

## Chapter Seven

### Diaspora

Jaswinder K Dhillon, University of Worcester, UK

ORCID id 0000-0002-6590-9632

(5257 incl refs)

#### Abstract

Displacement brought about by immigration often leads to enduring loss and nostalgia for an imagined homeland. The search for physical and psychological space and a sense of belonging is continually negotiated by diaspora communities. This chapter explores the experience of an immigrant in the transnational Sikh diaspora. It uses an innovative methodology, bilingual-bicultural life history, to narrate the story from an insider perspective. The features of the methodology are explained and the findings use both Panjabi and English words to capture the nuances in meaning which can be lost through monolingual narrative. The findings focus on the overarching theme of diaspora as ‘unbelonging’ and how this is experienced through living parallel lives, moving between multiple identities and facing racism.

#### Keywords

diaspora, Sikhs, identity, belonging/unbelonging, racism, bicultural narrative

#### Introduction

The displacement brought about by immigration leaves individuals and groups with an enduring loss and nostalgia for their imagined homeland. Movement from one country to another, often accompanied by traumatic events arising from political, religious or ethnic persecution and severe economic hardship, reinforce the idea of a safe, secure homeland. This imagined reality of place and space remains integral to the identity and experience of diaspora communities even when they become well settled in countries which they now regard as home. This chapter explores the experience of an immigrant who was brought to the UK by her family as a child and had to balance the demands and expectations of the Sikh

diaspora with often competing and disparate norms and values of the multi-ethnic community where she settled. The story reflects both negative and positive effects of displacement but with an underlying thread of not quite belonging. The chapter begins by presenting the context of the transnational Sikh diaspora and then explains the narrative methodology and methods used. The latter part of the chapter presents the participant and her story, explains how data were collected and interpreted and discusses the findings of the study.

### Context: transnational Sikh diaspora

The context for this displacement story is the Sikh diaspora and this section begins by defining diaspora and outlining characteristics of Sikhs as an ethnic and religious community. Chanda and Ghosh (2013) provide a definition which summarises the evolution of the term. They state:

“Diaspora” has come to refer to mass-dispersion across the ages of history... the term has come to mean a dispersion of people with a common root, who forge some sort of community network with each other, and maintain a relationship (real or otherwise) with their homeland, while living far away from home. The Diaspora therefore includes permanent immigrants, citizens and non-residents of a country living abroad, but not short-term migrants (Chanda & Ghosh, 2013, p. 6).

Sikhs fall into the category of permanent immigrants, but many maintain an enduring relationship with their homeland or imaginary homeland. The emotional attachment to a homeland (Rajan, 2018) is symbolically even more poignant as in the current political map of the world Sikhs are ‘stateless’ since there is no Sikh nation.

Sikhs are a minority religious and ethnic group who originate from Punjab in northern India and are geographically distributed in many countries across different continents. Punjab is also part of Pakistan due to the Partition of India in 1947. The data in this chapter refers only to the part of Punjab which is politically part of India. The total Sikh population is around 27 million, making Sikhs 0.39% of the world population (Oxford Sikhs, 2019). In Punjab, India Sikhs make up 76% of the population and this is the only place where Sikhs are in the majority. Outside India, the countries with the largest Sikh populations are Canada, the UK, the USA, Australia and Malaysia (Pariona, 2018) though Sikhs are to be found almost everywhere (Oxford Sikhs, 2019, p. 1). Sikhs are a very visible minority; easily recognisable by the distinctive turban and beard of males (Helweg, 1979, p. 1); though not all Sikhs wear

turbans and not all men wearing turbans are Sikh. Furthermore, increasing numbers of female Sikhs are choosing to wear turbans.

The symbolic capital inherent in the Sikh turban is double-edged with positive and negative meanings and impacts in multi-ethnic societies. The turban signifies respect, pride and loyalty earned through historical and contemporary Sikh contributions to society (BSR, 2015; Collins, 2019) and is embodied in the use of the term ‘Sardar’ to refer to turban wearing Sikh males. However, this symbolic visibility can be an easy target for racism, discrimination and acts of terror against the wearer (Kishwar, 1984; Katy, 2017). This precarious existence and duality of perceptions in multi-ethnic settings contribute to ‘common experiences of displacement associated with migration: homelessness, painful memories and a wish to return’ (Tatla, 2005, p. 3) to an imagined homeland.

Painful memories of the Partition of India in 1947 (Talbot & Singh, 2009) and the 1984 Sikh massacre (Axel, 2001; Singh, 2017) fuel debate about an imagined Sikh homeland. There are ‘anguished voices’ (Tatla, 2012) calling for the formation of a Sikh state (Khalistan) and whilst these voices do not reflect the views of all groups in the Sikh diaspora, they do ignite a yearning for a homeland. More broadly, such debates influence constructions of Sikh identity and nationalism in the diaspora (Shani, 2002) and contribute to the emotional search for ‘home’ (Mitra, 2015) amongst Sikh diaspora communities. Many Sikh immigrants maintain an emotional attachment to Punjab through philanthropy (Dusenbery & Tatla, 2009; Thandi, 2014) and reverse flows of capital by investing in land and property as a link to their ancestral home (Chanda & Ghosh, 2013).

### **Methodology: bilingual-bicultural life history**

This study used bilingual-bicultural life history to explore Rajinder’s story. This approach to narrative inquiry was adapted from methodology developed in research with British Sikh families (Dhillon & Thomas, 2018). The methodology involves the use of linguistic, paralinguistic and cultural knowledge together with researcher positionality and reflexivity to interpret the life stories of participants who self-identify as Sikhs. In life history research ‘the researcher does not just describe situations but tries to explain them’ (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 233) and in the construction of Rajinder’s story aspects of shared history, culture and language enabled researcher and participant to understand, interpret and explain the narrative.

Central to the use of this methodology was the ‘ethics of engagement’ (Dhillon & Thomas, 2019). This involved going beyond the process of obtaining formal ethical approval to a deeper level of reflexive analysis ‘in shaping the methodology and interpretation of situated knowledge’ (ibid p. 2). This evolving methodology aimed for *engagement* rather than *participation* in research with power relations more equally distributed between researcher and researched. Our experiences of migration and belonging to a diaspora generated empathy and a connection where feelings of trust developed quickly as I, as a researcher, entered the personal and social world of Rajinder’s displacement story. In our interaction during interviews our shared bilingual skills and bicultural identities enabled us to interpret experiences and concepts which do not translate easily into other languages and cultures. This insider perspective has the potential to increase bias and subjectivity but was chosen because shared cultural knowledge and experience provide insights that are not available to an outsider. This transparency in researcher perspective and methodological stance is important as it enables readers to judge the trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of research findings.

Central to the use of this methodology were:

*Insiderness: portrayal of multiple identities*

Insider research reflects shared histories with ‘experiences [that] engender a sense of sameness’ (Le Gallais, 2008, p. 146) and in Rajinder’s story several aspects of sameness influenced the research. This includes gender, ethnicity, religion, language and culture. These dimensions of intersectionality affected the relationship between researcher and researched and shaped the portrayal of multiple identities which are fluid and cross boundaries. As female Sikhs who are bilingual in English and Panjabi (the mother tongue of Sikhs) and bicultural in understanding British and Sikh norms and values, we were able to communicate with ease about multiple loyalties and differing aspects of diasporic identities. As Mitra (2015) has argued, ‘binaries are... unhelpful’ (p. 320) in multidimensional analyses of identity and peoples’ sense of belonging. However, binaries are an established feature of qualitative research and distinctions between, for example, insider/outsider are familiar aspects of methodology (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Nakata, 2015).

Dhillon and Thomas (2019) proposed a more nuanced understanding of differing degrees of insider and outsidersness. Their continuum encapsulates the fluidity of researcher positioning

and ‘reflects more accurately the multiplicities of insider-outsiderness and the ethical issues and dilemmas it raises for researchers’ (Dhillon & Thomas, 2019, p. 4). This was the case in the unfolding and portrayal of Rajinder’s story, where aspects of intersectionality and sameness framed our understanding of multiple identities and displacement in the Sikh diaspora.

### *Bias and subjectivity*

Bias and potential subjectivity were acknowledged by researcher and researched. We recognised that all researchers and participants bring subjectivities and ‘baggage’ to research, though these are often tacit rather than explicitly recognised and acknowledged. In this study, we acknowledged our sameness and followed systematic research procedures in data collection and interpretation to aim for authenticity in the narrative.

### *Ethical approval*

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the University of Worcester Ethics Committee and guidelines for research produced by the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2018) in relation to confidentiality, anonymity and informed consent were followed. The institutional process and guidance provided an external layer of assurance for researcher and participant and was a stepping stone for the deeper reflexive ‘ethics of engagement’ process (Dhillon & Thomas, 2019).

### *Reflexivity*

Reflexivity was a fundamental feature of the methodology as researcher and participant engaged in reflexive questioning of social and cultural aspects of Sikh diaspora experience in making meaning of the displacement story. This was a recursive process in which the transitional space for dialogue created by a research setting helped us to interpret experiences that we had not analysed before as individuals. Thus, the life history research approach became a tool for self-reflection and learning as well as for providing new knowledge and understanding of displacement stories. Interpretation of the interaction between researcher and participant, including non-verbal communication and bilingual-bicultural knowledge, shaped the questions and the depth of conversation. Furthermore, it was an ongoing process. This is not the case in all types of research, for example linear models of research depict analysis and interpretation as stages which follow data collection. In this study, the research process was more organic and reflexive interpretation of one interview informed the questions for subsequent ones as the story unfolded.

### *Data collection: the interviews*

Interviews are a prominent method of data collection in differing approaches to research so it is important to be specific about aspects which characterise narrative interviewing. The Latin term *narrare*, which means to tell a story is central to narrative approaches (Bruner, 2002; Riessman, 2008; Clandinin, 2013). Other characteristics that have evolved from application of narrative ways of knowing to various research settings are meaning making and co-construction of the story with participants (Goodson, 2012). Researchers using narrative interviewing recommend several interviews with each participant and an open style of questioning which gives space for participants to tell their story in depth. For this study, I undertook three interviews as advocated by Seidman (2013) over a period of four months.

The interviews took place in Rajinder's home, which was where she felt most comfortable, and lasted between 70-105 minutes. The first interview was the shortest and this reflects the process of developing trust and a closer relationship between researcher and participant which Goodson (2017) argues is needed for life history research.

The interviews were preceded by an informal conversation over a cup of tea and snacks as it is not possible to go to a Sikh home and not have something to eat and drink. As an insider, I was aware of this aspect of Sikh hospitality and so did not decline (see Dhillon & Thomas, 2018, for further discussion of this aspect of Sikh culture). The informal conversations were not part of formal data collection but provided temporal and psychological space to develop a level of trust and closeness that enabled a more open dialogue about sensitive and emotional aspects of displacement. This was also the space where informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality were discussed, affirmed and re-affirmed during the course of the study, including consent for audio-recording each interview.

The interview questions approved by the Ethics Committee were the starting point for data collection and as Rajinder's story unfolded themes emerging from the interview data became the focus for more in-depth exploration of her displacement narrative. This evolving process with over a month between each interview gave both of us time and space to reflexively consider and interpret experience of loss and displacement in diaspora. During the interviews I, as researcher, aimed for a gentle open style of questioning with warm non-verbal communication to encourage and support the participant's reflection and sense making of her story.

### *The participant*

Rajinder describes herself as a Sikh professional who has positive and negative experiences of diaspora. She came to the UK as a young child and member of a family of economic immigrants. Her parents originate from the Punjab state of India and belong to the transnational Sikh diaspora.

### *Assemblage and portrayal of the diaspora story*

Assemblage is a holistic process of bringing different data together to portray a compelling narrative. It is more than systematic coding of themes and sub-themes in interview transcripts using thematic frameworks, such as Braun and Clarke (2006) or software packages such as MAXQDA. Non-verbal and paralinguistic features of communication, such as tone and pitch of voice, gestures, silences, are as important in conveying meaning as the words used by the participant in telling their story. Thus, in assemblage these features of communicative meaning should be part of the interpretation and portrayal. I consider the person of the researcher to be the architect in the story and assemblage to involve three overlapping analytic processes:

- systematic but not mechanistic thematic analysis and interpretation of transcripts;
- careful listening to recordings of interviews and comparison with transcripts;
- reflexive critical scrutiny of the interpretation and portrayal of the story.

In this study, portrayal was negotiated and agreed with the participant to ensure anonymity as the transnational Sikh diaspora is a well-connected community and even small detail may risk identifying an individual.

For readers who are not familiar with non-mechanistic analysis as discussed above, I offer further detail of the process. I distinguish systematic from mechanistic analysis. In the latter, a rigid process of coding, categorisation and theming is followed, often using Microsoft Excel spreadsheets and line-by-line analysis. In this process, the researcher's attention is exclusively focused on detailed reading of transcripts and generating huge numbers of codes and categories. Sometimes it is difficult to see the wood for the trees. On the other hand, in non-mechanistic analysis, the researcher adapts a more holistic reflexive approach to data analysis and interpretation. The focus is not just on the words in a transcript but also on wider aspects of communication, such as tone, pitch, stress, silences and pauses in spoken language. These aspects of communication are just as important in making meaning of qualitative data as the words in an interview transcript.

### Findings: diaspora as ‘unbelonging’

The overarching theme that permeates all aspects of Rajinder’s story is ‘unbelonging’. In interview 1, she confirmed that hers was a positive diaspora story but there was a sadness in her eyes, which suggested a sense of loss. The feeling of loss and ‘not quite belonging’ ebbs and flows through Rajinder’s experience of physical, cultural, social and emotional displacement. It is particularly strong in living ‘parallel lives’ during her schooling but the feeling of ‘unbelonging’ remains with her to this day, perhaps a common experience for diaspora communities. Rajinder’s physical displacement from a rural village in Punjab in northern India to an urban inner-city neighbourhood in the UK brought positive and negative changes in her life. It gave her opportunities to achieve educational and occupational success in arenas which would not have been open to her in the Punjabi village where she was born but also left her feeling ‘always an outsider’ in the community where she settled. She views this as a cultural as well as a physical displacement and spoke fondly, somewhat nostalgically, about the home she left behind:

I moved from a largish house [in Punjab] to a terraced house in an urban working-class part of X [region in the UK] ...in the village everybody knew everybody else, people used to sit and talk in the street, women spun cotton together and were very close, it was a close knit farming community ...in the UK it was very different, we lived with my aunt, her family and members of her extended family in a small house...I didn’t speak a word of English... school was difficult...in the village life was tough but you felt at home...no one would call you a ‘paki’ [a racist term]...

Rajinder came to the UK with her Mum to join her Dad. He had come four years earlier and been sponsored by his cousin as an economic migrant through the work voucher system. This system set up by the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act (National Archives, 2019) lured young men from India, Pakistan and other British ex-colonies to come and work in industrial cities in the UK. The image of ‘streets paved with gold in Valiat’<sup>1</sup> (England) which still persist in Punjab, and the rosy welcome migrants expected was quickly shattered by the harsh realities of work in steelmaking factories and foundries and backlash from the host community. This stark contrast between the imaginary and the real framed Rajinder’s experience of physical and cultural displacement when she came to settle in the UK and was the backdrop to her childhood in a diaspora.

### *Parallel lives*

Rajinder spoke about the most difficult aspects of her displacement experience as living 'parallel lives' particularly during her schooling and adolescence. The interview data below illustrates her feelings and behaviour in trying to manage this duality:

I started school and I just felt like I didn't belong, although I made friends it wasn't comfortable... it felt it wasn't your home, you were different, you felt like you had to be careful...[her eyes welled up with tears]...you had to build up a kind of resilience... when you got home you almost felt like you were living in two worlds...at school you felt like you had to dress like the English girls and wear short skirts...when you came home you were in your own community and you behaved in a particular way, especially as a girl ...there were expectations about what you did as an Indian girl which you did not share with your English friends at school ...you lived almost parallel lives ...this continued in university ...

She gave examples from her schooling and adolescent years that were almost part of a dual life, which I could relate to and empathise with as I had also experienced some of the same feelings and expectations as a Sikh girl. She spoke about the power and pressure of competing expectations. On the one hand, the expectation from her family and the Sikh community to protect the family honour (izzat) and not tarnish her father's turban (Paag nu dhaag na lige) by being 'a good Sikh girl'. On the other hand, the pressure to conform to the norms and expectations of peers from other cultures. She found that this left her with:

a negative sense of not having a safe space psychologically ...to be myself...but to balance the expectations of being an Indian girl and not been able to do the things that my English friends were doing..., or at least not being able to tell my parents about it...or talk openly about it to my parents ...

This psychological pressure remained with her even when she lived away from home whilst at university in another part of the UK. She feels that this has led to her feeling 'not quite belonging' to any cultural group as she never fully participated in the social activities of her Western friends and colleagues or those of Sikh family and friends. Thus, Rajinder feels like she is 'always on the periphery' trying to negotiate the boundaries between belonging to groups with varying norms, values and expectations. These in themselves are changing all the time, especially in the transnational Sikh diaspora where people settled in many different countries are navigating and asserting multiple dimensions of their identity.

### *Multiple identities*

The notion of multiple identities and moving between different dimensions of identity seemed quite comfortable for Rajinder. In the interviews she self-identified as being Sikh, female, bicultural, bilingual and British and did not view these descriptors as being contradictory or conflictual. She spoke confidently about her identity as a Sikh and gave a nuanced analysis of her position in relation to religious practices:

I identify with being a Sikh...I'm not Amritdhari<sup>2</sup> but I do follow the principles of Sikhism in my own way...I do wear some of the symbols of being a Sikh and I consider myself to be a Sikh...and I speak Panjabi...like a native speaker and I can understand...when I go to the Gurdwara, I can understand the Kirtan and Akand Path, not one hundred percent but well enough, I think, although you can always improve...

Rajinder found it easy to talk to me, as an insider, about aspects of Sikh religious practices as she did not need to explain terms such as Amritdhari, Kirtan, Akand Path, and I could see she was wearing a Kara (one of the five symbols of the Sikh faith). She was also wearing a Punjabi suit (shalwar and kameez) which was unusual for a woman in her senior professional position. Most Sikh woman in that type of professional role would wear Western clothes at home as well as at work. Thus, it appeared that Rajinder was proud to manifest her heritage in symbolic capital. In terms of cultural meaning wearing a Punjabi suit and Kara were equivalent to the symbolic capital of wearing a turban. Rajinder affirmed my interpretation in her summary comment: 'I've actually retained a lot of my, what I regard as my Sikh heritage' and gave examples of how she does this in her professional and social life. This was not the case during her schooling when she tried to hide her Sikh identity from her friends, due to the racism and discrimination she experienced as 'the little girl in plaits'.

She went on to reflect on other dimensions of her identity and the fluidity of living multiple identities:

In terms of identity, you can have...you can feel you belong to different identities...so I consider myself to be a woman...a Sikh...British...Indian...European... 'Sikh' is for me a religion, but also a sense of social and cultural identity ...I don't see the identities as being necessarily conflictual or exclusionary...I think you can wear different hats, depending on what you are doing...and to me these identities are like that...[like different hats]...

The confidence and ease with which Rajinder spoke about living multiple identities as a Sikh British professional woman was a stark contrast to the emotional unsettling account of the racism and discrimination she has faced.

*Facing and fighting racism and discrimination*

Rajinder spoke with a trembling voice about rampant racism and discrimination she and her family faced during the early part of their lives in the UK. They had come with ‘golden hopes and dreams’ but were called ‘pakis’ [a term of abuse] and ‘told to go back home’. As she recalled the most difficult aspects of her displacement experience, she looked towards me for emotional support and I nodded with empathy as I also had experienced such taunts and name-calling. She continued:

We were called names...it was very common to be called ‘paki’ ...I didn’t really experience physical violence, maybe because I’m a girl ...boys did get beaten...but we all got called names ...‘paki go home’ ...you felt like an outsider...second class ...second rate...you didn’t feel like it was your home ...English friends would say ‘that’s a paki house you can tell cos they don’t clean the windows and it’s smelly’ [due to the strong smell of curry].

The undercurrent of racism and discrimination and its profound impact on Rajinder’s life and sense of belonging was intensely moving. As well as overt and covert racism she spoke about discrimination, activism (Collins, 2019) and subsequent change:

My Dad cut his hair because that was the only way to get work ...because they[employers] said the turban and beard was not hygienic or safe for work in steel making factories and foundries...when he became established, like many other men of his generation, he grew his hair and beard again and wore his turban with pride...it’s very different now, as you know, ...there are turban wearing Sikhs in all the professions...and at senior levels...

This interview data reflects some of the transformational changes in the perception and power of the Sikh diaspora and indicates positive aspects of Rajinder’s displacement experience. She summarised positive aspects of her move to the UK as ‘feeling like you could do anything...not so much from school but from parental expectations, aspiration, friends and the Sikh community’. In socio-economic terms Rajinder, like many Sikhs from the transnational Sikh diaspora, has achieved enormous success. She lives in a prestigious

affluent area in the UK, engages in philanthropic giving in Punjab and works in a senior role in her profession but, as she ruefully reflected:

I can still walk down a street...especially if I'm dressed like this [pointing to her Punjabi suit] and hear someone call out 'go back home'...so even though I have lived here all my life I never quite feel like I belong ...that it is home.

## Conclusion

Rajinder's story reflects negative and positive effects of displacement but the overwhelming feeling is one of 'unbelonging' and a yearning for an imaginary place and space which is 'home'. In the context of the transnational Sikh diaspora this yearning may reflect calls for a homeland (Tatla, 2012) or be a feature of diaspora stories in general (Mitra, 2015). An adopted home in a diaspora is perhaps never quite the same as home in the safe and secure environment of a community where one is born, lives and works, as in Rajinder's recollection of the closeness in the village where she was born. This may be an imagined home, rather than the real one left behind, but for members of a diaspora it represents a cultural and social loss due to immigration.

The sense of loss in the diaspora story is counterbalanced by the positive effects of displacement. Coming to the UK gave Rajinder opportunities to transform her identity from being 'the little girl in plaits' to becoming an articulate woman in a senior professional role. She is confident in moving between multiple identities in the transnational Sikh diaspora and able to challenge racist and discriminatory practices in multi-ethnic societies. This trajectory and socio-economic status, which reflects the path of British Sikh families (Dhillon & Thomas, 2018), would have been unlikely if she had stayed in Punjab.

This assemblage and portrayal of Rajinder's story is positioned as narrative from an insider perspective. In its assemblage, I have drawn together themes across the interviews and interpreted data using bilingual-bicultural lenses and multiple dimensions of insiderness. In the portrayal, I have tried to strike a balance between my narrative voice and Rajinder's voice so that readers may bring their own subjectivities and lenses to make their own interpretation(s) of the text.

## References

- Axel, B. K. (2001). *The nation's tortured body: Violence, representation, and the formation of a Sikh" diaspora"*. Duke University Press.
- BERA. (2018). *Ethical guidelines for educational research* (4th ed.). British Educational Research Association.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77–101.
- Bruner, J. (2002). *Making stories: Law, literature, life*. Harvard University Press.
- BSR. (British Sikh Report Team). (2015). *British Sikh report: An insight into the British Sikh community*.  
<http://www.britishsikhreport.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/British-Sikh-Report-2015.pdf>
- Chanda, R., & Ghosh, S. (2013). Punjabi diaspora in the UK: An overview of characteristics and contributions to India. *CARIM-India Research Report*. <http://www.india-eu-migration.eu/media/CARIM-India-2013-08.pdf>
- Clandinin, D. J. (2013). *Engaging in narrative inquiry*. Routledge.
- Collins, R. (2019). The turban-wearing British bus driver who changed the law.  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-47853718>
- Dhillon, J. K., & Thomas, N. (2018). British Sikh entrepreneurs: Social mobility and transformations over generations. *Sikh Formations: Religion, Culture, Theory*, 14(1), 1–25.
- Dhillon, J. K., & Thomas, N. (2019). Ethics of engagement and insider-outsider perspectives: Issues and dilemmas in cross-cultural interpretation. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 42(4), 442–453.
- Dusenbery, V. A., & Tatla, D. S. (Eds.). (2009). *Sikh diaspora philanthropy in Punjab: Global giving for local good*. Oxford University Press.
- Dwyer, S. C., & Buckle, J. L. (2009). The space between: On being an insider-outsider in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 8(1), 54–63.
- Goodson, I. (2017). Introduction: Life histories and narratives. In I. F. Goodson, A. Antikainen, P. Sikes, & M. Andrews (Eds.), *The Routledge international handbook on narrative and life history*. Routledge.
- Goodson, I. F. (2012). *Developing narrative theory: Life histories and personal representation*. Routledge.
- Helweg, A. W. (1979). *Sikhs in England: The development of a migrant community*. Oxford University Press.
- Katy, P. S. (2017). Surveillance, Islamophobia, and Sikh bodies in the War on Terror. *Islamophobia Studies Journal*, 4(1), 37–52.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.13169/islastudj.4.1.0037>

- Kishwar, M. (1984). Gangster rule: The massacre of the Sikhs. *Manushi*, 25, 10–32.
- Le Gallais, T. (2008). Wherever I go there I am: Reflections on reflexivity and the research stance. *Reflective Practice*, 9(2), 145–155.
- Lincoln, S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage Publications.
- Mitra, D. (2015). The boundaries between " Home " and " Diaspora “: American Sikhs and the construction of place. *Journal of Punjab Studies*, 22(1), 319–342.
- Nakata, Y. (2015). Insider-outsider perspective: Revisiting the conceptual framework of research methodology in language teacher education. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 38(2), 166–183.
- National Archives. (2019). The Cabinet papers: Commonwealth immigration control and legislation.  
<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/cabinetpapers/themes/commonwealth-immigration-control-legislation.htm>
- Oxford Sikhs. (2019). Sikh population around the world.  
[http://www.oxfordsikhs.com/SikhAwareness/Sikh-Population-Around-The-World\\_159.aspx](http://www.oxfordsikhs.com/SikhAwareness/Sikh-Population-Around-The-World_159.aspx)
- Pariona, A. (2018). Countries with the largest Sikh populations.  
<https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/countries-with-the-largest-sikh-populations.html>
- Rajan, S. I. (Ed.). (2018). *India migration report 2019: Diaspora in Europe*. Taylor & Francis.
- Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Sage Publications.
- Savin-Baden, M., & Major, C. (2013). *Qualitative research: The essential guide to theory and practice*. Routledge.
- Seidman, I. (2013). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social Sciences* (4th ed.). Teachers' College Press.
- Shani, G. (2002). The territorialization of identity: Sikh nationalism in the diaspora. *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 2(1), 11–19.
- Singh, P. (2017). *1984 India's guilty secret*. Kashi House CIC.
- Talbot, I., & Singh, G. (2009). *The partition of India*. Cambridge University Press.
- Tatla, D. S. (2005). *The Sikh diaspora: The search for statehood*. Routledge.
- Tatla, D. S. (2012). The unbearable lightness of diasporic Sikh nationalism! From anguished cries of 'Khalistan' to pleas for 'Recognition'. *Sikh Formations*, 8(1), 59–85.

Thandi, S. S. (2014). Sikh migration, diasporas, and transnational practices. In Singh, P. & Fenech, L.E. (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of Sikh studies*. Oxford University Press.

## Notes

1. Valiat is the Panjabi word for England and its contextual meaning still carries a golden image of the UK.
2. See [https://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Category:Glossary\\_of\\_Sikh\\_Terms](https://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Category:Glossary_of_Sikh_Terms) for a glossary of terms.