while discussing the stress on 'British' values in community cohesion, Ratcliffe (2011) claims that the framework is tilted towards integration via assimilation. There is a whole body of research like Brah (1985) and Berger and Luckmann (1971) which argue that identities are constructed by social processes and a dialectical relationship of the people with the society. The interplay between an individual, their consciousness, the social structures and changes in them, produce, preserve, adapt and reshape identities. The community cohesion vision of developing a common national identity is "top down" as has been alleged by many critiques as well as was accepted by a councilor in charge of diversity and community cohesion of a super-diverse city in England, BM10, during interview for this research. He said that "*community cohesion is easy when you see it but hard to define in academic terms*". Community cohesion discourse gives the impression that a common British identity is disrupted by immigrants and diversity based on colour and especially religion, which is seen as:

> "…the distinguishing characteristic of new immigrants and their position in the inclusive nation envisaged under the New Labour policy making…Yet slippages in language within and around the discourse of community

> cohesion…highlight Asian minorities as a destructive force and a burden to the creation of positive social capital" (Cheong et al., 2007, 32).

This researcher opines that it is not totally accurate that government is outright in its favour of a singular national identity or assimilation. Paragraph 4 of a Home Office report states:

> "For those settling in Britain, the Government has a clear expectation that they will integrate into our society and economy because all the evidence indicates that this benefits them and the country as a whole…we consider that it is important for all citizens to have a sense of inclusive British identity. This does not mean that people need to choose between Britishness and other cultural identities, nor should they sacrifice their particular lifestyles, customs and beliefs. They should be proud of both (Home Office, 2005, 45).

However, Worley (2005) contends that this dichotomous construction of identity does not leave room for the multiplicities of identities that people carry and do not account for the transnational identity, which most people in the minority have.

Second is the treatment given to race, over other concerns that impact cohesion. Cheong et al. (2007) argue that the focus on 'integration' distracts from resolving underlying issues of structures and practices that create inequalities. Various commentators (Burnett 2008, McGhee 2003, Flint and Robinson 2008, Cooper 2008) who have assessed Cantle's analysis and the government policies that followed have claimed that these fail to fully acknowledge the role of wealth disparity, prevalent racism and other forms of inequalities as factors contributing to the occurrence of the disturbances and focus on communities, making them solely responsible for the segregation which was accepted as being the root cause for the complex problem that had surfaced in the form of riots. It is alleged that for Cantle and subsequently the government, it was the communities' failure to meaningfully engage with the diversity around them.

Since community cohesion is not only about the minorities but about the getting along of all communities, it is important to know about the views of the majority White Christian British people as well, who have not received adequate attention in the government documents. Beider (2011) conducted a research on the white working class population and identified a similar policy schism as exists in the case of minorities. On the one hand, there are local level initiatives promoting integration, social exclusion and community cohesion, but on the other, there are many policies that disproportionately affect the poor, working class communities such as stop and

search orders, little or no help for the homeless, the addicts and PWDs. Another research exploring the relationship between ethnicity, deprivation and community cohesion concluded that "it is not neighbourhood ethnic profile, but neighbourhood deprivation, which erodes social cohesion for ethnic minority and white British people in the UK" (Becares et al., 2011, 2783). It was thus recommended that to promote cohesion, there needs to be a shift in focus away from problematising ethnicity towards addressing deprivation issues.

Third criticism is about the promotion of a lack of historical sensitivity in community cohesion discourse as advocated by the liberal nationalists (discussed in section 4.2.3). Ratcliffe (2011) argues that community cohesion wishes away historically entrenched racism by simply promoting 'cross-sectional dialogue' which places it in the same wavelength as multiculturalism that hoped that differences could be 'negotiated'. The point is that community cohesion discourse is de-racialised to a certain extent as it exonerates the majority racism by promoting dialogue from this point onwards in the history of the relations between the communities in question. While discussing the 2001 riots, Burnett (2004) believed that the role of White racists who formed one part of the problem was dismissed as being 'extremist', indicating that not all the people were extremists, but when it came to the other side, the criminal actions of the Muslim youth was taken to be typical of the entire community.

This brings us to the final point of contention that community cohesion indicates a 'closed' view on Muslims, a perspective that underpins Islamophobhia (Runneymede Trust, 1997). While the earlier discourse was to do with equality and diversity, the latter brought threats to internal security under the realm of community cohesion with special focus on the Muslim community. It is noteworthy that multiple strategy documents were released to counter Islamic terrorism, but in comparison, negligible efforts were made to monitor extremist behavior in other groups.

Vultee (2009) argues that it is quite common for parallel discourses to prevail in government and media practices, owing to the complexity of the social context. However, when it comes to community cohesion, which is aimed at integration and bringing people together, the parallel discourse on tackling extremism with a focus on the Muslim community has been counter-intuitive because as they have created an atmosphere of fear and anxiety and significantly pushed the minorities inwards. In

Vultee's view, it is not accurate to say that Cantle himself overlooked the significance of racism and Islamophobia, as he had mentioned about it in his earlier report:

> "Islamophobia…was…identified as a problem in the areas we visited and for some young people was part of their daily experience. They felt they were being socially excluded because of their faith and this was not being recognised or dealt with." (Cantle, 2001, 40)

It were the later reports produced by the government agencies, as mentioned above, which singled out the Muslim community. Critics of community cohesion have questioned this emphasis and argued that multiculturalism is still a legitimate framework for mitigating racial discord. Many also argue that the new policy seemed like a 'knee-jerk' reaction to incidents that happened in a few cities between two particular groups of people, whose experience cannot be generalized and that there are a wide range of communities who do have the issues that led to disturbances in the first place (Lowndes and Thorp, 2011).

However, it is observed that while critiques of Cantle highlight the lacunae in his analysis and solution to the problem as he saw it, none of them have suggested or devised alternative solutions, in which case, Cantle's community cohesion is what one has to work with, more so because it has governmental backing. Cantle's findings suggest that while religious identity/faith/belief gave a sense of pride and belonging to the people, it was also a source of hurt and a barrier to their participation in public life. Bringing together all of the approaches and concepts discussed in this chapter so far, the next section analyses the question of 'integration' of the Sikhs in the context of community cohesion.

4.4- The Era of Community Cohesion and Sikh Integration

As we approach the climax of this research, let us recall some things from the previous chapters. Sections 2.3 and 2.8 discuss the situation of Sikhs in their earliest days of migration to the UK. It was an era of assimilation marked by discrimination against the coloured body and other physical signs of difference. For example, regarding the turban, the Sikh men had to cut their hair in order to not be marked different and hence lose out on any opportunity to make a life and living in the new country. There were other adjustments to the Sikh way of life as well – rural families had to tune themselves to the pace of western industrial life and women began joining the workforce. All NCW immigrants, including Sikhs, had to contend with the

toughest jobs requiring hard physical labour and it was rare for people with any education to land a job matching their profile. In short, their skin colour decided their place in the society and economy. The earliest struggles for identity for Sikhs began in this time, like the one led by G.S.S. Sagar in Manchester.

Mid-1960s onwards, with the passage of every new RRA, the era of assimilation gradually faded away and that of multiculturalism began taking shape. In this time, Sikhs began struggling for their identity with robustness, aided by British laws and an atmosphere of support for multiculturalism (section 2.11). Section 3.4 discusses how Sikhs built their institutions and a strong and well-connected community across various cities and towns in the UK. They have significantly raised their economic and educational standards as well as gained employment in almost every field out there. The nature of Sikh families also began to change as time passed by (section 3.5). A new generation of British born Sikhs was maturing and the Sikh community in the UK acquired a unique characteristic, which was neither 'British' nor 'Indian'[74] but an evolved diasporic identity – British Sikh. The Sikhs, despite their many struggles and tussles with the British state and society, some even violent, remained one of the very coveted minority communities in the UK. The word 'remained' is used deliberately because Sikhs have historically had a certain proximity with the British. At a time when it was declared that the days of multiculturalism had to end as it was leading to parallel lives, the Denham Report (2001) in one of its recommendations mentioned that:

> "A positive approach to celebrating diversity has undoubtedly been a key factor in enabling some communities to deal with the inevitable tensions between different groups more effectively than others, as the Cantle Team found in Birmingham, Leicester and Southall." (Denham Report, 2001, 11)

All the areas used as examples for having good inter-community relationships, have a high concentration of Sikh population and are either themselves or located close to 'Little Punjabs' (section 3.2.2). The above is an official testimony to the fact that Sikhs are a well 'integrated' community in the UK. When this research proposal was being discussed in its rudimentary form, some of the comments received were that Sikhs are already a well-established community, so what new was there to explore.

[74] If there is such a clear-cut definition of what being 'British' or 'Indian' means.

4.4.1- Why Community Cohesion

As it has been mentioned earlier, existing analyses of Sikh 'integration' have been done in the context of multiculturalism, but this research was intended to be based on community cohesion. There are a number of ways that the latter is distinct from the former. Community cohesion is a way of re-imagining the way we look at today's society and figure out a way to live *with* diversity, which is emerging as a big challenge to the concept of homogenous nation state. The nature of that diversity has also changed. Cantle (2015) states that multicultural texts have failed to recognize many modern realities.

Firstly, with the passage of time, and subsequent generations of minority communities being born in the UK itself, the difference no longer revolves around race/ethnicity, dividing the society into minority and majority communities. There are so many more axes of difference that exist today, for instance, the British Social Attitudes (BSA) (2015) survey states that the major dividing lines along which people have voted in Brexit in 2016 and in the general elections in 2017 have been age and education. There are many more axes of difference like gender, disability, mental health, inter-generational conflict, sexual orientation etc, which cause significant chasms in the society but do not find place in the multicultural discourse. Even Modood (in Antonisch, 2015, 17) accepted that there are some things that interculturalists have explained better than multiculturalists.

While multiculturalism exclusively focused on the minority community and how they could be positively accommodated, community cohesion brings the members of the majority community into its fold as well. Many among the majority community who feel disadvantaged and discriminated against, can find hope under this approach. During this research, many such white British people were encountered who felt that they were discriminated against for a variety of reasons like homelessness, addiction, not enough support for PWDs and mental health issues, and unemployment as well. The multiculturalist framework essentialised identities and did not create common ground between different communities. It also looked at groups as homogenous entities and failed to look into the diversity within them and the various issues that may be hindering the growth of individuals belonging to, for instance a certain gender, sexual orientation, caste and also a part of minority community.

The objective of this research, based on community cohesion, is to bring all the above factors into integration analysis but before we move on, there is a need to 'unpack' the word integration.

4.4.2- Why Integration?

> *"The word 'integration' needs some theoretical unpacking because being a British citizen who is born here, the very idea of my life being viewed as requiring 'integration' seems very reductive and synthetic to me. It is a rhetorical label given to processes that happen in the society, but I am at unease with the agenda behind its usage as a policy word. I don't really feel I represent someone who needs to be 'integrated', being British, born in Britain and being a Sikh in Britain are what I relate to and for me, the best way to be a part of the society would be to find my true self, to explore my highest potential and not by complying to certain standards that someone else or even the government sets for me. At the same time, I don't think that the UK is a static society or a fixed mould that I must integrate into. If anything, I feel it's a reciprocal process whereby multiple faith organizations or any other type of community organizations come together and form a new kind of society."* (SFB6)

This excerpt from an interview presents a fascinating view of what the word 'integration' looks and seems like to a person belonging to a minority community, who is a citizen of and has been born in Britain[75]. There are some notable points in the testimony above which give us an idea of how to move ahead with caution as well as a positive approach towards 'integration'. At the onset, the word 'integration' can be seen in two ways – first, that there is a set of static principles/body of thought which is directed by the majority community, towards which the minorities need to move and finally integrate to; and second, that all communities, while maintaining their diversity, move towards a common goal which is good relations in the society for the betterment of all. The first idea, which is why 'integration' is viewed with skepticism by the minority communities, was rejected in the UK by Roy Jenkins way back in 1967, a moment which marks the official beginning of multiculturalism. Despite all its criticisms, and the many misstatements by politicians and other public figures[76], the core concepts of community cohesion do not in any way view integration as assimilation[77], as has been quoted above as well (Home Office, 2005), and in fact, in

[75] Majority of the BME population of the UK today is born in Britain.

[76] For example: David Goodheart (2004), one of the biggest critics of multiculturalism said that "we feel more comfortable with, and are readier to share with and sacrifice for, those with whom we have shared histories and similar values. To put it bluntly – most of us prefer our own kind."

[77] Some scholars express displeasure at the promotion and emphasis on learning English as a compulsory language, but in the view of this researcher, in a post-colonial globalised world, it is a matter of great convenience to know English, whether one lives in the UK or not. The fact that is a

the opinion of this researcher, are a step to further the principles of multiculturalism. Wetherell et al. (2007) see the two ideas discussed above as the hard and soft variants of community cohesion. We will base our further analysis on soft community cohesion.

A second very important point that stems from the above discussion is the question of who is 'British' and what are British values. Some of the values like liberty, responsibility, rule of law, fairness etc. which are touted as being British, are in fact not exclusive to Britain and are shared by many more countries and cultures. Moreover, there is a tendency to gloss over the past atrocities of the Empire by claiming these values to be core to the British world view and action (Pilkington, 2008). When discussing the matter with Dr. Jasdev Rai (SMA44), the director of Sikh Human Rights Group, he very interestingly pointed out that:

> *"I think the most important values that the British have are the secular and liberal values. As long as they don't ask me to take my turban off, the same values are Sikh values as well. In fact, the Sikhs have contributed in making this land more liberal than it was, you know, I'm talking about the Mandla (*vs Dowell Lee*) case. We also have the principles of gender equality in our faith. I tell the British, that our values are more advanced than yours, so you don't have to give me lectures about liberal values"* (SMA44).

It is thus seen that there is no one standard set of 'British' values, which the state can lay exclusive claim on and direct the minorities to develop in themselves. In fact, it is very likely that many people from the majority community also do not subscribe to some of the so-called British values. In fact, these values are themselves ever changing as BM10, the councilor, has agreed and being a public servant, quite radically said that:

> "*The 2001 incidents gave rise to a need to rethink fundamental British values and thereafter it was decided by the central government that certain values were fundamental British values and its dissemination began at school and local government level. The backlash was not so much about the nature of the values, which were, in fact quite universal, but about the need to fix certain values as such. Fifty years ago, these values would have been protestant, Christian, empire, monarchy, women raising families etc. Hundred years ago, they would have been something else. So, knowing that values evolve with the times, how can they be fixed! These are philosophical matters, to be discussed and debated but never frozen in time*." (BM10)

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colonial product is subject to debate, but much of the world, including more than half the nation-states are colonial constructs and dismissing everything is not the way forward.

The third important issue that the testimony of SFB6 highlights is that of Britain not being a static society and one where people of all communities bring their characteristics and create a new society, which is always in flux, always dynamic. This brings to mind Parekh's (2000) statement that Britain is a 'community of communities…and a community of citizens'. A number of other scholars like Cook (2001) have also re-defined Britishness in an inclusive fashion. The then Prime Minister Gordon Brown stressed on the fact that there are multiple identities that comprise UK and give it its unique identity and some common values are needed to be identified, which will root and glue all the communities together as part of one nation[78]:

> "The issue is whether we retreat into more exclusive identities rooted in 19th century conceptions of blood, race and territory, or whether we are still able to celebrate a British identity which is bigger than the sum of its parts and a Union that is strong because of the values we share and because of the way these values are expressed through our history and institutions…this country has fostered a vigorously adaptable society and given rise to a culture both creative and inventive but an open and adapting society also need to be rooted and Britain's roots are on the most solid foundation of all – a passion for liberty anchored in a sense of duty and intrinsic commitment to tolerance and fair play." (Brown, 2004)

The fourth issue that is highlighted from the above statement - "*the best way to be a part of the society would be to find my true self, to explore my highest potential",* is that everyone wants to live their best life, according to their own vision, without hindrances and overt control of any external force. This corresponds with two of the ideas towards promoting a cohesive society, which are that people from all backgrounds are 'positively valued' and have 'equal life opportunities'.

Thus far, it has been argued that 'integration', in the form soft community cohesion, based on some common values (which could be called British values, but are actually humanistic values for any good and just society in the present age) that do not contravene and rather supplement multiculturalism, and is cognizant of the changing dynamics of identities and people in the society, makes the world more conducive to live *with* diversity and is desirable. Having established that, let us now discuss about how to analyze integration of the Sikhs in the UK.

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[78] The nation here being understood as a geographical entity that has an administrative system and not just in the sense of a socio-cultural entity.

4.4.3- Analysing 'Integration' of Sikhs based on Community Cohesion

In a single statement, community cohesion is 'all people should get along with each other' and,

> "A cohesive community is one where there is common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities; the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued; those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods." (LGA, 2002)

We will now analyse the British-Sikh community with respect to each of the above parameters.

4.4.3.1- Cohesive communities have a 'common vision'

One of the greatest achievements of the last Labour government in the UK has been the adoption of a single Equality Act in 2010. This aim of this act was simplification, harmonisation and modernisation of equality laws and it replaces nine pre-existing major equality legislations, including EU directives along with British Laws. The Equal Pay Act 1970, Sex Discrmination Act 1975, RRA 1976, Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and three major statutory instruments protecting from discrimination on the ground of religion, age and sexuality were brought under this singular legislation.

This Act lays the ground to develop a common vision in a diverse polity, which is Equality for all. Some of the salient points of this Act are:

> "Right to equality to all human beings (principle 1), equal protection from discrimination regardless of the grounds concerned (principle 6), and the obligation on states to give "full effect" to the right to equality in all activities of the state (principle 11). The same rule should be applied to all strands unless there is convincing justification for an exception…but broadly speaking, the drafters have managed to limit the exceptions." (Hepple, 2010, 15)

From the minority point of view, this Act lays the legal basis for non-discrimination based on endogenous reasons, i.e. reasons arising from within the community. Ethnic minorities can no longer continue with discriminatory practices against a section of their own population under the garb of tradition and customs. Section 3.4 discusses the manifestation of caste in the British-Sikh community and section 3.5 discussed discriminations based on gender, sexuality, mental health, disability, being a single parent and old age. Throughout this research, at least half of the respondents, while

discussing community related issues have said something to the tune of "*we Sikhs are our greatest enemies*", "*Apne-i bande paidhe ne, gore te baut change ne*" (it is our own people who are bad, the whites are a good lot), and one new immigrant said that,

> "*the established Sikh community which was fabled to extend help and support to the new-comers in the earlier days, is not welcoming at all anymore. I have experienced a lot of leg-pulling and jealousy from my own community here*." (SMA2)

This statement highlights a new issue that is coming up in transnational diasporic communities – the older migrants vs. the new migrants. These issues highlight the various ways in which citizens of the UK experience discrimination. Multicultural frameworks do not have any instruments to analyse and expose these, because the community on the whole is flourishing and its institutions proliferating, which was why, there were doubts about this research topic as well.

The common vision of society in the UK is based on the idea of Equality between the communities as well as between individual citizens. No amount of arguments based on cultural relativism are accepted for continuing practices such as female genital mutilation[79], domestic abuse and forced marriage[80]. This is not to say that a legal document is enough for long held cultural practices to stop all of a sudden, but making these practices illegitimate is a significant step towards change. There are pending issues still, like the inclusion of caste in the Equality Act or a separate caste legislation. In 2018, following years of consultations, debates and lobbying from both upper caste as well as dalit organizations, the government decided "not to legislate but to rely on emerging case-laws in court" (Sonwalkar, 2018). Hepple (2010, 15) says that "there is bound to be continuing argument at the margins, particularly where the principle of equality has to be reconciled with the freedom of religion and freedom of expression", so is the case with caste.

As is mentioned earlier, White British people were also interviewed for this research and it was revealed that most of their issues coincided with the Sikhs. BF01 was suffering from Attention deficit syndrome and her new-born baby was taken away from her by the social services. She said,

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[79] Was outlawed in the UK by the Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act, 1985, but covertly continues to this day in some communities.
[80] Which was outlawed in 2014.

> "*I know I need help, but in-stead of giving me the required support, they took my two weeks old baby away from me. One time they held a counseling session where they kept telling me how to take care of the baby, but I already know that. My issue is something else.*"

Another respondent BF09, doctorate from Oxford, and employed in the state education department was discriminated at her workplace for her physical disability to sit on a normal chair, "*all I required was a special ergonomic chair but they kept me off for eight months before one could be procured.*"

Old-age and loneliness related issues persist in the majority community too, as they do in the Sikh community. The experience of BF15 – "*I'm 89 and have two well-settled children. I've had two heart attacks and an open heart surgery, but I still don't see anybody*" - resonates with that of SFA38 mentioned in section 3.5. This matter is so serious that the May government appointed Tracey Crouch as the first 'Minister for Loneliness' in the UK in January 2018. There definitely are issues like homelessness which the Sikh community is not known to face, but that could be because of families are under pressure from the community to take care of individuals who would have been rough-sleeping had it not been a matter of *izzat*.

Hepple (2010) categorically stated that The Equality Act was an

> "outcome of 14 years of campaigning by equality specialists and human rights organizations…Social legislation of this kind is not a 'gift' of enlightened rulers. It is the outcome of struggles between different interest groups and competing ideologies." (Hepple, 2010, 11).

The above discussion highlights that while racial/ethnic/religious/cultural differences will always remain, the fundamental human condition binds all people together. In other words, there is a possibility that people belonging to different backgrounds build solidarities around the common issues that affect their lives such as the few illustrated examples discussed above, and march onwards to the common vision of building a more equal society.

4.4.3.2- 'Diversity is appreciated and positively valued' and there is 'intercultural contact'

Owing to the physical manifestation of their religion, Sikhs are a visible people, especially men, and increasingly even women. Interviews with white British people revealed that not many of them had much knowledge about Sikh faith, customs or beliefs, but most could recognize Sikhs when they saw them.

People who had formal interaction with Sikhs in their workplaces, noted that Sikhs are very hard-working, open-minded and friendly people and that they share – food, jokes, time and myriad other mundane things. To observe people who knew Sikhs only via work, which is to say, not from a very close proximity, noticing that they are a hard-working and 'sharing' people was quite interesting because they are two of the three essential Sikh codes of conduct – *naam japo, kirat karo, vand chakho* (chant the almighty's name, work hard, share the fruits of labour). One octogenarian (BM14) also noted that Sikhs are "*not fanatical*". White British people, who knew Sikhs as friends, were very positive about them and shared experiences of being welcomed at their homes, being treated to food every time they would visit, sometimes even forcefully and that they were always supportive and helpful. We already know from the previous chapters that Sikhs had very good relationships, dating back to colonial times with the British and many of those linkages helped them get employment when they arrived as the British people were aware of the hard-working nature of Sikhs. One such example is:

> "In some locations old imperial ties proved useful; occasionally, as in the Woolf Rubber Factory, Southall, where a manager had served in a Sikh regiment, employers or senior managers with past connections with Punjab were only too eager to welcome Sikh workers." (Singh and Tatla, 2006, 146)

Apart from workplace and friendships through university or neighbourhood, there are other ways in which Sikhs interact with the general population in the public sphere. One of the most popular Sikh activities in the secular public space is *Langar,* the significance of which we have discussed in section 3.3. *Langar* is a form of *seva* (service), based on the concept of *vand chakho.* In the UK, it has greatly benefitted the homeless people, who, as long as they are not under the influence of any substance, can go inside the gurudwara and get to eat warm food. The Midlands Langar Seva Services (MLSS), started in 2013 which offers food for all without discrimination and began running a food truck called Guru Nanak Dev Ji Langar Bus in 2017 won the MBE[81] for their excellent work in the field of public service.

However, the 'free food' aspect of *Langar* is popular but its religious significance is hardly known by the white British people. BM10, despite being the councilor in-charge of diversity, said:

[81] Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire

> "*While it is great that charity is being done, I wish it was non-sectarian…something like 'Midlands feed the homeless' programme in-stead of '*langar*'. Community cohesion is not about promoting religious beliefs*."

SMB8 said that "*for a Sikh, taking away the religious aspect of* langar *is to take away the whole meaning of it*." Dr. Opinderjit Takhar, while discussing the matter, said that:

> "Langar *is based on our principle of* seva *but is quite often misunderstood by the other communities. Many a times during meetings like inter-faith dialogues, it is expected that the Sikhs would get the food for the event because we are known to distribute free food but that is not what* langar *is about. A public recognition to the (MLSS) is important in this regard because some people might ask what the purpose behind it is*." (SFB26)

Western secularists need to understand that community cohesion is about 'diversity is appreciated and positively valued' and not about getting rid of cultural or religious meanings of phenomenon, especially those which promote 'intercultural dialogue'.

One white British respondent (BF03) mentioned that she was once offered a cold-drink at a stall in a public place and after much thought, remembered the name of the event as 'Chabeel'. Recall the 'first martyrdom' of Guru Arjan Dev from section 3.3, who was executed by placing on a hot plate. Following the principle of *Chardi Kala*, this day, instead of being a day of mourning, is rather celebrated as Chabeel, when Sikhs across the world distribute cool and sweet drinks to the general public. In the UK as well, stalls distributing free cool beverages are set up in many places. This positively engages people and promotes intercultural dialogue.

Sikhs have been at the receiving end of a lot of hate crimes due to mistaken identity in the West. To the western eye, a Sikh with his turban and beard looked close to the image of Osama Bin Laden. In order to spread awareness about the turbans and its significance, Sikhs have been organizing 'turban day' in many places across the world where they tie turbans for the general people in public places. March 27th, 2018 was celebrated as the turban day by the UK parliament. On *Vaisakhi*, the 13th of April every year, all the cities and towns with significant Sikh population witness massive *juloos* (procession) of Sikhs dressed in traditional colours – blue and orange. Apart from festivals, langar and chhabeel, the Punjabi Bhangra is gaining huge popularity across communities in the UK.

It has been alleged that various religions have started becoming competitive for public space to organize events promoting their faith and Sikhs are one of them. This view is based on a superficial understanding of Sikhism, because all the public displays like the ones stated above, are very much a part of their belief and code of conduct and not just events organized for making a display or for proselytizing like the multiple Christian dominations are seen to be doing in the UK. Moreover, organizations like Khalsa Aid, which was started by Rav Singh from the UK, provides worldwide aid in almost all conflict and disaster zones. It is not only expensive to reach these areas but also very difficult to survive in, even as volunteers. This is genuine seva.

When it comes to Sikh views on the white British people, various testimonies mentioned in this thesis tell that the Sikhs really appreciate the British, even more than *apne bande*, and do not hold grudges against them because of the struggles they faced in this country. Few British people know Sikhs but obviously all Sikhs know British people and from what they say about them, it seems that they genuinely respect them. The Sikhs also really appreciate the efficiency of British public institutions and services and it is not uncommon for the 2nd and 3rd generation British-Sikhs, who come to India occasionally, to make comparisons. These comparisons are mostly on three grounds:

Extreme poverty, a kind that they do not experience in the UK:

> *"In 2013 we went to Punjab and once, two kids with ripped clothes and dirty faces, like you could tell that they slept rough, came asking for money. I told them I would give them money if they could recite their* ooda-aida *(Punjabi alphabets) for me. They didn't know. I kept prodding them and I could see that they were embarrassed about it. This incident really stuck with me and is the reason why I am working in the field of education now." (SFB6)*

Inefficiency at the banks, police stations and other institutions:

> *"My grandfather was in the British army and came here. My father was born in India but came here with the rest of the family as a boy. I was born here. We have a lot of property in Punjab and need to go there at least once a year to manage things but my dad and used to have a lot of problems being an NRI. At the banks people would ask them to get this paper and that paper, and no one knew exactly what was needed. The police would always try to extract money from them. So when I was born, they got me registered as an Indian. I am one of the rarest people you will meet, who is a 3rd generation British-Sikh but holds an Indian passport, just so that things could be more convenient. Such issues could never arise here." (SMB24)*

Pension, healthcare and other facilities for the aged population:

> "*Even if I wish to, I cannot go to India. I am 84 and if something happens to me there, who will foot the bill? Here we have NHS. The busses are also low and I we have free pass. I am at least mobile here. In India, I will become dependent on others.*" (SFA37)

This above discussion has revealed that the British and Sikh people value each other and there is a fairly good and increasing level of intercultural dialogue between them. There is however much scope for building a better understanding of Sikhs in the British society, which was one of aims of Late Jugraj Singh who started the websites Everythings13 and Basics of Sikhi. To that end, he would go out in public places and discuss about Sikhism with anyone and everyone.

4.4.3.3- All People have 'similar life opportunities'

How can we tell whether a person or a particular group of people have 'similar life opportunities' as the rest of the population or at least as the majority, considering that they are the group who have the highest chance of having the best life opportunities?

One of the ways in which this can be analysed is by examining the freedom to participate in public life. We can then question what is it that hinders a person, a free citizen, from fully participating in public life. There can be many reasons for that like colour, gender, sexuality, age, disability and religion. This aspect has been discussed in section 4.4.3.1. We should then ask what are the freedoms that groups or communities seek in order to participate in public life. This section will discuss four such important 'freedoms' in the context of British Sikhs.

For religious groups, first and foremost is the freedom to practice their religion, without fear of discrimination or intimidation. With respect to Sikhs, one of their biggest challenges has been to be able to embody their articles of faith. While the turban issue was resolved a few decades earlier, another important article of faith, the *kirpan*, still manages to ruffle some feathers. In the UK, *kirpans* have been given legal exemption in the Offensive Weapons Act 2019 and *kirpan* carrying Sikhs have access to all public places, including the Parliament and courts.

A curious case related to the *kirpan* came to light in May 2019, when a six years old Sikh girl wielding a *kirpan* joined a primary school in Yorkshire. The parents of the other pupil, mostly white British, stopped sending their children to school due to fear of the object and started an online campaign, after which the parents of the Sikh girl

agreed to send their daughter to school without the *kirpan* but the white parents were investigated for spreading racial hate. Kirpan has been a contentious issue in many western countries. Italy, the country with the largest Sikh population in continental European, has banned it. A Sikh city councilor, while discussing this issue, said:

> "*The* kirpan *was given to us by our Gurus in the medieval times for upholding the honour and ensuring the safety of others. However, in the era of weapons of mass destruction and suicide bombers, I don't see how a* kirpan *can save anyone, should the need arise. Religions should adapt to the changing times and in the interest of public safety and security, in my opinion, I wouldn't mind if the* kirpan *was banned*." (SMA42)

While this makes sense in the sense of western secular values, such opinions are not taken well within the community. Occasionally there are cases also, like the one from a school in Wales which disallowed a Sikh girl from wearing a *kada*, which is a totally benign object, on grounds of their no-jewellery policy.

With respect to institutions, Sikhs have, through their own initiative as well as state support during the era of multiculturalism, established many gurudwaras and community centers. Despite many sectarian issues between different groups and castes among Sikhs, most have been able to establish their own institutions as discussed in the case of Chapeltown Road, Leeds in section 3.4. The above discussion proves that the British-Sikh community has quite a solid sense of freedom to practice their religion and any challenge to it is effectively dealt with.

Second is the freedom to participate in economic and professional life. As it has been discussed in section 2.11, through untiring struggles and aided by the RRA, Sikhs have managed to get legal and normative exceptions to be able to wear the turban and carry a beard in every sphere of life, with an extremely narrow area of reservation like the food processing industry where the beard posed a health risk. Section 3.2.3 gives details about their educational and employment status, making it clear that Sikhs are successfully integrated in the British economy. BM10 said that "cohesion is so complex that sometimes a single issue like economic success becomes a big contributor to cohesion".

In addition to that, Sikhs are also developing as an academic community. The first Centre for Sikh and Punjabi Studies was started in the University of Wolverhampton in 2018 under the leadership of Dr. Opinderjit Kaur Takhar. The University of Warwick has been organizing the International Sikh Research Conference for the past

five years, and the Punjab Research Conference which was started in 1984, is also dominated by Sikh discourses and discussion. Earlier, the stalwarts of Sikh studies – Hew Mc. Leod, N. Gerald Barrier, Owen Cole, Eleanor Nesbitt, Verne Dusenbery – were all White people. For some time now, Sikhs – Darshan Singh Tatla, Gurharpal Singh, Shinder Thandi, Harjot Oberoi, Opinderjit Kaur, Jasjit Singh – are leading Sikh academic discourse in the UK. Every year, a number of Sikhs receive Order of the British Empire for their exceptional contribution in various fields of work.

The third is the freedom to speak, develop and proliferate their own language. The first generation Sikhs did not have the time to learn English, so when their children were growing up, there was an emphasis on them learning English. A new hybrid dialect of Punjabi and English had evolved which was called 'Punglish' or 'Southalli' (Singh and Tatla, 2006). However, the community soon began to panic as and gurudwaras responded to this by starting Punjabi classes, a feature that most big gurudwaras in every city and town still continue with. The first Punjabi School was established in the Guru Nanak Gurudwara, Smethwick in 1965 (Ibid.). In response to the growing concerns about the education of pupil from various ethnic backgrounds, the Swann Report was released in 1985. This was an important breakthrough for multiculturalism because what followed in 1988 was the National Curriculum in which Asian languages including Punjabi were placed on par with other foreign languages like German and French at the school level. This opened the door to upward mobility for some Sikhs like SMA32:

> "*I did masters in history and Punjabi language from Lyallpur Khalsa College in Jalandhar. Despite my high qualification, when I came here, I had to work in the factory. I had got married and had responsibilities so I couldn't wait to get the perfect job and there was nobody to guide me through the field of education. I was stuck with heavy labour work for nine years before the opportunity came to me in 1988, when they decided to introduced Punjabi, Urdu, Hindi, Gujarati and Bengali in schools. I immediately jumped to the opportunity and joined the junior school, got promoted to secondary school and then to the University level. There in the special classes for adults, there were more* gore *than* apne*, who wanted to know basics of other languages as this is a very multi-ethnic locality. Most of them were in the police and health departments and this helped them with their jobs.*" (SMA32)

The above is testimony to the advancements made in the field of language during the era of multiculturalism, which also encouraged people involved in public service to learn minority languages. Singh and Tatla (2006) give a detailed description of Sikh media, both print and electronic, British Punjabi literature and Sikhs in English

literature in the UK. They, however, contend that the transmission of language to the younger generation remains a big challenge for the Sikh community.

Finally, and most importantly, we discuss about the freedom of political expression. Sikhs have historically been a politically active people. Their earliest political activism in the UK, which started even before 1948, was in the form of class politics. The first Indian Workers Association (IWA) was started in Coventry in 1938. When Udham Singh assassinated General Dwyer (section 2.1), this organization arranged to pay for his legal defence (Singh and Tatla, 2006). In the post-war era, the IWA Southall was quite influential and reached its high water mark during the 1970s, a period which was marked by violence and murders in the area, including that of Sikh youth Gurdip Singh Chaggar (section 2.9).

The major axes of its political activities were racism and class. They had a big role to play in the Southall Youth Movement and in 1979, when the case of virginity tests being conducted at the Heathrow airport were reported, they very actively organized anti-racist marches and events (Ibid.). The IWAs' influence began to decline by the end of 1980s and was replaced by other Sikh political movements or organizations like the Siromani Akali Dal (SAD) UK and the Indian Overseas Congress (IOC) of which many Sikhs were a part. The first Sikh and the fifth Asian to be elected to the British Parliament was Piara Singh Khabra, an former IWA activist. Following him, a number of Sikhs have made it to the Parliament. The year 2017 was special in this sense, as the first Sikh woman, Preet Kaur Gill from Birmingham Edgbaston and the first turbaned Sikh, Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi from Slough were elected to the Parliament. Several Sikh councilors have also been elected to the local councils, primarily in areas with high Sikh population; many have been Lord Mayors as well.

Apart from electoral politics, another way of Sikh political mobilization has been identity based, which started with the turban campaigns, as discussed in section 2.9. Notwithstanding their sectarianism and factionalism, Sikhs have periodically organized themselves around common issues that relate to their faith. In addition to that, 1984 onwards, Sikhs in the UK have been involved in homeland politics. Relationship with India is a very important and sensitive issue for Sikhs in Britain and it suffices here that they have adequate space in this country to speak, organize and hold protests against the Indian state. Not going into the details of the issue here, as it

requires a very detailed and separate treatment and the concern for this discussion is only whether Sikhs have 'equal life opportunities' or not. In August 2018, a massive rally calling for a referendum for a free Khalistan, a separate Sikh nation state carved out of the Indian union, in the year 2020 was organized at the Trafalgar Square in London. This was organized by a New York based organization called Sikhs for Justice. The Indian government tried to influence the UK to stop this gathering from taking place, but in the UK, if Scotland can organize to secede, so can a Sikh group. The state protected the freedom of political expression of the Sikhs in this case. It is noteworthy that none of the big Sikh figures of the UK were a part of this call for referendum 2020 and simultaneously, there were Sikh groups along with other Indian groups protesting against that protest. Everyone was free to express their opinions and this is what a democracy should look like!

4.4.3.4- 'Sense of belonging'

Finally, we have reached the final and the most rhetorical question of this research. Who has a complete sense of belonging to the nation/state/country? Is it the majority community? It is generally understood that the majority community has a default sense of belonging towards the nation but immigration and the resultant diversity have the power to challenge that, as time and again, it is not uncommon to hear members of the majority community exclaiming something to the tenor of that they no longer recognize their neighbourhood, they do not like the changing face of their country etc. It is for such reasons that potentially disastrous events like Brexit happen. While that issue remains subject to debate, here we address this question from a minority, specifically, Sikh perspective.

In order to emphasise their place in British history, one has to go back to where it all began. Section 2.2 discussed the presence of Sikhs in the UK prior to the passage of the post-colonial BNA. The relationship of Sikhs and Britain in fact, pre-dates the fall of the Sikh Empire to British imperialism and what more, the British brought their last king to live and spend the rest of his life in this country. Sikhs in the UK have started to re-discover and celebrate the Anglo-Sikh heritage. Elvedon Hall in Thetford, which was the residence of Maharaja Duleep Singh and also has his and many of his family members' graves, has started attracting more and more Sikh tourists every passing year. In the year 1999, Prince Charles unveiled a life-size bronze statue in Thetford.

Every year on the Maharaja's death anniversary, a festival of Anglo-British heritage is organized, which has prominent members of the British Sikh community in attendance. The contribution of Sophia Duleep Singh, Maharaja's daughter, who was one of the prominent suffragettes, was acknowledged in the form of a stamp that was released on the occasion marking 100 years of women's suffrage. Apart from the royal family, the contribution of Sikh soldiers was also acknowledged by instating a bronze bust of Sikh Soldier on Smethwick high street. Despite all of this, and a fairly good level of integration as explained below, whenever there are any racially sensitive moments, like post 9/11 and 7/7 as well as Brexit, the Sikhs' sense of belongingness in the UK is put to question.

Citizenship for ethnic minorities is structurally characterised by irony (Sayyid, 2006). They are constantly confronted with evasions, and gaps in the national narrative. Thus, their sense of belonging is tempered by the way in which that very belonging is often undermined by racist exclusions and interrogations (Sian 2013). The Sikhs were thought to have a place within the constellation of symbols that constitute the British South Asian imaginary and was marked out in popular culture. However, the image of Osama Bin Laden in a turban and a shorn beard brought Sikhs under sharp attack. The first man to be killed after 9/11 was Balbir Singh Sodhi in Arizona. The first religious establishment to be attacked with a petrol bomb after the 7/7 bombings in London was a gurudwara in Kent. Sikhs have been victims of innumerable hate crimes since the rise of Islamophobia (Verma, 2006), compelling one to wonder why the Sikhs, one of the most well-established minorities in UK, USA, and elsewhere, are mistaken to be something they are not. Why is their identity still mistaken based on the turban, despite the many famous struggles that have gone in the way to make them wear it with due respect in public?

In the beginning, Sikhs, who have embraced 'Britishness' and represent a modern, independent, and hardworking collective and acquired a greater social status and mobility, 'othered' the Muslims, who have, so to say, 'failed' to integrate in the UK. Issues like the Muslim grooming gangs that befriended and then sexually abused young girls also played a role in this. Sian discusses the development of the Sikh variant of Islamophobia and how Sikhs are making attempts at uncritical assimilation to distinguish themselves from the Muslims (Sian 2013). However, with the passage of time and the continuing attacks on Sikhs, it can be inferred that the hate crimes

against Sikhs depict a rise of traditional racism. Lawyer activist Valarie Kaur states that it is not as if there was no discrimination before 2001, but 9/11 marked a paradigm shift in terms of the increase in the threat of violence. She contends that the violence has become mainstream; and Sikhs have come to realise that it is no longer the state that has a problem with the turban, but the people at large, who are, after all these decades, still not oriented to the rich diversity in these countries. A survey in 2015 revealed that sixty percent of Americans are not aware of Sikhs or Sikhism. The numbers seem unlikely to be very encouraging in the case of UK too, should such a survey was conducted there. It has also been noted that almost all anti-hate crime efforts are directed towards Muslims; not much is being done for Sikhs, even in terms of recognizing and understanding the extent of hate crimes against them. There is government funded anti-Muslim hate crime monitoring, Jews are sought to be protected against anti-semitism, but there was nothing in place for the Sikhs. The Network of Sikh Organizations (NSO), which links more than 130 UK gurudwaras and other Sikh organizations of the country, has been instrumental in putting this fact into perspective for the state authorities. It was brought to the notice of the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) that of all the crimes labelled 'Islamophbic', twenty-eight percent were committed against people of other faiths, mainly Sikhs. Following significant campaigning from the NSO, it was finally decided that, starting from April 2016, hate crimes against other religious groups would be recorded. The secretary of DCLG, Greg Clark, in a letter dated 25 February, 2016, wrote to the director of NSO, Lord Singh:

> "I understand your concerns about Sikhs being the victims of anti-Islamic attacks. In response to increased attacks on mosques and gurudwaras, the Prime Minister announced in October that new funding will be made available for the security of all faith establishments, with more details expected over the coming months.... This builds on existing funding for anti-Semitic attacks on synagogues. In addition to Tell-Mama which measures incidents of anti-Muslim hatred, my department is proud to fund True Vision which allows people of all faiths and backgrounds to report hate crimes."

Similarly, there have been other Sikh NGOs like the United Sikhs and the Sikh Federation that are actively involved in responding to this latest crisis that the community is facing. In the year 2004, when France banned conspicuous religious symbols in school, the main target being the headscarves of Muslims women, the Sikh turban happened to be a part of the collateral damage. United Sikhs took this case to

the European Union Human Rights Court, which upheld France's decision to continue with the ban. They then went to the UN Human Rights Court, which ruled in favour of the Sikhs. However, France has not accepted the decision of the UNHRC and Sikhs are still not allowed to wear the turban despite winning the case. As Sikhs continue to face racial abuse and attacks or simply have a white lad shouting 'go back to your country' at them. One is then forced to question; can a diaspora really belong anywhere?

> "*This is a very difficult question. How do I approach it? From my perspective, or from the perspective of the country, or where the two, if at all, coincide? The kid me, belonged to Dudley. I am sure of that, there was no doubt back then. But now, even if I say that I belong to Dudley, does Dudley belong to me? If Dudley wanted me, it should be its responsibility to tell me that you belong to us. When I go to rural Punjab, ironically the place where we are told to go back to, all too often these days, they can tell me from a mile away that I don't belong there. It is so weird because my cousins there and I share our great grandparents and our surname, but that's where the connection ends. I know where I want to belong to, but there are a lot of unanswered questions here."*

The discourse goes on but here I rest my case.

4.5- Conclusion

This chapter begins with a discussion on how, after more than two decades, multiculturalism and the milieu that it had created began to show its weaknesses. The Rushdie Affair, Stephen Lawrence murder case and the subsequent expose of Institutional Racism by the Macpherson Report and the Parekh Report have been discussed in some detail due to their importance in the discourse of diversity in the country. Community cohesion, a new approach to diversity was institutionalized after riots shook several towns in the North. This approach is then discussed in some detail and a discussion on the integration of Sikhs is analysed using the principles of community cohesion.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

5.1- Introduction

This thesis set out to explore the immigration and the integration discourse of the Sikhs in the UK, with an aim to contribute to the growing body of community cohesion debates. For the purpose of this study, 44 Sikhs and 12 white British people were interviewed from regions across the UK where there is a high concentration of Sikh population – Greater London, West Midlands, Leeds and Manchester.

The trajectory of immigration of the Sikhs to the UK was discussed, replete with real-life testimonies alongside the evolution of the immigration policies of the country. The struggles that this community had to face in order to fully participate in public life as well as maintain their identity and its repercussions on the race debate in the UK were also highlighted.

In order to analyse the integration of the Sikhs in the context of community cohesion, a deeper understanding of the their settlement, community and family life was essential and was discussed and finally, the circumstances that led to the shift in the discourse of integration from multiculturalism to community cohesion were deliberated upon and following a theoretical analysis of community cohesion, four salient points are identified, based upon which the integration of Sikhs in the UK was analysed.

Each of the chapters give a summary of the most important discussions included in them which take the argument further. In this chapter, we will revisit the research questions set out in the introductory chapter of this thesis before going on to discuss the validity of the of the hypotheses. Lastly, some important takeaways, scope for future research and limitations of this study will be stated.

5.2- Conclusions on the Research Questions

The main research question of this thesis is to examine how community cohesion has impacted the integration of the Sikh people in the UK, and how the Sikhs in the UK have contributed in making it a more inclusive polity. Nine research questions which

would lead us to answering our main question and testing our hypotheses were designed for this research. In this section, we individually answer these questions.

5.2.1- Research Question 1

Why did the Sikhs choose to migrate to the UK in such large numbers?

This question was designed to explore why such a large number of Sikhs chose to go the UK. Today, they are close to half a million in population, making Sikhism the fifth largest religion in the country, and have become one of the most prominent minorities with a visible presence in almost every sphere, be it politics, entertainment, sports, education and business. This question is answered throughout chapter 2. The chapter begins with discussing the migration of the first Sikh to the UK, Maharaja Duleep Singh. It also lists a number of other categories of Sikh people like elite students, princes, peddlars and soldiers who migrated to the UK, forming a small but significant presence in the country. The first gurudwara in the UK was established in 1911.

However, mass migration to the UK happened only after 1948 due to a coincidence of a number of factors. Firstly, the partition of India that was affected in 1947 and Punjab was the worst affected sites of violence and dispossession. Many of the affected people were Sikhs, who looked to settle in East Punjab as well as other parts of India and the world. Secondly, when the BNA was passed in 1948, permitting all Commonwealth citizens to come to the UK with full citizenship rights, a great number of those looking for better life opportunities moved to the 'mother country'. Thirdly, following the Second World War, there was an acute labour shortage in the UK and Sikhs, who don't shy from hard work, could easily find employment, albeit the toughest jobs. The few thousands of Sikhs who were already living in the UK, aided in passing information regarding availability of work and acted as the first point of contact when the people reached the UK, thereby creating a network conducive for more and more migration.

Following the information in 1961, that immigration controls were underway, the Sikhs in the UK, who were mostly men, sent for their families to join them, thereby making family reunification a big factor in the rise of Sikh population. A large number of Sikhs also made way to the UK following the anti-colonial movements in East African countries of Kenya, Uganda and Malawi. In the 1970s and 80s, a large

number of Sikhs came to the UK via marriage as refugees/asylum seekers after Operation Bluestar. Overtime, a vast transnational network working for Sikh migration has been put in place, which even today, in the era of managed migration, enables Sikhs to migrate to the UK as students or professionals in larger numbers compared to other people. This question is answered in chapter two.

5.2.2- Research Question 2

What are the challenges that the Sikhs have had to face for the expression of their identity in the UK?

The biggest challenge to the earliest Sikhs was that they had to cut their hair, which is the very basis of their 'Sikhness', in order to assimilate in the UK. Apart from that, Sikhs, as other NCW immigrants would only be employed in the toughest of jobs, which the white working-class population preferred not to do. These issues have been discussed in chapter two. In due course of this research, it was recognised that people wield multiple identities for example caste, gender, sexuality, old-age and disability etc. Identities can therefore not be essentialized into just faith/ethnicity/religious categories and struggles of people, are also on multiple fronts, as has been discussed in detail in chapter three.

5.2.3- Research Question 3 &4

3) What has been the role of 'Race Relations Acts' in the integration of Sikhs in the UK?

4) How has multiculturalism affected the Sikh community?

Research questions 3 and 4 are clubbed together because their essential meaning is the same, because multiculturalism is said to have started in the UK with the passage of the RRA. These Acts have been very useful for Sikhs as they laid the legal foundation for non-discrimination against them. Most notable in the history of race relations has been the *Mandla vs. Dowell Lee* case, as it marked the end of racial dualism and the beginning of ethnic pluralism. The fact that RRA was extended to a 'non-race' category gave rise to discussions and deliberations among other groups as well, this has been discussed in detail in section 4.2.1 of this thesis.

It was in the era of multiculturalism, that Sikhs established their institutions like gurudwaras, schools, media etc. with a degree of state support. It can be said that Sikhs, as a community, deepened their integration in the British society during this period, considering that Sikh majority areas were cited as good examples of

intercommunity relations while analysing the race riots. Section 4.4 discusses this point.

5.2.4- Research Question 5

What have been the repercussions of 9/11 and 7/7 on the Sikh community in the UK?

Events like the ones above and Brexit bring re-ignite the insider-outsider debate in the context of nation states, as discussed in section 1.3.2. The Sikh body is Sikhs, marked with visible difference which makes them a target for 'otherisation'. In the aftermath of the above events, even the third generation Sikhs have been attacked and abused, which has brought to question one of the fundamental values of community cohesion, a common sense of belonging. This point is discussed in greater detail in section 4.4.3.4.

5.2.5- Research Question 6

What is community cohesion? Why was there a need to shift from multiculturalism to community cohesion for the integration of minorities?

A well rounded definition of this is given in section 1.4.2, which is used as a base in this analysis. Its salient points are: (a) a common vision for a cohesive community; (b) a sense of belonging; (c) people from diverse backgrounds are appreciated and positively valued; (d) people from all backgrounds have similar life opportunities; ((e) strong and positive relationships between people from all backgrounds. This researcher has added another dimension to this definition, which is; (f) people (at least) from Commonwealth background have the opportunity to lay historical claim to the land and equal participation in the national identity discourse. Detailed discussion on this concept and its criticisms are given in section 4.3 and 4.4.

Regarding the need for the change in integration policy from multiculturalism to community cohesion, it had become clear after the Rushdie Affair that there were many categories of citizens whose differences had not yet been recognised or accommodated in the race related reforms. Additionally, the Macpherson and Parekh reports had suggested that more inter-community dialogue and contact was needed to reduce tensions in the society. Finally, when the 'race' riots took place in the northern towns of England in 2001, inquiry reports suggested that segregation between communities, who were leading parallel lives, was the major cause. It was at this

juncture that under the thought leadership of Ted Cantle, community cohesion was adopted as a new strategy. Community cohesion, which takes into account various axes of difference, not just racial/ethnic/religious; recognizes the disadvantages faced by the majority community along with the minority community and the diversity within those communities; and advocates common values and common grounds, as compared to multiculturalism which primarily focused on group rights of the minority communities, was considered to be more appropriate for the changing circumstances.

5.2.6- Research Question 7

How has community cohesion affected the Sikhs in UK?

One of the best outcomes of community cohesion, not just for Sikhs but for all minority communities is that there is now a framework that accommodates the diversity within them. Under the garb of customs, traditional communities can no longer, claim cultural relativism for the practices that are not conducive for some of its members as citizens of a liberal democratic state. Apart from that, the discussions under section 4.4 show that community cohesion allows one to engage deeply with questions of citizenship in a diverse polity. While it was possible to claim that Sikhs had successfully integrated in the UK, using multicultural frameworks, the community cohesion framework, on the one hand exposes multiple chasms in this belief, and on the other hand, presents the scope for engagement at a deeper level and possibilities of new solidarities among citizens.

5.2.8- Research Question 8 & 9

8) What rules/laws/policies in the UK have been altered because of Sikhs?

9) How have Sikh struggles for integration affected other minorities in the UK?

In order to accommodate Sikh symbols of faith, particularly the turban and the kirpan, a number of rules/laws and policies in several institutions have been changed. The process began with acceptance of the turban as part of the uniform in the transport departments in Manchester and Wolverhampton. Gradually, the turban began gaining acceptance in other areas of work as well, albeit not without struggles. Following a struggle of four years, a clause for exception to the Sikhs was inserted in The Road Safety Act 1972. Mandla vs. Dowell Lee was the landmark case that gave brought 'ethnicity' under the protection of the RRA. This, however, did not mean that all ethnicities were protected by it, or even Sikhs in other circumstances faced no trouble.

However, it was a significant move towards increasing inclusivity in the UK as other ethnicities soon began to use this as the legal grounds for protection under the RRA as well. We will discuss more on this in the next section.

5.3- Hypothesis Testing

This research began as with a single hypothesis but with the progress in the research and a scope for further enquiry, a second hypothesis was added, along with the last two research questions. In this section, we will try to test the hypotheses.

5.3.1- Hypothesis 1

Community Cohesion is contributing to the deepening integration of the Sikh community in the British Society, that began with the Race Relations Acts.

In answering the research question 6, we have seen how shifting the framework from multiculturalism to community cohesion brings a whole new perspective to social integration in a society which is a 'community of communities of citizens.' People belonging to minority communities are no longer fixated to one essentialised identity and scope for deeper engagements and multiple solidarities can be seen envisaged and is in fact desirable.

In section 4.4.3, we have analysed each of the visions of community cohesion with respect to British Sikhs and realised the complexities associated with diversity and how to build a common vision. In every parameter, we saw that the engagement of Sikhs with the state is deepening, but what is the best thing about this approach is that, it gives the scope to ask deeper questions about sense of belonging and stresses on the need to build it among all the people in the society. It is understood that integration is not a one of event and cannot be said to have been completed, it is a discourse and in that, principles of community cohesion contribute in deepening the level of integration of Sikhs, which began with the Race Relations Acts, in the British society and this hypothesis tests **valid**.

5.3.2- Hypothesis 2

Through their struggles for the expression of their identity, Sikhs have made the British society more inclusive of diversity.

One of the big moments of British multiculturalism was *Mandla vs. Dowell Lee. This case* ended the era of racial dualism, of seeing people as just black or white and giving recognition to the multiethnicity of the British polity. When Sikhs were

identified as an ethnic group, the same began to be asked about other identities as well, like the Rastafarians (Banton, 2010), Muslims (Meer, 2008) and Gypsy Travellers (Clark, 2006). There is no generally no trouble for Rastafarians who also have a religious underpinning related to maintaining their natural hair but in the form of dreadlocks) because that fight is long over in the UK. Not just the Rastas and not just in the UK, a Norse Pagan was recently hired by the US army, because Sikhs had already won a lawsuit against any ban on carrying long hair. Thus it can be said that the second hypothesis also stands **valid**.

5.3.3- Limitations to this Study

Like any study, this one has limitations too. The biggest limitation, which the researcher has tried her best to deal with, is the methodological challenge when it comes to analysing socio-cultural phenomena such as integration. Some degree of psychological training would have helped build a deeper analysis.

5.3.4- Final Remarks

The reason why this research was undertaken was because this researcher is in a quest to understand how best diversity, an ever-growing phenomenon, can be accommodated in a nation state set-up. The complexity of the future, rather the present is that even as diversity and the demands that it places – the claim to equality and developing a meaningful life irrespective of identities – is positing a big challenge to the hitherto held ideas about the nation state, which is understood as a somewhat fixed in time entity. Nationalism is emerging as one of the biggest challenges to this natural diversifying flow that has been going on since the post-war era. It is incumbent upon nations to re-think how they are going to live with diversity, because that is not going anywhere, it is coming to everyone. In this regard, having completed this study, I would give a compliment to the United Kingdom, for having, what could perhaps be, the best model to engage with diversity that exists today. The fact that England won their first cricket world cup with this team of players could be symbolic to show that diversity is the way and not the other way around.

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