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From one world to another photographs taken by Les Taylor on the 11th of January 2011.



Massey University, Albany,
New Zealand.
School of People, Environment and Planning

The Sikhs of South Auckland.
An Anthropological and Historical Account of Sikh Migration and
Resettlement in the Counties - Manukau Districts of Auckland, New
Zealand.

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of

Masters of Arts in Social Anthropology

Lesley John Taylor

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ABSTRACT

Migration has always been part of the human endeavour. This aspect of human behaviour is often characterised as driven solely by an economic rationale in that individuals or families migrate in order to improve their economic well being. Because of this perspective most contemporary academic studies have focused on the economic push- pull factors of migration. However there has been little attention given to other dimensions such as normative family obligations, geographical dispersion of relatives and friends or historical depth of family migration that may facilitate or inhibit the migration and resettlement process.

To delve into these differing paradigms I spent considerable time with the Sikh Community as a participant observer and conducted interviews both formally and informally with Sikh migrants. I explored their reasoning for migration and documented their initial and long term experiences here in New Zealand.

I conclude that economic considerations, whilst important no longer play the dominant role, as espoused by neo-classical economic theorists. Rather it is factors such as clean air, weather patterns, infrastructure capability and political transparency that have eclipsed the importance of immediate and future economic considerations when considering, implementing or maintaining the migration process.

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Academic endeavours are pursued through solitary effort. However that effort does not occur in a social vacuum. This thesis is no exception and has been made possible due to the direct and indirect contribution of many people. I take this opportunity to thank them all.

In particular I would like to thank all the members of the Sikh Community both here in New Zealand and in the Punjab who graciously gave of their time and tolerated my prying questions with good humour and hospitality.

To the academic faculty of Massey University who granted me extension after extension. This thesis would not have been possible without your understanding and co-operation.

To my good friends Harminder Singh and Daljit Kaur who made my dream of conducting field work in the Punjab a reality “Look for side and blow horn”

Finally thanks to my principal supervisor, Dr Graeme MacRae for his patience and encouragement over the years that it has taken to produce this body of work.

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INTRODUCTION

My first contact with the Sikh community happened quite by accident when I took a wrong exit off the Auckland southern motorway on my way to visit a friend in South Auckland. This exit took me straight past the *Sri Guru Nanak Dev Sikh Sangt Gurdwara Sahi Ji* in Otahuhu where just at that very moment significant numbers of people were leaving the *Gurdwara*. Although at that given moment I had no idea what a *Gurdwara* was never mind its name or who the people in fact were. My initial response was “*Oh my God where did these people come from, what made them come here? How did they get to be here and what are they doing here? They all look the same.*”

As the folk saying goes, *it is curiosity that killed the cat*. By stopping the car and by getting out *half expecting by this time to see someone whizzing past on a flying magic carpet*, I took the first steps to what would lead to a small research project “Through the Years, Sikh-Punjabi Experiences of Ageing in Aotearoa New Zealand” (Taylor, 2007) and ultimately to this thesis. Coincidentally I happened to mention this *close encounter* with the *foreign other* to a close friend several days later, who promptly replied to a casually thrown remark made by myself “*I wonder why they came here*”. “*Like all these blasted migrants and aliens they come for the money. We’re becoming over run with them*”. The content of their reply appealed somewhat to my common sense notions of the world. However, the tone rekindled that sense of curiosity that I had experienced on my initial encounter with my reply being benignly sarcastic and something similar to “*is that right*”. It is that curiosity and those first initial questions coupled with the notion that “*we’re being over run with money hungry migrants*” that fuel and drive this thesis.

Aims of the study

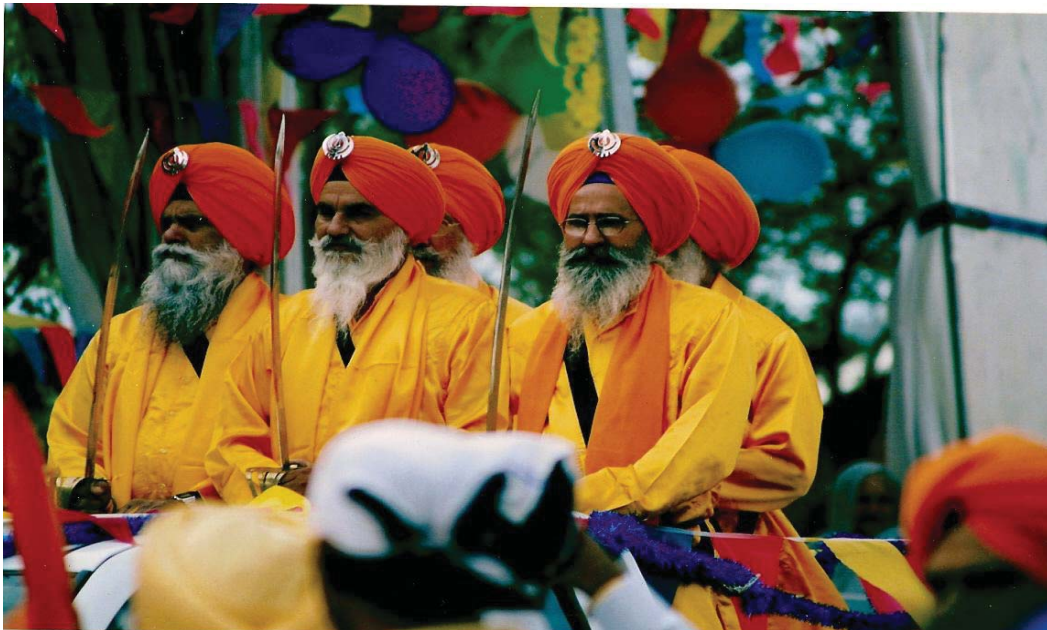
To fully answer those questions and assumptions this thesis has a specific set of aims. Firstly, the study intends to background the overall history of migration as a means of illustrating and understanding migration in general and the wider picture of Sikh migratory patterns. (Are we really being over run?). Secondly the thesis aims to background the history of the Punjab and the influencing factors on migration from the Punjab (How did they get to be here?). Thirdly the study aims to critique the dominant theories of international migration by highlighting their strengths and weaknesses. (Are they really here for the money?). Fourthly the study will argue against theoretical exclusivity and contend that a synthesised approach is better suited to analysing migrational streams. (Why are they here then?)¹.

¹ By theoretical exclusivity I mean only analyzing a migratory stream through the lens of one theoretical paradigm. For example economic theorists postulate that migration is prompted by economic gains say for example New Zealanders to Australia or England for higher wages. However, if that was such a salient reason why do English citizens migrate to New Zealand or why do some New Zealanders return home?

Fifthly, the thesis aims to document and understand, through field work and literature research, the personal motivations, structural forces and constraints that feed into, drive and govern the experience of migration and resettlement in the greater South Auckland area. Sixthly, the report intends to analyse how the migration process has impacted and changed the study participants and by extension the Sikh community. (What are they doing here?). Seventhly the study intends to fill a much needed post 1990-gap in the literature on the Sikh community in New Zealand. Lastly the study hopes to foster a more inclusive and more informed awareness of this growing and vibrant sector of New Zealand's social fabric. This last aim aligns itself well with the aspirations of the Sikh Community which wishes for recognition from mainstream New Zealand.

*“No one knows we are here
People think we are Muslims because of the Turban
People are not well informed about us here”* (Kaur, J. Amrit-Dhari).

“The mere fact is that here is a community that has silently and passively served and pioneered this country for a very, very long time, and at no time has it ever had its hand out to the Government. I do feel that there has been very little recognition of the fact” (Singh, A. as cited in Binning: 2005).



Baisakhi Day celebrations at the Sri Guru Nanak Dev Sikh Sangat Gurdwara Sahib Ji Otahuhu Auckland. The five men are known as the Panji Piare “The Cherished Five” or “Five Loved Ones” (McLeod, 2005:153). Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 1st March 2007.

Why Study the Sikhs

The Sikh community has been a part of the New Zealand social landscape for over one hundred years. The first known Sikh migrants to have arrived in New Zealand were two brothers Bir Singh Gill and Phuman Singh Gill who arrived in or around 1890 (McLeod, 1986: 33)². Since that time their social footprint has become highly visible throughout the North Island of New Zealand with Sikh temples (*Gurdwaras*) situated in Auckland Hamilton, Tauranga, Napier and Wellington. Yet surprisingly very little is known about the Sikh community. They are visible and yet invisible despite their significant contributions to New Zealand. When it became known to friends and colleagues that I intended to make the Sikh community the focus of an ethnographic study I was shocked by the lack of knowledge and limited recognition articulated about the Sikh community.

“They are a secret society aren’t they? They are a cult”

“Who are they? I’ve never heard of them. Do these people really live in New Zealand? You have got to be joking me. Where are they?”

During World War One Sikh soldiers’ fought alongside the Anzacs in the ill fated Gallipoli campaign (Singh, V. 2002: 1). During World War Two the Sikh Community (and the greater Indian community) was equally supportive of New Zealand’s war effort by producing and supplying food to the New Zealand and American Armies. Additionally two New Zealand Sikhs, Lachman Singh and Munsha Singh Basi both volunteered for active overseas duty (Leckie, 2007: 102)³. Whilst a third Mr Hari Singh “*served in the New Zealand army driving trucks in New Zealand*” (McLeod & Bhullar, 1992: 61).

Further contributions by the Sikh community to New Zealand include the owning and operating of significant numbers of dairy farms including the esteemed Mount Cosey Jersey stud farm (Leckie, 2007: 64). In the political arena Sukhinder Kaur Turner (probably better known as Sukhi Turner) made significant contributions to the City of Dunedin during her three successive terms in office 1995, 1998, and 2001 (Pio, 2008: 16). Further Sikh political achievement includes the coming to Parliament of National Party List MP Mr Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi in 2008, the first Sikh to achieve parliamentary office (Gower, 19th August 2009).

² This date is now under question due to the recent print media research conducted by Harpreet Singh (2010) of Otago University who has brought to light “new evidence detailing an even earlier presence”.

³ Between the 3rd and 4th of June 1915 the 14th Sikh Regiment suffered 371 casualties at Gallipoli (Singh, V. 2002: 2). Their heroism at Gallipoli was cited in the case for the Motorcycle Crash Helmets (Religious Exemption) Act (1976) in the UK (Singh, R. 2010. in Nadkarni, D. 2010). While this number of Sikhs who actively participated from New Zealand may seem small it must be remembered that thousands of Sikh soldiers served in World War Two under British command (Singh, & Singh- Tatla, 2006:47)

Sikhs today can be found in a broad spectrum of occupations ranging from fruit pickers, policemen, surgeons, small business owners, real estate agents, immigration consultants, nurses, doctors, lawyers, teachers, information technology workers and dairy farmers.⁴ Despite their efforts the Sikh community only seems to enter the New Zealand psyche in moments of high social stress or controversy where this overall lack of knowledge [at times] assumes even greater salience

“.....*Go away Osama, no Muslims here this happened to me once on the main street of New Plymouth and Palmerston North*” (Singh, K).⁵

“*After 9/11 I stopped wearing my Turban into town for a little while you know I didn’t want trouble I could see it*” (Singh, M.).

“Daggers taken on plane reveal gap in security A group of Sikh priests with ceremonial knives alarm Napier-bound passengers” (Binning, 2007).

“Sikh plea for tolerance in air security: turbaned community understand need for controls after 9/11 but want respect” (Binning, 2007).

“Cossie Club: All races welcome, but no hats. Entry refused to a turbaned Sikh” (Nash, 2009).

This lack of mainstream knowledge is further compounded by the lack of academic attention paid to the Sikh community.

The only academic researcher who has focused exclusively on the Sikh community is the late Emeritus History Professor Hew McLeod of Otago University, who in his ground breaking monograph *Punjabis in New Zealand* (1986), covered Punjabi Sikh migration from 1890 to 1940. This work was further augmented when *Punjab to Aotearoa Migration and Settlement of Punjabis in New Zealand 1890-1990* which was co-authored by S.S. Bhullar, appeared in 1992. Since that chronological point of demarcation there has been a discernible gap in the literature concerning the Sikh community in New Zealand (Bandyopadhyay, 2010: as cited in Bandyopadhyay, 2010: 9)⁶. Other New Zealand researchers such as Jacqueline Leckie, from Otago University *Indian Settlers* (2007) and Edwina Pio *Sari* (2008) have tended to adopt a wider focus of enquiry and have not exclusively focused on the Sikh community.

⁴ New Zealand’s first turbaned policeman is Mr Amaninder Singh Sandhu who was initiated into the police force on June 9th 2008 (Booker, J. 2008).

⁵ All quotes from participants through out this thesis are in the actual and real words of the participants themselves, therefore they may not be grammatically correct.

⁶ Bandyopadhyays (2010) comments also refer to the wider Indian population in New Zealand.

Other publications *India in New Zealand* (2010) and the *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies* (2010) also have extended a wider focus to their endeavours.

Who are the Sikhs

The Sikh people are a religious community who originate from and claim the state of Punjab in Northern West India as their spiritual homeland (Helweg, 1979: 3). Most Sikhs are readily identifiable through their distinctive style of dress. For men this comprises of not shaving, keeping their hair long and never cutting it (*Kesh*), pinning their hair with a wooden comb (*Kangha*) over which they wear a turban to contain their hair, and the wearing of a steel bracelet on the wrist (*Kara*).

Furthermore men are required to wear long shorts (*Kachh*). However in contemporary times men most usually wear long pants. Women also do not cut their hair and wear a distinctive suit comprising of a long tunic and trousers coupled with a headscarf that covers their heads and shoulders. The tunic and pants are known as a (*Shalwar- kameeze*), and the headscarf as a (*Dupatta*) or (*Chunni*). Like their menfolk Sikh women also wear a steel bracelet (Noss, 2003: 249).



Elderly Sikh couple and a friend enjoying the morning sunshine, the woman in the centre is wearing the traditional *Shalwar Kameeze*. Her hair is covered with a *Dupatta*. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 17th June 2007.

Furthermore, Sikh men and women who have taken a vow of (*amrit*)⁷ also wear a dagger or small sword (*Kirpan*). The *kirpan* is worn by baptised Sikhs as a symbol of their willingness to fight in defence of their beliefs and against tyranny, and injustice (Noss, 2003: 249). Not all Sikhs though adhere strictly to this dress code. Some Sikh men cut their hair and either shave completely, or at the very least trim their beards.

⁷ *Amrit –Dhari*. A Sikh who has taken *amrit* (nectar) the water of eternal life and has been initiated into the *Khalsa*, this is done by the ceremony of *amrit sanskar* (McLeod, 2005: 13).

Women, however, adhere far closer to Sikh notions of dress especially when in full view of the community. While younger women and females who are educated or have been raised in an urban or western environment do don western attire for work, the *Shalwar Kameeze* and the *Dupatta* remains the socially accepted dress code for women (Kaur-Rait, 2005: 6).

The Sikh cultural religious world view can be summarised as one of fostering and favouring loyalty, community service, status and achievement through hard work. It is not a religion that advocates a self centred escape from problems or social responsibilities. Emphasis is laid on accentuating positive action or thought or effort in any situation (Shankar & Singh, 1998:62) and an unshakeable belief that one must never give up in but remain in a state of high spirits or (*Charhdi Kalaa*) (Singh, K. Vol 2 1999: 437).

Theoretical Considerations

Migration is a complex and multi faceted phenomenon with a review of the literature revealing many theories and opposing perceptions. Because these perceptions have been developed through time and in response to specific events and migratory streams, their theoretical focuses and explanations are not always transferable or applicable to differing migratory events or patterns. One of the contributing reasons for this lack of theoretical coherence is that the topic of migration has never been the exclusive arena of a particular social science. Rather, all the social sciences and the differing lenses and levels of analysis that they all bring, have studied migration. This has not only resulted in acrimonious theoretical debates across the disciplines, but has led to the lack of a grand theory of migration (de Haas, 2008: 2).

The dominating discourse within the literature was and still is the perspective that emphasis economics and mathematical analysis. A review of migratory journal articles (Skeldon, 2009. Peach, 2010. Smits, 2001. Khadria, 2002.) revealed, that the majority are focused on economic factors such as remittances earnings and the monetary effects of intellectual, and skill gain, or loss.⁸

A large number of these economically driven research papers are funded by large governmental or international organisations such as the Global Commission on International Migration, “with most current research on international skilled migration focusing on the male dominated sectors such as finance and business” (Raghuram, 2004: 305).

⁸ While an in depth study of the academic leanings of journal articles and books is not the focus of this thesis the literature at least in the samples that I looked at are littered with journal articles such as, International Migration Remittances and the Brain Drain A study of 24 Labor exporting Countries authored by The World Bank, Adams-Jnr, R.H. (2003) and Migration Remittances Development: A Review of the Global Evidence by The World Bank, Page, J. & Plaza, S. (2005). These particular studies were both authored and funded by the World Bank. For a more thorough analysis on the influence of large corporate organizations, see Schwenken & Eberhardt (2008).

This economic bias can be traced to the founding theorist of migration Ernest Ravenstien an English geographer who first initiated the notion that the primary causes of migration were improved economic conditions in an alternative location.⁹ This economic emphasis was later reinforced by the developmental models of Lewis (1954), Ranis & Fei (1961), Sjaastad (1962), Harris & Todaro (1970) which all emphasised labour and wage differentials between and within countries. The dominant male perspective in the economic literature can also be traced (as alluded to previously) to the proliferation of corporate reports by such institutions as the IMF which are male dominated and draw on neo classical economic frameworks to analyse and predict the costs and benefits of migration (Schwenken & Eberhardt, 2008: 6).

Whereas, research papers that focus on the human considerations that feed into migration are not nearly as prevalent or so financially endowed.¹⁰ For example, an analysis of family is usually absent from the migrational literature on “brain drain” (Raghuram, 2004: 305). The economic literature is also lacking a comprehensive analysis on the contribution of skilled women and still assumes the male migrant as the normal migrant (Schwenken & Eberhardt, 2008: 19).

This dominance however, has not gone unchallenged. Up to the 1980s there were major schisms between economic theorists and the advocates of the historical structuralist approach (neo Marxists, world systems and dependency theorists) Castles & Kosack (1973), Wallerstein (1974). However, since that time the theoretical debate has come under two influences that have slightly diluted the theoretical debate and encouraged a more inclusive approach (de Haas, 2008: 2). Beginning in the 1970s the invisibility of women in the migrational literature began to be addressed by feminist theorists (Boyd, 2003: 1).

This has ultimately led to academic disciplines concerned with the study of migration being influenced by feminism and feminist theory (Curran, Shafer, Donato, & Garip, 2006: 200-204). Additionally the advent of postmodernism and affirmative postmodernism has encouraged increasing co-operation between theorists of differing backgrounds (de Haas, 2008: 2). Affirmative postmodernists do not feel that theory needs to be abolished but merely modified, synthesised, improved or extended and built upon (Weiss & Wesley, 2005: 2).

⁹ An elaboration and critique of the dominant migratory, theories including Ravenstein will be presented in chapter four.

¹⁰ An example of this comparison is Bhatti & Dusenberry (2001) whose work on the history and migratory experiences of the Sikh community in Woolgoolga NSW while government funded and certainly not on the scale of the above studies was ultimately published by a local publishing facility the Woolgoolga Neighbourhood Centre Inc which is a far cry from the World Bank.

Because there is no grand theory of migration this thesis will argue for and adopt a multi-theoretical approach and by doing so hopes to contribute to rectifying the imbalance in the literature. However by acknowledging that in order to understand the complex nature of migration it is necessary to adopt a variety of perspectives and analysis (Massey, Arango, Hugo, Kouaouci, Pellegrino, & Taylor, 1993: as cited in Cohen, 1996a: 431). *“As a full understanding of migratory processes will not be achieved by relying on the tools of one discipline alone or by focusing on a single level of analysis”* (Massey, et al 1993: 432 as cited in de Haas, 2008: 3). A researcher needs to be fully aware of the theoretical strengths and weaknesses of the differing theoretical paradigms that are to be utilised.

For example theories of economics assume that migration is a rational choice made by rational self interested individuals who wish to better themselves. Therefore it is economic factors that are considered the most important variable when viewing whether to migrate or not (Waddington & Sebates-Wheeler, 2003: 5). However, a close analysis of migratory streams to New Zealand reveals on average high levels of career regression for skilled migrants (Tharmaseelan, Inkson, & Carr, 2010: 232). Yet even with the advent of internet, email, mobile phones and well established migrant networks in which to convey the economic ill tidings migration to New Zealand continues to increase. With the number of people who are born overseas increasing from 19.5% in 2001 to 22.9% in 2006 (New Zealand Statistics Quick Stats 2006). With these notions in mind (as mentioned previously) an analysis and critique of the dominant migrational theories will be presented in chapter four.

Entering the Field Methodology

This thesis follows on from previous research (Through the Years Sikh-Punjabi Experiences of Ageing in Aotearoa New Zealand) which was carried out in 2007.¹¹ This previous research has afforded me the privilege of following and participating in the trials, tribulations and fortunes of my good friend Harminder Singh, and his family over the last 4 years, as they make the transition from new migrant to new Kiwi. This ongoing relationship with Harminder Singh and his family has meant that I have become intimately involved with their lives, to the point that I am no longer considered an outsider.¹²

¹¹ Insights and participant comments from this earlier research will also be included into the body of this thesis. Participants from this previous research were informed at the beginning of the research that their comments and input could also be incorporated into a possible thesis sometime in the future.

¹² In fact not only have we become firm and fast friends but we have also set up an immigration consultancy business NZASIA. However because I am not a licensed Immigration Consultant and cannot advise on immigration matters this to my mind has not created a conflict of interest, rather it allows me to observe the processes of migration as I can only speak to people about what New Zealand is like.

This has enabled me (albeit mostly on the weekends) to participate and observe a migrant Sikh family at a deeper level than was possible, when I conducted my initial research.



Harminder Singh and family. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 17th July 2008.



Citizenship Ceremony. Photograph taken by Daljit Kaur on the 5th May 2011.

Furthermore this previous endeavour has also proved immensely helpful in that I have been able to re-enter the field with an established network of informants and with a partially established reputation as a university researcher. Additionally my ongoing association with Harminder Singh has proved useful in opening up opportunities for interviews and overall endorsement of the research. However, like my previous academic endeavour as mentioned above, most of the research has been very much weekend anthropology.

I further realized that I had been accepted when I was being spoken to in Punjabi and Harminder his wife and his family were not aware that they had addressed me in Punjabi. This acceptance now further extends to the notion of kinship where I am now also considered as a (*Cha Cha*) which equates to an uncle and elder brother. This full acceptance means that Harminder and his family are only too happy to be fully identified throughout this study and in fact have insisted on their identity being made known.

A quick perusal of ethnographies written from the 1990s onwards Limon (1994), McCarthy-Brown (1991), Moon (1994), and Ong (2003), indicate that this method of anthropological inquiry seems to be becoming more common especially for anthropologists whose research populations are in an urban setting.

Although becoming increasingly common it does have pragmatic weaknesses, in that weekend anthropology is very much a stop start-affair, with life and work commitments doing their level best to create obstacles between the researcher and the researched. Time constraints whether imposed by the researcher or the researched, can tend to distort moments in social time where events can become forced or artificial. Furthermore the spirit or spontaneity of a moment or situation can be lost, because you have to leave just as something is about to happen or someone was just about to disclose or share something that is important to them.

A positive element of the weekend approach however is that it can create a social expectation where informants look forward to your coming so that they can enter into and share your world. Typical comments such as *Where have you been? What have you been up to? You weren't here last weekend* tend to negate some of the power differentials between the researched and the researcher.

“When the lines long drawn in anthropology between participant – observer and informant break down, then the only truth is the one in between, the situation is riskier but it does bring intellectual labour and life into a closer relation” (McCarthy-Brown, 1991:12).

Because of these life constraints I was forced to rely at some stages of the research on interviews and less on participant observation than I would have liked.¹³ At other times this situation was inversed and participant observation was the pre-dominate research method. Needless to say the research also involved copious amounts of reading and internet browsing.

In fact the research and the writing of the research had to be postponed several times due to personal and work commitments with writing only fully commencing in January 2011.¹⁴ However during these times of postponement I was fortunate enough to be able to turn negative situations into positive outcomes.

¹³ All participants who were formally interviewed signed a participation sheet and were assured of their confidentiality and rights regarding participating in this study including the right to withdraw.

¹⁴ The research was also halted out of respect to Navtej Singh who was murdered in an armed holdup on June 9th 2008. Subsequent events which were a flow on from this event and again impacted on the Sikh Community also tempered and slowed the research.

In September of 2009 I was able to combine research interests with a business trip to India where I accompanied the Indian International Marketing Manager of the company I was working for (North Shore International Academy) on a recruitment drive for students to study in New Zealand.

This enabled me to observe and actively participate in the strategies that are implemented by both migrational agents in India and a private international school in attracting potential students to study in New Zealand. Additionally, I was able make contact with family members (albeit briefly) of informants who had participated in the research in New Zealand. As a result of this brief contact I was able to visit the *Bangla Sahib Gurdwara* in New Delhi which further allowed me to engage in very informal discussions with informants who had consented to meet with me after their devotions.

Additionally as a result of my ongoing association with Harminder Singh and our subsequent business interests I was able to visit India and in particular the Punjab between December `19th 2010 till the 11th of January 2011. Where again I was able to actively participate in and observe (although as stated previously I am not a licensed immigration adviser and cannot give out immigration advice) the processes of recruiting potential students to New Zealand.

Additionally, because of the time frame involved, which allowed for extensive travel within the Punjab (all major cities and towns were actively targeted) the itinerary afforded me the time to create opportunities to substantially extend the focus of my observations and enquiries beyond that of the international student market. The time schedule also allowed for a visit to the Indian-Pakistan Border as well as the Golden Temple in *Armritsar* and other small *Gurdwaras*

Research methods during this time in the field consisted of in-depth participant observation, countless informal conversations, and two formal interviews which were conducted at the informants' homes. The participants of the formal interviews were interviewed only once with any clarification of points noted being communicated electronically or by telephone. Also because we stayed primarily with kith and kin, this allowed me to observe the inner workings of Punjabi families in a homeland setting. This created further opportunities from which to contrast and compare family dynamics in the Punjab with family dynamics in New Zealand.

During the New Zealand component of the research, I attended a guest lecture hosted by Auckland University of Technology. The invited speaker Dr *Jaideep Singh* from the State University of California spoke on Sikh identity, and Sikh experiences of migration in America.

I formally interviewed and re-interviewed nine couples. Eight couples were Indian born migrants with one couple being (*Amrit-Dhari*). The remaining couple comprised of a New Zealand born Sikh and his Indian born wife. The inclusion of this couple into the participant sample provided a slight contrast and allowed a differing story or perspective to emerge.

Additionally two of the couples also included their teenage children into the interviews which also allowed their voices and perspectives to be heard and included into the data which allowed for a more balanced perspective to arise.

All of the eight (strictly speaking 8.5), couples interviewed represented differing time spans of settlement, varying ages, social circumstances and variations in employment. I also had as stated previously continuous access to Harminder Singh and his family¹⁵.

I also interviewed and re-interviewed ten individuals (none of whom were New Zealand born) who were also of varying ages, had been in New Zealand for differing time lengths, held varying vocations, and occupied different social circumstances. All participants personally identified themselves as Sikhs and because of the huge variation within the study sample were fairly representative of the wider Sikh community in the South Auckland area¹⁶.

For the first interview, participants were given the opportunity to elect a place and time that was suitable for them to be interviewed. This inevitably resulted in the interviews being conducted in their private homes or accommodation. This permitted for a more relaxed environment, where I encouraged them to talk freely about whatever they felt a university researcher might like to know.

This allowed for conversation to flow and for me to ask open-ended questions as subjects of interest arose. The interviews did however maintain and explore certain themes through the use of a question guide (see Appendix One). All interviews where the participants felt comfortable were tape recorded and field notes were taken where it was deemed socially appropriate. The interviews were then transcribed to ensure the contents, the facts and the comments recorded were correct. This was greatly aided by the audio recordings as this allowed me not only to record what participants said but how they said it. The tape recordings also allowed for continual ongoing analysis as I had constant access to the data.

¹⁵ Any questions that may have arisen around the New Zealand experiences of Harminder Singh's children were always conducted within an informal family setting with both parents present and consisted mainly of casual questions and general observations. Furthermore, in the early stages of our relationship both parents would often ask me for advice concerning their children's education and overall welfare.

¹⁶ Study participants included the unwaged, higher education lectures, transport workers, farmers, aged care workers, teachers, doctors, *Gurdwara* committee members, agricultural workers, the retired, early childhood educators, students, home makers and an MP. I do not claim however that my sample represents and speaks for the Sikh Community rather the sample is typical of Sikh migrants to New Zealand.

On the second interview, which was invariably conducted at the same venue, I asked participants to elaborate and verify their answers to previous questions, comments and stories. This ensured consistency and the accuracy of information and also allowed for stories and information to be enlarged or changed. All interviews were conducted in English and ranged in duration from 1-3 hours. Further consultation with participants was initiated during the writing stage of the thesis where it was deemed necessary.

Interviewing participants in their homes provided not only a venue, but an arena where participants were less socially guarded. This was especially true after the first interview. This allowed me to observe real human feelings associated with the lived experiences of migration. One of the strengths of the ethnographic approach is that it allows and provides up-close in-depth knowledge of the lived experiences problems and social relations of study informants to be given life (Foner, 203a in Foner 203c, in Reed-Danahay & Brettel, 2008: 244).

A further bonus of interviewing participants in their home was I could directly observe participants as they interacted with family members in a private sphere. It also gave me the opportunity at times to hear criticisms and community gossip, enabling a more nuanced understanding to emerge of Sikh family dynamics as opposed to the dynamics that are exhibited in a public sphere such as a *Gurdwara*. Furthermore, this gave me first hand experience of observing and interacting with a variety of Sikh families.

This experience I would later call on when conducting field work in the Punjab. Although at the time of these interviews I was not to know that I would later be afforded the opportunity to conduct field work in the Punjab. Additionally I was also able to gauge by the way their homes were furnished how far they had taken on a New Zealand way of life. With some homes, being heavily furnished, with Punjabi furniture, artefacts and religious icons in contrast other homes displayed a hybridised influence with large comfortable leather chairs and glass coffee tables, complemented by a large flat screen TV usually tuned in to Vision Asia or a live service from the Golden Temple. This hybridised influence often extended into the rooms of their children where posters of the New Zealand All Blacks were prominently visible. All homes though did display some religious artefact ranging from pictures of the Gurus to poster pictures of the Golden Temple. Lastly these interviews opened up the generous realm that is Sikh hospitality (*Khidmat*) (with most interviews being concluded with a generous meal).

Because the Sikh community in New Zealand is relatively small and maintaining anonymity difficult, I have deliberately made participants, identities obscure and at times non specific¹⁷.

¹⁷ According to Statistics New Zealand in 2006 there were 9,507 Sikhs in New Zealand.

For example a truck driver may be termed as a transport worker. Whilst most participants were happy to have their name associated with the study, some participants were also aware of the possibilities of a communal backlash should their comments be construed as provocative. In view of this dilemma the obscuring of participants identity seems an obvious choice yet still allows for their stories to be told whilst protecting their confidentiality.

I have been greatly assisted in this manner by the very nature of the Sikh faith where the last name of all male Sikhs is Singh and the last name for all female Sikhs is Kaur.¹⁸ Where participants have expressed the desire for their identity to be known such as in the case of Harminder Singh I have not obscured their vocational details and have included the initial of their first name.¹⁹ Where participants have wished to remain anonymous I have referred to them as Singh or Kaur only and as stated previously obscured their vocational details.²⁰ All the people who appear in photographs throughout the thesis gave their full permission for their images to be used. Some were informants, most were not.

Impressions of Punjab

As mentioned previously and as the inserted pictures throughout the thesis illustrate, fieldwork was conducted in the Punjab from the 19th of December to the 11th of January 2011. This period of fieldwork enabled me as an anthropologist to partially grasp some of the experiences of migration in reverse. One of the strengths of the anthropological method as stated previously is that it allows for a researcher to get involved and for human perspectives and feelings to take centre stage as opposed to cold facts.

Field work-participant observation, by going there, *“to wake up to a day presenting itself more or less as it does to the native”* and by participating allows a researcher at the very least to experience *“to get in touch”* (Malinowski, 1922: 7-8), and possibly understand what another person experiences (Patton, 1990: 70).

¹⁸ *Kaur* is the surname a Sikh female takes on when baptized and means princess. Singh is the name given to Sikh males upon baptism Singh means lion (McLeod, 2005: 109, 191).

¹⁹ This dilemma manifested itself during the writing stage of the thesis when Harminder Singh insisted that his identity be made public. Furthermore for those participants who identified themselves as Amrit-Dhari they also insisted that I mention their status of having taken a vow of Amrit. In the words of one participant “I fear no man only God” (Singh, B *Amrit-Dhari*). This situation which only manifested late in the writing stage did not allow for discussions to take place with the Massey University Ethics Committee. However even with their religious status, their vocation and initial included it is still very difficult to actually identify any body personally as the following example illustrates (Singh, S.). Am I referring to Sukminder Singh, Sukdeep Singh, Sukbal Singh or Sukwinder Singh?

²⁰ A similar method has been used by Nayar (2004) in her study of the Vancouver Sikh Community. Informants were quoted by their number in a generational cohort ie (Singh 3, 24) indicated an informant who was a third generation Sikh and the 24th person who was interviewed in that grouping.

By going to the Punjab I have been able to relate to Sikh Punjabi people and their migratory experiences in far greater depth than had I remained in New Zealand with only an imagined and detached concept of the Punjab. This anthropological insight helped turned benign comments that were captured during the New Zealand phase of interviewing into sites of awareness making them more salient and meaningful.

The Punjab during this period of fieldwork had the coldest winter on record (World Weather Report Dec 2010). It was bone chillingly cold and constantly foggy all day every day or so it seemed. These winter climatic conditions are exaggerated by its proximity to the Himalayas, its flat geography, a poor environmental infrastructure and an overall lack of adequate internal heating within most Punjabi homes. All the houses that I either visited or stayed in were not carpeted or had, in my view, adequate hot water facilities, or any discernible system of household heating apart from to don more clothes. To compensate, the people of Punjab light fires in the open and as stated previously they put on more clothes. Bathing was difficult because for the most part there were no showers rather buckets were filled with hot water and one sat on a plastic bucket and scooped warm water over oneself. Because of the price of electricity and the power supply being unstable hot water was and is very much a luxury.

The air was so cold that I developed skin problems. My hands, face and the backs of my legs and feet all dried out and began to crack due to the coldness and dust in the air. This was further compounded by the water being exceptionally hard. The level of noise pollution is overwhelming as is the sheer volume of humanity. However, despite the cold people still laboured in the fields and overall life went on. The Punjab in winter is not an environment that could be romanticised nor do the people themselves attempt to do so. Quite often a topic of introduction would include an open acknowledgment of the severity of the weather conditions.

There is a huge variety of people with a full range of the human condition well represented. It's chaotic and yet people appear relaxed calm and optimistic about life. Tradition sits alongside modernity satellite TV alongside cottage industry, rich alongside poor. Litter is everywhere and yet the cultivated fields are surprisingly litter-free and well kept. Cold and colder weather yet the smiles are warm, the people warmer and the relationships between humans one can immediately sense are enduring and of primary importance. They are genuine, spontaneous and generous. The Punjab is edgy, vibrant brash, colourful and confident and very similar geographically to the South Auckland area. In short I experienced the same feelings of bewilderment and culture shock that migrants had so often spoken off when articulating their initial experiences in New Zealand.

CHAPTER ONE

The Global Story: Overrun or just arrived too late?

To develop a distinct understanding of any migratory flow, a thorough grounding in global migrational history is a prerequisite as most policy makers and people in general are basing their actions and thought on false assumptions (Massey 2003: 24). “*Like all these blasted migrants and aliens they come for the money we are being overrun with them*” (Anonymous). Therefore the objective of this opening chapter is to present a historical and contemporary overview of international migration within the last 500 years. This will be coupled with an emphasis highlighting the migratory relationships between Western countries and the Indian sub continent. The chapter will show that migration and in particular migration from Asia is not something new.

Migration has been part of the human endeavour since *Homo Erectus* trekked out of the confines of East Africa. What precipitated *Homo Erectus* to leave home scientists cannot be totally sure. However by the time *Homo Erectus* evolved into *Homo Sapiens* some one million years later our early forebears had travelled to vast points of the Old World (Nelson & Jurmain 1991: 492). This aspect of human behaviour has reached enormous proportions where migrant populations have now become a visible phenomenon of the modern world “*resulting in most of the worlds developed countries becoming multi ethnic and diverse societies*” (Massey, Arango, Hugo, Kouaouci, Pellegrion, & Taylor 1993: as cited in Cohen, 1996a: 181). However it is only within the last 550 years that the serious study of human migration has begun to take shape.²¹ Prior to this, records of migration were primarily oral stories and tales or records of military defeats or conquest.²²

The modern history of international migration can be divided into four distinctive steps.²³ The first phase from about 1500 to 1800 was known as the mercantile period during which time global lines of communication were opened up and long distance trade flourished.

²¹ However it would be a mistake to conceptualize that the 21st century is the age of migration one century ago the percentage of migrants in the total world population was at comparable levels to those of today (de Haas, H. 2005: 2-3).

²² The biblical recording of the Jews fleeing Israel (Exodus) in the Holy Bible or the oral traditions of New Zealand Maori who place Kupe as the first Polynesian explorer to reach New Zealand shores (Dalley, & Mclean, 2005: 34) are such examples.

²³ By modern history the author is referring initially and primarily to western history and western migratory patterns. However as will be shown contemporary migratory trends are now predominately non western in origin.

“During, this phase, world migratory patterns were dominated, by flows, out of Europe, and stemmed from the processes of colonisation and economic growth under mercantile capitalism” (Massey, 2003: 1).

As a result of these processes Europeans were able to occupy and control large tracts of the New World. Most of these labour migrants were far more fortunate than later or contemporary migrants (especially those of colour) in that during this phase of global migration, the newcomers (Europeans) were mostly able to dislodge the local inhabitants from the land, install their own law, religious and political systems and proclaim themselves as the new legitimate regimes of power (Cohen, 1996a: xiv).²⁴

Those who emigrated during this period generally fell into four categories agrarian settlers, administrators and artisans, convicts and entrepreneurs who founded plantations of cotton, sugar and other commodities necessary to satisfy Europe’s expanding mercantilist economies (Massey, 2003: 1). The pre-industrial technologies of plantation enterprises however required large amounts of cheap labour and during the next three centuries this labour was predominately supplied by the forced migration of African slaves to the Caribbean and the continent of the Americas (Britannica Vol 10. 1987: 874).

It was also during this phase that European trading ties with the sub continent of India and Asia were re established (Britannica Vol 21. 1987: 77).²⁵ This re-establishment was made easier with the founding in 1652 of Cape Town in South Africa which acted initially as a refreshment station for trading vessels using the trade route round the southern point of Africa to the East Indies. Later in the same year (1652) forced migration from Asia to South Africa was initiated when slaves from India, Java, Ceylon and Malaya were imported into South Africa. Streams of voluntary Indian migrants also responded to labour needs in developing European colonies across the Indian Ocean.

²⁴ It should be noted however that the onset of British influence in India differed dramatically from other regions of the world in that the British came neither as migrating hordes seeking new places of abode nor as armies seeking plunder or empire. Neither were they motivated by missionary zeal. Yet overtime they transformed India more than any other previous ruling power (Encyclopaedia Britannica Volume 21 15th Edition 1987: 89).

²⁵ The first known documented connection between Europe and the Indian sub continent was Alexandra the Great invasion of the Punjab in 327-325 BC and in the second century BC Greek adventurers from Bactria were know to have founded kingdoms in the Punjab and in the neighboring Afghanistan mountains. (Encyclopedia Britannica Volume 21 15th Edition.1987: 77). Later European contact with Asia was through Marco Polo who journeyed to Asia in 1271 remaining in China for 17 years (Encyclopedia Britannica Volume 9 15th Edition 1987: 571).

These numbers were quite often bolstered by freed Indian slaves and service migrants such as doctors and priests that often followed voluntary migrants (Lal, Reeves, & Rai, 2006: 43). As will be shown later in the thesis Indian migrants also spread out to other European colonies or developing nations (albeit in small numbers).

For example, Indian immigrants arrived in Australia with the earliest settlers with others following as transported criminals from 1800 onwards (Clark, 1962: as cited in de Lepervanche, 1984: 36). In the New Zealand context the first reported Indian migrant was a Bengali who deserted ship to live with his Maori wife in the Bay of Islands in 1809 (Leckie, 2007: 21).

These migrational contacts and processes continued through the 18th and 19th centuries thus sustaining an association with Asia that continued up to and through what migratory historians term the first period of economic globalisation 1800 to 1928 (Massey, 2003: 2).

This initial phase of globalisation owed its genesis to industrial development in Europe and the spread of capitalism to colonies in the new world (Massey 2003: 1). During this early period of industrialisation some 48 million people left the continent of Europe for such destinations as America, Argentina, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. These countries, who were previously settler societies, become rapidly industrialised and hence drawn into the global trading networks (Massey, 2003: 3). During this first phase of globalisation, slavery was abolished firstly by the British in 1807 and the US following its Civil War of 1861 – 1865.

However, these shifts in moral stance created labour shortages in the sugar colonies. Consequently slavery was replaced by the colonial system of indentured labour. Initially colonies in the West Indies experimented with recruiting labour from Europe, China and again from Africa. However, these attempts met with failure for varying reasons. This failure to procure and maintain a stable and productive workforce shifted colonial attentions to India.

During the time that indentured labour was in force some one million Indian workers were transported across the globe (Lal et al., 2006: 47). For example indentured Indian labourers were imported to work in the sugar cane fields of Natal (Hopkinson, T. & The Editors of Life, 1965: 14 -27).

Between 1897 and 1901 the Imperial British East Africa Company recruited thirty two thousand indentured primarily *Ramgarhian* caste Sikhs to construct the Uganda railway between the Ugandan City of Mombasa and Lake Victoria (Bhachu, 1985: 22).

In 1879 indentured labourers were contracted to the Australian Colonial Sugar Refinery Co to work the Fijian sugar fields (Overton, 1991: 64). These indentured labourers laid the foundations of permanent settlement in these countries which imported their much needed labour.

However, as will be shown later in the thesis, this permanent settlement in countries such as Fiji and Uganda would sow the seeds of social unrest resulting in political or military action, that would ultimately result in forced or coerced expulsions.

Furthermore, rapidly industrialising countries such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand that did not experience indentured labour but rather free migration of Indian migrants would ultimately resort to tactics to severely limit their entrance (Nayar, 2004: 16-17; de Lepervanche, 1984: 56- 70; Bhatti & Dusenberry, 2001: 44-45; McLeod, 1986: 39-42).

Global flows of immigration were virtually halted with the arrival of World War One. In respect of Indian migratory flows only 106 Indian migrants were known with certainty to enter New Zealand during the first phase of economic globalisation. These figures include the two years prior to the out break of war 1912-18 (McLeod, 1986: 60). In Canada only one Indian migrant entered during the war years (Nayar, 2004: 18). This downturn in migration would continue throughout the world for the next four decades although there was a brief revival under difficult circumstances during the 1920s (Massey, 1995: as cited in Massey, 2003: 3). The 1920s were distinguished by the rise of nationalism resulting in restrictions of people, manufactured goods and investment capital. In New Zealand the 1920s saw the birth of the White New Zealand League with the explicit agenda of “*excluding further Asian immigration to New Zealand*” (Leckie, 2007: 67).

The Great Depression of the 1930s saw global migration falter and stall. This was further checked by the outbreak of the Second World War. What migrational movement there was, was directly the result of the war (Massey, 2003: 3). Britain, because of limited manpower, recruited colonial labour to work in munitions factories, forestry and as ground crew for the RAF thus ensuring a future war migrant labour link (Meyer, 2004: 66). Although overall most migration during this period of time consisted of refugees and displaced persons (Massey, 2003: 3). At the conclusion of the Second World War the migrational landscape was to change significantly.

The War had created significant numbers of displaced persons with Canada, New Zealand, Australia and the USA all receiving migrants from post war Europe (Bodvarsson & Van den Berg, 2009: 12).

However the majority of global migrants were not Europeans leaving for the colonies, but rather migrants from the colonies arriving in Europe to assist in the rebuilding of Europe (Papastergiadis, 2000: 29).

As post war reconstruction continued, the demand for cheap labour surged. Britain recruited heavily from its former colonies and between 1955, to 1962 nearly 500,000 migrants from former colonies settled in the UK (Meyers, 2004: 68). France recruited labour from its colonial interests in North Africa and Germany looked to the Southern Europe to fill its labour needs (Papastergiadis, 2000: 29). Germany initiated guest worker schemes that were similar to the policy implemented by Britain who issued short term work permits to displaced Ukrainians, Poles and Yugoslavians after World War Two (Hansen, 2003 : 25).

By the 1960s the high growth economies of Western Europe and the USA continued to pull workers from India, Pakistan, Southern Europe, North Africa, Turkey, Mexico and the Caribbean (Holifield, 1997: as cited in Ucarer & Puchala, 1997: 31). This economic pull changed global migrational streams from being European based, to streams of migrants that were not only of a dissimilar racial composition but were from densely populated countries, which were in the early stages of rapid industrialisation, to densely settled post industrialised countries. Whereas on average previous migratory patterns had been from rapidly industrialising European countries to sparsely populated but rapidly industrialising countries such as New Zealand Australia America and Canada (Castles & Miller, 1993: as cited in Massey, 2003: 3).

By the 1970s the Mediterranean countries of Portugal, Italy and Spain, all of whom had been traditionally migratory sending countries had reached an economic level of prosperity that required supplementary labour. Consequently Italy, Spain and Portugal began recruiting foreign labour predominately from North Africa and the Middle East (Massey, 2003: 6). Over time their field of recruitment has enlarged with field work in Punjab uncovering a migratory stream feeding into Portugal. Where, Punjabi Sikhs have become involved in the provisioning and manning of shipping operating within and between the Mediterranean and South America.

However, this transfer of cheap labour from the former colonies and other peripheral locations was to prove problematic when migrants from sending countries began to settle permanently in significant numbers. So much so that by the mid 1970s most countries, that were migrant destinations, had implemented some form of immigration control. However, during the latter part of the 1970s the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand all continued to admit war refugees (Meyers, 2004: 175).

Furthermore, within the same decade, the rich but labour scarce countries of the Persian Gulf started to import foreign labour initially from their poorer Muslim neighbours to support their ambitious plans as they embarked on modernisation schemes. However this later expanded to include such countries as India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

During the 1980s the labour pool was again expanded to include non Muslim countries such as Vietnam Korea and the Philippines (Massey, 2003: 8). Unlike the countries of Europe, the Arab States imposed strict immigration controls right from the outset of labour importation resulting in migrants having very few rights (Ucarer & Puchala, 1997: 33).

In spite of these restrictions migrants have become a permanent feature of the Gulf region where it is estimated that there is a total of around 12 million quest workers throughout the Gulf Region (Bodvarsson & Van den Berg, 2009: 12). Where, in spite of the severe restrictions, the overstaying and illegal entry of migrants into the Gulf States is outstripping the number of legal arrivals (Papastergiadis, 2000: 46). Investment and reconstruction of the Iranian oil industry is also likely to increase migration to the Gulf peninsular (Birks, Seccombe, & Sinclair, 1988: as cited in Cohen, 1996a: 106). However as events have played out across the Middle East in general during 2011 it remains to be seen how migratory streams will be affected. It may be that Sikh migrants may turn their focus to New Zealand however, if the financial meltdown in Dubai is any indicator the likelihood of this occurring is slim.²⁶

In the following decade with the expansion of the Asian Tiger economies, countries such as Singapore, South Korea and Malaysia had attained levels of prosperity that ultimately required the importation of migrants (Massey, 2003: 4). To satisfy its economic aspirations Malaysia started to and still currently imports unskilled and semi skilled workers from the Indonesian Archipelago and professional migrants from the Indian sub continent (Lal et al., 2006: 167).

Global immigration patterns in the 1990s started to shift discernibly from being labour based migrations to that of the refugee or asylum seeker (Reed-Danahay, & Brettell, 2008: 5). This rise in the numbers of migrants seeking refugee asylum status prompted the European nations of Germany Holland and Great Britain to introduce restrictive measures concerning the procedures and right of entry for those migrants seeking refugee status (Meyers, 2004: 79, 115, 133).

In contrast the USA (which historically has admitted more migrants than any other nation) adopted a very broad definition of those eligible for refuge status.

²⁶ As will be shown later in the thesis field work has not uncovered any Sikh migrants to New Zealand who have originated from the Gulf States either before or after the financial crisis in Dubai.

However, when analysing their countries of origin the overall distribution of refugees into the USA continues to reflect the ideological notions and conflict of the Cold War period, with the bulk of America's refugees originating in the former Soviet Union or the Eastern states of Europe (Meyers, 2004: 44 - 47).

While labour based migrants continued to migrate to countries such as the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand this acceptance began to be based more on a sectoral and limited basis (Meyers, 2004: 175). In the New Zealand context this manifested itself through the point system designed to attract highly skilled workers (Spoonley, Macpherson, & Pearson, 1996: 25).

With the events of 9/11, international migration has become increasingly characterised by growing governmental awareness of border security and public hostility towards migrants. Where, it is now perceived, that the inflows of migrants, into host countries is now reaching unacceptable levels. Further events in Europe such as the 2005 race riots in France and the 7/7 bombings in London have further strengthened public hostilities towards migrants (King, 2007: 187). This has resulted in an atmosphere, in many western countries of uncertainty and frustration surrounding the topic of immigration, with most countries adjusting or introducing new policies to restrict and control migratory flows (Puchala, 1997: as cited in Ucarer & Puchala, 1997: 339-340). A salient example of this attempt to strengthen border demarcations is the American Homeland Security Act signed in 2002 by the then President of the USA George Bush (Meyers, 2004: 54).

However, in opposition to this growing xenophobia and government surveillance, migration to the developed countries of the west continues to grow. By way of example, in the opening years of the 21st century over one million migrants entered the United States legally each year (Bodvarsson & Van den Berg, 2009: 376). In contrast to legal avenues of migration, illegal migration in to the USA continues to rise with 12% of its population being foreign born a total of 35.7 million people. Of that 12%, it is estimated that 29% of that 12% are unauthorised immigrants (King, 2007: 187). This reversal of migration from the periphery to western countries will undoubtedly change the world. How much so remains to be seen.

CHAPTER TWO

Land of Origins: The Punjab: Land of the 5 Rivers

*“You think you know a story
But to get to the heart of a story, you have to go back to the beginning”*
(Opening dialogue to the television series the Tudors).



Leaving a typical rural Punjabi village- Sarpuwali. Photograph by Les Taylor taken on the 17th January 2011.

As stated in the introduction, two of the questions that fuel and drive this thesis is *where do they come from and how did they get to be here?* This chapter therefore intends to narrow the focus of enquiry from a wide angled perspective to a micro or localised analysis (as will the following chapter). The chapter will start by presenting a brief history of the Punjab. Then direct its focus to the geography of the Punjab. The focus will then be further extended to explore the interplay between the British Empire and the infrastructural development that was initiated in the Punjab under colonial rule. The analysis will further document other influencing factors such as culture and other colonial endeavours on migratory streams up to the opening years of the 20th century. This analysis is needed for two reasons.

Firstly in order to make ethnographic sense of the contemporary flows and the changing dynamics of the Sikh community today it helps, to fully comprehend how Sikh migratory patterns were initiated and how Sikh people ended up in the far flung corners of the British Empire including New Zealand.²⁷

Secondly a concise overview is needed because the literature that is available predominately focuses on chronological sections of the migratory process or on only one country of destination.²⁸ Furthermore the literature that does present an overview of Sikh migratory patterns doesn't always go into fine detail about a casual mechanism of migration. For example Lal et al., (2006: 389) states "that during the 19th and 20th centuries rural Punjab and Gujarat were undergoing substantial transformations which encouraged migration" without stating what those structural transformations were.

One of the notions that underlie this thesis is that theoretical exclusivity does not reveal a fine grained analysis of any social phenomenon. This chapter will therefore implement and by doing so highlight the efficacy of using a blended approach by combining history, world systems theory and geography when analysing and explaining Sikh international migratory patterns under British Colonial rule.²⁹ A further consequence of emphasising geography is that it highlights and unmask the salience and strength of comments made by study participants during both the interviewing process and informal conversations comments that undoubtedly added weight in the decision to implement the migratory process.

The location of the Punjab in the north west of the Indian sub- continent has been and continues to be a matter of immense historical, cultural, geographical, agricultural, and military significance. The original or the greater Punjab originally comprised of vast territories that included not only the entire northwest of India as far south as Delhi but also extended into modern day eastern Pakistan. These vast territories contained one main river, the Indus, and six tributary rivers-the Sarasvati, Jhelum, Ravi Beas and the Sutlej.

²⁷ This comment equally applies to the following chapter which carries the analysis further forward till contemporary times

²⁸ Examples of this are "Punjabis in New Zealand A History of Punjabi Migration 1890-1940" by W.H. McLeod (1986) "The Sikhs of Vancouver" by James Chadney (1984), Indians in a White Australia by Marie de Lepervanche (1984), which as the titles suggest predominately focus on those countries of migratory destination or a defined period in time. An exception to this however is the Sikhs of Britain by Gurharpal Singh & Darsham Singh Tatla (2006), The Encyclopedia of the Indian Diaspora by Lal. et al., (2006). and The Story of a New Zealand South Asian Community by Jaqueline Leckie (2007). Never the less these authors fall within the minority as opposed to the majority. Furthermore as stated above sometimes these authors do not always go into a finer grained analysis of varying topics. This is certainly not a critique of their work (as I would not have been able to complete this work without theirs) rather it is an offering of explanation as to why this thesis is attempting to present an overview of Sikh migrational patterns. Additionally topics that the preceding authors have not completely elaborated create further opportunities for other students and academics to investigate.

²⁹ World systems theory and all other migratory theories as stated previously will be elaborated on in Chapter Four.

However through time the Sarasvati dried up and the local inhabitants began to exclude the Indus from the count since it marked the western part of the Punjab and was not considered a part of or within the defined territory (Singh, K. Vol 1 2004: 5).

The mountain ranges that border the Punjab are almost a complete rampart making human mobility and contact almost impossible, therefore the few passable areas of these mountains have attracted great attention through the ages. The most traversable points are on the Northwest of the Afghan frontier. It is here through the Bolan Pass in the Tobar Kakar mountain range of Baluchistan Province in western Pakistan, or the the Kyber Pass which snakes its way the Hindu Kush mountain range (between Afghanistan and Pakistan or the Gomal Pass which lies between the Kyber and the Bolan and cuts through the Sulaiman Range between Afghanistan and the south eastern portion of Pakistans Waristan province) that the Punjab has been continually invaded and at times ruled by so many different empires and ethnic groupings (Gosal, 2004: 2-3).

These differing empires and ethnicities have through the ages included Greeks Persians, Arabs, Turks, Mughals, Afghans, and finally the British (Singh & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 10- 14). Few of these marauding armies brought females but relied on liaisons with local women. As a result the Punjab became a melting pot of ethnicities and languages and even today bears the impress of ethnic mixing (McLeod, 2001: as cited in Bhatti & Dusenberry, 2001: 3). This state of flux has resulted in a world view that values hard physical work, a reluctance to submit to political authority and a suspicious outlook on the unfamiliar (Singh & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 10).

Over time this territory, which served as a bridge between the Middle East and central Asia or more precisely as the gateway to India became known as the Punjab “land of the five rivers” (Singh, K. Vol 1 2004: 5).



Boys in a Punjabi Village notice the differing colouring and facial features of each boy. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 5th of January 2011.

However with the establishment of Sikh rule at the beginning of the 19th century under the Maharaja Ranjit Singh did the cycle of invading, armies cease (McLeod, 2001: as cited in Bhatti & Dusenberry 2001: 3). However this cessation was only to last forty years and upon the Maharaja's death in 1839 the Punjab fall victim to infighting and British intrigue who finally annexed the Punjab on March 29th 1849 (Singh, S. 2005: 120). The Punjab was to remain under British influence until partition in 1947, where it was split between the newly formed independent countries of India and Pakistan. The smaller eastern portion of Punjab remained with India and the western was allocated to Pakistan (Britannica, Vol 21 1987: 118).

The Punjab (as stated previously) is bordered by lofty mountains on its west, northwest and northern boundaries. The most commonly known of these mountain ranges are the Himalayas situated on the northern reaches of the Punjab. The Himalayas in particular effect the geography and climate of the Punjab in significant ways. Firstly the Himalayas are eroding rapidly and as a consequence send out a rich source of soil and minerals to the plains below. This loam is further enriched by flooding rivers carrying rich silt deposits which renew the fertility of the soil annually (Gosal, 2004: 2-3).

The greater Punjab then is best described as primarily an agricultural landmass and one of the most fertile regions on earth. This fertility coupled with high yielding crop varieties and subsidised fertilisers have helped stave off famine within the Indian sub continent for decades (Bourne, 2009:39).

Furthermore, the Himalayas act as a barrier against the cold winds of the Asiatic continental shelf whilst simultaneously trapping the monsoon winds blowing up from the tropical south. This geographical feature ensures two months of rain from the end of June onwards with as much as 50 to 80 cm of rain falling which turns the Punjab from a dustbowl into a swampland. (Singh, K. Vol 1 2004: 7). About 70% of the annual rainfall across Punjab is received during the monsoon. In September the rains slacken and air temperatures begin to decline. By December and January temperatures plummet to near freezing at night and heavy fog envelops the Punjab during the day and night.

“We freeze in winter and sweat in summer. We always need the conditioner. I am thinking of going out and your country you have this?” (Singh.).

“Climate is no good” (Kaur.).

“It is bone chillingly cold so cold and dusty that my face, hands, feet, backs of my legs have all dried out and begun to crack” (Field Notes Punjab 2011).



Heavy afternoon fog on the Grand Trunk Road. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 11th of January 2011.

A few light showers tend to occur during January but they are short in duration and do little, as the above picture shows, to dispel the combination of fog and dust. By February winter has passed and by the start of April the summer has arrived with dust storms and scorching heat with temperatures sometimes rising to the mid forties (McLeod, 2001: as cited in Bhatti & Dusenberry 2001: 5).

“It is so hot in Punjab !!! and then the flies they come” (Kaur, S.).

“The weather in Punjab can be most hot- yes very hot- it is no good” (Singh.).

“Les you can not stay in Punjab in the summer the heat dust and flies heaps of mosquitoes especially in July. People have to do shopping in the evening. Due to heat schools are closed. You will not be able to stand a Punjab summer it is very sweaty and you will not be able to go outside at the midday. Temperature is unbearable so we stay inside and do more work in the morning afternoon is resting during mid day, dengue fever comes in the summer and people die.

After 5pm it is ok” (Kaur, D.).



Heavy late morning fog late in urban Punjab. Photograph by Les Taylor taken on the 11th of January 2011.

Rainfall across Punjab is notable because of its extraordinary variation. The north-western Punjab receives more winter showers than does the eastern Punjab however the intensity of winter rain is far weaker when compared to summer rain. The Eastern Punjab receives more rain during the monsoon than does the western Punjab. Furthermore the reliability of rain in the arid or semi arid regions of the western Punjab is far less than other parts of Punjab (Gosal, 2004: 17).

Because of this variability, water management and agricultural irrigation within the Punjab is of vital importance and was one of the primary factors in initiating massive internal migration within the Punjab. In the late 19th century six million acres of arid wasteland in south west Punjab were transformed into rich farmland with the introduction of irrigation canals engineered by the British Raj.

This development, which the ruling British viewed as one of their greatest achievements in India, had far reaching consequences on future Sikh migration which was to impact all the way back not only to England itself but right throughout the British Commonwealth (Gilmartin, 2004: as cited in Talbot & Thandi, 2004: 3).



Canal Waters Central Punjab. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 25th December 2010.

Firstly the Canal Colonies as stated above encouraged massive internal migration from the central Punjab to the Western areas that would later become Pakistan under Partition. For example between 1891, to 1911 the migrant population of the Chenab Colony grew from 112,000 to 1.1 million. This migrant population consisted primarily of Jats, the Sikh landowning castes and lower caste Arains. Furthermore the rationale for migratory selection was based on British notions of the Jats and Arain being natural cultivators with a pioneering spirit (Gilmartin 2004: as cited in Talbot & Thandi, 2004: 4-5). These notions extended to the Army where the British, after the Mutiny of 1857, deliberately targeted the Sikh community and encouraged the recruitment of Sikhs into the ranks of the British Indian Army (Singh, K. Vol 2 1999: 111). Additionally, to increase the numbers residing in the Canal districts retiring Sikh soldiers were rewarded with plots of land in the Canal Colonies (Singh-Tatla, 2004: as cited in Talbot & Thandi, 2004: 49).

The increase in farming productivity and the Punjabisation of the Indian Army introduced profound changes throughout the Punjab and Sikh society. Recruitment into the British Indian army exposed Sikh recruits to the distant shores of overseas postings and the British Empire in general.

This resulted in awakening notions of new opportunities and horizons for individuals and their collective families (McLeod, 1986: 31). With rising land values and farm surpluses the possibilities of overseas migration became more of a possibility for more and more rurally based Sikh Jats. These possibilities were further fuelled by the cultural notions of (*zamindari*) and that of (*izzat*) which are enhanced amongst other things by the successful management of the three familial Sikh concerns of land, housing and marriage (McLeod, 1986: 23).³⁰

Military service enhanced their reputation as a preferred and trusted auxiliary migrant for some Commonwealth destinations such as Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore (Lal et al., 2006: 156, 176, 206). There was even consideration given to transferring Sikh troops to New Zealand during latter stages of the New Zealand land wars with Maori (McLeod, 1986: 31). In short Army postings coupled with agricultural surpluses integrated the Punjabi farmer into a global economy as a producer of rice, wheat and cotton (Singh-Tatla, 2004: as cited in Talbot & Thandi, 2004: 48).

A relevant illustration of this example is the initiating impulse for Sikh migration to Canada, which owes its genesis to visiting Sikh soldiers in British Columbia who were on their return journey to India after participating in Queen Victoria's Jubilee Celebrations in 1897. Upon their return to India tales of the immense opportunities Canada offered filtered back to family members in the Punjab (Basaran & Singh-Bolaria, 2003: 95). Again in 1902 Sikh troops stationed in Hong Kong travelled through Canada en route to the coronation celebrations of Edward VII. Like the previous troops, they reported back to the Punjab stories of the rich soil and favourable climate of British Columbia.

These geographical observations struck a chord in the rural Sikh imagination with the end result being that between 1903, to 1908 around five thousand males who were predominately Punjabi Sikhs came to work on the railways, forests and lumber yards of British Columbia (Lal et al., 2006: 328). A large percentage of these migrants were ex Indian Army men (Singh-Tatla, 2004: as cited in Talbot & Thandi, 2004: 51). Other Sikh migrants to Canada came from the British colonies of Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore (Singh-Tatla as cited in Talbot & Thandi, 2004: 51), where they had originally been recruited for police duty (McLeod, 1986: 31).

³⁰ McLeod notes that family concerns of land housing and marriage evidently prompted emigration. (1986: 23). However, after reviewing Rashmere & Dusenberry (2001) Chapter Two I feel reasonably confident in stating it was cultural notions and concerns around land, housing and marriage as opposed to evidently.

Simultaneously, as migration to the canal colonies continued and foreign migration was being initiated there was also increasing Punjabi migration within India to its major cities (Singh-Gill, 2004: as cited in Talbot & Thandi, 2004: 178). This subsequent drift to the south initiated career changes away from the traditional vocations of rural farmers to that of transporters, mechanics, and entrepreneurial capitalists. This laid the foundations of vocational versatility which would prepare the Sikh population to fully realise the opportunities that the later years of the 20th century would ultimately bring.

Furthermore, because of the late annexation of the Punjab into the British Empire in 1849, the system of indentured labour introduced by Britain to fill the labour needs of the sugar producing countries was not actively promoted within the Punjab. (Singh & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 33).

Attempts in the 1870s with indentured labour to the Islands of Fiji proved to be disappointing. Where it was noted by the governor of the day, *“that the Punjabis previous occupations as soldiers or something of that sort made them unused to field labour”* (Singh-Tatla, 2004: as cited in Talbot & Thandi, 2004: 53).

This did not however deter the British Imperial East Africa Company who between, 1897-1901 recruited 32,000 primarily Ramagarhian lower caste Sikhs to construct the Uganda Railway which was to run between the Ugandan city of Mombassa and Lake Victoria (Bachu, 1985: 22). On completion of their indenture which usually ran between 3-5 years 80% of them left Africa (Lal et al., 2006: 254).

However, an estimated 7,000 remained in East Africa establishing themselves as traders and government employees until their forced expulsion by Idi Amin, the Ugandan dictator in 1972 (Singh & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 54). Where upon most resettled in the UK.

This chapter then has not only documented colonial migratory flows from the Punjab. But has also shown that through the combining of different theoretical perspectives the initiating pulses of colonial migration had their genesis in the intertwining of the British dominated world economy, the geography of the Punjab and that these initiating impulses were given even more impetus through cultural notions and Sikh family networks. This opening chapter then gives partial understanding as to how Sikh people ended up in far flung corners of the empire.

Whilst the British Nationality Act of 1914 conferred citizenship on all subjects of the crown and migration had been assisted through colonial channels such as the army and colonial police forces, the white Dominions of empire were determined to restrict access right up to the early 1960s and 1970s (Singh & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 34).

As the next chapter will show migrational access to western countries was to become more and more difficult during differing time frames and not so difficult in other times. However, the Sikh people would take advantage of all the openings and opportunities that would be presented.



Classroom motivational poster Pathankot Secondary School. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 5th January 2011.

CHAPTER THREE

International Migration Streams into Rivers

This chapter will continue the analysis initiated in the proceeding chapter. This chapter will show that the migrational stream into New Zealand mirrors that of migratory streams into the United Kingdom and Canada. This has ultimately resulted in the Sikh community here in New Zealand grappling with the same social tensions that have been reported in the United Kingdom and Canada, Singh & Singh-Tatla (2006), Chadney (1984), Nayar, (2004), Basran & Singh-Bolaria (2003), Kaur- Rait (2005).³¹

The chapter will further show that whilst this pattern is similar it is situated in a different time frame and has been influenced by differing world events. Nevertheless the rationale regulating migration to New Zealand is the same rationale that has driven migration to Canada, the United Kingdom and the Middle East. That is to include migrant labour when economically prudent and exclude supplementary labour when it has served economic its purpose. For ease of comprehension each national migratory stream will be presented separately.

Furthermore, the chapter will also focus on how events in India have propelled the Sikh people of Punjab into migratory streams in order not only to satisfy the needs of western countries', but also as a result of changes in agriculture, the importation of out-of-state labour, political instability, and lack of infrastructural development. The chapter will conclude by introducing the notion that because of these problems that have plagued Punjab since partition, these problems have now grown into other problems and it is these new problems that are now fuelling migration. For example because of a lack of investment in infrastructure the State of Punjab has not been able to contain or manage waste in a successful manner resulting in high levels of air and water pollution.

The result of these ongoing issues within Punjab is that the educated and skilled migrant of today is no longer reacting solely to economic considerations. Rather, other factors such as clean air, political stability, and safe drinking water now feature more prominently into migratory decisions with these factors in turn influencing the choice of destination.

³¹ By these social tensions I mean changes to the family dynamic, intercommunity tensions between the new and the old, changes at the individual level changes in language comprehension and use and other social variables.

It Don't Come Easy

Overseas migration of Sikhs began to slow to an almost stop in the opening years of the 20th century when Commonwealth countries such as Australia, Canada and non Commonwealth countries such as the US began to restrict immigration from the Indian sub continent. These regulations across all countries were implemented due to pressure from internal conservative and right wing associations such as Church groups, trade unions and business interests. The rationale for these restrictions was “*that Indians could not and would not assimilate*” (Basran & Singh-Bolaria, 2003: 97).

In 1901 Australia introduced the Immigration Restriction Act officially barring all peoples of colour into Australia. However because of official pressure from both India and Britain this was relaxed and a language test was inserted into the legislation to avoid openly offending Indian governmental officials and thus damaging India British relationships. This test was used selectively and very much in tandem with agricultural labour requirements. Thus Sikh Punjabi migration into Australia was both regulated but simultaneously allowed to continue in step with capitalistic labour requirements (Bhatti, 2001: as cited in Bhatti & Dusenberry, 2001: 45).

In 1908 the Canadian authorities aimed to restrict migration from India by passing regulations that raised the amount of money that had to be in possession of an Indian migrant from \$25 to \$200 and further legislated that a migrant must come by way of a continuous journey from their country of birth or citizenship (Chadney, 1984: 28). This piece of legislation was most effective in restricting Indian migration and few were admitted into Canada until after the conclusion of the second, world war (Basran & Singh-Bolaria, 2003: 99).

The US held out on outright barring Indian migrants due to labour shortages in the western regions of the US. However in 1917 Indian migrants and effectively all other Asians were banned from entry with the introduction of the Immigration Act of 1917 (Lal et al., 2006: 315).

In spite of these sanctions implemented by other nations, Punjabi immigration into New Zealand continued, where it was facilitated predominately via Fiji, a previous destination for indentured labour, which with the closing of Canada and the USA, was seen as a desirable destination. It was not only open, but discrimination against Indians appeared negligible when contrasted with other areas of the globe (Leckie, 2007: 26). This left New Zealand acting more as an overflow and destination by chance as opposed to a destination of choice (McLeod, 1986: 33-35).

Nevertheless, the increasing numbers of Indian migrants aroused economic, moral and employment concerns and in 1920 the New Zealand government introduced The Immigration Restriction Amendment Act. However, a special provision was inserted into the legislation to facilitate the arrival of spouses and offspring of already admitted migrants. The rationale behind this sub clause was to accelerate the “*assimilation process*” into the wider community (Leckie, 2007: 109).

However the arrival of females did not have the desired effect that the government of the day intended. Indian wives have a duty to be an upstanding wife and mother and a social duty to improve the position of her husband’s family. If this is not forth-coming then this affects the *izzat* of the entire family including herself, her parents and her kin group (Helweg, 1979: 55). Therefore because of *izzat*, the home making efforts of women migrants ensured that traditional dietary practices were rekindled albeit under difficult circumstances and a more traditional-pragmatic Indian style of life implemented.³² The Immigration Restriction Amendment Act overall however, ensured that the potential increase of Indian migrants to New Zealand was forestalled until the 1970s (Lal et al., 2006: 390).

These restrictions remained in place across the Commonwealth until the 1960s and 1970s. While these immigration controls had succeeded in averting significant numbers from migrating to the white dominions, by the end of the 2nd World War Punjabi Sikh communities had been established throughout the world and would serve as beacons of opportunity for subsequent generations (Singh & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 34).

The British Rebuild

Immediately following the Second World War, Great Britain underwent massive reconstruction. The labour for this reconstruction was initially filled by migrants that had been displaced by the war in Europe (Lal et al., 2006: 337). However the amount of labour needed became insatiable and Britain increasingly turned to the former colonies of India, Pakistan and the Caribbean to fill its labour demands. Given these ripe economic times, Sikh workers were easily able to secure employment in heavy industry and unskilled labouring positions. This was quickly communicated back to the Punjab triggering the large scale migration of temporary economic migrants. The goal of these temporary economic migrants was the same as earlier sojourners to Australia, Canada the USA and New Zealand, to amass enough money to return to Punjab and live a life of the (*Bara Sahib*) a life of ease (Helweg, 1979: 38).

³² For example Sikh women “continued to wear *salwar kameez* but learned to knit thick cardigans to wear over them” (Leckie, 2007: 119).

However like in previous years, the spectre of racial prejudice raised its head and in 1962 the Commonwealth Immigration Act came into force (Singh & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 35). Like previous legislation, enacted by countries such as New Zealand and Australia, the rationale was to limit and control the amount of Indian immigration. The legislation was framed in such a way that it excluded people of colour from the new commonwealth countries through rigorous control but included Irish workers and white British subjects from the old commonwealth through lack of immigration controls (Hayter, 2007: as cited in Gupta & Omoniyi, 2007: 23).

In affect the Commonwealth Immigration Act of 1962 encouraged further migration as the Sikh Community increased its migratory efforts just prior to its enforcement (Lal et al., 2006: 337). To beat the ban over 50% of Indians who arrived in Britain did so in the eighteen month period prior to the implementation of the Commonwealth Immigration Act of 1962 (Hayter, 2007: as cited in Gupta & Omoniyi, 2007: 25). The legislation favoured women and children and restricted the entry of young adult men over the age of 18 so that what started out as a community of temporary economic workers with visions of returning to India rapidly turned into a rooted and permanent diaspora. However the mass migration of non professional Sikhs to Britain effectively was ended (Lal et al., 2006: 337).

The next inflow of Sikh migrants into the UK occurred between the years of 1967 to 1972 as a result of political policies initiated on the African continent. These post independent policies of Africanisation initiated by the political leaders of Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya resulted in the removal of around 50,000 persons of Indian origins. (Lal et al., 2006: 338). These new migrants were the descendants of the indentured labourers originally contracted by the British to build the Ugandan Railway. This new influx differed in significant ways from previous Sikh migrants in that they effectively were refugees, were from a different caste, they were better educated, had a higher command of the English language and were vocationally upwardly mobile (Bhachu, 1985: 1).

Furthermore because they lacked a myth of returning to the Punjab they had more assets to improve their status or *izzat* (Singh, S. 2005: 559). Their arrival disturbed the homogeneity of the Sikh community making it more heterogenous. They were urban orientated, sophisticated and were used to combining traditionalism with progressive thought and action (Bhachu, 1985: 2). Their arrival also sparked the introduction of new immigration restrictions preventing the automatic right of entry for those from former protectorates and colonies (Lal et al., 2006: 338).

This influx of new migrants also brought to the fore the perennial conflict between *old timers* and *new arrivals*, a schism that would further manifest in the 1980s with the rise of the (*Kalistan*) movement and the subsequent arrival of refugees from that movement) (Singh & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 82).

During the 1980s the flow of Sikh migrants to the United Kingdom was curtailed by recession and the implementation of stricter immigration controls. As Britain enmeshed itself with globalisation, right wing economic policies became the norm inevitably destroying one of the pillars of Sikh employment—the garment and manufacturing sector (Singh & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 35). Heavy industry fared no better and Sikh migrants who had filled these working class positions were left in an underemployed situation (Lal et al., 2006: 340). Consequently, established and prospective Sikh migrants sought alternative destinations in North America and other countries. (Singh & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 35). This included professional Sikhs such as doctors and engineers who had already settled in the UK but felt frustrated in the United Kingdom (Singh & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 56). Since the 1990s, there has been resurgence in migration to the UK especially for doctors and IT professionals (Lal et al., 2006: 339). There have also been recent measures to allow for temporary work appointments within the United Kingdom.

Field research in India in 2010 uncovered that foreign students are now automatically granted an open 2-year work visa on completion of their studies, thus encouraging even more foreign students to study in the UK. This influx of additional capital from export education is contributing directly to the financing of the London 2012 Olympics (Immigration Consultant New Delhi).

The Commonwealth Stories

Canada

During the 1950s Canada began liberalising its immigration criteria with the early 1950s being marked by increased immigration based on sponsorship (Nayar 2004: 18). This liberalisation however up till 1962 was still very much guided by conceptions of Canada “*as a white country*” (Basran & Singh-Bolaria, 2003: 1). By the 1960s it was apparent that like Great Britain previously, Canada was unable to meet its labour needs in regards to professional, skilled, managerial, and technical positions and would consequently need to import foreign workers. Therefore a shift in policy was initiated through the 1966 White Paper on Immigration which promoted a point system. This change in policy allowed Sikh white collar professionals and others to enter into Canada.

This resulted in Canada becoming the world's second largest destination of choice for skilled non European workers (Basran & Singh-Bolaria, 2003: 152). By the mid 1970s immigration from India to Canada was averaging, 10,000 a year (Kaur-Gill, 2007: 8).

However, in 1976 Canadian authorities made it more difficult for independent migrants to gain entry into Canada whilst simultaneously allowing more migrants to enter under family reunification or as refugees (Lal et al., 2006: 329). This enabled a significant number of Sikhs to migrate to Canada as political refugees following the political insurgency in the Punjab during the 1980s and early 1990s. Once the Punjab problem as it became to be known settled, Sikh migration continued through family sponsorship (Nayar, 2004:18).

A large percentage of the new immigrants were better educated professional skilled workers with progressive world views from urban areas (Basran & Singh-Bolaria, 2003: 196). Indeed, the history of Sikh migration to Canada could be described as a shift from a general labourer to urban professional (Chadney, 1984: 40). There were some new migrants and political refugees who wished to maintain the more traditional aspects and practices of Sikhism that they had brought from the Punjab (Nayar, 2004:18). This resulted in tensions within the Sikh community between the new and the older migrants who in order to achieve economic social success found it prudent to give up some of their religious customs or introduce new ones such as chairs into *Gurdwaras*.

Furthermore, professional Sikhs could fit into the dominant society as individuals and did not have to maintain links with the community for economic prosperity. This was in stark contrast to previous migrants who because of their working class background and limited mobility had to maintain solidarity and utilise the resources and contacts of the community in order to attain economic prosperity. Therefore the new comers were seen as upstarts or weekend Sikhs (Chadney, 1984: 66). While all Sikhs are bound by their faith and connection to Punjab, differences in settlement times, occupational preferences and depth of piety as well as other variables have altered the Sikh community to the point that it is no longer homogenous as in the founding years (Nayar, 2004: 18).

Middle Eastern Stories

Simultaneously as Canada became progressively more open during the early 1970s and as Britain (as stated above) was initiating restrictions after the massive influx of Indian political refugees from Africa, the Gulf States of the Middle East, flush with the profits of oil-initiated massive construction programmes that required significant numbers of labourers (Singh & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 35). This infusion of petro-dollars transformed the countries of the Persian Gulf into capital-rich yet labour-scarce economies.

Correspondingly Persian Gulf Governments sought to recruit temporary workers to fill their labour needs. Initially they focused on labour-rich and capital-poor states within the Middle East countries such as Egypt who sent more and more workers to the oil rich producing states. This occurred firstly in 1973 and then in 1979 after the second increase in oil prices (Talani, Wolf, & Thielemann, 2003: 11).

However, during the 1980s there was a restructuring of labour policies to incorporate temporary workers from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. This was later extended to include workers from Vietnam Korea and the Philippines. This redirection of labour procurement away from neighbouring Gulf States was deliberately embarked upon to reduce the number of migrants with potential religious, moral or political claims on the hosting States. This redirection further enabled Gulf States to assume more control and reduce the likelihood of permanent settlement by temporary workers (Massey, 2003: 8).

It is currently estimated that there are between 60,000 to 175,000 Sikhs currently under contract in the Gulf States. These contract workers often use their accumulated finances to pursue further migration (Singh & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 35). However field research has not uncovered any migrants who have originated from the Gulf States.

The New Zealand Stream Continues

During the 1970s, as a result of American insistence in treating Western European economies as one institution or trading block as opposed to individual trading entities, the United Kingdom aligned itself with the European Economic Market in 1973. As a result of this New Zealand lost its privileged position as an agricultural provider to the United Kingdom. Consequently New Zealand found itself having to compete on the international stage and was forced to realign its previously secure trading links. Coincidentally, as this economic need was thrust upon New Zealand, the economies within the Asian Pacific rim began to expand as did their patterns of consumption. As a result New Zealand began to realign its trading patterns with Asia. This reorientation of New Zealand's trading links with Asia initiated a radical overhaul of its immigration policies and the dismantling of anti-Asian immigration that had been in place since the 1920s.

With the removal of nationality and culture to a skilled-based criterion for the purposes of entry, immigration from Asia was free to proceed. In 1987 when restrictions were first removed 323 migrants of Indian ethnicity migrated, by 1994 this had increased to 2,135 (Palat, 1996: as cited in Spoonley, Macpherson, & Pearson, 1996: 46- 51).

By 2001 this had increased to 43, 923 migrants who had been born in India (Statistics New Zealand 2002: 11). Between 2001 and 2006 the number of people born in India who are now residing in New Zealand, more than doubled (Quick Stats about Culture and Identity New Zealand Census 2006: 5).

Narrowing the focus to the Sikh population in 1991, there were officially 2061 Sikhs in New Zealand. By 2001 there were 5,196 (Lal et al., 2006: 394). In 2006 The New Zealand Census reported the Sikh Community to number 9,507. *“However, statistical data is subjective because of self reporting and ambiguities in classification”* (Leckie, 2010: as cited in Bandyopadhyay, 2010: 58). Therefore this figure could be substantially more and probably is so. However, with the cancellation of the 2011 census, due to the Christchurch Earthquake, current official figures remain unknown.

Whilst the exact figures may not be known, what is readily apparent is that the contemporary Sikh migratory patterns to New Zealand are substantially different to what started out as an intermittent endeavour by pioneering individual sojourners. While the early phase of Sikh migration was predominately from the *Hoshiarpur* and *Jullundur* districts of Punjab and its participants predominately of rural origins (Pio, 2008: 20), the Sikh migrants of today are far more diverse and have disturbed the equilibrium of what was previously a small and relatively homogenous community.³³ Like all Sikh communities in the diaspora (as previously shown) the long established pioneering segments of the New Zealand Sikh community are having to negotiate and to adapt to the changes brought on by the volume and diversification of new arrivals that are swelling the ranks of the community. In short, since the review of New Zealand’s immigration policy in 1986 and the consequent Immigration Act of 1987, the volume and composition of the Sikh migratory stream to New Zealand has changed radically.

*“We are being invaded by hard Indians”
“These other Indians !!”* (Singh.).

*“They look at me as if to say
Look at her in that car as if she owns it or is going to drive it”* (Kaur.).

*“A lot of new migrants do not like the fact that there are chairs at the Hamilton
Gurdwara”* (Singh.).

Simultaneously the newcomers are grappling with the changes that have been fostered by the act of migration which includes adjustments at both the individual and householder level.

³³ This disturbance of equilibrium was noticed by W.H. Mcleod. “Although their presence has not led to the kind of conflicts which occur in Canada it would be misleading to suggest that their distinctively Sikh qualifications have endured them to the old established Punjabi Community” (1986: 146-147).

“See he has started cooking for us. This is a big change. He vacuums the house. In India he would never do this!! (Kaur, D.).

Furthermore, new migrants face the psycho-social challenges of negotiating, their place and space with both the host society and the more established segments of the Sikh community.

“If I had been more familiar with New Zealand laws I might have had a different work experience. I had a bitter experience with these people (Kaur, S.).

“The Sikh community is strong here in New Zealand but the kiwi- born Sikhs have different attitudes to life, respect for elders. They pick up the values of kiwi. There are more love marriages now” (Singh, M.).

Concurrently both the new comer and old timer segments of the Sikh community are engaged in a struggle to maintain the continuity of their cultural norms and religious practices.

*It is Westernisation versus Indianization
We are leading two separate lives or cultures (Singh, H.).*

The structural demands of England, its Commonwealth subsidiaries, and the Middle Eastern bloc have impacted on Sikh migratory streams. These impacts have resulted in differing streams being initiated and redirected to differing destinations as required. These requirements also have demanded through time that the migrants’ of today possesses different skill sets to those of previous migrants. This requirement has and does not only result in conflict between *old timers* and new migrants, in the differing countries’ of destination but also creates new types of stresses and changes at the level of the individual, and family.

However, it would be a mistake to assume that migration from the Punjab is simply a response to the economic needs of the developed and developing countries. Events within the Punjab itself also propel Sikh people into migratory streams. It is to these events that the latter portion of this chapter will now turn to.

Indian Tales

The Independence of India was to bring about massive changes for the Sikh community and the newly partitioned state of Punjab. These changes lay in the wider political arena of a rapidly disintegrating British Empire: the need for Great Britain to rebuild after the Second World War, the political manoeuvres of The Indian Congress Party and the Muslim League coupled with the political decisions that Sikh political leaders ultimately made. These decisions made at international, state and regional level caused huge social, cultural, religious and economic upheavals and in fact instigated one of history's largest and bloodiest human migrations (Helweg, 1979: 8).

The Sikhs at the time of partition found themselves in the unenviable position of being caught between opposing forces. They were neither Hindu nor Muslim and through their association with the British owned and occupied some of the best agricultural land in the Punjab namely the Canal Colonies (Singh, K. 1999 Vol 2: 264). This political stance also entailed accepting the decision by Sir Cyril Radcliff who was charged with the ultimate authority as to where the final lines of partition would lie (Singh, S. 2005: 227). The Radcliff decision was as fair as it could be to the Muslims and Hindus. *"However the one community to which a boundary award could have done justice without doing an injustice to the other significant parties was that of the Sikhs"*. As a result the Sikh Community lost its richest agricultural land holdings, 150 shrines of historical importance and 40% of its population were left stranded in Pakistan (Singh, K. Vol 2 1999: 275). In the months immediately following partition massive population exchanges occurred between the newly formed states.

It is estimated that 5.3 million Muslims moved to Pakistan while 3.4 million Sikhs and Hindus moved to East Punjab and further a field into newly independent India with as many as 468,562 people arriving in Delhi from West Punjab (Gupta, 1996: 29). These migratory movements were fuelled by continuing communal violence (Singh, K. Vol 2 1999: 279). As stated previously, areas in west Punjab had large Sikh populations while in east Punjab major cities such as *Amritsar* and *Gurdaspur* had significant Muslim populations, all of which were attacked by opposing religions.

These forced migrations would initially and ultimately have significant economic repercussions on the future financial development of both east and west Punjab. On the post-partition political front the Sikhs who had been active in the partition process now found themselves relegated to the political wilderness. Post partition conditions made the Sikh community re-evaluate the prudence of aligning themselves with the Hindus. *"The Muslims got Pakistan the Hindus Hindustan and us Sikhs what did we get"*.

This attitude became increasingly common when it became more than apparent that the promises that were made to the Sikhs during the prolonged struggle for independence by the Indian Congress Party, namely that the Punjab would be returned to the Sikhs as an independent homeland a “*Punjabi Suba*”, would not be honoured (Singh, K. Vol 2 1999: 290). These promises that the Congress Party had no intention of honouring would create ongoing political instability within the Punjab which would help to fuel ongoing out migration from the Punjab in the following years and decades (Singh & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 36).

The migration of Muslims from East Punjab to West Punjab left a significant skilled labour shortage for those industries that were situated in East Punjab. Migrants who were fleeing from West Punjab could not fill the skilled jobs left behind by departing Muslims as those migrants were predominately farmers, the Sikh *Jats*, who had populated the prosperous Canal Colonies under British rule or were from the Hindu trading classes who lacked experience. This was in direct contrast to the situation in western Punjab which retained the bulk of greater Punjab’s heavy industry and inherited a surplus of skilled workers. In fact these economic bonuses have ensured that the Pakistani city of Lahore has been one of Pakistan’s post partition economic successes.

Furthermore in eastern Punjab, due to the political uncertainty and lack of clarity around whether the population shifts were permanent, bank credit shrunk and insurance rates rose. Raw materials used in the production of goods became increasingly difficult to source as industries in Eastern Punjab had traditionally relied on sources within the greater Punjab. Additionally traditional markets that had also been situated in the greater Punjab dried up due to restricted access by Pakistan.

Simultaneously those industries wishing to stay in production faced increased costs associated with the transport of raw products and finished materials to now distant markets.

Furthermore, there was reluctance from both private and governmental institutions to invest in industry in the Punjab due to its location at a sensitive international border.³⁴ Overall investment into the infrastructure and business development when compared to other states was minimal (Maini 2004: as cited in Talbot & Thandi 2004: 151). The two border wars of 1965 and 1971 have reinforced these perceptions. Because of these wars and ongoing tension between India and Pakistan there is a huge military presence throughout the Punjab.

³⁴ There is a huge military presence in the Punjab all major bridges are heavily guarded. There are regular patrols of Indian air space by fighter jets especially at night.

Additionally because of the Sikhs cultural priority *zamindari* of investing in land first and foremost and then channelling any remaining proceeds into other small scale business, ventures have remained conservative (Singh, K. Vol 2 1999: 315-316). As a result of these variables the Punjab had to and continues to rely on agricultural development to ensure its economic prosperity (Maini, 2004: as cited in Talbot & Thandi, 2004: 142- 154).

This reliance led to the Green Revolution in the 1960s which fed out of the days of partition. Where to accommodate the influx of displaced Sikhs the entire agricultural system including the amount of land one could own and operate was totally over hauled. These changes led to improvements in methods of cultivation irrigation and animal husbandry with dairy farming and poultry farming assuming greater importance. These modifications ultimately resulted in economic surpluses (Singh, K. Vol 2 1999: 282).



Dairy farm-Gurdaspur Punjab. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 31st Dec 2010.

However, these surpluses were not enough and India had to constantly import grain in order to feed its growing population. In the mid 1960s amidst another food crisis American agricultural researcher Norman Borlaug in conjunction with Indian researchers, introduced high yielding wheat varieties into the Punjab. To realise results these high yielding wheats required three prerequisites a constant supply of water, synthetic fertiliser and limited competition from weeds or insects.

In support of these prerequisites the Indian government subsidised canals, fertilisers and the drilling of tube wells for irrigation. These measures resulted in the Punjab being able to produce double harvests of rice wheat or cotton (Bourne, 2009: 46).

With the prosperity of the Green Revolution in the 1960s and 1970s there was a discernible shift in the Sikh rural sector towards modernisation and the abandoning of traditional Sikh values. More and more, young Sikhs started to shave their beards and experiment with opium, hashish and heroin. Smoking became prevalent and alcohol consumption increased (Singh, K. Vol 2 1999: 315-336). Modernity also ushered in a dramatic shift in work patterns that had existed in the Punjab for over two centuries. The increase in capitalistic farming methods, which favours monoculture and requires intensive labour at peak times, saw the importation of seasonal workers from the states of Bihar and East Uttar Pradesh (Singh-Gill, 2004: as cited in Talbot & Thandi, 2004: 181).

Furthermore, as more and more farms utilised machinery such as tractors the need for family labour diminished. This development also saw the landless Punjabi farm worker, who had traditionally supplied the year round labour for tasks now carried out by machinery, deemed to be too expensive. Consequently, their position in the agricultural system, become increasingly tenuous to the point of redundancy. Farmers who had substantial land holdings were able to increase their overall production levels while those farmers with smaller landholdings were barely able to survive. For those farmers who possessed less than ten acres they found farming totally unviable and were forced to sell their land to wealthy land owners.

Adding to these social fractures was the discernible trend that the sons of wealthy land owners who had been to university no longer wanted to work on the land. Farming for the educated was no longer the occupation of choice. The wave of prosperity that the green revolution had ushered in raised the expectations and living standards of those fortunate enough to be able to participate in the wave of affluence. Simultaneously, some overseas countries began closing their borders or tightening their requirements for work visas. In addition, the Indian Army which had been a traditional source of employment introduced a numbers quota limiting the numbers of Sikhs admitted.

In affect this caused underemployment for significant numbers of university graduates, who even if they had wanted to now work the land had no point of entry, or any industry of significance that could employ them (Singh, K. Vol 2 1999: 315-336).

The rapid embrace of modernisation and its winning-losing consequences coupled with Congress Party political policies, such as the diversion of seventy five percent of the Punjabs' river water to the neighbouring states of *Rajasthan* and *Harayana* increased the cost of farming (Kaur, J. 2002: 3).

The inclusion of Article 25 into the Indian constitution which categorised Sikhs as Hindu thereby subsuming their identity within the Hindu majority all served to loosen the bonds of the Sikh people to the state as their daily lives and economic endeavours began to be disrupted by the State and global forces (Pettigrew, 1995: 7). These variables further contributed to the overall appeal and meteoric rise of Sant Jarnail Bhindranwale (Ranbir, 1997: 16), who in effect was offering a religious critique of the insufficiencies of the secular state (Jurgensmeyer, 2004: 7). To Bhindranwale modernity was not totally in the interests of the Sikh people.

His first initial support came from the first victims of modernisation-women and children who had bore the brunt of abuse from drunken or drug addled husbands or brothers. Because Sant Bhindranwale spoke the language of the villagers it was not long before the menfolk of the villages were coming under his charismatic personality and renouncing their former ways. Bhindranwale reinstated the moral precepts of Sikhism that had been the first casualty of the green revolution (Singh, K. Vol 2 1999: 324). His success highlighted the fact that "Sikhs live by a model of society that is different and opposed to the model that Hindu India stands for" (Pettigrew, 1995: 42). Needless to say his growing popularity and success alarmed not only the established leadership of the Sikh Community but leaders of other religious groupings and politicians at regional and national level. Just as the cohesion of the Sikh people alarmed the Mughal Emperors in the time of the Gurus, Bhindranwale raised similar fears that the Sikh religion would ultimately result in the emergence of a cohesive Sikh nation *Kalistan* which could ultimately demand its independence from Hindu India (Ranbir, 1997: 22).

Ultimately this political instability coupled with the effects of the Green Revolution and the meteoric rise of Sant Jarnail Bhindranwale would entail direct armed conflict with the Sikh people (Singh, S. 2005: 232). This open conflict throughout the 1980s and early 1990s would result in the storming of the Golden Temple (the Sikhs most sacred site) by the Indian Army, the death of Bhindranwale and his followers and through retaliation with the assassination of the Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

As the Punjab descended into insurgency and counter insurgency this open conflict, especially after Operation Wood Rose, forced several thousand young Punjabi males to seek political asylum, in many countries throughout the western world (Singh & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 55).³⁵ This included Pakistan where they became pawns in Pakistans unfolding game plan over the state of Kashmir (Kaur, H. 2006: 221). These events propelled significant numbers of Sikh people to settle abroad in a deliberate measure (Singh, S. 2005: 556).

From 1984 to the end of hostilities in 1992 5,900 Indian citizens, excluding dependants, sought political asylum in Great Britain. Furthermore the USA, Canada and European countries with asylum policies all received significant numbers (Singh & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 36 - 37).

Field research in New Zealand revealed that several Punjabi men did come to New Zealand under political asylum. However the community was highly reluctant to pass on the names and contact details of these persons. It is generally known in the Sikh Community that one of its prominent community members was a refugee from those times. However I was unable to secure an interview with that community member. There were, however, other community members who were not political refugees and were prepared to share their feelings and experiences of that time.

“Thousands crossed the border to Pakistan and did military training then came back to fight” (Singh).

“One night we hid the militants in our home. If the police had found out we would have been beaten and killed (Kaur).

“I saw people shot and killed on three different occasions” (Kaur).

While in recent years conflict between the Sikh people of the Punjab and the central government has abated, religion and modernity can be very unstable partners. As little as four years ago elections held in the Punjab resulted in two political assignations (Dhaliwal, S. 2007). Furthermore the notion of *Kalistan* is never far from the aspirations of many Sikh Punjabis including Sikhs in New Zealand.³⁶

³⁵ Operation Wood Rose was the military operation initiated in the Punjab by the Indian Army as a means of stamping out further terrorism within the Punjab. Far from stamping out terrorism it induced hundreds of young Sikh men and women to turn into terrorists (Singh, K. Vol 2 1999: 369).

³⁶ The *Gurdwara Sri Guru Nanak Dev Sikh Sangt Gurdwara Sahi Ji* in Otahuhu and the *Gurdwara and the Gurdwara Sri Kalgidhar Sahib Ji* in Takanini all display pictures of Sant Jarnal Bhindranwale and that of the men who assassinated Mrs Indira Gandhi.

Because of these ongoing problems that have never adequately been resolved the Punjab now suffers from serious infrastructural and social issues such as poor traffic control, governmental corruption, safe drinking water, clean air, adequate shelter for its poor, it is these problems that are now acting as a catalyst for further migration.

“The system, the system in these countries they work so well. It means there is no corruption and everything your ability is valued. What you are capable off that is valued. If you are capable you are there. In India you need some pushing they get the jobs by paying the money. The people are just throwing rubbish here and there. These are the things why we came” (Kaur.).

“No traffic rules the system does not work. There is high pollution, there is many people. There the people do not stop for you on the road” (Singh.).



The wide variety of traffic on the roads in Punjab often results in very bad traffic accidents. This is especially so at night when visibility is poor and alternative traffic that is not vehicular is poorly lit. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 3rd January 2011.

CHAPTER FOUR

Migrational Theories and Considerations

One of the driving questions propelling this thesis is why are members of the Sikh community migrating to New Zealand? This chapter will examine and critique the dominant theories of international migration by highlighting their strengths and weaknesses. The chapter will show that while economic theories do capture some of the elements of the migratory process (Bodarsson & Van den Berg 2009: 53), the rationales behind migratory impulses are better understood when theories that stress culture human agency history and political outcomes are interwoven.

In short the chapter will argue that a synthesised approach to analysing migrational streams is a far stronger tool of analysis than theoretical exclusivity. Evidence and insights gained from field work and literature research will be included throughout the chapter as supporting evidence.

Each individual theory presented will show what level of analysis it subscribes to. Micro theories of migration use their lens of analysis to bear on the individual, meso theories which are situated between the micro and macro look at the community or household influences on migration. Macro theories focus on combined migratory trends and attempt to explain these trends from a wide national-international focus (Hagen-Zanker, 2008: 5). For ease of comprehension the chapter will discuss the theories as stated above individually and in a generalised order of chronological development.

Neo Classical Migrational Theory

The oldest concept in understanding human migration, as opposed to recording or creating mythologies around migration dates from the 17th century when the statistician Ernest George Ravenstein (1885, 1889) formulated, what he considered to be the “Laws of Migration” By using census data from England and Wales and then extending his data base to include 20 countries he concluded that :

1) Migration and distance *“That the vast majority of migrants only travel a short distance and that migrants who are employed in a certain centre of absorption will grow less as the distance from the centre increases. Migrants who do travel great distances usually go to large centres of industry and commerce”.*

2) Migration happens in stages *“Once a shifting or displacement, of the population has occurred, currents of migration are initiated towards the great centres of industry and commerce which absorb the migrants.*

The inhabitants of the areas immediately surrounding a town undergoing rapid growth flock into it; thus the gaps left in the rural population are filled up by migrants from more remote districts. This will keep on occurring until the attracting forces of the rapidly expanding town or city makes its influence felt to the most remote corner of the country. The process of population dispersion is the inverse of absorption and exhibits similar features”.

3) Stream and counter stream *“Each main current of migration produces a compensating counter stream of migration”.*

4) Urban Rural Differences *“People who reside in urban areas are less likely to migrate as opposed to people who reside in the rural arena”.*

5) Females *“Females are more likely than males to become short journey migrants”.*

6) Technology and migration *“An increase in locomotion, manufacture and commerce all create increases in migration”.*

7) Dominance of economic motive *“Oppressive laws, heavy taxation, climate and uncongenial social conditions all have produced and are still currently producing migratory streams.*

“However none of these currents can compare in volume with that which is inherent in most men to better themselves in regards to material gain and betterment” (Ravenstein, 1885 in Lee, E. 1966 in Cohen 1996a: 15).

In short Ravenstein’s neo classical economic theory predominately postulates that migration is very much governed by unfavourable factors (mainly economic) that push people out and favourable economic conditions *“material gain”* that pull them in (de- Haas 2008: 4).

“My father [BhagwanSingh] was working the land in the village. Conditions in the Punjab were harsh and there was no value for crops. He was uneducated. He had heard that there was good opportunity in Australia to earn money. He realised the value of foreign money and how this could improve his lot” (Singh-Narwal (informant) as cited in Bhatti, & Dusenberry, 2001: 40).

In more contemporary times field observations show that the Punjab is currently experiencing huge migratory inflows from the poorer states of *Himachal Pradesh* and *Uttar Pradesh*, of manual workers in search of higher paid work.



Out of State, migrant workers, who have migrated to the Punjab for a better economic future. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 23rd December 2010.

This assertion-that people tend to move from low wage areas to high wage destinations-appears rational, as the above example illustrates. However field research has indicated that this does not necessarily apply at the level of the individual, although this assertion is also mediated by social class as the above and below comparison of the two groups of workers highlights.

“Economically we were sound, we both had good jobs as teachers but New Zealand is beautiful- peaceful!” (Singh, B. Amrit-Dhari).

“He has an adventurous personality, itchy feet. He thought about it, for twenty years before doing it. He was in law now he works for a Christian Company. We are happy !!” (Kaur, N.).

“It was spontaneous migration after visiting Australia for the Sydney Olympics. We were in good jobs. I am a chemistry teacher in senior secondary school in Gurdaspur. Manfred was a bank manager for almost 22 years Punjab and Sindh Bank” (Kaur, S.).

Economic Theories at the Macro Level

Internal Macro theory

The next contribution to economic migratory theory owed its genesis to the growing trend of world wide urbanisation. Lewis (1954) and Ranis and Fei (1961) postulated through their Macro Dual Economy Model that internal migration within a state or nation was governed by economic development and the differences in the supply of labour between the rural and urban sectors (Hagen- Zanker 2008:6). Additionally rural-urban migration would only be sustained until a level of wage equalisation had been attained between the two sectors (Massey, et al 1993: in Cohen, 1996a: 433).

However this theoretical notion, when applied to internal Sikh migratory flows prior to and during the upheavals of partition, does not achieve congruence. While Punjabi migration to New Delhi did assume numerical significance after partition in 1947 (Gupta, 1996: 29), it was not rural Sikh Punjabis who migrated to New Delhi but the Hindu Khatri and Arora commercial castes of the West Punjab. These migrants were predominantly drawn by the economic opportunities that the new capital of India offered (Talbot, 2009: as cited in Bessel, & Haake, 2009: 325). Sikh labour migration from rural Punjab, as postulated by macro theorists Lewis (1954), and Ranis & Fei (1961), to the closest significant urban arena, (New Delhi) did not achieve any significant proportions despite the upheavals of partition. More than three quarters of the Sikh population remained in East Punjab (Singh, K. 1999: 284), in order to protect their landed interests, which are of primary cultural importance for (*Jat*) Sikhs (Helweg, 1979: 33).

Further focusing on Sikh historical migratory trends, the model of Lewis (1954) and Ranis & Fei (1961) does however achieve some salience in that it was the economic development of the Canal Colonies that first initiated significant migration within the Punjab (Tatla, 2004: as cited in Talbot & Thandi, 2004: 48). However, this migration was from one rural sector (East Punjab) to the rural and labour scarce West Punjab.

To conclude because aspects of this theory focus exclusively on economic factors when it is applied to a segment of Sikh Punjabi migratory history the theory overall fails to find congruence simply because it does not recognise the cultural factors associated with migration.

Nevertheless this theory when combined with World Systems Theory (which will be elaborated on further into the chapter and has been well utilised in the preceding chapters), does help to explain (as shown previously) the migratory impulses that resulted in Sikh migration to Indian cities such as Calcutta and Bombay and more distant urban arenas such as Hong Kong and Singapore. As it was the economic prosperity that resulted from the economic development of the Canal Colonies (coupled with profits from the integration of the Punjab as a supplier of food and commodities into the world economy) that simultaneously allowed for and encouraged albeit, in small numbers, Sikh migration to further destinations and shores. (Gill, S. 2004: as cited in Talbot & Thandi, 2004: 178).

International Macro Theory

Expanding Lewis (1954) and Ranis & Fei (1961) macro dual economic model to the international arena, migrational theorists (Sjaastad, 1962 & Todaro, P. 1970) postulated that like the state or nation rural to urban model, international migration is caused by geographical differences in the supply and demand for labour. Workers from a low wage country hear about opportunities abroad and move to a high wage country. This movement of migratory labour results in wages in the poorer sending countries rising, due to the lack of labour that has migrated, and wages dropping in capital rich countries. Inversely reflecting these migratory labour flows is investment from capital rich countries to capital poor countries.

Following these capital investment flows are highly skilled workers (ex-pats) from capital rich countries to capital poor countries in order to reap high gains on their qualifications and skills³⁷ (Massey, et al. 1993 in Cohen 1996a: 433). While there are aspects of this theory that are salient such as New Zealand workers to Australia, Pacific Island workers to New Zealand (Spoonley, Macpherson, & Pearson, 1996: 45-48) and Puerto Rican migrant workers to America (Bourgois, 1996: 51) migration still occurs long after the original economic prompts have disappeared or have been significantly lessened (Portes and Borocz, 1989 as cited in Cohen, 1996a: 162).

For example the number of illegal immigrants to the Middle East is fast outstripping the number of legal entrants despite the risks of working in the informal economy at a lesser rate of remuneration and the harsh measures imposed if discovered (Papastergiadis, 2004:46).

³⁷ Ex Pat commonly known as a skilled worker- manager who works in foreign country ie Civil Engineers who undertake construction projects in Dubai.

In the New Zealand context field work from my previous research indicated that family was a strong motivating factor for elderly Sikhs in the commencement and act of migration. Family is an important theme dominating Sikh thought and action. *“If family members are loyal and helpful to each other their social status is elevated and they are construed to be a family of high honour, this is known as izzatwai”* (Helweg, 1979: 18).

“One has to go where my family is. I came to check on my son. He is a surgeon at Auckland Hospital” (Singh, H.).

“We came to meet my new grandchild. This is a big happiness” (Kaur, S.).

Furthermore, working age migrants have continually expressed the notion that if it was money that solely motivated migration they would have gone either to Canada Australia the USA or stayed in India.

“If I wanted to join the creamy layer- then Canada it is a good country. My cousin is there” (Singh, H.).

“Now we are 100% here. If you are chasing money you will never be satisfied” (Singh, V.)

Another conceptual weakness of Lewis (1954), Ranis & Fai (1961) Macro Dual Economic theory is that it failed to account for the continued migration of rural migrants to the urban arena in spite of rising levels of unemployment, especially in rapidly developing nations (Hagen-Zanker, 2008: 6). *“The rural sector has a choice of either using all available labour to produce agricultural goods or use only part of its labour to produce these goods while exporting the remaining labour to the urban sector in return for wages”* (Harris & Todaro, 1970: as cited in Cohen, 1996a: 248).

To address this theoretical shortcoming Harris & Todaro (1970) extended the reasoning of why rural to urban migration occurs to include the notion of individual expectation. This extended theory, postulates that migration is an individualistic decision where the deciding factors rely solely on a cost benefit rationale. People will migrate if the expected benefits outweigh the cost of migration. The prospective migrant considers such variables as the initial cost of relocation, the effort required for learning a new language and the cost of cutting social ties and forging of new social networks.

In theory the prospective mover migrates to a location where the expected returns are greatest. *“Rural to urban international migration occurs and will continue to occur as long as the expected income differential between the rural sector and the margins of the urban international employment arena remains positive”* (Harris & Todaro, 1970: as cited in Cohen, 1996a: 248).

One of the underlying assumptions of Harris and Todaro (1970) hypothesis is that the typical migrant retains his ties to the rural sector. *“Although this assumption is not at all necessary when demonstrating the rationality of migration in the face of significant urban unemployment”* (Harris & Todaro, 1970: as cited in Cohen, 1996a: 248).

Historical assessment of the driving rationale behind early Sikh migration to the dominions of the British Empire and to Great Britain shows congruency with the Harris & Todaro (1970) model. The lens of historical scrutiny shows clearly that early migrants to the British dominions were predominately male and were motivated not only by expected wage differentials but also by ties and obligations to kith and kin in rural Punjab.

“Our Grandfather came to Australia in 1914 to improve our position in the Punjab” (Singh-More (informant) as cited in Bhatti & Dusenberry, 2001: 39).

“For those Punjabi males in England at that time, their primary goal was making money and enhancing their izzat, prestige in India” (Singh & Barrier, 2004: 239).

“Even when the first generation of migrants were joined by their sons, they still perceived home as back in India. Money was remitted to support family there and this was often invested in land, housing and social and religious activities” (Leckie, 2007: 36).

Macro-Micro economic theories however assume the perfection of capitalistic markets, where money from the urban arena will flow back into the rural sector resulting in a similar if not perfect wage balance (de Haas, H. 2010: 5). Whilst research released by the World Bank confirms India as the top country in 2004 with the highest volume of remittances (Lal et al., 2006: 75), research at state level indicates that non-resident Punjabis in the predominately urban diaspora appear reluctant to invest in the State of Punjab (Thandi, 2004: as cited in Talbot & Thandi, 2004: 226).

Field research both here in New Zealand and the Punjab indicates that while many individual stakeholders have and do remit finances back to the Punjab, overall investment back into the Punjab, focuses primarily on family interests such as improving homes or increasing land acreage (as it historically always has) with full advantage being taken of the cheap labour supply from the bordering state of Uttar Pradesh. This availability of cheap labour, however has depressed local wages, as opposed to creating a wage balance, as predicted by economic theorists. Additionally migrant workers have been instrumental in keeping local workers disciplined, docile and subservient to their employers (Singh-Gill, 2004: as cited in Talbot & Thandi, 2004: 184)³⁸



Migrant workers living conditions, the farm house is just visible in the background. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 12th January 2011.

Additionally many Sikh migrants sell their land to facilitate migration or to set up businesses here in New Zealand thereby severing any commercial interest they may have in the Punjab.

“Yes he sold his land to his father’s cousin so we could do this business”
(Kaur,).

“Yes people do sell their land, mainly those who have 20-50 acres. Some I know have used that to set up their business here in Papatotoe” (Singh, H.).

³⁸ All the farms that I visited all had migrant workers who lived on their properties and who were there in the capacity of agricultural field workers and domestic servants.

Micro Economic Theories

Building on Ravenstein's hypothesis (1885 1889) Everett Lee (1966) reformulated Ravenstein's theoretical stance at the micro-level placing like Harris & Todaro (1970)³⁹ a greater emphasises on the individual and on push factors. In summarising Lee's work (1966) (Lee 1966 in Cohen 1996a: 17-24)) introduces the notion of intervening obstacles.

“Actual physical barriers like the Berlin Wall may be interposed, or immigration laws may restrict movement. Different people are of course affected in different ways by the same set of obstacles. What may be trivial to some people – the cost of transporting household goods for example – may be prohibitive to others”.

Lee (1966) further argues that variables such as having dependant children, can impede or even prevent migration. *“The effect of a given set of obstacles depends also on the impedimenta with which the migrant is encumbered. For some migrants these are relatively unimportant and the difficulty of surmounting the intervening obstacles is consequently minimal; but for others making the same move, the impedimenta, among which we must reckon children and other dependents, greatly increases the difficulties posed by intervening obstacles”.*

Lee (1966) also makes the point that migration is selective because differentials amongst migrants, such as age, gender and social class affect how people respond to push- pull factors. Personal sensitivities, life stages and awareness of conditions at the site of destination can all impede or facilitate migration.

“For example, highly educated people who are already comfortably situated frequently migrate because they receive better offers elsewhere. Professional and managerial people are also highly mobile and migrate because migration means advancement” (Lee 1966: as cited in Cohen, 1996a: 23).

One immediate critique of Lee's reformulated theoretical model is that in the New Zealand context some professions such as teachers who may not have sat their examinations in English need to provide competency in English to a standard of IELTS level 7 which entails extra study. They then need to register with the New Zealand Teachers Council⁴⁰. The new migrant then needs to find work *“which because of the lack of kiwi experience is very hard to achieve”* (Kaur.).

³⁹ Although Lee was obviously 4 years earlier.

⁴⁰ It is the policy of the New Zealand Government that all teachers who wish to enter the teaching profession in New Zealand have their qualifications assessed by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority.

New Zealand based studies such as Wilson, Gahlout, & Mouly, (2005) have reported that migrants with non Anglo Saxon names, foreign qualifications or experience are less likely to be short listed for employment. Furthermore migrant “professional women, and men often find devaluation of their foreign credentials and often have to start out at the bottom of their professions” (Basran & Singh-Bolaria, 2003: 207).

“Even if Americans come here, they have to sit the medical exam it is not fair that our qualifications are not recognised” (Singh, M.).

Similarly Tharmaseelan, Inkson, and Carr, in their (2010) study on New Zealand migrants’ career progressions found that “on average migrants career paths after six years in New Zealand declined in career success rather than advanced”.

“Here in New Zealand it is hard to get the job you want” (Kaur.).

“In Punjab I was a history teacher. Recruitment agencies just wasted our time so we started in horticulture for a Gora growing Capsicums in Waiuku. The sprays affected our health and I got back problems. Then I got a job at the Mobil Station worked for one year now I am Taxi Driver” (Singh.).

Migration then does not necessarily facilitate automatic advancement for professional migrants either in New Zealand or as the following quote illustrates in other countries.

“One commentator has noted the famous PhD taxi rank in Sydney run by alumni of the Punjab Agricultural University. These alumni, are also to be found, in New York, Seattle and Vancouver” (Singh, & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 38).

Structural Migration Theory

Advocates of structural theory such as Castles & Kosak, (1973) place the causes of migration in the historical, political and economic arenas. Within this paradigm other important structural factors to be analysed include policies regarding labour-migration, foreign investment patterns and changes in local economies particularly agricultural economies (Boyd, 1989: as cited in Cohen, 1996b: 298). Furthermore, *“the core pillar to the structuralist theory of migration is the notion of the reserve army which is drawn from Marx’s account of the relationship between employment opportunity and the cycles of capitalistic expansion and contraction” (Papastergiadis, 2000: 32).*

Marx's analysis notes that a precondition for capitalistic economies to expand is the availability of cheap and disposable labour (Marx, 1980: as cited in Papastergiadis, 2000: 32). This philosophical tenet of the reserve army coupled with Marx's insights gain prominence when analysing Sikh migratory patterns at the conclusion of the Second World War.⁴¹

In the aftermath of the Second World War the economy of Britain began to expand on the back of post war reconstruction. This expansion required labour. This much needed manpower was initially filled by European migrants. However, as demands for labour increased, Britain increasingly turned to its former colonies to meet its labour demands. This demand was further facilitated with the introduction of the British Nationality Act of 1948 (Singh & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 50). As a consequence of this facilitation and ongoing demand Sikh migrants rapidly filled positions which locals did not want, to work in such as heavy labouring jobs in foundries and factory work in white ware production (Lal et al., 2006: 337).

However by the end of the 1950s immigration became a political issue and in 1962 the British Government enacted stringent immigration controls over migration from India (Lal et al., 2006: 337). These immigration controls coincided with the economic reality that the post war reconstruction was all but over (Nikolinakos, 1975: as cited in Cohen, 1996a: 85). Sikh migrants then, according to structuralist views had taken on the role of a reserve army that secured the growth and living standards of the British people (Nikolinakos, 1975 as cited in Cohen, 1996a: 86). Furthermore, through state control of admission and exclusion, Great Britain could draw on this supply of cheap labour in times of economic growth and could reduce the flows of migration in times of recession (Papastergiadis, 2000: 32).

Nonetheless the structuralist approach is often critiqued for its lack of attention to the individual desires and motivations of the human migrant. Bourgois (1996) acknowledges this when articulating "A focus on structures often obscures the fact that humans are active agents of their own history rather than passive victims" (Bourgois, 1996: 17) as the illustration below highlights.

During the 1960s the rising price of farmland thwarted the ambitions of many Sikh agricultural workers whose cherished ambition was to own and become farmers. Inevitably this change in the agricultural sector initiated a general drift to the suburbs of South Auckland (McLeod, 1986: 146).

"When we moved to Otahuhu around 1969 -70 there were only 4 Punjabi families. Dad worked at Pacific Steel. But he wanted a farm, we moved to the Bombay Hills around 1975-76. Dad had 50 acres" (Singh).

⁴¹ The utility of any particular theory depends on the specific situation to which it is applied (Nayar, K. 2004:9).

Feminist scholars have also criticised this approach as woman and men often migrate for differing reasons that are not always linked to the sole purpose of procuring paid work (Kofman, Phizacklea, Raghuram, & Sales, 2000: 25).

For example procurement of spouses from India is one strategy that Sikh families both internationally and in New Zealand often employ, to ensure, the continuity of family values and religious beliefs (Kaur-Rait 2005: 33).

*“Yes our son in law is from Punjab this is best for our daughter we help him.
This is good for our way of life”* (Singh- Bolar, M.).

*“I want a Sikh from the Punjab from a good family for my children and we will
get one”* (Kaur, D.).

The New Economics of Migration

This theoretical approach advocates migration as a strategy that families implement to overcome jarring structural transformations and market failures. By diversifying their sources of income families minimise the overall risk to the household as the migrant can always remit income back to the household should labour or market conditions fail to produce a sufficient income in the sending environment (Kalish, 1994: 2).

This theory however overlooks the power differences that operate within families. In particular families are differentiated by age gender and generation with women having less power (McLennan, Ryan, & Spoonley, 2000: 81). Sociological researchers such as Delphy & Leonard (1992) argue that it is men who take on the primary roles of decision making, whilst women are relegated to a subordinate position. Given this power differentiation, feminist scholars, such as Boyd (2003) find it difficult to conceptualise a family dynamic based on equality, capable of formulating a migration plan in response to market driven conditions.

“ When placed within ongoing power relations that operate in families and households, such diverse interests and activities strongly suggest that the interests of men and women in families do not always coincide and may affect decisions about who manages to migrate, for how long and to what countries”
(Boyd, 2003: 2).

Traditional Sikh notions of family which is patriarchal with men making all major decisions, coupled with common sayings such as ‘*gut picche mat*’ (women lack wisdom) (Kaur-Rait 2005: 53), reinforce Boyd’s (2003) argument.

However, field work both in the Punjab and New Zealand exposes that Punjabi Sikh women can and often do yield considerable power within the family dynamic, *“with women, normally having more than an equal say in domestic matters”* (Kaur-Rait, 2005: 52).

“No we will go when I am ready to New Zealand or Australia” (Kaur.).

“Wife was interested in coming, not me as I had a good job” (Singh.).

“No in some ways I made him come- we had to come” (Kaur.).

Similar findings have been reported by de Lepervanche (1984) *“Although women appear subservient in public they often have an important say within the domestic circles and sometimes beyond. I have seen both young and older women take significant parts in decision making: some of the decisions have concerned the men, the farm or business matters and not simply domestic arrangements”* (1984: 151-152).

Furthermore Boyd (2003) fails to account for changing socio economic shifts which can affect the decision making processes in families. Sociologists (Basran, & Bolaria, 1985a as cited in, Basran, & Bolaria 2003: 197) reported that 70% of the Sikh females in their Saskatchewan study profiling the Sikh community jointly made important decisions together.

This theory however operates congruently when analysing the pioneering phase of Sikh migration. McLeod (1986) highlights this notion when examining the initiating impulses of early migration from the Doaba region of Punjab *“Where, if for example, a Punjabi family experienced a decline in its fortunes a family strategy of reversing this trend was implemented this strategy might well have included the migration of young adult males to restore its prosperity”* (McLeod 1986: 21). Helweg (1979) carries forth this notion when analysing the early migratory streams that fed into the United Kingdom in the late 1940s.

“In those days migration was selective-no kin group were prepared to waste their assets on a member who was incapable of yielding a high return. Therefore only those who were considered most likely to succeed or those who had little to start with ventured forth to England” (Helweg, 1979:38).

Contemporary research in both New Zealand and Punjab did not however find congruency with the notion of individuals being selected for migration as a strategic means of survival. My research found no family or individual remitting finances because of economic necessity nor any family or individual in Punjab receiving remittances because of financial need.

Dual Market Theory

This theory postulates that international migration stems from the labour demands of modernised societies. Post industrial societies create a bifurcation of labour markets. The tertiary sector jobs, created by post industrialisation, provide highly paid stable work for the educated middle classes. However, employment positions that fall into the second sector offer low pay little stability and limited promotional prospects. This in turn repels local workers thereby creating a structural demand for immigrant workers (Hagen-Zanker, 2008: 7). This inability to recruit local labour causes employers to often initiate immigrant streams through formal and informal recruitment strategies (Massey, 2003: 15). These theoretical notions, are helpful in understanding the early phases of Sikh migration to such destinations as Australia and Great Britain when synthesised with the theoretical conceptions of net work theory. *“The Sikh community in Gravesend came about when Bhuta Singh founded an employment agency and recruited labourers from his village to build an oil refinery on the Isle of Grain”* (Helweg, 1979: 36).

In the Australian context, even though there was a formal White Australia Policy this was regulated around agricultural labour for *“When agricultural labour was needed some workers were apparently allowed entry without being tested”* (Bhatti, 2001: as cited in Bhatti & Dusenberry, 2001: 45). Having then been allowed entry *“they then summoned others from their families or villages and so set in motion a small scale chain migration”* (McLeod, 2001: as cited in Bhatti & Dusenberry, 2001: 27).

The manifestation of this theoretical notion is most evident in global cities where a condensed nexus of managerial, administrative, and technical expertise creates a concentration of wealth and affluence that is coupled with a strong demand for low wage services and goods. (Massey, 2003: 15). Research in the South Auckland area confirms that there is a huge underground economy based around seasonal agricultural work with some migrants reporting being paid as little as \$7.00 per hour. Because of the non compliance with tax these migrants in the event of an accident are not covered by ACC.

Further investigation, into the processing and grading of onions in the Franklin district, (where I noticed what appeared to be significant violations of the New Zealand Health and Safety Act (1992)) resulted in me discreetly being asked to vacate several facilities where the processing and grading of onions was taking place. This was to avoid possible repercussions for the workers from the individual supplying the contracted labour. Whom, I am sure did not want the prying eyes of a researcher on site.

Because of this structural demand that is a by-product of modernity many new Sikh migrants to New Zealand who initially were unable to secure acceptable mainstream positions, were easily able to obtain low paying casual work in the South Auckland-Franklin agricultural sector

“During picking season there is everybody, visitors, residents, students, over-stayers, Brazil people and Vanuatu. They have to pay proper money to the residents” (Kaur.).

“We picked strawberries, but it was not us we had never done it” (Kaur.).

“So we started working in horticulture Bombay Waiuk. The sprays affected our health and we got back problems” (Singh.).

While historical pioneer Sikh migration was primarily directed to second tier employment (as illustrated on the previous page) the contemporary migrant to New Zealand who has to satisfy strict immigration criteria does not migrate to satisfy the employment market that is created as a result of modernity.

However, as stated above Sikh migrants are often excluded, from mainstream employment opportunities, *“because of the lack of kiwi experience, and in some cases because of lack of English competency or the validity of their professional qualifications”* (Singh). This results in some Sikh migrants being lured into this sector of the economy until something more promising emerges. *“Employment agencies just wasted our time. We decided to apply for jobs- any jobs”* (Kaur.).

To avoid becoming permanently entangled in this level of the economy many Sikh migrants both women and men opt for further study at government or private learning institutions. For some this is a successful strategy for others not so.

“It took Daljit three years of study. Now she is getting good salary from childhood education” (Singh, H.).

“My wife gave up working in the agriculture and went to MIT to study English level two. Then she went to Office Administration level two for one semester \$2,000 dollars. It was good books were there. Then she started Level 4, Office-Administration another \$2,000. After, computers level seven, eight papers \$4,000. A job with the Manukau Council came in the finance department for one year. Now the contract has expired and she is sitting it is very hard” (Singh.).

This theory however has been critiqued for its lack of attention to individual agency and personal motivations and for its emphasises on capital (Castles & Miller, 2003: 22-29). However, as illustrated above this critique opens the door for the ethnographic method to enter into a collaborative analysis allowing a finer grained investigation to emerge.

World Systems Theory

World Systems theory builds on the work of Immanuel Wallerstein (1974) and links the genesis of international migratory streams to the development of world markets from the 16th century. According to this paradigm, capitalistic ventures penetrated into peripheral countries that were non capitalistic. The disruptions and dislocations that these capitalistic ventures invariably caused created a population that was prone to migration (Massey, et al 1993: as cited in Cohen 1996a: 194-195).

As capitalism mushroomed outward from its centre in Western Europe, ever increasing numbers of the world's population were incorporated into the world economy. Thus as global markets expanded so did the number of migrants entering into migratory streams.

Peripheral countries where this was especially likely to have happened were countries that were former colonies of colonial powers, where infrastructures and cultural links were established early. The Sikh diaspora in Britain for example dates its association from the colonial encounter which dispersed Sikhs across the world through military service (Singh & Singh- Tatla 2006: 41). This penetration simultaneously creates a strong material and cultural affiliation with the penetrating countries facilitating even more migration (Massey, et al., 1993: as cited in Cohen, 1996a: 197).

“We would have been better off if the British had of stayed. The British develop a country the common man was better skilled and happy under the British. The Indian government cannot maintain the railways” (Singh.).

Whilst world systems theory explains reasonably well Sikh migration from the Punjab, in that cultural links, infrastructure and the use of a common language were all initiated under colonial rule.

However, one aspect of the theory is not quite congruent with field observations or the literature. Both (Maini, & Thandi, 2004, as cited in Talbot & Thandi 2004.) show that there is very little global venture capital or even national investment in the Punjab. Thus according to the economic theoretical pillar of world systems theory, migration from the state of Punjab should virtually be at a standstill because of the lack of capitalistic investment into the Punjab.

Furthermore critical scholars such as Petras (1981:148) succinctly point to the generalised nature of World Systems Theory and lack of individual agency *“specific events within the world system are to be explained in terms of the demands of the system as a whole. Actors are acting not for their immediate concrete interests, but because the system dictates that they act”*. In defence of world systems theory it is a useful tool of analysis when viewing global migratory flows and as shown previously when it is combined with other theories.

Network Theory

Network Theory falls under the umbrella of perpetuation theories, which speculate on the reasons and conditions that perpetuate migration across time and space. Network theory postulates that informal social contacts connect potential, current and former migrants in both the receiving and sending destinations. These social links help to facilitate and increase the possibilities of international migration as these connections lower the cost and associated risks of international migration. Therefore, variables such as employment prospects become less salient in migratory decisions and migration increases (Massey, et al., 1993: as cited in Cohen 1996a: 448-450). Social networks also ensure that migratory streams are not necessarily limited in time, unidirectional or permanent (Boyd, 1989: as cited in Cohen, 1996a: 299).

“My uncle was here. He guided me very well. I didn’t work for 2-3months then I got a job but I didn’t like it and then I got another job” (Singh, J.).

“I am here because my sister in law is here I came to meet her. Daljit told me about New Zealand” (Kaur, K).

“Arrived in 2003. Came straight to South Auckland. We had family” (Singh).

Field observations did reveal however that migration does occur in the absence of established networks but overall migration in the absence of established social networks is very rare and unlikely to be sustained in the absence of close friends and family.

“Where will I stay? I didn’t know any body. But then I met someone at the airport I stayed with them. In 2004 I got a job in Takanini at the Anchor Factory packaging I got \$534 a week in the hand they offered me a permanent job. But I went back. I was lonely” (Singh,).

Furthermore once migratory streams have been established they become difficult to control from a regulatory perspective. This aspect of the theory however is not congruent with the migratory situation in New Zealand.

Business experience indicates very clearly that New-Zealand immigration has a robust and enforceable selection process.

Finally as networks expand the migratory flow becomes less selective in socioeconomic terms and more representative of the sending country (Massey, et al. 1993 in Cohen, 1996a: 199). This can be visibly seen in the community of South Auckland where the social composition of the community mirrors that of the Punjab. This notion is also congruent with other communities in the international arena.

“The overall profile of Sikhs in Britain today is vastly different from what essentially started out as a migration of single uneducated peasants” (Singh & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 67).

Scholars such as Breiger (2004: 505-526 as cited in Hardy & Bryman, 2004) critique not the theoretical thrust of the theory but rather the pragmatics of data collection and analysis. *“Social network analysis lacks the tools to explain the motivation for connecting with others and the meaning of the relationships they establish and maintain or neglect.*

This assertion however as the above comments demonstrate is not applicable at the moment to the Sikh community here in New Zealand where kith and kin still bind individuals to the community. Family is still the overriding motivation for connecting with others and maintaining that connection. However with the changing composition of the community and more professional people arriving as will be shown further into the thesis this is changing.

Institutional Theory

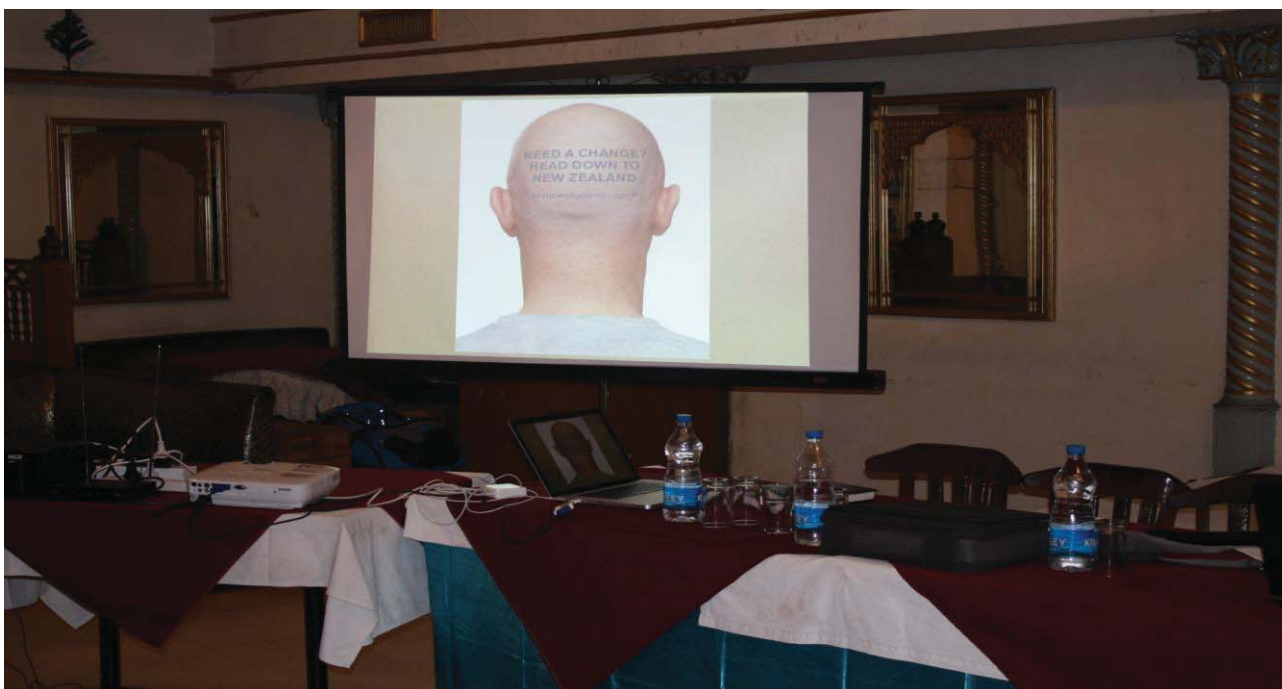
Institutional theory, like network theory, belongs to the perpetuation group of theories. Once migratory patterns have been established private immigration companies and voluntary resettlement agencies arise to satisfy the needs of prospective and actual migrants. Over time these organisations become well known to migrants who utilise these organisations to facilitate the migration process (Massey, et al 1993 as cited in Cohen, 1996a: 200).

Field work in the Punjab shows very clearly that there is a well established network of migratory institutions with some migration consultancies having been operational for over 50 years.

Once established, these institutions (through utilisation and the profit to be made by their owners) develop a life of their own thus migration becomes institutionalised into the infrastructure of the sending and receiving country. Their presence and continued existence in the market place is a salient indicator of the importance that migratory institutions play in the migrational sphere.

In the weekly South Auckland Punjabi paper Kuk Punjabi Samachar at least six different immigration consultancies are advertised weekly with all reporting (supposedly) to be doing financially well. As a further indication of the economic influence these networks yield, most western airlines offer substantially discounted airfares to and from the Punjab (Singh & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 39).

Furthermore because of the marketing techniques employed by immigration consultants and companies the reasons for migrating to a given destination are often very different from the reasons that originally initiated migration to a given migratory destination as the picture below shows.



Marketing prop, used at an Educational Seminar promoting New Zealand as a safe relaxed clean and green study destination, with the caption reading “need a change head down to New Zealand”. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 24th December 2010.

Field work and business experience indicates, however that there is a guarded response to the utilisation of these institutions with each institution being, thoroughly scrutinised by not only the intended client but extended family as well. When conducting educational seminars in the Punjab, my business partner and I were constantly challenged by members of the public concerning the business ethics of the migratory process and the authenticity of our company.

This challenging is a direct result of the corrupt business practices of migration consultants in the Punjab who fail to adequately inform their clients of their rights and obligations. Consultants are also said to fail to adequately keep secure and proper documentation systems and more often than not overcharge their clients or even disappear once monetary transactions have taken place.

Migrants who distrust consultants either negotiate the process individually or call on the collective experience and advice of family and friends as a means of negotiating the bureaucratic process involved in the migratory process.



Migrational Education Seminar conducted by NZ ASIA Ltd, Gurdaspur Punjab. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 23rd December 2011.



Billboard promoting educational migration Chandigarh Punjab. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 1st January 2011.



Bill Boards promoting Migrational Education and airline tickets, Armritsar Punjab. This picture also highlights the relationship between the English language and Punjabi and illustrates just how common the use of English is in the Punjab. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 3rd of January 2011.

Trans-Nationalism

The concept of Trans-nationalism highlights the recursive nature of movement associated with international mobility and migration (Walton-Roberts & Pratt, 2004: 362). This theoretical notion further argues that contemporary migrants engage in social fields of practice that link their country of origin and their country of destination simultaneously (de Haas, 2008: 38).

Trans-national theorists (Ong 1999), (de Haas 2005) advocate such social fields of practice to include, education, communicative practices, email, internet, business investments, religious practices, pilgrimages political activism, financial remittances, travel and financing development in the sending country. These practices bring the contemporary lives of migrants into one single social field (Glick Schiller, Basch, Blanc, & Christina, 1992: 1).

Critical scholars however such as Kivisto (2001) have pointed out that this theory has conceptual weaknesses. Firstly non contemporary migrants are portrayed as having broken off all homeland relations and cultural ties thereby positioning themselves solely within the realm of the host society (Kivisto, 2001: 552). This leaves a dichotomy between two groups of migrants, contemporary and historical with no recognition of the latter who sever all homeland ties.

Secondly not all migrants can participate in these social fields of practice rather it is capitalistic entrepreneurs, such as those portrayed in Ong's (1999) ethnography *Flexible Citizenship* as opposed to the global proletariat that are active agents in trans-nationality (Kivisto, 2001: 561).

Literature research and field work finds agreement with the primary notions of trans-national theory as presented above. Interviews and observations both here in New Zealand and the Punjab indicate that the majority of the Sikh community observed are engaged in some form of trans-national practice.⁴² However the differences, depth and regularity of these practices were mitigated by age, gender, class and economics.

Wealthier, Sikh migrants, participate in trans-national practices more often, and utilise a greater variety of trans-migrational practices. These practices included but were not limited to face book, internet chat rooms, e-mail, return visits to Punjab, telephone conversations and visits to relatives in other parts of global diaspora.



Trans-National Punjabi family the women on the left and the man in the pale blue turban both hold PhDs' and lecture and live in Vancouver Canada and return to India regularly. The gentlemen wearing the blue beanie is Harminder Singh, a co-owner and Director of NZ ASIA an Immigration Consultancy company based in Auckland, New Zealand. Harminder also visits India on business at least once a year. The remaining three people have all visited Canada and are also in regular contact with other extended family members in Australia, Britain and New Zealand. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 31st December 2010.

“She has been to Canada more than 3 times. She does not want to come back to Punjab” (Singh, R.).

⁴² This observation includes my previous research with elderly Sikh migrants who were constantly traveling through out the world staying with various siblings or family members

“Once twice a week I telephone family in India” (Kaur.).

“I have all the vision Asia channels here for over 5 years. The Golden Temple broadcasts 24-hours a day. We get this through the TV. My wife has been back to India, 5times and my children 3times since arriving” (Singh.).

However field and literature research does not find congruency with the notion that it is only contemporary migrants who engage or have engaged in trans-national fields of social practice.

In the New Zealand context *“the early Indian diaspora as in later years was highly trans-national”* (Leckie, 2007: 24), *“with trans-national business links being forged as early as 1902 when Sikh business man R. Singh sponsored a cultural dance troupe to New Zealand”* (Singh, H. 2010: 60). Furthermore migrants who have been in New Zealand for many years still retain links to the Punjab via land, real estate and through family.

“My father Baldev brought us in the 1980s. We still have a farm in India it is 15 acres. We have it leased out, we also have, two houses, in Sandhu village in the Doaba” (M, Singh).

“We still have our family house in Ludhiana”
(Singh, M. Retired Dairy Farmer).

Literature research however does expose one set of Sikh migrants who effectively did overtime sever ties with the Punjab-the Sikhs of East Africa. However the Sikhs of East Africa who have since migrated to Great Britain after the upheavals in Africa in the early 1970s have not positioned themselves within the host community as postulated by Glick Schiller et al (1992: 1). Rather they maintain their distinct identity vis-a -vis other Sikh migrants whilst simultaneously being identified as *“Asians Indians, and Pakistanis” by the dominant indigenous British who fail to recognise finer internal markers amongst people of Indian origin*” (Bhachu, 1985: 11). McLeod (1986: 128) however reports congruency with Glick Schiller et al (1992) in that *“prior to World War Two, Punjabis who married European wives did assimilate to a certain degree and likewise several of those who took Maori wives. A few of those who brought their wives from India were also distinguished by a growing separation from the Punjabi community”*. (Fuchs, Linkenbach, & Malik, 2010: as cited in Bandyopadhyay, 2010: 91) have also uncovered a small number of Sikhs in Christchurch New Zealand who do not want to be with or participate in the fledgling Sikh community in Christchurch.⁴³

⁴³ Because the Sikh Community is relatively new I take that these are new migrants as opposes to old time migrants.

Theoretical Evaluations

All of the theories presented reflect different research objectives, focuses and were conceived in differing social circumstances (Massey, et al 1993: as cited in Cohen, 1996a:183). As a result the theories presented all have strengths and limitations, therefore no single theory can claim to universally represent and explain migratory patterns and trends. If migration was a circle then the differing theories capture a slice of that circle but not the entire circle.

Economic theories overlook the obvious in that people migrate for a plethora of reasons other than income maximization (Bodvarsson & Van den Berg, 2009:32). A sole focus on economics and economical topics obscure the human dimension of migration.

Such reasons amongst the Sikh community include educational advancement, family reunification, vocational satisfaction a desire to escape a potential conflict with neighbouring Pakistan and for the health of their children.⁴⁴

Additionally economic theories privilege men as the “*normal migrant*” and fail to conceptualise the contribution of women to the migratory decision. Feminist anthropological scholars have consistently pointed out “*the need to root out the pervasive assumption that women are not actors on the scene of human history to the same degree as men*” (Leacock, 1983: as cited in McGee, & Warms, 2000: 429). Furthermore, economic micro theory takes no account of non economic factors that may propel women into migratory streams such as war, divorce, or a desire to escape gender discrimination (Kofman, Phizacklea, Raghuram, & Sales, 2000: 21).

Additionally, inequalities in material wealth do not necessarily prompt the mass movements of people (Hayter, 2007: as cited in Gupta, & Omoniyi, 2007: 25). “*The vast majority of Afro-Americans remained in the Southern States after the American Civil War despite the many opportunities offered in the West and the rapidly expanding Northern Cities*” (Petersen, 1958: as cited in Cohen, 1996a: 5). Similarly, as illustrated previously the Sikh *Jat* did not migrate to Delhi as a result of the upheavals created by partition and the economic opportunities that the urban arena may have held.

⁴⁴ The health of their children was especially important for some migrants who reported that their children all suffered respiratory problems especially those migrants from large cities such as Chandrigah and Armritsar. A visit to the Attari border with Pakistan highlighted the fervent, nationalism between both countries.

Furthermore, the persistence of migratory streams that follow previous migratory streams, such as the Sikh migratory stream into Great Britain, highlights the importance of kith and kin networks and the links that were forged during the British Empire as opposed to migrating for solely economic gain (Papastergiadis, 2000: 31).

Whilst economic theories do capture some of the complexities of the migratory process (Bodvarsson & Van den Berg, 2009: 53) migration is better understood when theories that emphasize culture, human motivations, history and other factors are intertwined. For example the cultural factor of status *izzat* was a considered variable in the early pioneering phase of Sikh migration (McLeod, 1986: 23). For early pioneering migrants (and even contemporary migrants who wish to maintain class differentials vis a vis caste) migration was not just a step out but it also entailed a step up (Papastergiadis, 2000: 35). By stepping up and enhancing theirs or their families, *izzat* pioneering migrants became active agents in cultural transformation as opposed to solely economic gatherers.

This awareness of the possibility of social change not only allowed for the semi break down of cultural values (Helweg, 1979: 39). But also prompted further migration, this historical outcome is but one example that shows that there can be, and should be, (where a researcher thinks it is necessary or useful) a linking of the social cultural dimension with the economic factor when analysing migratory streams.⁴⁵

Conclusions

This approach of highlighting some of the differences, strengths and limitations of each of the paradigms discussed brings the author to conclude that rather than adopting methodological and theoretical exclusivity, international migration resettlement and place making are best researched by using a plethora of theoretical notions, topics of research and ethnographic methods. By adopting an eclectic approach, depth, breadth and vigour are added to the research. This in turn reveals far more than a single lens analysis can ever hope to yield (Denzin & Lincoln 1994: 2). It is with this in mind that the thesis will now shift its focus to the field.

⁴⁵ “The utility of any particular theory depends on the specific situation to which it is applied” (Nayar, 2004:9).

CHAPTER FIVE

The New Zealand Stories

“It is a mini creation of Heaven” (Singh, S.)

“New Zealand is beautiful peaceful” (Kaur,S.).

Patterns of Settlement

This chapter will first highlight some of the cultural notions that fed into the creation of the founding rural community in the greater Waikato Districts. Secondly the chapter will outline the structural adjustments that prompted the shift of the Sikh community into the suburbs of South Auckland. The chapter will then further extend the argument for theoretical synergy by showing through the ethnographic research that Sikh migrants do not migrate exclusively for economic factors.

The ethnographic research will focus on a number of variables, children, the elderly and vocational dissatisfaction. The chapter will then show why these variables have overridden economic considerations when making the decision to migrate. The chapter will then highlight the implications of that decision. The chapter will conclude by showing that for the Sikh community migration represents continuity and change in the public, domestic and personal realms.

*There is a reason why people don't stay where they are
Sometimes love just ain't enough*

Like all agricultural societies, the notion of land ownership (*Zamindari*) assumes significance in the world view of the Sikh Jat. Historical research shows one of the initiating impulses for migration to New Zealand had its genesis around land ownership and the maintenance of social status (*izzat*) (McLeod, 1986: 20-30). The ownership of land is essential for self respect and is not only a source of wealth (*Jaidad*) but a source of prestige which in turn enhances ones *izzat* (Helweg, 1979: 14). It is through land and the earnings from it that a family is able to offer hospitality, secure the future of its daughters through the financing of marriage ceremonies and construct large brick and concrete homes (Bhatti 2001: as cited in Bhatti, & Dusenberry, 2001: 36). Land ownership and the building of large concrete homes is still a prominent factor in the Sikh world view, with the Punjab having the largest concentrations of concrete homes in India (Bhatti 2001: as cited in Bhatti, & Dusenberry, 2001: 36).



New concrete home as seen from the Grand Trunk Road Punjab. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 24th Dec 2010.

“All my friends here in Punjab have Government jobs with Government flats. But on the weekends they go to their village to work on their farms” (Singh, H. 2010 Punjab).



The family below resided in these Government flats on week days and often commuted to their village farm on Friday nights, returning to their workplace on Monday mornings. The flats were located in the Mohali sector 70 (*Sas Nagar*) and belonged to the Punjab Department of Agriculture. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 28th December 2010.



Sarupwali -leaving the farm house. Photograph taken by Harminder Singh on the 2nd January 2011.

In the New Zealand context, *Zamindari* appears to be a significant contributing cultural factor amongst other variables in the establishment of the Sikh community in the greater Waikato and King Country Districts. Early immigrants, in keeping with their rural background, mostly obtained work as rural labourers on remote North Island farms (Pio, 2008: 20).

Those early sojourners, who elected to stay through self denying industry prior to World War 1 or just after, were able to either lease or buy outright small farms which they developed into dairy farms. This trend continued through the 1920s and 30s with some Punjabis even venturing into market gardening (Leckie, 2007: 61- 63).

These agricultural ventures ensured rising wealth thus enabling the wives and young children to join their husbands and fathers (McLeod 1986: 75). After world war two a shift in immigration policy helped to further encourage the migration of Indian wives and their children. This shift also coincided with the growing vocational trend away from scrub-cutting to dairy farming thus enabling Sikh Punjabis to reconnect with and establish a life based around family (Leckie, 2007: 109-110).

By the 1950s and 60s several Punjabis had established successful dairy farms in the greater Waikato regions (Lal et al., 2006: 391). This trend of land ownership was to increase and continue so that by the beginnings of the 1990s around 100 farms were owned and operated by Indians (Leckie, 2007: 64).

From these rural beginnings the Sikh community in New Zealand was founded. For those Punjabi families associated with the rural sector in the Waikato, the fruits of their labours were made immediately apparent when I visited the Hamilton *Gurdwara* with an Auckland Sikh family who had recently arrived from India.

“Look at their clothes, they are very costly and they are in the latest fashion. You can see they are from very good families” (Kaur.).

In India, successful Sikh Jats who are in the landlord class can be distinguished by their finer quality of clothes (Pettigrew, 1975: 38). The progressive trend throughout the 20th century of land ownership amongst the founding families of the Punjabi community shows the enduring nature of this cultural concept and when coupled with the above comments and observations, reveals the active face of *Zamindari*.

“However the trend towards private ownership of farms in general is now slowing, with a greater emphasis on corporations owning farms and leasing them back to previous owners or share milkers to manage” (Singh.).

The Sikh community today however is primarily clustered in the South Auckland suburbs of Papatotoe, Papakura, Manurewa, Takanini Otahuhu and Pukekohe. This clustering of Sikh migrant families initially started as a result of escalating land prices in the Waikato. These subsequent land increases, placed the aspirations of farm ownership beyond the reach of most Sikh agricultural workers.

Consequently during the 1960s Sikh agricultural workers who found their aspirations thwarted by the price of land found alternative employment in the industrial suburbs of South Auckland (McLeod, 1986: 146). This shift in employment heralded a move from the rural areas of the Waikato to the urban arena of South Auckland.

This rural to urban shift also heralded in a change in economic aspirations from a rural to a more urban centred focus. Although this structural constraint did not impede the aspirations of all Sikh migrants as the following quote illustrates.

When we moved to Otahuhu around 1969-70 there were only four Punjabi families. Dad worked at Pacific Steel. We moved to the Bombay hills about 1975-76. Dad brought 50 acres. It was more dairy farming than market gardening. Then Dad had a stroke we had to sell and we moved to Drury. I was at Pukekohe High School. I went labouring to help the family out. Then we purchased a store in Mt Wellington an IGA Super Discounter around 1980 (Singh-Bolar.).

However on average it was this economic structural change in the price of land that was the initiating impulse that propelled the Sikh community into the urban arena. Since that time the Sikh community who would have preferred farming to business has continued to diversify its business interests. Moving initially into corner dairies their entrepreneurial skills have led the Sikh Community progressively up the business ladder (McLeod & Bhullar, 1992: 61-67).

So much so that today a tour through the shopping malls and business sectors of certain South Auckland suburbs all reflect a Sikh Punjabi influence. Their business interests now cater to both the wider community and their own community and currently include liquor stores, immigration consultancies, petrol stations, lotto outlets, spice shops, restaurants and travel shops.

“In 2001 everything was closed. There were few places to buy spices. Now you can get everything sweets, clothing” (Singh, K.).

The continued growth of the Sikh community is further reflected in the proliferation of *Gurdwaras* in the South Auckland area⁴⁶. This proliferation has been initiated amongst other considerations, by the sheer volume of devotees that attend the *Gurdwaras* and the diversity of devotees coupled with the proximity of the congregation.⁴⁷ This continued expansion and migration to the suburbs of South Auckland and the Counties Manukau districts has many variables that feed its growth.

Why they came-what they told me

The following tales indicate that personal needs, proximity of family and aspirations and dreams carry far more strength and are far more likely to propel people from the Punjab into migratory streams than mere economic considerations.

“We came for our children”

This variable was a common theme articulated not only among the interview participants but also among the general Sikh population during casual, and informal conversations. This contributing impulse is not only confined to the Sikh community. Similar findings have been found by Firkin when analysing the narratives of professional migrants working in New Zealand where “children were the most often cited reason for migration” (2004: 61).

⁴⁶ Although it should be noted, that the proliferation of *Gurdwaras* is also a reflection of factions and class differences within the community. Sikhs have a saying 2 to 3 is a congregation 5 is another *Gurdwara*.

⁴⁷ My previous research indicates that proximity is a deciding factor for many elderly adherents who attend the *Gurdwara* on a daily basis and more often than not walk to the *Gurdwara*.

“It is a hard struggle for our children to get good teaching, there is people competition and corruption. Every parent wants to give their children the best 100%, and they will need to marry one day. When I was in India I had to sit every night for 2-3 hours 6 days a week so they could get good marks” (Kaur, D.).

“There are lots of reservations. 50% is caste based for places in education Jat Sikhs are not classified there is reservations for lower class. This causes huge frustration amongst parents and children. The standard of education is going down, creative education is going down. It’s been 60 years since the British. The British wanted to educate the people. That is why they opened libraries in the village. You will not find education health or population control on the agenda of any political party in India” (Singh, G.).

“Even in colleges they have reservations for the lower caste 25% for Hill Tribes, 25% for lower Schedule Caste and the other 50% is for general” (Kaur- Gill, H.).

Indian culture in general places a high premium on education and the family is a site where higher education is actively encouraged (Zodgekar, 2010: as cited in Bandyopadhyay, 2010: 72).

As the above narratives indicate educational achievement has become linked to maintaining *izzat* status and by extension to the enhanced eligibility of prospective marriage partners (Bhachu, 1985: 92).

In 2001 the total number of Dalits or former outcastes in the whole of Punjab numbered 30% (Singh & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 40). Thus these verbal articulations further disclose that migration for some Sikh Punjabis is a last resort in attempting to maintain the status difference. They also disclose a subtle shift in the psychology of the community from a traditional outlook to a perspective based in modernity. In traditional societies ones status is based around the clan or collective, status is credited to the whole (Nayar, 2004: 14).

“Here you are treated as an individual and family reputation and status cannot protect you. In Punjab no one would dare insult us” (Kaur, S.).



Secondary School, Pathankot Punjab. This photograph is not a criticism rather it is intended to highlight the competitive and collective nature of the Indian education system there are over 50 students in this semi open class room in mid winter. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 3rd January 2011.

For the children of Sikh parents who do well, the cultural concept of *izzat* is maintained in that parents or relatives can make known to other community members of their children's achievements. "*Sikhs have a strong belief that education will open the doors of power and secure an easier life*" (Bhatti & Dusenberry, 2001: 118). However by promoting a western educational system where learning success is something that is achieved individually (McLennan, Ryan, & Spoonley, 2000: 98).

"The children love the schools because they know the difference between the schools" (Kaur, D.).

The maintenance of class and *izzat* achieved comes with hidden cost [s]. To academically achieve the children of Sikh migrants need to move to an individualistic outlook, western educational systems, promote individualism and individualistic analytical styles of thinking in the way of assessments, tasks, tests and delivery modes.

"Here you have to do all the work by yourself" (Kaur- Gill, H.).

This shift in outlook comes at the expense of a collective traditional psychological orientation⁴⁸ an outlook and orientation that well educated and intentioned parents from India are still partially anchored into because of their early formative years which were forged in a traditional psychology.

“My children are starting to argue back. When I compare my children to children in India they are different very different. In India children do not debate with their parents. Maybe the schools need to punish them with the stick or physical punishment like in India” (Singh, H.).

“The children are very inquisitive here” (Kaur, H.).

Inquisitiveness is a trait that is actively encouraged in the western educational system. However, for parents who are still partially anchored in a traditional outlook this trait is seen as disrespectful and undermining parental authority (Nayar, 2004: 77). Additionally parents feel threatened as the above narrative illustrates, if they cannot adequately answer their queries. This open encouragement of western education inevitably sets up tensions between parents who are happy to take on the trappings of westernisation but not necessarily its underpinning philosophies and values.

“Thus being a good Indian and being a successful student at the same time is no easy goal to attain. There is bound to be breakdown” (Bachu, 1985: 171).

These differences in educational practices start to become visible (as the narrative below illustrates) when viewing the public behaviour of young Punjabi children when attending service at a *Gurdwara*.

“The kids from year 6-9 speak English. They do not want to sit down. That’s from school because you are normally moving around you don’t sit in one place you do not get use to sitting in one place” (Singh.).

Field observations in Punjab reveal that children attend school six days a week, have only one break during the day and there is a limited emphasis on physical activities, tactile learning or learning by experimentation or play. In contrast to the New Zealand education system, which values learning by movement and doing, I did not see any evidence of the usual facilities that are taken for granted in New Zealand schools-such as jungle gyms, asphalted playing areas for ball sports such as netball, pater tennis courts or swimming pools, or even swings and slides. Rather, there is far greater emphasis placed on group and rote learning and non-physical movement.

⁴⁸ These statements stem from my own observations as a qualified adult educator and tutor of foreign students. Students who make the transition from a collective endeavour to individual learning especially around tasks tests and assignments all do very well.

“The kiwi kids play a lot. You are more active. You get to be good at sports. I didn’t know what high jump was” (Kaur, S.).

Discipline also appears to be a salient feature of the Punjabi educational system. Every time I entered into a learning environment all pupils immediately stood up and did not sit down until instructed to do so by their teachers. These teaching methods also find congruency with traditional Sikh family values in that (like the elders) the teacher is the fountain of all knowledge as opposed to knowledge obtained through research and self discovery.

This dichotomy of philosophies becomes more discernible as young Sikhs’ mature, and develop into young adults and continue, or start to, rub shoulders with young adults from other cultures including Kiwi culture.

“Western culture takes our kids. They are drifting away from us. Punjabi families do not like their children clubbing, roaming at night” (Kaur, N.).

“Punjabi families are not that modern. They need to live a modern life. You have to have fun. Not just live the life!! Like in Punjab” (Singh, J.).

“All of my friends were European at school. I had a party. 85 people all whites, only 4 Indians. You need to open up to the Kiwis” (Singh, D.).

This rubbing of shoulders, either physically, through print media, or electronic mediums can and does produce multiple identities which manifest in a highly visible hybridised youth culture. Field observations at Auckland *Gurdwaras* show that the majority of Sikh Punjabi male youth have absorbed and engage to a significant depth in the social practices and vocabulary of mainstream New Zealand culture. This visible hybridised youth culture materialises in the wearing of super fifteen, regional and suburban rugby colours, denim jeans, short hair styles and not wearing the Turban. These cultural engagements further extend to the ownership of boy racer motor vehicles, which are liberally adorned with Sikh Punjabi cultural ornaments. That are placed or hung on internal rear vision mirrors and dashboards with the final adornment culminating in a personalised plate embodying the Sikh way of life. This cultural hybridisation and adoption further flows into the social arena, where the speaking of English when congregating outside a frequented *Gurdwara* has become normalised and New Zealand cultural practices are ardently pursued whilst listening to loud Punjabi (*bhangra*) rock music.

“Sikh community is different from India, because we can talk about girls. I have been here two years and girls can talk and are very friendly here. It has changed now. New Zealand Sikhs are like Kiwis, they can talk with every one. They go to clubs” (Singh, J. Student).

Field observations in Punjab also show similar trends. There are night clubs and bars in major cities, such as Chandrigah, which are frequented by Sikh Punjabi youth. Furthermore, Sikh youth (both male and female) are highly fashion conscious with jeans a major feature of their attire. Punjabi remains however, the language of choice when communicating amongst peers. Although the choice of language does appear to be at times situational, where when observing youth at McDonalds outlets English was discernibly audible.

“Globalisation of Media has definitely affected the Punjab. Now the girls’ are very trendy, sex before marriage- it is all common over there in Punjab”
(Kaur.).

Whilst young Punjabi females tend to wear the *Shalmar Kameeze* when attending *Gurdwara*, close observation reveals that young Punjabi females will often wear jeans or leggings and even low necked tops to a *Gurdwara* service. While jeans and leggings are becoming more acceptable with similar field observations being made at the *Bangla Sahib Gurdwara* in New Delhi India, the case of low necked tops in the New Zealand instance remains contentious. Congregation members (especially young females) at the Takanini *Gurdwara*, the *Sri Kalgidhar Sahib*, are regularly reminded during the summer months of the appropriate attire for *Gurdwara* attendance.

While these tensions are openly articulated within the community the differences are compounded and will be likely to be compounded further into the future by the declining rate of native language retention amongst the children and youth of both recent migrants and those that are New Zealand born.

Mind Your Language: English Please

“The Punjabi kids cannot speak their mother tongue. What happens if they go back to Punjab? They cannot communicate it is their culture. The old people cannot speak English. It is compulsory they must learn Punjabi!”
(Singh, J. Student).

Language or mother tongue is seen as a central construct in the formation of personal identity. Language is a point of difference and is what sets people regions and countries apart. It is the vehicle through which a cultures heritage is maintained and transmitted (Roscoe, 1999: 112). If a language is lost then other cultural notions methods and practices that language supports can also be lost as language is fundamental to culture (Durrie, 1998: 59). This inability to maintain the language is conceptualised by most Sikhs at the level of the individual or family. However the declining loss of language has many contributing factors that are situated outside the realm of the individual or family unit. Field work in the Punjab suggests that for recent migrants some of these contributing factors have their genesis in the Punjab itself.

“In Punjab the people learn English. Here the people are learning Punjabi”
(Kaur-Gill, H).

In summary Sikh Punjabis have been exposed to the English language in some shape or form for a considerable length of time especially segments of the community that have been prone to migration. This appears to have normalised the speaking and use of English through constant exposure and the promotion of English as a high language.⁴⁹ This exposure was initially through Army service. Whilst the recruitment and service of Sikhs into the Indian Army has declined in recent times, this was not always the case especially under the British who at the outbreak of World War One were able to call on over one hundred thousand Sikh soldiers that were enlisted in the Indian Army to serve in the trenches of Europe (Singh, & Singh-Tatla, 2006: 46). As it was, under the British, the language of the Indian Army today comprises of Hindi and English, with all serving officers having to achieve fluency in English (Singh, H. Retired Indian Army Officer).

Field observations in *Pathankot*, which is home to a large military base, also tentatively indicate that English comprehension is also prevalent among enlisted men. Therefore through service in the Army, English is a language that has been spoken in the Punjab since Britain annexed the Punjab in 1849 (Singh, 1999: 80). Furthermore, casual informants often reported that the children of Punjabi Sikhs whose fathers' army careers often take them out of the Punjab cannot read Punjabi and often have limited oral skills in Punjabi.

“I remember my cousin at Pathankot. His father is army. He could not catch the bus. He got on the bus and had to ask because he can speak, but could not read the sign” (Singh.).

“My cousins are living in Bihar. They do not know any Punjab. Their father is Indian Air-Force they never lived in Punjab” (Singh, H.).

Similar findings were reported by New Zealand informants when conversing with kith and kin in Canada.

“So many in Canada cannot speak our mother tongue we have to use English otherwise how” (Singh, P.).

Whilst business in the Punjab is conducted in both English and Punjabi, government departments, banks, the judicial system and hospitals primarily conduct their business directives in written English.

⁴⁹ Where two languages co exist side by side and where one language is promoted as a high language this is known as a diglossic relationship (Saville- Troike, M. 1982: 54).

Additionally road signs within the Punjab are all in English as is significant amounts of shop signage throughout the Punjab. English is taught in government schools starting at year 6 and at pre -school level for private schools. There are English speaking television channels which arrive via satellite dishes and bill board advertisements around major consumer brands such as The United Colours of Benetton, Nike, Adidas and Lee that are all in English.

“Both Jobandeep and Sukhchandan were in private Catholic Schools in India in our Punjab. They were sent there because of the Educational Standard and for the English speaking skills” (Kaur.).

Furthermore, competence in English, both written and oral is a requirement for entry into New Zealand and other English speaking countries.⁵⁰ As a result of this requirement a well established industry of English language schools is discernible when travelling through the Punjab.

Additionally, because English is the accepted medium in governmental structures, this promotes English as stated previously as a high language and its speakers gain *izzat* and social capital by its mastery.

These examples all indicate that the English language has become, through time and repeated exposure, a tolerated and an accepted aspect of the Sikh Punjabi linguistic-social landscape.

As a result of this exposure I tentatively draw the conclusion that the linguistic transition from Punjabi to a solely English medium for recent migrants becomes less traumatic or emotionally charged. This increases the chances of failing to maintain their mother tongue, when faced with the challenges of migrating to New Zealand.

The overriding importance of language maintenance can be contextually specific and assumes salience in some situations and wanes in other situational contexts (Roscoe, 1999: 133). For the children of new migrants the mastery of the English language is essential for academic success.

Academic achievement is seen by many Sikh Punjabi youth as a means of counteracting feelings of inferiority and as a means of fitting in or assimilating into the host culture (Kaur-Gill, J. 2007:16).

“There was bullying from all the ethnic communities. In the school I got by doing something, by achieving” (Singh, D.).

⁵⁰ For migrants to enter New Zealand under the general skills category an IELTS band of 6.5 must be achieved. For more skilled migrants such as nurses and doctors an achievement of 7 and 7.5 is mandatory for entry into New Zealand (Singh, H. NZASIA Licensed Immigration Consultant).

This is further reinforced when Sikh children enter into New Zealand public schools where English is actively encouraged through the use of ESOL lessons as part of school curriculum.

“I went to ESOL at Papatoetoe East but not Papatoetoe Central. At Intermediate I went to the language centre for one year. It was intense some had to stay back for extra and finish their ESOL” (Singh, J).

Whilst at school Sikh Punjabi children, because of the multi cultural composition of most south Auckland schools, tend to speak English in their breaks.

“My friends are Indian but they are not Punjabi. Sometimes it is good to be with other people and not with the Punjabis. If we speak Punjabi at school people might be offended so we do not speak at school. In the playground the teacher encourages English, English. So everybody can understand what you understand. It is unusual for me to speak English at school” (Kaur, S.).

“My friends they are two, one is from Malaysia and one from our Punjab. The Malaysia he is Punjabi to but we speak English in the breaks” (Singh, J).

Additionally, field observations reveal that for Sikh children who are involved in extra curriculum activities such as sports either within school or out of school are, all conducted in English. Hockey games are a salient example where sideline comments from Punjabi spectators are usually in Punjabi whereas on field communication is always in English. *Gurdwaras* such as the Kolmar Road *Shri Dashmesh Darbar* do provide reading and writing lessons in Punjabi on Saturday afternoons. For the children and parents who are involved in extra curriculum activities time is a major barrier to attendance.

“Our children do not go we do not have time. They are playing hockey. Maybe once a week or fortnightly we do the shopping list in Punjabi, at least they will be able to read. Not many Punjabi parents are even doing this” (Kaur.).

Furthermore schools such as Papatoetoe Central and Papatoetoe Intermediate that have Indian cultural groups tend to place a far greater emphasis on Hindi than Punjabi.

“We have Indian groups but they are more for dancing than speaking more Hindi. There is more Hindi at school than Punjabi” (Singh, S.).

For Sikh children who may have newly arrived relatives staying with them English is likely to assume importance and take pride of place in the home.

So that relatives who need to be immersed and coached in English can pass speaking and writing tests to satisfy the enrolment criteria for private learning institutions.

In short the above examples and narratives, have attempted to highlight that through migration the arenas that are available for the promotion and articulation of the Sikh mother tongue are diminishing. Consequently as the arenas that are available for the promotion and speaking of Punjabi become more and more redundant Punjabi children are failing to maintain their mother tongue.

“We are surrounded by English. You can never lose English. Everybody speaks English. Slowly we will forget we are not encouraged. We learn Maori at school” (Singh.).

“When my kids step out of the house they are speaking English so many kids cannot speak Punjabi” (Singh,V.).

For old time migrants the maintenance of the Punjabi language was not seen as an immediate concern in that the community was not as established therefore migrants and their off spring were compelled to learn and speak English.

“Before we had to make contact with the wider community we were mixing more” (Kaur.).

Additionally it was in the immediate interests of parents to learn English where possible to reverse the power differentials between non English speaking adults and English speaking children. As children have considerable power over parents who do not speak English (Singh, 2001: as cited in Bhatti & Dusenberry, 2001: 236).

“For many Indians especially women, migration often entailed linguistic isolation where children became the bridge between cultures helping their mothers to understand English and to negotiate new challenges outside of the home” (Leckie, 2010 as cited in Bandyopadhyay, 2010: 57).

Whist most old time migrants tended to insist that their off spring retain their mother tongue in order to maintain power differentials, they did recognise the necessity off and became reasonably proficient in the speaking of English. Field work showed succinctly that all old time migrants had a comprehensive grasp of English and New Zealand vernacular. This learning entailed for some *“just sort of picking it up”* (Leckie, 2010: 119).

*“Of course if you wanted to make progress you had to learn”
There was more communication in 1967 when I first came. No one wanted to
speak Punjabi in front of the European. Everybody tried to speak English”
(Kaur. Amrit-Dhari.).*

This necessity was further compounded by the pragmatics of good business sense when Sikh Punjabis started to venture into dairies and I.G.As (neighbourhood supermarkets) in the 1980s.

*“Wife worked in the business to understand the language. Kiwis talk very fast,
at the counter she has to say hello” (Singh-Bola.).*

These pragmatic considerations therefore tended to negate the emotional significance of language retention. Furthermore, there was like the youth of today an underlying desire to fit in “to assimilate and quietly accumulate” (Pio, 2008: 21). “As language identifies a person as different and can be seen as a barrier to acceptance and assimilation” (Roscoe, 1999: 113).

Mother tongue does however, become important in certain contexts such as community gatherings where people expect that it be known (Roscoe, 1999: 133). Field observation at the *Nanaksar Thath Isher Darbar Gurdwara* in Manurewa South Auckland shows that during the service (*Kirtan*) the devotional hymns are projected on to a screen in both Punjabi (*Gurmukhi*) and English. This practice, to the best of my knowledge, only occurs at one other South Auckland *Gurdwara* the *Shri Dashmesh Darbar* in Kolmar Road Papatoetoe.

The *Gurdwara* is the bastion of Sikh faith. It is a well defined area and has its own distinctive architecture and protocols. It serves as the focal point for the Sikh community who gather there and its boundaries serve as a cultural buffer from mainstream New Zealand. When one visits a *Gurdwara* one is visiting India. However, not all *Gurdwaras* are the same, with the varying *Gurdwaras* tending to attract different core segments of the community. The Kolmar Road *Gurdwara* is known as being the Hindu or businessman’s *Gurdwara*.

Where as the *Gurdwara* in Takanini *Gurdwara Sri Kalgidhar Sahib* is known more for attracting rural migrants and for its traditional leanings. Patronage of the *Shri Guru Ravidas* temple in Bombay is based more on caste distinctions as opposed to class distinctions.⁵¹

Whilst this practice of projecting English translations is an educational tool, as the language of the *Guru Grand Sahib* can be difficult to understand (Kaur Rait, 2005: 39).

⁵¹ These are just a sample of the many *Gurdwaras* in the South Auckland area.

The ethnographic data leads me to interpret this to be a public acknowledgment of the declining rate of language comprehension and a visible resistance to modernity. This practice simultaneously not only highlights class differentials between the varying *Gurdwaras* by unveiling the trans-national, cosmopolitan composition of the congregations but also unmasks the depth of engagement with modernity that not even the bastions of the Sikh faith seem immune to.⁵²

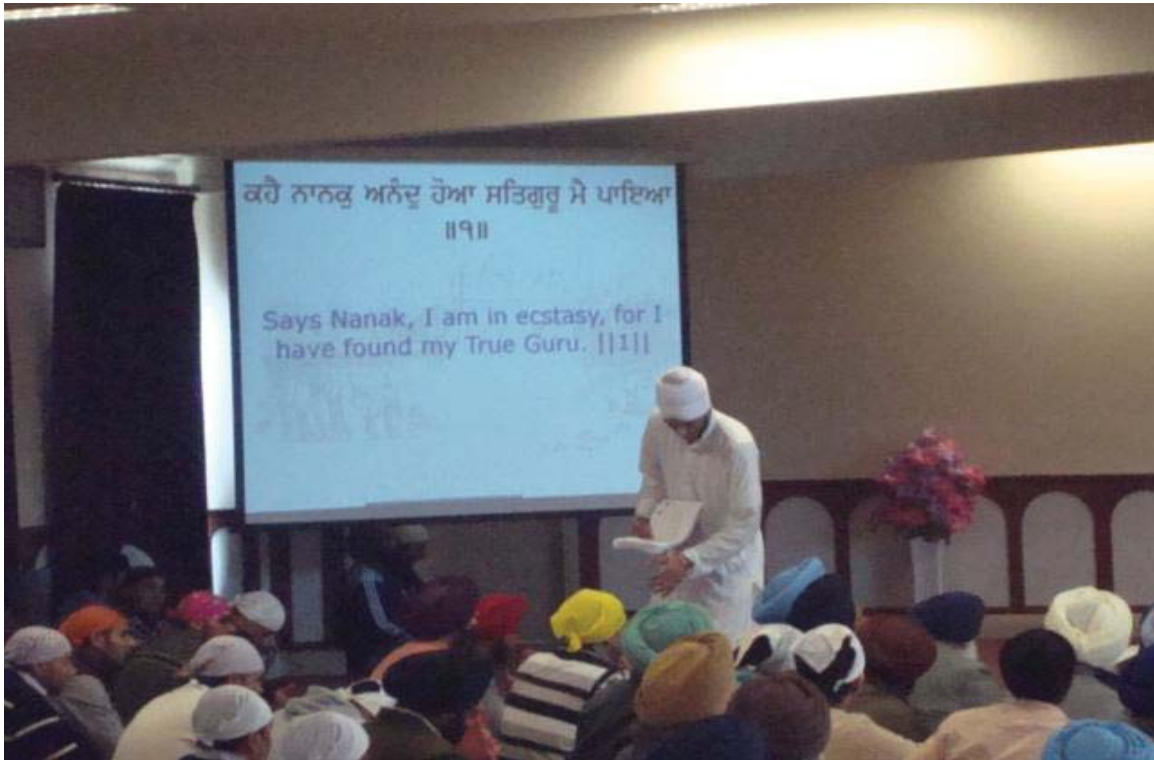
“Cosmopolitan Sikhs may want their children to learn Punjabi so they can comprehend Sikh scriptures. However they are normally not averse to the use of English as a first language and as a component of Sikh services” (Dusenberry, 2010: as cited in Bhatti & Dusenberry, 2001: 246).

This unmasking of modernity in turn reveals a shift in identity formation that opens up the possibilities of retaining a Sikh identity without total comprehension or fluency in the language. A shift which is becoming more and more prevalent across the Sikh community as the implementation of projecting English translations onto a *Gurdwara* wall clearly shows.



Kirtan-Devotional Service at the *Nanaksar Thath Isher Darbar Gurdwara* Manurewa. These captions also capture the growing numbers of non wearing turbaned Sikhs. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 3rd July 2011.

⁵² My previous research with the elderly that was primarily conducted at the *Nanaksar Thath Isher Darbar Gurdwara* shows that the study participants were very much educated cosmopolitan trans-national migrants who fitted well with Carmen Voit Graft's notion of "true transnationals in terms of mobility" However they still retained very traditional expectations when it came to family relations. (Voit Graft, as cited in Bhatti, & Dusenberry, 2001: 256).



Kirtan-Devotional Service at the Nanaksar Thath Isher Darbar Gurdwara, Manurewa. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 3rd July 2011.

Further influences on the declining use of Punjabi can also be attributed to the changed family dynamic brought on by migration. As stated previously field work in Punjab highlighted the prevalence of the giant or extended family, with great accord being given to the elders.

Number their Days: The Role of the Elders

Field observations noted that the elders' presence in an extended family is celebrated and they are totally included in the family dynamic. This is in direct contrast to western social practices where the elderly tend to be isolated and excluded from the family arena and where social death may precede physiological death by several years (Lamb, 2009: 1). Leaving elderly parents in Sikh culture to the care of strangers in an elderly institution is considered a disgrace and any family that does so experiences a huge loss of *izzat* (Kaur-Rait, 2005: 117).

In both urban and rural Punjab young and old, all physically work towards the collective good of the family. This orientation, toward the collective, means that all family members have defined social roles, and each family member is expected to do their (*dharma*) duty (Nayar, 2004: 47). In a traditional society the aged are considered the custodians of knowledge and one of the roles of the elders is to pass on the accumulated knowledge of the community (Maaka, 1993: 213).

This role is also a fundamental of Sikh culture where “*elders are regarded as the best source of knowledge (wisdom)*” (Nayar, 2004: 49). Because grandparents or elders in the Punjab are physically present and have highly interactive relationships with their grandchildren, this interaction allows for the easy transmission of cultural norms values and language (Bhachu, 1985: 37).



This elderly woman from *Masti* village in the district of *Hoshiarpur* is still working. Here she is threshing the leaves of sugar cane in order to feed her cows. At 90 years of age she was immensely proud of the fact that she could still provide fresh daily milk for her entire extended family. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 7th January 2011.



Elderly Sikh man and his young granddaughter-*Ladhur* village *Gurdaspur*. This gentleman’s extended family consisted of himself, his wife, their son, their son’s wife and their two grandchildren. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 8th January 2011.

However in the New Zealand context migration for some families has meant that the elders are no longer a physical presence in the family dynamic.

Where as, in the Punjab, it is very normal for grandparents who live with their grandchildren to be conversing with their grandchildren in Punjabi, with research indicating that the presence of grandparents in the home supports and encourages mother tongue proficiency (Smythe & Toohey, 2009: 52). This linguistic forum however is not present for the children of some Sikh migrants.

When this social outcome is combined with parents who are both working and are time poor, the resulting outcome can further limit the linguistic arena where Punjabi is heard and spoken. Some families attempt to overcome this hurdle by either returning to India on regular holidays or by having elderly parents either visit for up to nine months or migrating permanently. This opportunity for migration is readily grasped by some

“It is their attraction and affection for their children, that brings them here”
(Kaur,V.).

“We came to meet our new grandson. This is a big happiness” (Singh, M.).

“One has to go where my family is” (Kaur,B.).

“I came to check on my son. He is a surgeon at Auckland Hospital” (Singh,H.).

Whilst it is considered the duty of sons and daughter in laws to co reside with their senior parents (Lamb, 2009: 32), it is an opportunity that is fraught with difficulty. Many elderly migrants visit New Zealand for brief periods of time before finally migrating and express great fondness for New Zealand.

“It is a mini creation of heaven ” (Singh, B.).

“This is a God gifted country, a nature country, seas, hills, mountains” (Kaur.).

“The traffic is most disciplined. The rubbish removal is very good and planned. In India there is no real rubbish disposal or planning” (Singh, H.).

“There is less noise less pollution ” (Singh, M.).

Visiting a country and living in a country are two very different things. Migration to New Zealand has meant a rupture a virtual uprooting from their lifelong social arenas such as hometowns, villages neighbours and extended kin. Arenas that most expected to stay in and participate in for the entirety of their lives. *“I neve really thought that I would actually leave India”* (Kaur.).

Most humans live out their days in localised spaces, dependent in differing ways on people they have known for years (Peters, 1997: as cited in Gupta & Fergusson, 1997: 91).

These social networks offer support in everyday life events and serve as a protective buffer during times of stress with good social support from friends and family showing a positive correlation with good mental health (Weiten, 1995: 540).

Field observations in Punjab have noted that for the elderly, members of their social network have been a part of their lives for a considerable length of time (in some cases virtually all their lives). The concept of a friend in a collective culture implies a lifelong intimate relationship with many obligations (Franzoi, 1996: 303).

Furthermore sociological research has found that *“elderly folk’s satisfaction with life bears relatively little relationship to the quantity or quality of their contact with the younger members of their own families but it shows substantial correlation with the quantity and quality of their contact with their friends”* (Berger, 1998: 680).

The act of migration however as stated above constitutes a rupture a discontinuity of the physical and social arena. This results in a significant reduction of the social circle for most elderly migrants, a reduction that is most difficult to rebuild as people from collective cultures have fewer skills in making new friends (Franzoi, 1996: 303). Furthermore elderly migrants by moving have effectively lost their accumulated social status.

No one knows their personal achievements or social history outside of their immediate family. For some they are further excluded from making friends amongst the dominant kiwi culture by language difficulties

“I would like to have some Kiwi friends but English is a problem” (Singh).

Not only then do elderly migrants have to cope with a severely depleted social circle, but the feelings of being uprooted are constantly reinforced by the fact that for some, significant friends, kin, and siblings still reside in India, or are dispersed through out the world thus resulting in feelings of a *“generalised condition of homelessness”* (Malakki, 1997: as cited in Gupta, & Fergusson, 1997: 53).

These feelings of homelessness are further compounded by partial cultural isolation, and for some a changed or changing family dynamic and physical boredom as most elderly people in Punjab still physically work.

This is especially true in rural Punjab as more often than not they own their farm so it is in their immediate economic interests and working further maintains their physical and mental health. *“Work, has a more powerful effect than any other aspect of human life to bind a person to reality”* (Muchinsky, 2000: 303). Furthermore, through work their hierarchical position in the family is maintained through achievement and the respect derived from that achievement.

“I never thought my children would leave India. I have lost my relationships and daily activities. There is no attachments, here no system of relationships in New Zealand” (Kaur.).

“There are no neighbourly relations here. Nobody knows each other” (Singh).

“I have three daughters. One in Sweden and two in Delhi, and I am here with my son. It is very very hard” (Kaur.).

“Yes I am here, but I am there also. I will travel back and forth till I am bedridden” (Kaur.).

Field observations have noted that for women more so than for men there is partial alienation from the Sikh faith and by extension the Sikh social network, due to the limited access of transport and the availability of kith and kin to transport elderly women to their local *Gurdwara*.

People who subscribe to a meaningful faith are more satisfied, less lonely and have more positive attitudes towards ageing. Studies show that morale and wellbeing are positively correlated, with three kinds of religious activities-organised structured events (going to church or temple), informal (praying or reading scriptures), and spiritual (personal cognitive commitment to religious beliefs), with women over the age of 75 showing the strongest correlation between religion and well being. (Koenig, Kvale, & Ferrel, 1988 as cited in Papalia, Sterns, Feldman, & Camp, 2002: 419).

Field observations in Punjab note that Sikh Punjabi women of all ages have a high level of piety. With some elderly women attending *Gurdwara* daily at 5am.⁵³ However in the New Zealand context, for elderly women access to a *Gurdwara* is not an automatic event and can become a daunting social and physical mission.

⁵³ Most villages in Punjab have a *Gurdwara* within walking distance of all homes. Most mornings in Punjab I was woken at 5am by the morning prayers being broadcast through loud speakers. The *Gurdwara* is a very visible and audible part of life in the Punjab.

“In India I go to the Gurdwara daily. I wake around 5am bathe and then walk to the Gurdwara. Here in New Zealand I have to wait for my son in law”
(Kaur.).

“The transport system is very bad here. I am living like a prisoner here, I just sit alone” (Kaur.).

In contrast it is quite a common sight to see elderly Sikh men walking or bicycling along the streets of South Auckland particularly Manurewa to or from a local *Gurdwara*. I have never seen an elderly Sikh women walking to or from a *Gurdwara* in South Auckland.

“I walk daily 5-10 kilometres” (Singh, M.).

“I walk everyday to this Gurdwara” (Singh, H.).

Life in the Fast Lane: The changing of *Izzat* and *Dharama*

Additionally for some elderly women migrants (and some men) there is further cultural discontinuity and alienation through economic change which emanates from their immediate children who have had to adopt a faster paced life premised on modernity in order to survive and flourish. Whilst the vast majority of elderly that were interviewed in my previous study had held professional jobs in India and in some cases were exceptionally educated their core values were still anchored in a traditional framework.

This anchorage has tended to isolate them from their children who have taken over the economic locus of control within the family.

“The children are all very busy New Zealand is a society that is time poor”
(Kaur.).

“Here the children have to become fast and they do not have time for their parents” (Singh.).

“Here in New Zealand the younger generation is not dependent on their parents. They are involved in their own jobs” (Kaur.).

This economic change in turn has disrupted the power structures that have traditionally operated within joint family households. Where the elders have traditionally held the reins of economic and social power, this transfer of power has ultimately influenced the cultural notions of duty (*dharmā*) and *izzat* honour and the social practice of those notions (Nayar, 2004: 52).

“The status of looking after ones’ parents is fading away. The values are eroding away” (Singh.).

“They just get them out here to look after the kids” (Singh.).

“Everybody is chasing money here. People are more bothered about their personal lives, their personal happiness!!!” (Kaur.).

Furthermore for some elderly who had sold everything to migrate, they have ended up becoming economically dependant on their adult children which has resulted in further tensions within the family. These tensions reflect further change in cultural notions of *seva* (service) this notion when applied to the elderly means *“striving to fulfil all of an elders bodily and emotional needs”* (Lamb, 2009: 32).⁵⁴

“If I get sick instead of giving me affection respect and love, another burden has come. All the money goes on my PR which annoys the children. These feelings are the killers” (Kaur.).

These economic shifts further collide with Sikh religious ethics. Sikh religious ethics are premised on three concepts (*kirt karo, nam japo*) and (*vand cako*) which translates into work, worship and charity.

Self reliance or rugged individualism which is a prized cultural norm in New Zealand is severely frowned on. (*Haumai*) or (self-reliance) is the great enemy of God in that it manifests itself in lust, greed, anger, pride and materialism (Cole & Singh- Sambhi, 1978: 136).

“In India religion and family are important. It is these things that give you peace of mind. Here there is no importance placed on family, religion and God” (Singh.).

“By taking up Westernisation they have taken up more pressure with less regard for values. No one is taking care of the elders, life styles have changed” (Singh.).

“Here the government is not trying to kill you but we have other enemies here. There is no balance between Deserve and Desire Here there are no social restrictions, no social shame” (Kaur.).

⁵⁴ *Seva*. “Service” This cultural concept has a wide meaning ranging from service to the greater community to the level of the individual, to cleaning and maintaining a *Gurdwara* or participating in the preparation and serving of *Gurdwara* meals in the community kitchen. (McLeod, 2005: 184).

In attempting to maintain the continuity of Sikh religious values and ethics elderly Sikhs are constantly engaged in a juggling act between the forces of modernity and their religious beliefs and values.

Another issue impacting on the overall health and well being of elderly migrants is the uncertainty surrounding the process of obtaining permanent residency. Because of language difficulties and mobility issues obtaining permanent residency is fraught with tension and stress for some elderly migrants who invariably have to rely on their adult children.

This results in a sense of helplessness, which usually manifests itself through physical ailments. Until permanent residency is achieved medical expenses invariably have to be shouldered by the immediate family which can be costly. (Sponsors of elderly parents have to sign a legal declaration stating that they will provide financial support and accommodation for at least the first two years of residency). Furthermore, elderly migrants are not eligible for the old age pension for a further ten years after permanent residency has been granted (Singh, H. Licensed Immigration Agent NZASIA).

The above narratives indicate that for some elderly Sikh old age can be fraught with difficulty and that the lived experiences of the elderly can be characterised in varying degrees by isolation and tension between personal, cultural and religious values and the wider society in which they find themselves in. These many and ongoing variables can and often do especially for elderly Sikh women result in the onset of depression.

*“After coming to New Zealand they get depressed. The GPs do not have the time. Almost 80-90% of the women are suffering from depression”*⁵⁵

This increases the importance of having an intact social network. For elderly men and women who are able to attend *Gurdwara* on a regular basis and in some instances on a daily basis, the *Gurdwara* serves as a pragmatic safety net for elderly Sikh who may be experiencing emotional and inner conflict.

Gurdwara attendance provides a venue for what Myerhoff (1978) terms dramas of honour. These dramas of honour allow elderly migrants, whose lives have been through the migratory process and thus separated from life term social arenas and significant long term witnesses to their accomplishments, to publicly display their accomplishments and abilities both past and present. It further allows for the framing of new relationships thereby replicating the function of old ones and to continue a way of life that would have only been possible had they remained in India.

⁵⁵ The person who disclosed this information wanted to remain anonymous not even their gender was to be disclosed. Depression or the concept, of feeling very helpless and down for prolonged periods was however a common theme, that was articulated during the research by the research participants themselves.

“The Gurdwara is not only for visiting God. It is helping socialising”
(Singh.).

“I did not know anybody here. They are all new friends” (Kaur.).

“I always come to the Gurdwara. Everyday I come to pray and for the company and to do seva (community service)” (Singh.).

“The people here are from all over the world, Fiji, England, even USA”
(Singh.).

For Sikh elderly who successfully negotiate the changes brought on by migration especially after attaining permanent residence, a far more optimistic world view emerges.

“My personal future is very bright. Our community is very hard working. Now I am a citizen. I would like to see Melbourne” (Singh.).

“I want New Zealand to be prosperous. This country has given me space. This country feeds me. I want New Zealand to be very strong” (Kaur.).

In summary to reduce feelings of generalised homelessness, isolation and to maintain a reasonable degree of homeostasis the elderly actively seek out the cultural mediums of the *Gurdwara*. Where they can frame new relationships and enjoy cultural continuity. For Sikh elderly who do not have the visible hallmarks of having lived a successful life that would normally be self obvious had they remained in India, old age in New Zealand is about re engaging and rebuilding what has been lost and cherishing what has been gained.

Migration, though, has not only affected the elderly and the young it has also significantly impacted on working age migrants both female and male. For most migrants the change has been professional, personal and social.

I Can't Get No Satisfaction: The World of Work

One of the driving impulses commonly articulated amongst the New Zealand study participants was vocational dissatisfaction and further dissatisfaction with the wider infrastructural systems both in Punjab and throughout India.

“The life is good but the corruptions” (Singh.).

“The electricity supply is not good. It goes and then it..... goes again!. You have to queue in India. Everything takes time” (Kaur.).

“The teaching strategies are very different. There is no resources” (Kaur,H.).

*“In my class I taught 90 girls chemistry class. There is no atmosphere”
(Kaur- Nagra.).*

“I prefer to live in India however we got so frustrated. No quality in India. We are very happy here. The political system is going down. The education, system is going down. They are not interested in controlling the population. The people who are able are not being looked after. Life style was good in India, but there is no job satisfaction. Lots’ of job satisfaction here in New Zealand. We had a very comfortable life in Armritsar one fulltime servant” (Singh.).

“You have to pay to get things done. There is so much corruption, even for your passport to go the next level for processing you need to pay” (Kaur-Gill).

“You have to pay the police to get your police clearance. These things take time” (Singh.).⁵⁶

These critiques however rarely mentioned remuneration or salary levels and if they were mentioned there was no sense of dissatisfaction concerning salary levels. Research studies strongly indicate that remuneration is not a long term motivating factor when entering into or maintaining an employment relationship. Rather it is higher psychological needs that motivate people, in short most people work for other reasons apart from money (George, & Cole, 1992: 102).

“Socially economically we were good but the systems the corruptions” (Singh Amrit-Dhari.).

According to Maslow (1962, 1970) people are motivated by needs that compete for expression. Maslow’s theory (1962, 1970) postulates that there is an arrangement of human needs that need to be satisfied fairly well before a human is motivated to proceed to the next level of need. These needs are portrayed in a hierarchical manner with concerns for water, food and other physiological necessities occupying the bottom level. The next levels concern themselves with safety and security needs, belongingness and the need for love, esteem and achievement needs, cognitive needs including knowledge and understanding, aesthetic needs for order and beauty and finally the need to become everything a man can become the need for self actualization (Weiten, 1995: 381).

“If you work hard here in New Zealand you get reward, not just working hard, there is future here” (Singh.).

⁵⁶ Whilst conducting fieldwork in the Punjab I did not see any evidence of monetary corruption but I did sense that people were weary of the police and I did witness several acts of police being extremely heavy handed with members of the public.

“Les I love teaching I love to watch the children grow. See how they change their thinking how they express. It was the same in Punjab the feelings I still have relationships with them. I got phone calls when the earthquake came. We have fun at work. We are all girls there” (Kaur.).

“It is a clean environment. Fisher and Paykell it is 40% Indian on the night shift. We can talk our language, how can I explain it is good. I am now the main setter” (Singh.).

“There was no community support. We took a pledge after this experience to help the community. No help like regional migrant services. I enjoy telling the new migrants about New Zealand” (Kaur.).

When attempting to satisfy these needs individuals attach values and beliefs to those needs. These values include notions of what is fair and unfair, acceptable and unacceptable.

Values constitute an important aspect of self confidence and serve as a means of anchoring a person into a certain world view *“values are enduring beliefs about important life goals and transcend specific situations”* (Franzoi, 1996: 173). Values influence attitudes and a person’s attitudes affect and influence their behaviour.

Attitudes that are forged through direct personal experience and when coupled with high levels of emotion tend to be stronger than attitudes that are formed without personal experiences consequently these attitudes are better predictors of behaviour. Strongly held attitudes, can profoundly shape a person’s actions, their thoughts, and lifestyle, choices (Franzoi, 1996: 172-173).

Types of values that are projected into and onto the world of work and then compared to organisational values are notions of distributive and procedural justice. Distributive justice refers to the fairness of outcomes or ends achieved through a companies policies or directives and has three strands, equity, equality and need.

Equity refers to the notion that people should receive rewards that are consistent with the contributions they make or bring to a situation. In India it is sometimes common practice amongst researchers for a senior colleague to expect his juniors to include his name as the author of an article that they write. This results in credit for the senior colleague and a denial of accolade for the person who has written the article (Oomen, 1989, as cited in Cohen, 1996b: 368). Equality refers to the concept that all individuals should have an equal chance of receiving an outcome or reward.

“In India allocation into the universities is based around caste and promotion in an occupation sometimes depends on you being related to the boss. All the wrong people are in the jobs because they are related or have paid money” (Singh.).

“Even the colleges are 25% for lower caste” (Kaur-Gill.).

The need rule refers to the concept that rewards should be distributed based on individual need.

“Jat Sikhs are not classified there is reservations for lower caste. This causes huge frustrations amongst parents and children” (Singh.).

Procedural justice has two strands. One strand places emphasis on the ability of an individual to have input into a situation to be consulted.

“If you do not have a relationship with the judge you are nothing. You cannot get bail for your client” (Singh.).

The second strand emphasis the rules and regulations around procedural processes and the extent to which the rules are adhered to or violated and subjected to corruption.

“The police in Punjab they are corrupt they earn so little money” (Singh.).

“Level of corruption in professional life cheating in board school exams” (Kaur.).

“I had 55 children in my class. It is more like a business” (Kaur.).

“Here the people are working very properly. They are not wasting the time. In India they are not doing this” (Singh.).

The presented narratives unmask and highlight the in-congruencies between the needs, expectations, values and attitudes of the study informants and the wider infrastructural deficiencies and Indian work place practices and systems.

Most people would rather endure an unsatisfactory work situation than be unemployed (Muchinsky, 2000: 272). The fact that migrants have rescinded their employment, uprooted themselves and their families and migrated to New Zealand is a salient indicator of the strength of their attitudes and sense of violation concerning their core values and beliefs as they pertain to the world of work. This notion is further supported by the fact that most migrants arrive in New Zealand without firm offers of work.

Therefore the ethnographic data from this study indicates that it is these attitudes and violations of core beliefs that have propelled Sikh Punjabis into migrating to New Zealand as opposed to solely economic considerations.

Location- Relocation

Because the migratory stream of today is no longer confined to the close knit rural orientated community of pre 1987, relocation to New Zealand may entail for some migrants major obstacles that may need to be negotiated immediately on arrival. Accommodation is one such obstacle. For some this may mean booking into a motel on arrival until permanent accommodation is procured, for others the generosity of friends and family may have been called upon and utilised.

“We came straight to South Auckland. We had known friends there and family. We all arrived together. They had been in Punjab seeing family. We stayed with that family for two months, then found rental” (Singh.).

Because of this changed and changing composition of the migratory stream migrants who arrived in the early 1990s and onwards could not always rely on established family networks for accommodation or other forms of social support.

“We came on the 11th of April 2002. We knew no one. We came through an agent. He arranged one week for free accommodation. We all came, entire family” (Singh.).

“We knew one family and no one else. We rented their house because it was empty in Manurewa. Then we met you at the Basakhai in Otahuhu. You are our first Kiwi friend” (Kaur.).

This lack of support often resulted and still results in large amounts of stress, either psychological or economical or a combination of both, on newly arrived migrants.

“We came in 1993 the whole family. It was very tough for two years. No job no income whatsoever for two years. It was very stressful studying with young children eight and twelve. Even if Americans come here they have to sit a medical exam. It is not fair our qualifications need to be recognised” (Singh.).

“We came with just four suitcases. We had lots of pressures. Our children were 12 and 13” (Kaur.).

“Our first obligation was to survive. We are a middle class family. We are not millionaires. The first six months was very hard” (Singh.).

As support for newly arrived migrants prior to 1987 was primarily through family and *Gurdwara* networks, there were very few associations either within the Sikh community or government initiated that could cope with the post 1987 influx of migrants into New Zealand. This however was to change with the continuing and growing arrival of professional and community orientated migrants.

“When we first came there was no support for professional people. We went to the Gurdwara and the people told us to go the farms. We picked strawberries but it was not us we had never done it.

The earlier migrants were farmers, the educated have only started coming in the last ten years. Because of this we took a pledge to help the community”
(Kaur & Singh.).

In response to these growing needs, a number of community based organisations such as Shanti Niwas, Shakti and ESOL for migrants have taken up the challenge of providing social support for not only the Sikh community but the wider Indian community as well. There are now Sikh migrants who are members of community advisory boards and as mentioned previously the Sikh community now has access to a Sikh Member of Parliament Mr Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi.

However, for migrant families who are working and possibly experiencing the stresses and challenges of migration utilisation of those and other community based organisations may not be a pragmatic option.

For those families the tensions and challenges of migration are negotiated and managed within the household. In the Punjab, as previously highlighted, notions of family and family relations are predicated on a patriarchal system with well defined vocational and social roles (Chadney, 1984: 89). Whilst Sikh teachings emphasize the equality of women and women having more than their say in most matters, especially those that pertain to household and off spring, they are still expected to fill the gendered role of cleaning in housework (Kaur- Rait, 2005: 53).

Field observations in Punjab noted that men do not prepare or cook food. Nor do men attend to duties such as the washing and ironing of clothes nor do they attempt to do any household cleaning or tidying with these domestic matters being attended to solely by women.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ When attempting to wash my own clothes I was promptly told by the women of the house that this would never do and to leave them and they would be taken care of.



Punjabi woman, washing clothes by hand - all clothes in the Punjab seem to be washed by hand. In all the homes that I visited I did not see one washing machine. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 31st December 2010.

When travelling in Punjab my business partner and I when visiting kith and kin would always be served food no matter what time we arrived. This hospitality was always carried out by women even if at times we had to wait until the women of the house had either returned from their place of employment or had completed their external domestic duties. Men in all these varying social situations never offered food or refreshments apart from alcohol.

Furthermore, we would quite often return to my business partner's parents' home in *Pathankot* late in the evening late without notice-in all cases we were served a full hot meal regardless of the time by his elder brothers wife. While consuming food, field observations further noted that the men are very much left alone when eating with the women of the house only entering into a room to either serve food or to remove dishes and elicit feedback concerning their culinary endeavours.

They would then discreetly retire to the kitchen to clean up leaving the men to discuss the important events of the day and to further evaluate these events through generous servings of whiskey or beer.

This cultural notion of eating separately further extends into the architecture of most Sikh Punjabi homes. Where there is no dining room or defined dining areas where an entire family could comfortably gather.

This lack of a defined dining area is not attributable to a lack of space as most homes that I visited were two to even three storied dwellings with six or more bedrooms.



Sikh Punjabi family notice the man is holding his sons hand and not that of his wife. The meal was consumed without her presence. Photograph taken by Les Taylor on the 10th January 2011.

In contrast, field observations in New Zealand note that married men on a regular basis help to prepare and participate in the cooking and serving of food. Meal times are further characterised by all members of the family eating together in the same place and at the same time. These observations were most noticeable during the interviewing process where quite often an interview would take place in the kitchen as food was being prepared and cooked especially at second interviews where participants felt more at ease. However, the same observations were noted when there was no interview scheduled.

Furthermore, in contrast to the Punjab, at the completion of a meal women do not retire submissively to the kitchen leaving men to discuss and evaluate the current events of the day whilst they clean up. Rather they actively participate and contribute to the topic of discussion. This participatory dialogue is characterised by respect and affection. In contrast relationships in the Punjab between couples are marked by a distinctive lack of public consultation and affection. This lack of public affection reflects traditional Sikh Punjabi cultural values where men assume the role of protector and representative (Chadney, 1984: 89).

In comparison, during the New Zealand interviews whilst there were no overt displays of public affection between any couples interviewed, this participatory dialogue further reflects the growing confidence of women within the greater social public arena signalling a further move away from traditional Punjabi cultural notions of intimacy avoidance especially in the public arena where men assume the public face of the family (Chadney, 1984: 89).

“I am comfortable sitting with men. I am a professional woman” (Kaur.).

“I have changed by coming to New Zealand my way of thinking because of my study being professional. I learnt about computer, internet, kiwi culture, everything” (Kaur.).

Sikh families still consume however the same type of food and food dishes as they did in Punjab. With some families reporting, small disagreements with school age offspring around the choice of food being offered in the home as being too narrow, too Punjabi. These small conflicts also often reveal their sense of frustration at their very limited access to fast food such as Subway and McDonalds. Field observations have noted that when out with Sikh families on weekend activities such as sporting events they never buy their children (although they are often asked) coca cola, chips, and other fast foods rather they will stop and buy fresh fruit carrots and water. These small conflicts and alternative options to fast food reflect attempts at maintaining cultural boundaries and cultural continuity. *“If a society feels the need to protect itself from outsiders or foreign influences this will be symbolised around the rules of eating”* (Douglas, 2000: as cited in McGee, & Warms, 2000: 477).

These ongoing changes to the Sikh family dynamic are further reflected in a discernible shift in gender demarcations concerning house work, where male study participants have been known to and have been observed doing house work.⁵⁸ Similar findings have also been reported by Bhachu (1991: 45-61) where the increased earning power of women has led to an increased involvement of men in domestic tasks and child rearing.

“See he has started cooking for us. This is a big change. He vacuums the house. In India he would never do this” (Kaur.).

Whilst women, still do the bulk of household chores these observations are a discernible shift from the normal gender demarcations of the Punjab. A shift that is often remarked upon by Punjabi men who feel at times they are not being looked after as well as before.

⁵⁸ Although most study participants would probably not admit to this publicly.

“Things have changed. I do not get things that used to happen. I have to do it myself” (Singh.).

“Now the women are talking. They are joining groups. This never was before done” (Singh.).

This shift in gender relationships, however, is balanced by continuity in other social fields such as parent sibling relationships which is marked by the same warmth and affection as exhibited by parents in the Punjab.

In summary contemporary Sikh families who have migrated to New Zealand have been motivated by a plethora of reasons that are not solely governed by economic considerations. Some of those reasons have been alluded to throughout the thesis while the above subjects have been explored in greater detail. By focusing on non-economic factors and topics that neo classical theory does not capture, a richer, clearer understanding of reasons for Sikh migration has emerged. Those reasons have, however, engaged Sikh migrants in a game of cat and mouse with modernity which results in continuity of cultural notions and values in some life arenas and subtle and dramatic change in others.

CHAPTER SIX

Ethnographic Conclusions

In the introduction of the thesis I posed a number of questions. “*Oh my God where did these people come from, how did they get to be here what made them come here? and what are they doing here?*” I then further introduced the notion that “*we’re being over run with money hungry migrants*”. This thesis has sought to answer those questions and that notion.

By tracing the historical global flows of migration I have shown that contrary to commonly held perceptions human migration is something that is not new. What is, different, however and since 1987 has become more discernibly so (in New Zealand and elsewhere) is the source of migration (and in the case of the Sikhs) the perceived volume of migrants from those non traditional sources.

If one looks at the figures during the first phase of global migration where some 48 million people left the continent of Europe for such destinations as New Zealand, Canada, Australia, and America (Massey, 2003: 3). Then contrast those figures with the estimated figures of the entire Sikh diaspora globally which numbers around 2million (Singh, 2005: 591). Then narrow the numerical focus to New Zealand where the Sikh population numbers 9,507 (New Zealand Census 2006) it would hardly be fair to equate those numbers to the commonly held perception of “*being over run with money hungry migrants*”.

In response to “*how did they get to be here?*” I presented a brief sketch of the Punjab. I then highlighted the initiating impulses that first projected the Sikh people into the global arena. The analysis revealed the interplay of geography colonization and economic development showing that Sikh migratory patterns were predominately inclined to following the flag of empire.⁵⁹

I then traced the migratory streams into the former colonies of Great Britain the Middle Eastern bloc and Great Britain itself. The analysis highlighted that Sikh migration was initiated by the structural demands of Great Britain, Canada and in latter times the Middle Eastern bloc and New Zealand.

⁵⁹ This following of flag eventually brought Sikh migrants into contact with New Zealand in the 1890s or even possibly earlier I make this assertion after noting in Singh H. (2010) that in “1894 Joe Falk Singh purchased a share of Wing Lees garden market from Joe Kak on the 22nd May 1894”. (Singh, H. in *The New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies* 12,2 Dec 2010 pp 50-56 . It would be highly doubtful that a newly arrived migrant from India would have the necessary funds available to purchase part share of a business. Rather it would be more than likely that he would have been working in New Zealand for a number of years before having attained the necessary capital to make this purchase thus pushing even further down the settlement dates for Sikhs in New Zealand.

To further explore the reasons as to “*how did they get to be here*” I then looked to the Punjab and focused on events within the Punjab and noted that since partition the Punjab has been plagued with ongoing political, economic and developmental issues that have not been fully resolved which have further fuelled migration.

I then wanted to know *are they really here for the money?* and if not, *why are they here then?* To answer these questions, I evaluated the main theoretical notions that have been postulated around the causes of migration. I concluded that not one theory could claim total exclusivity in explaining the causes of migratory flows. I further concluded that by combining differing theoretical strands and focusing on topics other than monetary a more complete and rich understanding of migration would emerge.

I then presented the ethnographic research that was conducted both here in New Zealand and the Punjab, with the ethnographic research clearly supporting my conclusions.

I conclude then that by combining different theoretical lenses and focusing on non economic considerations a deeper analytical evaluation of a migratory stream is possible: *they are not here for the money*. Furthermore, this deeper evaluation shows that economic considerations, no longer occupy pride of place in the migratory decision: *they are here for here for other reasons*.

Additionally this thesis intended to contribute towards filling the post 1990 gap in the literature concerning the Sikh community. The narratives that are recorded in these pages contribute towards filling that gap. However because the Sikh community is a relatively green field there is ample scope for further research.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Some questions may be slightly reworded to take into account interview dynamics or personality of the participant being interviewed. Some questions may not even be asked at all as they may not even be relevant or applicable to the participant. They are guide-lines only, as the researcher would like the participants to decide for themselves, what they consider important and relevant to their world view and experiences.

Where are you originally from in the Punjab?

What year did you come to New Zealand?

Did you come as a family unit or by your self?

Did you know any body here prior to migrating?

Why did you come to New Zealand?

What factors or things did you have to consider before coming?

Why did you settle in South Auckland and not settle in some other part of Auckland?

Where in South Auckland did you first settle?

How difficult do you think life has been since arriving in New Zealand?

What age did you come to New Zealand?

What family members or relatives did you leave behind?

What are you qualified as?

What was your first job here?

What are you employed as now?

Do you have any other job or other means of increasing your income apart from your main job?

Do you work with other Sikh people?

Does your partner work?

How long were you here before you purchased a motor vehicle?

Do you own your own home?

Do people react to your turban or your Shalwar Kameeze?

Do you wear your Turban everyday?

Have you experienced racism since arriving in New Zealand?

How would you describe your current living arrangements?

Do you think you would have been more successful here or in the Punjab?

Do you send money back to India?

Have you arranged or help to arrange other family members to come to New Zealand?

Do you get homesick?

What is it the most you miss from where you come from?

Would you consider going back to India permanently?

Do you have siblings or family members living elsewhere in the world?

How did you hear about New Zealand?

Do you think the Sikh community is changing by being in New Zealand?

After 9/11 do you think things changed for you here in New Zealand?

Do you have many Kiwi friends?

How involved would you say you are with the community at present?

Has this involvement increased or decreased with time?

Did you develop any health issues after immigrating to New Zealand?

If you have been to hospital how did you find the experience?

What is the worst thing that has happened to you in New Zealand?

What is the most positive experience you have had here in New Zealand?

Do you have medical insurance?

Are you New Zealand citizens?

Do you consider yourself a Kiwi?

Do you agree with NZ immigration rules?

Do you see a difference in the attitudes and values or other Sikhs who have either been born here or lived for the best part of their adult lives here?

How has migration changed you as a spouse / husband / parent?

Could you describe a typical day for you?

What worries you the most about being in New Zealand at this stage of life?

How do you stay in contact with family still in India?

How much of New Zealand have you seen?

Are you involved in any professional / social organizations outside of the Sikh community?

How hard did you find it to get a job?

How does the job you have now compare to the job you had in India?

Has the process of migration caused any relationship difficulties between family members?

How long has your son /daughter been here?

How do you feel about spending your later years here in NZ?

What does your daughter or son do for a living?

What do you think of the school system here in New Zealand?

Do you ever consider migrating to another country?

What influences do you think have had a profound influence on your life?

How have you noticed any change in the NZ Sikhs community in NZ that is glaringly different from India?

What is the difference between here and in India in your opinion?

What were your first impressions of NZ?

What did you think, when you first arrived about the weather?

What caste are you from?

Do you follow New Zealand sports for example the All Blacks?

Do you speak Punjabi or English at home?

How important is your religion?

Do you think the Sikh community should interact more with kiwi culture?

How important would it be for your children to marry other Sikhs?

What do you think of mixed marriages?

What do you think of unarranged marriages?

Are you currently involved in any further education?

What kind of food do you mainly eat Punjabi or Kiwi cuisine?

Do you have children born here?

How important to you is that your children visit their homeland?

Do your children have Kiwi or non Indian friends?

Do you feel accepted here in New Zealand?

Do you have grandchildren here in New Zealand?

What is it that you like most about New Zealand?

What is it that you dislike about New Zealand the most?

Did you ever think your children would immigrate or you would spend your latter days here?

Do you feel your identity and values are under threat from the modern world?

Are you eligible for the NZ pension?

Do you think your lack of English has restricted your life here in NZ?

How do your children react to your lack of English?

What is the hardest thing for you to have to cope with here in NZ?

What do your children do for work has their lifestyle or occupation put a strain on your relationship or distanced you from your children?

How important is it for you to retain your identity for example would you, shave your beard?

How do you feel you have changed over the years?

What is your greatest fear here in NZ?

How different is it for elderly people here in NZ compared to India?

Why did you choose this particular Gurudwara to come to?

Where in your family were you born?

Do you have older brothers or sisters?

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