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**How are gender roles maintained and negotiated within Punjabi migrants'
transnational families in Lisbon and Punjab?**

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To all the families separated by migration

Acknowledgement

Abstract

In recent years, Sikh Punjabi migration to Portugal has started gaining attention. While it was estimated that the first migrants started to move to Portugal in the early 1990ies, the community has long time stayed unnoticed. Sikhs in Portugal are predominantly young and male and a large part of them has at some point been in an irregular administrative situation. Drawing on a multi-sited ethnographic research using participant observation in different cities of Punjab and the Great Lisbon between 2017 and 2019, this dissertation aims to look at how gender roles are maintained and negotiated within Punjabi migrants' transnational families in Lisbon and Punjab. First, it investigates the crucial role of gender in scoping migration projects to Portugal. While migration restrictions have the power to encourage or dissuade transnational family practices such as family reunification and transnational marriages, this work looks at how kinship rules and social norms operate across borders. Secondly, this work looks at the gendered division of labor in Sikh Punjabi transnational families. It examine the work of women both in origin and abroad. This dissertation establishes that at the present moment, transnational family practices have not led to a more egalitarian division of roles within the Sikh Punjabi family living between Lisbon and Punjab and that while new challenges are faced by, both men and women, caring expectation perpetuate conventional gender norms of the family even in the transnational context.

Key words: Transnationalism, kinship, gender, migration

Resumo

Nos últimos anos, a migração dos Sikhs Punjabi para Portugal começou a ganhar atenção. Embora se estimasse que os primeiros migrantes começaram a mudar-se para Portugal no início da década de 1990, a comunidade tem permanecido durante muito tempo despercebida. Os Sikhs em Portugal são predominantemente jovens e do sexo masculino e uma grande parte deles tem estado, a dada altura, numa situação administrativa irregular. Com base numa investigação etnográfica multisituada utilizando a observação participante em diferentes cidades do Punjab e da Grande Lisboa entre 2017 e 2019, esta dissertação visa analisar a forma como os papéis de género são mantidos e negociados no seio das famílias transnacionais dos migrantes Punjabi em Lisboa e no Punjab. Em primeiro lugar, investiga o papel crucial do género na delimitação do âmbito dos projetos de migração para Portugal. Embora as restrições à migração tenham o poder de encorajar ou dissuadir práticas familiares transnacionais, tais como o reagrupamento familiar e os casamentos transnacionais, este trabalho analisa a forma como as regras de parentesco e as normas sociais funcionam para além das fronteiras. Em segundo lugar, este trabalho analisa a divisão do trabalho em função do género nas famílias transnacionais Sikhs Punjabi. Examina o trabalho das mulheres tanto na origem como no estrangeiro. Esta dissertação estabelece que, atualmente, as práticas familiares transnacionais não conduziram a uma divisão mais igualitária dos papéis no seio da família Sikh Punjabi que vive entre Lisboa e Punjab e que, embora novos desafios sejam enfrentados tanto por homens como por mulheres na família, a expectativa de cuidado perpetua as normas convencionais de género da família, mesmo no contexto transnacional.

Palavras-chave: Transnacionalismo, parentesco, género, migração

Contents

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The literature about the Indian diaspora in Portugal has essentially focused on numerically dominant Goan and Gujrati labourers, merchants and investors (Ávila & Alves, 1993; Bastos & Bastos, 2001; Cachado, 2008; Malheiros, 1998; 2008; Lourenço, 2014) at the expense of the smaller, but important, Punjabi community of which the Sikhs are the most visually perceptible because of the bana - their spiritual attire. Even though not all Sikhs use the turban, the traditional headwear, especially for men, or keep their beard uncut, they do not go unnoticed and are often discernible amongst other Indian and South Asian migrants.

Unpredictably, Portugal has today become strongly transnationally networked to Punjab and the main reasons behind the unlikely connection are diverse. Portugal's entry into the European Union in 1986 and the Schengen Area in 1995, as well as the country's construction boom to improve the infrastructure in the early 1990s, have played a big role in captivating migrants (Myvold, 2012). Different regularization programs to include large numbers of cumulative irregular migrants (1992, 1996, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2007 and 2017) have also attracted people in search of measures to legalize their administrative status (Padilla & Ortiz, 2012). Simultaneously, Sikhs are encouraged to emigrate by their tradition of mobility with a history and culture that is marked by a willingness to travel (Jodhka, 2009) which was intensified by Punjab's socio-political situation in the aftermaths of the partition of the subcontinent in 1947 that divided Punjab into two parts – the East Punjab, belonging to India and the West Punjab, which became part of Pakistan.

Portugal became a coveted destination for a large number of migrants who responded to the demand for unskilled labour. The Punjabi migrants who have been coming to Portugal have no historical or cultural tie to the country and are predominantly young and male. While economic migrants are almost exclusively men, reunified family members are mostly women or/and children. It is difficult to quantify Sikh Punjabis as there is no census for the different Indian ethnic groups and because a large part of them disappear in official statistics due to their irregular administrative status. Nevertheless, it is a noticeably growing community. The first *gurdwara*, Sikhs' place of worship, was established in 1998. Since then, 5 more temples have been set up in different parts of the country, including the main one, *Gurdwara Sikh Sang*

Sahib in Odivelas, which, before the Covid19 health crisis, hosted estimated 2.000 Sikhs every Sunday for congregational prayer. Until present date, the few existing studies on the community mainly focus on Sikhs migration journey where Portugal is being described as a transition country for the community who seeks entry to Europe (Myrvold, 2012; McGarrigle & Ascensão, 2017) but the expanding of the community allows us to argue that Sikhs have already entered a phase of settlement and that Portugal is not only a country of passage for them.

However, Sikh Punjabi's situation in Portugal is often precarious, especially during the first years of settlement, as many migrants find themselves trapped in an administrative limbo because of inconsistent immigration policies and slow procedures (Padilla et al., 2018). This situation regularly forces people to enter clandestinely, which implies to carry out poorly paying jobs and to live at the margins of society with reduced and difficult access to health care, education and housing. The economic crisis of 2008, which reached the acme with the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Portuguese government and the TROIKA, has reinforced the disparities between Portuguese and foreign citizens. Its conditions of austerity and the externalized control of the political economy from 2011 to 2014 resulted in severe material deprivation among national and non-nationals and an increased difficulty of economic integration in the crisis context (Esteves et al., 2017).

Punjabis restricted mobility and their financial shortages in Portugal do not stop them from maintaining very strong cross-border connections with their family members. Since the early 1990ies, the concept of transnationalism has transformed the ways in which many scholars look at the lives of migrants and their descendants. Transnationalism points to the possibility that migrants can live ''*lives that incorporate daily activities, routines, and institutions located both in a destination country and transnationally''* (Levitt & Glick-Schiller, 2004:1003). Sikh Punjabis have settled and established local communities in different parts of Europe but have a strong tendency to retain and nourish links to their places of origin and are interconnected through transnational networks encompassing a wide area of activities (Jacobsen & Myrvold, 2012). In a predominantly masculine migration flow to Portugal, looking at how migrants perceive and manage their relationships with their extended family contributes to sharpen a transnational analysis of migrant families and of the impact of migration on gender roles within these families. To do so, it is necessary to look at the Punjabi Sikh kinship system. Gender relations in transnational families are negotiated across national borders between men and women, husbands and wives, children and their parents.

1.1. Objective, research question and hypothesis

This research aims to bring about better understanding of transnational Sikh Punjabi migration between Lisbon and Punjab in terms of their transnational practices, belonging, maintaining, and renegotiating gender roles between here and there, through an insight of migrant's practices within a transnational social space taking into account their own point of view and perceptions about their lived experiences. This study is guided by the following *main question*:

"How are gender roles maintained and negotiated within Punjabi migrants' transnational families in Lisbon and Punjab?"

The *main hypothesis* is that the maintaining and reproduction of gender roles depend on the family situation in origin, namely the need for female care work and the financial means. Secondary hypothesis are; that the migration of one family member has a broader impact on the whole extended family; that the migration of a single male increases his "value" for marriage in Punjab and that families from scheduled and tribal castes migrate less due to insufficient networks and resources.

This study can contribute to the perspective of generating and sharing new knowledge about Punjabi Sikhs in Portugal. The findings of this research shed light upon transnational family practices among Sikhs who are in Portugal, considering the importance this could have in designing migration and integration policies.

The structure of this research paper will be as follows: In the first chapter, the introduction gives a background on the topic and describes the objective, research questions, and key terms to define the problem. Findings of previous relevant studies regarding Sikh Punjabi foundational values and their impact on gender are discussed in the second chapter as well as the theoretical debate on transnationalism and transnational migration of Sikhs to Europe. Chapter three gives a detailed description of the research approach. It explains the rational why and how multi-cited ethnographic approach (Marcus, 1995) was employed as qualitative research method to meet the objectives of this study. It gives a justification behind selecting the specific field and describes in detail the strategies to enter into the field. The role of the researcher, ethical considerations, and limitations of the study are discussed in the same chapter. The findings from the extensive fieldwork that took place between 2017-2919 in Lisbon in Punjab are presented and elaborated in chapter four. Chapter five outlines the discussion of the findings and its main possible conclusions.

CHAPTER TWO

Theoretical Framework

2.1. Punjabi Sikhs: Foundational values and gender

According to the World Religion Database (2020), Sikhism is in 2020 followed by approximately 26 million people around the world. Even though Sikhs do not have their own nation state, most followers reside in the northwestern Indian state of Punjab or are part of the Punjabi diaspora.

Before the partition of India in 1947, Punjab encompassed the present-day federal states of Pakistani Punjab and Indian Punjab, as well as a number of then semi-autonomous princely states. After partition, mass migration of Hindus and Sikhs to India occurred as well as mass migration of Indian Muslims to Pakistan. As highlighted by Brass (2003), these mass migrations happened in a context of horrendous and atrocious violence on both sides and represent until the present day, Punjabis darkest days in modern history. Today the number of Sikhs still living in Pakistan remains unknown. Pakistan has until the present date never considered Sikhs separately in their census, always including them in the "others" column, which makes up less than 1% of the population since 1951 (PBS, 2020). In 2017, one month before the start of the Population Census in Pakistan, Peshawar High Court orders separate counting of Sikhs in the census. Three years later, Pakistan has remained silent on minority numbers. Estimations on the number vary from 50.000 to 70.000 people.
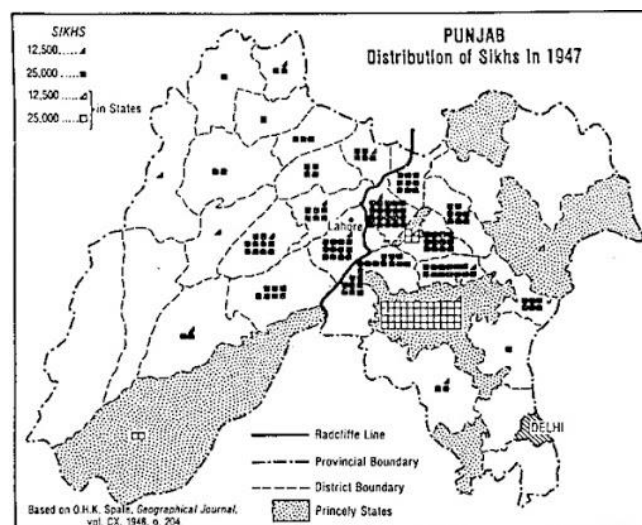
Map1: Punjab: Sikhs and the Radcliff Line, 1947

Sikhism originated in Punjab with its first guru and founder, Guru Nanak (1469-1539), who spread his message and organized a community of followers for over two decades before settling in the city of Kartarpur in Punjab. He inscribed himself in the tradition of Indian saint-poets like Kabir or Ravidas, and renounced to superstitions and religious worship and instead advocated for inner devotion and spiritual living (Mc Leod, 1989).

The word *Sikh* is Punjabi for disciple and Sikhs are considered to be the disciples who follow the teachings of the Ten Sikh Gurus. Sikhism is a monotheistic religion and considers its holy scripture *Guru Grant Sahib* to be practical and universal in its appeal to all humans.

Sikhs are supposed to be casteless, which is the reason why the whole community shares the same last name, *Singh* (lion) for men and *Kaur* (princess/queen) for women. The erasure of the last name is a strong message of equality in an Indian society where social stratification linked to caste has long been the most violent form of oppression.

Sikhs mains code of conduct includes daily reading of the gurus' hymns, the abstaining from intoxicants and the engaging in *seva*, selfless service to others (Grewal, 1990). The most predominant form of *seva* is the tradition of *langar*, a communal kitchen, where everyone, regardless of religion and origin can have access to food prepared by volunteers. Sikhs also have distinctive signs such as keeping their hair uncut, wearing a steel bracelet and covering their head with a turban or a scarf.

Guru Nanak and his nine successors are today often referred to as social reformers for opposing the Brahminical ideology in Hinduism and for having a more egalitarian attitude towards women (Thakar, 2011). They rejected the idea of a caste system and actively advocated for equality between all humans in a society previously characterized by religious and gender discrimination. Sanskrit was consciously replaced with an indigenous spoken language that was standardized into Gurmukhi script (Jodkha & Myrvold, 2014). The inclusion of the writings of different saints and religious leaders, from Hindu to Muslim, in the Sikh scripture is also interpreted as a sign of gurus teaching on egalitarianism and on respect for diversity.

At the emergence of Sikhism in the late 15th century, women's status was very low in Indian society. Female infanticide was a common procedure and polygamy was practiced in wealthy households. Girl child marriage was the norm and women had no independence to move freely. These problems continue to exist, but to much lesser extent. In the Sikh scriptures, the idea of marriage is sublimated by devotion to God. Even though it is never explicitly mentioned, the

golden rule "*one man and one woman*" opposes all forms of sexuality that derive from heterosexuality. Polygamy is repeatedly condemned and the sexual urge for another man or woman is regarded as a great sin (Shanker, 1994).

The equality preached in Sikhism is challenged by the largely documented empirical reality of Sikhs' lives. As recognized by Jakobsh (2014), within the Sikh narratives many like to make a distinction between Sikh Punjabi culture and Sikh religion. The culture is often considered as being engrained in North Indian patriarchal gender codes and casteism while being in contradiction with the textual understanding of Sikhism. As also previously underlined by Jodkha and Myrvold (2014), Sikhs do not constitute a homogenous group and their identifications and practices depend on social (caste, class, education) and cultural components that regularly contribute to tensions within the larger community.

Gill (2003) however, believes that the textual understanding of Sikhism cannot be seen as inherently equal as Sikh apologetics like to assert. He notices that historical writings contain in reality little to no visual representation of women. Existing references to women are minimal and usually refer to women in relation to men. In Guru Nanak's words, "*It's through woman, the despised one, that we are conceived and from her that we are born.*" (Adi Granth: 473). It is in her role of s a mother that the woman gains all her importance. In these famous lines, esteem for women is linked to the dependency of men on them. One can conclude that the Gurus were addressing the issues of gender within the parameters set by traditional patriarchal structures of their time. Women's most important role is seen as that of loving wife and mother. Women in general, even if included in the spiritual Sikh practices, are seen as the weaker section of society when going through the scripture.

Sikh teachings have not erased the long Indian tradition of caste in Punjab and within the diaspora and the importance of caste continues to be visible in the context of marriages and selections of spouses for the children within Sikh families (Singh, 1967; Jodhka, 2002, 2004, 2009; Puri, 2003; Jodhka & Louis, 2003; Jodhka & Kumar, 2007).

2.2. Kinship and the Sikh Punjabi family

Following the definition of Fox (1967), "*the study of kinship is the study of what man does with these basic facts of life – mating, gestation, parenthood, socialization, siblingship*". According to him, part of man's enormous success in the evolutionary struggle lies in his ability to

manipulate these relationships to his advantage. Kinship studies have been dealing with universal values and the fundamental dimensions of kinship, discussing the theories of descent and alliance and seeing kinship as a conceptualizing, organizing and managing element of social relations (Dousset, 2011).

When looking at Sikh Punjabi kinship it is important to underline that people belonging to different cultural backgrounds, live in Punjab. According to India's last census in 2011, Sikhism is the most practiced faith in Punjab with 57.69% followed by Hinduism with 38.49% and with a minority of Muslims representing 1.93%. Other smaller communities exist that include Buddhists, Christians and Jains. Most of Punjabis, regardless of their religion, share many basic kinship rules with the larger group of North Indians.

Like in other North Indian States, in Punjab a marriage alliance links one family with an entirely new family and in fact often one village with another village (Uberoi, 1993). The Punjabi family constellation is patrilineal which means the family members pertain to descent through male lines. There is also the rule of patrilocality: female family members leave their natal home when they get married to move to their husband's home. Often girls leave their family to move in with total strangers, as arranged marriages are considered quite normative even to this day. Despite Punjab having undergone several aspects of modernization, arranged marriage seem to continue to outnumber what is considered to be "love marriages" (Allendorf & Pandian, 2016). When the woman marries, she is permanently exported from her family and her "slot" ceases to exist and it creates a new "slot" for incoming brides. In rare cases women return, but they often face families and village members' resistance (Gupta et al., 2015). Studies suggest that the percentage of married women residing in nuclear families is increasing, although the majority remained in patrilocal joint families (Allendorf, 2013).

As part of marriage in Punjab, as well as in most of the societies found in North India, there is a transaction of gifts, which is known as dowry. Dowry is a transaction from the bride's family to the groom's family and mostly include household goods, clothes, jewellery and sometimes money. Usually immovable property is not included but it is becoming a modern practice of wealthier families. As describes by Sharma (1993), dowry is seen as a compensation for the groom's family for the addition of a dependent non-productive member.

Within the Punjabi families, dowry is also rarely openly discussed but when arranging the marriage there is mostly an assumption that the groom's family expectations and the bride's

family capacity will match. According to Sonpar (2005), the success or failure of a marriage can sometimes be based upon the satisfactory component of the dowry given during the wedding ceremony. A Punjabi woman in India can be a victim of severe abuse from her husband and his family if they are unhappy with the dowry that was given to them. As explained by Sharma (1993), dowry has for a long time been seen as a burden for the bride's parents but an honor for the bride. The bigger the dowry, the prouder the wife could be to join her new family. This view is has often be contested by feminist scholars who argue that in reality it puts enormous pressure on women to persuade their parents to give more dowry otherwise there is humiliation (Samuel, 2002). Daughters traditionally do not inherit land unless they have no brothers. Nowadays the law allows them to do so, but a minority exercises the new right that contradicts traditional rules (Roy, 2015).

The girl's behaviour in her father's house is also different from how she is expected to behave in her father-in-law's house. The wife is expected to behave in a modest and self-effacing manner. She enters a new role and an old Sikh Punjabi tradition even made brides change their names when arriving in their new homes. This symbolized the new person the girl was expected to be, leaving her old identity and belonging behind. Today this very marginal phenomenon can still be observed in remote rural villages. Cohabitation takes place among only the lineage members while ones affine generally live in other villages and do not participate in one's daily affairs. As per Sharma (1993), two main principles underlie the structure of authority in most households, those of seniority and of gender. Junior of either sex are expected to defer to elders and women are expected to defer to men.

The kinship terminology in Punjab also reflects the separation of kin related by blood from the kin related by marriage. Dumont (1961) highlights that the importance of affinity is marked in North India by the great number of terms for affine relatives. For example, the paternal uncle is called *Chacha* when he is younger than the father and *Taya* when he is older while the maternal uncle is called *Mama* regardless of his age. They do not only have different names but they also fulfill different roles within a family. This is true for every other family member.

Marriage alliances in Sikh Punjabi families follow the principle of hypergamy (Hershman, 1981). This means that the bride-givers are inferior to the bride-takers. Social stratification and systems of hierarchy are undeniable and Sikhs openly disclose their group identity.

In her important work on Punjabi kinship "Masks and Faces", Das (1976: 3) explains that the Punjabi kinship can be seen as a dialectic relationship between natural and social norms. According to her *"the Punjabi belief is that conduct derived from the biological substratum cannot be suppressed but that it should be kept in the backstage, away from public view. The backstage is not any less real than the frontstage where behaviour is governed by rules derived from the cultural stratum".* The cultural norms of *izzat* (honour) and modesty play a significant role in the frontstage.

The notions of purity and pollution are found influencing the kinship systems in terms of protecting the purity of one's blood even in Sikh households and are heavily influenced by Hindu caste tradition where the blood purity is considered a cardinal principle of kinship and society structuration. As described by Böck and Rao (2000), a common theme is that the woman and her womb are the earth or the field and the man and his semen are the seed. Women are not considered an active partner as blood is transmitted through the male line. Nevertheless, "the field" could be "polluted" or "weak" and therefore not able to carry the "seed" placed by the man. This is also the reason why women's food intake is often monitored, especially during pregnancy, to avoid the pollution of "the field".

2.3.   The Sikh Punjabi family transnationally

2.3.1. Transnationalism and transnational family

In the end of the 20th century Basch, Schiller and Blanc-Szanton defined transnationality as "*the processes by which migrants and refugees forge and maintain multi-stranded social relations that link together their places of origin and places of settlement*" (Basch et al., 1994: 7). These processes are called transnationalism to emphasize that many migrants today build from below social fields that cross geographic, cultural and political borders *(ibid., 1994: 7)* other anthropologists, sociologists and historians of contemporary migration studies started to put into question the prevailing view of immigrants as people who had displaced themselves from their country of origin to establish themselves in a new land. For Faist (2000), the formation and maintenance of transnational spaces is intensified by eased technological means of communication, incomplete nation-state formation in many countries of emigration and discrimination and multiculturalism in the countries of immigration.

For proponents of transnationalism, migrants could no longer only be considered as people who permanently leave their home and country and face the difficult process of integration into a different society and culture. It became essential to consider the fact that a significant proportion of migrants who settle in and become well-incorporated in their new country, still maintain home ties. Levitt (2007) underlines the importance for scholars to acknowledge that the sanctity of borders and boundaries is a recent development and that humans continually create and recreate boundaries, moving, trading and communication across them. In this way, transnationalism also opens the scientific gaze on "non-migrants" who are involved in the migration process. There is a displacement of attention from the individual who migrates to the migration networks.

The transnational perspective breaks away from a spatially and temporally dichotomized view of migration. It is dynamic and can privileges the point of view of the migrant as an actor articulated by different networks in different places and not only from one place to another. This perspective started to be more widespread because of critical questioning of methodological nationalism in the migration studies. Under methodological nationalism, one understands "*the naturalization of the nation-state by the social sciences*" (Wimmer & Schiller, 2002: 576). It is when scholars assume that countries are the natural unit for comparative studies and equate society with nation-state.

In the literature, the concept of "transmigrant" (Schiller et al., 1992) emerges and has a significant role in conceiving the social reality of these people. The diversity of connections, both in the host society as well as in the country of origin, are an essential feature of the transnationality. Transnational are those cross-border social, economic, political and cultural connections of people (Vertovec, 2001). People can "be" in several places simultaneously and sustain activities within their communities, not being stopped by state borders. Nagel (2001) alerts however that despite the efforts by theorists of transnationalism to challenge traditional analytical categories such as nation-states, state borders still exist and impose restrictions on individuals and on their movement. Migrants, who find themselves in an irregular administrative situation for example, have a restricted mobility.

More recently, major studies have brought to debate the role of the institutions of the sending and receiving countries in constraining and encouraging transnational activities. Several states engage actively with immigrants' groups in their countries, seeking to identify organizational interlocutors and even creating them where none existed before (Portes et al., 2017). Along

these lines, research has unquestionably advanced in knowledge, making evident that governments not only regulate immigrant transnational activism but also engage with it, seeking to promote developmental projects or to neutralize the disturbing political potential of such activities (Lacroix & Dumont, 2015). Nagel and Staeheli (2003) argue that it is important to think about transnationalism as a process and even a strategy that migrants use to negotiate the complex politics of citizenship and identity.

Defenders of transnationalism have quickly been criticized by fellow researchers recalling the historical depth of the phenomena. However, the intensity and the forms of the exchange processes as well as the variety of activities, which take place in transnational social spaces (Faist, 2000) are typical for these modern times (Portes et al., 1999). One could wonder if the transnational focal point reveals a change in the degree or nature of the migratory phenomenon. The scale of the technological revolution, which has allowed the development and the acceleration of communications and displacements, is put forward to affirm that even if it is not a new phenomenon, it is a huge change of scale, which justifies the advent of a new perspective. As the scholar of social sciences stresses, "*the spatial organization of social relations is deeply transformed insofar as relations become more stretched and more intensively interconnected.*" (Martinelly, 2007: 426).

The transnational family became a focus of reflection in the 1990ies when the pioneers Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanon (1992) looked at Haitian, Caribbean and Filipino immigrant families and analysed them with a transnational lens. For many researchers, the focus of reflection was how migrants managed parenthood, when both parents and children were living apart. Wiltshire (1992) calls them "astronaut families" and Zhou (1997) talks about "parachute children" when they migrate alone. Bryceson and Vuorela (2002) really opened the field of these studies in Europe and defined the families as families who live apart but who create and retain a sense of collective welfare and unity, in short "familyhood", even across national borders. Parreñas (2005) focuses on the "one left behind", the family members who did not migrate and brings to light the successful or aborted relational compositions within the family, as well as their consequences on children. Finally, Olwig (2007) revisits, in the light of relational theories of kinship, the Caribbean family from the analysis of three types of family networks and produces narratives to understand the way in which lives and identities are shaped by the origins, a certain imagination and the movements between different places.

Numerous researchers have concentrated on how family and social networks determine who migrates and how and where they migrate. They underline how the family, or in a broader sense, the diasporas, helps to provide information and assistance in the journey and settlement process. Simultaneously, families use strategies to cope with the challenges brought about by immigration across the family life course (Schmalzbauer, 2008). Mezzacuto and Schans underline that "*transnational family arrangements are prevalent worldwide because of stringent migration policies in migrant receiving countries that make it difficult for families to migrate together*" (1998: 704). The transnational spaces created by the families are often unconscious and emerge as an explicit response to globalization and migration and border restrictions. The transnational family life is therefore mostly not an option but rather a consequence of the circumstances. Gardner and Grillo (2002) also underline that transnational family relations cannot be considered a new practice, but their magnitude can be partly seen as the consequence of globalization and policies of neo-liberalism.

2.3.2. Transnationalism and transnational family

The Sikhs constitute a growing and visible religious community in Europe. The global Sikh population is today estimated at 26 million individuals and the European Sikhs comprise about 700.000, with the largest and earliest establishments in the United Kingdom and increasing communities in almost all countries in Europe. Especially after the Second World War and India's independence in 1947, the Sikhs developed a culture of migration and mobility, arriving and settling in various parts of Europe via different routes (Jacobsen & Myrvold, 2012). Mobility within the Sikh community has been seen as a consequence of British colonialism and expansion after the fall of the Sikh Empire in 1849 but Singh (2016) argues that there is a deeper history of mobility engrained within the Sikh tradition running back to its foundation laid by the first Guru, Guru Nanak, who himself travelled and lived in different cities.

Subsequently, the Green Revolution with its tensions created in rural areas of Punjab and the aftermath of the political turmoil created by what is considered the Sikh Genocide in 1984 increased emigration from the State.

The Green Revolution was an unprecedented techno-political strategy started in 1966 to convert agriculture into an industrial system through the adoption of modern methods and technology. It increased productivity drastically in Punjab making it the first food producer in the country.

Paradoxically, as Shiva (1991) underlines, it has left Punjab ravaged by violence and ecological scarcity. Sindhu and Byerlee (1992) also alert about the unequal income distribution it has created between landowners and labourers. Today, indebted and discontented farmers regularly make the headlines with their huge protest and frightening high number of suicides. In 2019 alone, 501 farmers died by suicide in Punjab according to Bharatiya Kisan Union, a non-partisan farmer's representative organization in India.

In 1984, the storming by the Indian army of Sikhism's most sacred shrine (*Harmandir Sahib* popularly known as the *Golden Temple*) to capture the Sikh leader Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale created unrest in the whole country. The demolition of sacred buildings and killing of innocent people created a national divide that resulted in the assassination of Indira Gandhi as an act of revenge by her two Sikh bodyguards. Public outrage over Gandhi's death led to anti-Sikh riots in several cities in North India. At least 2733 Sikhs, according to official figures (Justice Nanavati Comission of Inquiry, 2005), and perhaps as many as 8000 according to unofficial estimations, had died in Delhi and elsewhere in the country. As underlined by Jeffery and Hall (2020), in the aftermath, thousands more left Delhi to settle elsewhere in India, mainly in safe states in Punjab, or, if they could, to emigrate overseas. As recognized by Chopra (2010), the Sikh diaspora continues to use images of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale as a symbol of protest that produces home while simultaneously validating the act of leaving and the need to seek sanctuary elsewhere. In Portugal's biggest *gurdwara*, an image of the religious leader hangs in the *langar* hall.

Simultaneously, the appearance of job opportunities outside the country in the Gulf countries but also in Africa, Europe and North America were the main incentives for Sikh emigration.

Sikhs migration to Portugal has only recently gained interest of academic research (Correia & Bastos, 2006; Mrvold, 2012; Mc Garrigle & Ascensão, 2017) even though the country has been one of the major destination of contemporary Sikhs migration in the European continent. Their precise number remains unknown since national statistics do not differentiate between religious or ethnic groups and do not include migrants who are in an irregular administrative situation. The arrival of the pioneer Sikh migrants dates to the 1990ies and can be linked to the entry of Portugal in the Schengen Area in 1995 and to the construction boom in the country that created job opportunities for unskilled labor (Myvold, 2012). Both, the immigrant association Solidariedade Imigrante and the religious leader in charge of the Lisbon *gurdwara* (place of worship) Baba Ranjit Singh, estimate today's Sikh population living in Portugal to be around

10.000 people. Most of them live in Lisbon and its suburbs, while an increasing number have settled in Porto, Alentejo and Algarve, where job opportunities in agriculture are increasing.

Scholars recognize that, although the Sikhs have settled and established local communities in different parts of Europe and have become integrated into the host societies, they retain and nourish links to their places of origin and are interconnected through transnational networks encompassing a wide area of activities (Jacobsen & Myrvold, 2012). Their inclusion into Europe and transnational practices occurs simultaneously, and their transnational networks do not merely link European Sikh families with their relatives who stayed in the homeland but create active intra-diasporic connection with other Sikhs worldwide. Ballard (1990) describes the young male migrants who moved to the United Kingdom as being the protagonists of a wider family project aimed to improve economic and social conditions for the whole kin network. He considers that one can interpret the migration of a single person as a collective family investment where the individual is represented as the first ring of a migratory chain developing through time, as sort of facilitating device for the migration of family members in future. It is noticeable that Sikh migrants continue to regard themselves as part of an expanded family or kin network even when living alone far away from the country of origin. This has clear consequences for individual migratory patterns and integration processes in the country of settlement. In other words, immigration from Punjab seem to have been transnational from the beginning and continue to be so (Bertolani, 2014). "*Sikhs have been transnational for more than 100 years*" underline anthropologists (Garnder & Grillo, 2002: 181).

Transnational kinship practices among the Sikhs are therefore not a recent phenomenon, but what perhaps constitute a new development in more recent years are the intensified modes of exchange between Sikhs in different countries (Jacobsen & Myrvold, 2012). Migration regulations also intensify transnational family practices such as family reunification, remittances and transnational marriages. Because of policies who make it difficult to obtain a work permit in European countries, transnational marriages and the subsequent reunification are important means for Sikhs to immigrate legally (Charlsew & Shaw, 2006). Migration encourages transnational marriages which, in turn, sustain a migratory continuity in a process that reproduces itself over time (Mand, 2002). It is interesting to notice that the couplings are often arranged or facilitated by family member in the country of origin, following Sikh social customs of caste and lineage. One could argue that "*apparently traditional practices of arranged marriage are fully modern means of negotiation the boundaries of citizenship*

imposed by states" (Mooney, 2006: 389-390). Against the theoretical presumption that transnationalism would diminish the role of the nation state, many cases of Sikhs reveal that conditions within and policies of the European nations continue to exert a strong influence on the ways by which migrants and their family members develop and pattern their transnational networks and practices (Jacobsen & Myrvold, 2012).

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

This chapter discusses the detailed description of the research methodology that was followed for answering the main research question "*How are gender roles reproduced and renegotiated within Punjabi migrants' transnational households in Lisbon and Punjab?"*. It gives an explanation of the used approach, the access to the field and the data collection technique as well as the subsequent analysis. Ethical considerations are examined along with the difficulties and limitations.

3.1. Sample of the study

For this research, I chose to carry out my fieldwork in two units of study: The Great Lisbon and Punjab, extending it to the area of Haryana, which was carved out of Punjab in 1966 but is still home to many Sikhs. The units of observation being the extended families of Sikh Punjabis in Punjab and in Lisbon engaged in a transnational migratory project, a certain openness was kept to include other important sites that could allow more insights into transnational practices of the families. During the period of data collection (2017-2019), I was therefore also brought to interact and visit relatives of the selected families in other places such as Southall in London, popularly known as "little Punjab", Birmingham, considered to be a South Asian migrant hotspot in the UK, Bobigny in France, where most of France's Sikhs live, and other Portuguese cities such as Vila Nova de Milefontes, Zambujeira do Mar and Odemeira which are all towns with a high concentration of undocumented Sikh Punjabi agriculture workers.
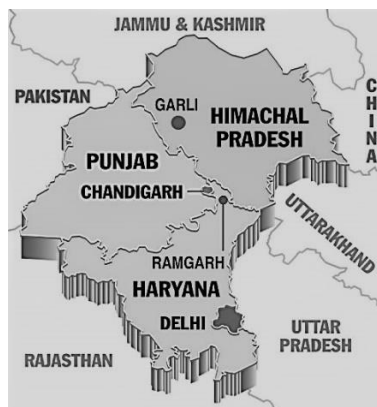
Map 2: Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh that constituted Punjab until 1966

For this research, I decided to choose 10 families that I "followed" genealogically and stayed open to all the observations outside of these families that could help me find answers to my research questions. My first criteria of selection was to identify my key informants within the community. I considered migrants who had been actively providing me with information on the community and who had participated in efforts to organize migrants. Having identified 4, I decided to use the snowball sample method for the rest of the families. The families were chosen by trying to diversify in the transnational family format; 5 young single men who immigrated alone leaving their parents and siblings behind, 3 married men leaving wife and children behind and 2 married couples leaving children to their parents. It is to underline again that Punjab being a mainly agricultural society, in which there is a permanent base for the family members, the extended family type is still predominant.

In Punjab and Haryana fieldwork was carried out in the following districts: Ambala, Amritsar, Bathinda, Chandigarh, Jalandhar, Karnal, Kurukshetra, Mohali and Patiala, while the whole Greater Lisbon was extensively covered with a focus on central Lisbon and Amadora, Odivelas, Loures and Pontinha.

3.2. Methodological approach

For this dissertation, a qualitative-ethnographic research methodology approach was chosen, as it was suitable to obtain in-depth, rich data on daily life, behaviour patterns and activities of transnational migrant households and their impact on gender roles. A qualitative-ethnographic approach facilitates the process of investigating, exploring, and capturing the experiences, interpretations, and opinions of the research subjects. It allows suspending judgment and working with a more robust, general set of inputs. Using an abductive and inductive approach to look at the transnational Sikh Punjabi household can give the necessary space for discovery and avoid a premature narrowing of possibilities and potential avenues.

Following the principles of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), my research plan involved observations and other forms of information gathering, a categorizing of the data and finally an analysis that resulted in looking for outstanding themes that emerged from the data. A constructivist approach was privileged and the participants played a central role in the formation of the conclusions of this work. As the name would indicate, constructivism is concerned with how human interaction helps to shape social reality, or as Schwandt sees it: "*we*

do not find or discover knowledge so much as we construct or make it" (2000: 197). It is to notice that unlike the positivistic orientation, the emphasis here is not on "why" but on "how" things are socially constructed. The focus lays in the work or practices that go into creating the social world and less in its causes (Gubrium & Holstein, 1997). Questions that arose during the data collection phase were often examined together with the families and a jointly constructed understanding of the social situation was privileged.

Qualitative methods support the creation of a trust relationship. The inclusive and participative nature of the research was both an ethical choice but also a means for gaining a depth of understanding of family and gender dynamics that could not have been gathered with a quantitative method using numeral categories. As opposed to the quantitative research approach, the qualitative approach is based on smaller and non-random sampling,

The results of this research do not claim to allow generalizations for the greater population but they help contextualize findings and guide research. The analysis was carried out following an analytical approach as a meaning is given to that provided by the observations. Interpretive research views social reality as being embedded within and impossible to abstract from the social settings, it "interprets" the reality though a "sense-making" process rather than a hypothesis testing process (Susman & Evered, 1978).The participants were informed about the research plan and were often treated as co-constructors of the research.

3.3. Data collection tools and techniques

One of the most popular forms of research into transnational phenomena is ethnography in various sites. Ethnography is described by its pioneer Malinowski (1922) as the methodology that allows "*to gasp the natives point of view, his relation to life, to realize his vision of the world."*. While ethnographers have long time considered the immersion in a single site as the best way to do research, they increasingly expressed concerns about global interconnectedness and the impact it has on local cultures. In was in the late 1980s and with the rise of globalization that the single-sited approach was put into question.

The basic principle of multi-sited ethnography, as suggested by Marcus (1995), is to break away from individual sites and situations, attempting instead to capture the circulation of cultural meanings, objects, and identities over space and time. The idea is to follow socio-cultural

phenomena through multiple sites and across national borders. If the unit of observation is the transnational family, following this approach we need to follow the family network throughout several localities (Gallo, 2009). The movement of people, knowledge and relationships in the transnational space stay on the core of this technic. The researcher moves through a spatially diverse and dispersed field through travelling into two or more places.

Ethnography was carried out through extensive participant observation with migrant and non-migrant members of these families, sharing time with them, with the purpose of looking at and describing their social reality. The social situation most frequently observed during the fieldwork took place inside of the families' domestic unit. I participated to activities inside of different homes involving family members and sometimes other actors such as neighbours or extended relatives. While participating to the families' daily routines, I also attended several ceremonies such as engagements and weddings but also festivals such as Baisakhi, Sikh's solar new year, Lohri, the winter harvest festival or Diwali, the festival of lights, the most celebrated Indian festival. Participation in these events was important because it allowed to observe the dynamics within the family but also their relation to the wider community within their local context.

Considering that research was done with a migrant population speaking mainly Punjabi, especially the ones living in India, the ethnographic method was also a way to tackle the language barrier. As underlined by Gobo (2008), in the ethnographic methodology the pivotal cognitive mode is "observation". It is undeniable that conversations are important but being on the field and observing nonverbal communication and information helps to avoid staged and ready-made information and gives access to more subtle clues.

It was also taken into consideration that the Sikh Punjabi family inscribes itself into the tradition of Indian collectivist societies such as described by Chadda and Deb (2013). This means that the individual family member often models his or her behaviour to comply to other peoples wishes. A popular Hindi phrase that applies across communities in the sub-continent "*log kya kahenge*?" (what will people think?) is a reminder of public expectations as a strong force to control individual behaviour. These disciplining tactics are a characteristic of collectivist societies. By doing participant observation, it is easier to try to gasp realities that people would not want to admit in words.

Observation was the primary source of information while other subsequent sources were necessary to respond to the questions that arose from the observations. Much face-to-face questioning of respondents took place in form of instructed interviews and 3 in depth semi-directed interviews were conducted a posteriori with participants during the phase of data analysis to help interpret some of the observations and give them a cultural meaning.

3.4. Entering the field

I worked in Lisbon as a social worker for Solidariedade Imigrante, an association for the defence of migrants' rights, from 2014 to 2018. The organization has approximately 35.000 members and is mainly visited by migrants coming from Non-EU countries. The country of origin of the members is very diverse and reflects somehow migration trends into the country. In the period of time I was active, the number of Sikh Punjabis visiting the association doubled and they represented the biggest portion of new members in 2017. The reasons for the increasing number of Sikh Punjabi migrants in Lisbon still need to be further investigated but new migration restrictions in other popular European countries for Punjabi migrants such as Italy, Spain and the UK seem to play a big role.

My responsibilities in the association included helping migrants to regularize their administrative situation as well as coordinating a group of migrant women and advocating for migrants' rights in Portugal. My visible commitment in the city gave me a privileged access to migrants' trust as it was clear since the beginning that I was on "their side". I was giving something in exchange and not merely using them as informants.

Their often-irregular administrative status and the risk of exclusion makes it rare for Sikh Punjabis to openly talk about their lived experiences to people outside of their community. Fear of legal consequences or judgement are the main barriers. In my social worker role, it was clear that all information given to me was confidential and that I needed it in order to provide them with guidance and help them navigate the system.

Apart from work, I engaged in extensive faith-based community organizing, often working with other civil society organizations in the city to address issues such as access to healthcare, housing and education for undocumented migrants in Lisbon. By reaching out to organizations and institutions that have established relationship with the Sikh Punjabi community such as places of worship, or by just being present in strategic places in Lisbon for the community such

as Martim Moniz Square, Senhor Roubado, Pontinha, Odivelas or Amadora, I gained important insights on Sikh Punjabi migrants' lifestyle. Contacts made during those years also resulted in two travels to Punjab before deciding to engage in the starting of this research project.

The proximity to the community and the already advantaged access to information, made it easy to identify people who could be willing to let me spend more time with them in order for me to collect narrations and experiences.

Fieldwork in urban Lisbon was easy to organize in comparison with the fieldwork carried out in India. Doing an international mobility year as an outgoing student at Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi allowed increasing my reach to be able to visit the selected families in Punjab. Living in the capital from June 2018 to September 2019, I mostly used buses to travel to Punjab and Haryana. Buses from Delhi are available every hour, costing in average around 2 to 5€. My poor Hindi and Punjabi as well as my white features made me noticeable amongst the crowd and particular care and attention had to be put into keeping my journeys as safe as possible. While my personal experience was positive, threats to women's safety are real and the fact that I was alone put me in a vulnerable position. An example for a strategy I used was to systematically ask the bus drivers to talk to the person I was driving to on the phone to make sure I knew where to exit the bus but more importantly to communicate that someone was expecting me and following up on my journey. The weather conditions also made fieldwork more challenging, from a cold and foggy winter to an extreme hot monsoon and summer with temperatures reaching up to 50c°.

3.5. Data management and alalysis

For a better presentation of the findings and to answer research questions, it was imperative to maintain a standard data management process. Since an observant participation in multiple sites during an extended period of time brings a huge amount of data, it requires systemic organizing. A field diary was used in which all observational, methodological, theoretical and emotional considerations were noted down. A detailed record of both objective observations and subjective feelings was kept. Notes were never taken during the observations but were mostly written down late at night or early in the morning in the absence of the participants. Important memos and questions were recorded on the phone and pictures were taken. Parts of the interviews were transcribed in verbatim.

The notion of what is "data" in ethnography is also debatable (Pool, 2017). While a distinction is often made between "hard data", being transcripts, photographs or material objects, and "soft data" being memories and impressions, I decided also to take the rich and relevant information into account that I got prior to the observant participation when I was working with the Sikh Punjabi migrants in Lisbon.

The analysis of the data often began during the observations as particular attention was given to organize the data using the previously established "sensitizing concepts" (Blumer, 1954). Charmaz (2003, p.259) has referred to sensitizing concepts as "those background ideas that inform the overall research problem". The attention was directed to observe the different roles of the family members within a household, with a particular focus on the gender and transnational networks. These analytic lenses suggest in which direction to look during fieldwork and analysis. After fieldwork, important themes from the field notes and memos were identified and a thematic analysis was carried out. According to Riessman (2008), this form of analysis is especially appealing for novice qualitative researchers who are looking for flexibility.

3.6. Reflexivity and ethical considerations

When engaging in participant observation in Lisbon, I had a certain sense of being an "insider". Even though I am neither a migrant, nor a Sikh Punjabi, my extensive immersion in the community made it very easy and natural to enter people's domestic unit. There was a certain ambiguity between rapport and friendship (Glesne, 1989) with the participants, especially with the key informants. It was important to stay conscious of these dynamics, without seeing them as a threat for scientific research. In recent decades, we have witnessed a multiplication of voices calling for the deconstruction of the notion of "objectivity" and for a change of perspective (Payne & Payne, 2004). The famous "distant gaze" advocated by Lévi-Strauss (1962) based on the tacit rule of distancing the ethnographic "subject" is put into question. By involving participant in designing the research, the idea was to break away from the idea that "I was doing research on Sikh Punjabi transnational households" to rather see it as "I was participating in research on Sikh Punjabi transnational households". Intersubjectivity was privileged over objectivity.

The reality is, the social situations observed are always, in one way or another, modified by the presence of the observer, who is then transformed in return. In the field, the attempt to maintain a certain form of neutrality would therefore be illusory, even unproductive. As Copans (1999: 13) puts it "*all social life is nothing but a series of decisions, choices, preferences, refusals, silences, and avoidances and the researcher must adapt to these situations and flow with them*". In this kind of work, the abandonment of a distant and external posture is not only a epistemological choice but a scientific necessity. Nevertheless a constant effort of reflexivity was made (Bourdieu, 1990), with a permanent reflection on the extent to my presence itself was affecting the research and the findings.

"Participating" during my fieldwork in Lisbon often resulted in actively engaging in different types of activities such as accompanying mothers during their visits to the family doctor or supporting fathers to get their documentation ready in order to apply for family unification. Those were often situations in which, I, as a local social worker who speaks Portuguese, could not just observe "from the outside" but was expected to actively be involved in. It did in many ways increase my capacity to have insights on intimate questions linked to gender by becoming part of the situations.

Doing fieldwork in Punjab brought many other challenges. In fact, it was inevitable that participants would perceive me as an "outsider". I do not speak the language and I am white. In India, particularly in the north, white skinned foreigners benefit from a positive bias that is still linked to British colonialism. I have often been referred to as "angreji madam" which literally translates to an "English madam". Today, dark skin is still associated with poverty and being low-caste while fairness is associated with being high-caste and more "developed".

Due to my connection to their family members in Lisbon, most of the people who welcomed me in their home did not show any suspicion and were happy to have someone interested in knowing more about the Punjabi family. Participants were curious and usually asked a lot of questions. Self-disclosure became not only an ethical mandate but also a way to bring the topic of gender into focus. For most of the families I have been in, it was uncommon to see a single woman in her late 20ies travelling alone with no immediate plans of marrying. The question of "*how my parents feel about me being in India and not wanting to marry*" was very frequent and already gave me interesting clues about gendered expectations and authority within the families. Sharing aspects of my personal life also helped to create fairness and bring balance to fieldwork.

To help create an environment ideal for observation, efforts were put into becoming as local as possible. The goal was not to simply mimic locals but rather to look as natural as possible within the environment and the role that was assigned to me by other family members. From the eating habits to the way people interact with each other, I tried to just do as the locals and did not ask for adaptations. I also complied with gendered restrictions, often finding myself hemmed to the domestic space. Restrictions to travel that applied to other women in the families were applied to me too. During fieldwork in Jalandhar for example, a family refused to let me leave by bus to Amritsar, which is 80km away, even when I had come to them by a 12 hours night bus ride on my own. I had to delay my departure to another family as I was driven to the other city by a driver on the following morning. During such situations, I often decided to set personal beliefs and convictions aside and just follow what was expected from me.

During fieldwork in Punjab it was usually men who were organizing my stay and actively engaging with me. They were often the most fluent in English and the main decision takers of the family. While accepting this situation without trying to overcome their authority, I put an extra attention into spending as much time as possible with the women, offering to help them with house chores. While the large majority always refused, I asked to watch them while they prepare meals and made efforts to bond over common experiences. The presence of an external woman in their homes could feel threatening or invasive so I especially focused on making women understand and feel comfortable with my presence.

A challenging aspect of this multi-sited ethnographic work, was dealing with the amount of confidential information I was getting. I followed the basic principle that researchers must not harm their study participants. This is much more serious responsibility when working with people in risk of exclusion such as undocumented migrants. Confidentiality was addressed during research planning and at three points during the research process: data collection, data cleaning, and dissemination of research results.

During data collection, I chose not to present and use confidentiality agreements, as I feared it would make participants more conscious about what they are sharing. My efforts into becoming as insider as possible made the use of forms and signed agreements not practical. I did verbally communicate my ethical commitments and extensively used video-calls to make family members here and there participate in conversations and help me convey messages such as addressing questions of confidentiality.

After the observation phase, I anonymized the collected data and selected the useful information for my research question. Identifiers were removed such as name and address. Some data however, like unique family combinations, was more difficult to deal with. In most of the cases, participants' unique life events and other contextual identifiers still made participants identifiable. Specific attention was put into avoiding quotations and examples when disseminating the results that could lead to the identification of the participants. Details that would not affect the meaning of the situation were therefore sometimes modified.

In order not to harm the participants, a large amount of data will remain unpublished as it would simply lead to deductive disclosure (Graham & Wiles, 2008) or expose migrants' strategies to overcome barriers such as immigration laws. Maintaining confidentiality and dealing with sensitive data was a challenge throughout the entire research process. Despite the fact that the importance of a respectful and fair dealing with data is emphasized in sociology (Grinyer, 2002), there is no practical and specific guidance on disguising participants identities in qualitative research (Giordano et al., 2007; Graham & Wiles, 2008).

CHAPTER FOUR

Analysis and Discussion

4.1. Socio-demographic profile of Sikh Punjabis migrating to Lisbon

As explained in chapter 2, whereas other Indian migrants have been in Portugal for several generations, Sikh Punjabi migration flow is more recent. Available data makes it very difficult to understand and trace the extent and origins of Punjabi migration to Portugal. Portugal's statistics on migration do not differentiate between the different Indian communities living in the country. The most recent figures from the Immigration, Borders and Asylum Report of the Service for Foreigners and Borders (2020, SEF) show an increase in applications from Indian citizens for residence permits. SEF scheduled a total of 23.295 appointments for Indian migrants in 2019. According to official numbers, the total Indian community comprises 17.619 people and 1225 were granted Portuguese citizenship in 2019.

As it was anticipated in chapter 2, this number does not reflect the reality and leaves out a large part of Sikh Punjabis living in Portugal due to their irregular administrative situation. People who do not have a residency permit in Portugal are not taken into account for these statistics, even if they have already submitted their application or if they are registered in other State administrations such as the social security or the finance. Most organizations in contact with the community agree that the number is significantly higher. The only previous estimations made on the number of Sikh Punjabis in Portugal are from 2012 (Myrvold) and talk about 8000 individuals. Community leaders such as the *granthi* (priest) in charge of Lisbon's Gurdwara, the president of the Association Solidariedade Imigrante and the president of the Portugal's Kabbadi association (an Indian sports practice) agree to say that the Punjabi community alone comprises today surely over 10.000 people. As most migrants, Punjabi Sikhs tend to live in Lisbon, or at least have their permanent address in Lisbon, even if they work across the country. According to SEF's latest statistics, most migrants reside in the capital or in the bordering districts such as Sintra, Cascais, Amadora and Loures.

The community is visibly predominantly male. This is easily observed in every Sikhs place of worship and during Sikhs' big annual street procession *nagar kirtan*. As described by Khurana (2011), the *nagar kirtan* or "*public procession of devotional singing*" has been an important occasion for Sikhs in the diaspora to mark both a performative and celebratory aspect of Sikh religiosity. The procession looks back to recreate the familiarity of a world the Sikh diaspora

has left behind. It is the event in Portugal that brings a large part of the Sikh community together and that allows, to some extent, to gain an insight on the demographics.

In April 2018, the *nagar kirtan* took place in the center of Lisbon city and the procession started in front of the Rossio train station to end at the Marquês de Pombal roundabout. Led by saffron-robed men who walked in front of the Holy Scripture carried by a car on a float, the event blocked the Avenue of Liberty for over 2 hours. An estimated 7000 people participated. There were women and children but representing only an estimated 30 % of the crowd. They were not only smaller in numbers but also less involved in the organizing of the event. Free food was distributed before and after the procession and mostly men seemed to coordinate the function. A look at the mass allows the conclusion that the majority of present Sikhs are young, between 18 and 35 years old.

During the whole multi-sited ethnographic experience, not one Sikh Punjabi migrant having a higher education degree was identified. Most of Punjabi migrants in Portugal have finished their primary education and some have carried on until secondary schooling. A proportion of people have learned a manual profession such as carpenters and welders. A significant amount of migrants have already worked in agriculture before coming to Lisbon, be it as laborers or on their own land. Most migrants speak Punjabi, Hindi, English and sometimes a little bit of Portuguese.

4.2. The socio-economic integration of Sikh Punjabis in Lisbon

As we mentioned in different point of this work, the Sikh Punjabi migration to Portugal is largely characterized by irregular immigration, reflecting the features of flows from Punjab in other EU countries (Cloet et al., 2012). According to their own explanations, most migrants travelled to Portugal with the help of so-called "travel agents". The fee charged by the agents depends on the route taken. Which route migrants will use depends on their ease of obtaining a legitimate visa, their networks in the receiving country and their economic resources.

The three most common scenarios for Sikh Punjabis to migrate to Portugal are; 1) Travelling with a tourist visa and overstaying, 2) entering in the Schengen space with the help of human trafficking networks or 3) family reunification which is the most common legal route taken.

Portugal's labour market need for cheap labour and its flexible immigration policies make it an attractive destination for low schooled migrants from Punjab which take up the risk of a migration project without the legal documents.

While immigration policies are described as being less strict than in other countries by the migrants themselves, there are in practice a lot of obstacles to a successful inclusion and access to all the rights such as healthcare or education. For undocumented new arrivals there is a limited access to the job market and the mostly find themselves do repetitive and manual labour in order to survive. During the fieldwork it has been regularly observed that employers pay their workers a wage lower than the minimum wage and some even work in exchange of food and accommodation. The work contract becomes the most important feature of the work relation, more than the wage, as it will eventually allow the migrant to regularize their administrative situation in Portugal. In fact, most irregular migrants regularize by proving that they have been working and contributing to the social security through taxes.

> Jugraj works in a phone shop in Amadora in the periphery of Lisbon. The owner of the shop is from the same city in Punjab and they have met in Lisbon's *gurdwara* shortly after Jugrajs arrival in Portugal. He works from 10am to 11pm. He is in the shop on his own and does the opening as well as the closing. His employer comes to check on him, but usually does not stay in the shop. Jugraj has a place to stay in his employer's apartment on the floor above the shop. According to him, his employers pays "his taxes, food and housing and gives him 300€ cash" despite the fact that his contract and his salary slips mention the minimum wage. He is off on Sunday until 4 pm.
>
> [Field notes] Jugraj, man, 22, emigrated in 2015, high school diploma, shop employee, living and working in Amadora since 2016

Many of the subjects of my study admit being forced to take employment well below their status in Punjab. It was commonly observed that the family members in Punjab had little to no information about their relatives working conditions in Portugal. Man would be employed in sectors they would not work in while in their home country. Even though most of the migrants do not come from wealthy families, they find their situation fails to match their expectations of their new life. Overtime and work on weekends is also common to compensate the very low wages, which then leaves workers with little spare time to make new social networks and with very few new social opportunities.

> Sukhwant works in the kitchen of a Portuguese restaurant. When he arrived in Lisbon he wanted to find a Portuguese employer in order to be forced to learn the language. Even though he admitted that it was not easy to find an employer who would give him a working contract, as he had no residency permit, he

ended up bargaining something he qualifies as "pretty decent". He is off on Mondays and works from 11am to 11pm. In exchange, he earns the minimum wage and is allowed to eat at work. Two years after his arrival, he has not made many friends as he explains that he uses his only day off to deal with "paper things" and to do his laundry. In Punjab, he remembers not having to do any of these domestic tasks. He had never worked before and qualifies life back home as "no tension life".

[Field notes] Sukhwant, man, 24, emigrated in 2015, 10th class, kitchen aid, living and working in Lisbon since 2015

Visits in Punjab have allowed concluding that many of the migrants present in Portugal come from a similar socio-economical background. Sikh Punjabis in Lisbon mostly come from small land owning families who could be qualified as having a middle socio-economic status. For most people encountered during the period of this research, their place of origin was rather rural and remote. It was also observed that it was not uncommon that men had never worked before migrating. Migration to Europe is supposed to offer them an opportunity to earn a more stable and comfortable life on long-term. Nevertheless, the initial conditions in which those financial gains are meant to be made often come as a shock for newly arrived migrants, as for other migration flows. For Sikh Punjabis in Portugal, migration commonly initially means downward mobility. In Lisbon, they end up being low paid workers in 3D occupations (dirty, dangerous and demanding). They usually work in mini-markets, as kitchen aids, in mobile phone shops and large numbers work ass seasonal agriculture labourers in other regions of the country for parts of the year.

Even though most of the migrants do not seem to radically differ from each other when it comes to the economic situation in Punjab, Sikh migrants in Portugal are not a homogenous group. Two main groups can be identified within the community. Those are not castes by the orthodox Hindu Brahmanical meaning but often operate as such. The largest part of the migrants in Portugal come from the Jat community. Jats were historically farmers, landowners and warriors and although no authentic figures are available, it is said that Jats comprise 25 to 30 per cent of the total population of the Indian Punjab. As underlined by Kaur (1986), they operate as leaders in villages of Punjab because of their numerical and socio-economic dominance. They can be seen as the "head" of the Sikh Punjabi caste hierarchy. In Portugal, religious leaders and influential members of the community are usually Sikh Jats. In smaller number, there are the Dalits, a term used for people belonging to castes in India who have been subjected to untouchability. Most of them are Mazhabi Sikhs or Chamars and they are legally recognized in India as being part of the category of scheduled caste. A part of them, argue that the stigma of

untouchability remained with them despite their adoption of the Sikh way of life which aimed to seek caste equality and therefore visit a separated place of worship in Lisbon, *Shri Guru Ravidass Sabha*. As explained by Ram (2017), the Ravidassia movement is a Dalit response to social exclusion emanating from oppressive social structures coupled with the persistence of acute landlessness among Dalits in Punjab. In Portugal, migrants following Guru Ravidass have been observed to also interchangeably visit the Sikh temples across the country and participate in Sikh ceremonies and festivals. Families that are part of the research sample and visit Shri Guru Ravidass Sabha still described themselves as being Sikh. In 2018, for Ambedkar Jayanti, Dr. Bhim Ramji Ambedkar's anniversary ceremony, Sikh religious leaders visited the Ravidassia temple in Intendente in order to show their solidarity. Dr. Ambedkar was a politician and economist considered to be the father of Indian constitution and a great leader in the fight against untouchability and caste discrimination. During the fieldwork in Lisbon, the practice of untouchability was not observed nor reported but members of the Ravidassi community commonly deplore that the caste problem in Sikhism is not addressed and that there is a cultural hegemony that excludes them. Finding a job within the community or an accommodation is reported to be more difficult because of their caste identity.

4.3.   Scoping migratory projects of Sikh Punjabis in Lisbon

"How did you come to Portugal?" or "Why did you come to Portugal?" These were usually the first questions asked to migrants when they visited the association Solidariedade Imigrante. These interrogations were mostly replied by generic affirmations that did not vary much from one migrant to the other "I want to work in Portuguese agriculture because I'm an agriculture worker in my country" or "I don't' have good conditions in my country". In most of the cases this affirmations are correct to some extent.

During the extensive fieldwork, first in Lisbon and later in Punjab, the immersion in the community allowed to identify that for the vast majority of migrants from Punjab in Lisbon, migration was not an individual choice but a family project such. As it was described by Mand (2002), the migration of one family member supposed to enable the migration of other family members. As migration from Punjab is a more recent phenomenon, most of the migrants seen during the research period were the so-called "first generation" migrants. Most of the "first" Sikh migrants coming to Portugal in the 1990ies currently already got the Portuguese citizenship and often left the country to seek for other opportunities, often in the UK. Mc

Garrigle and Ascensão even describe Lisbon as a transit locality in the migration journeys of Punjabi Sikhs to Europe (2017). Sikh Punjabi migrants coming to Portugal can, according to the field observations, be divided into 3 categories; a) Single men, b) Married men migrating alone and leaving behind their family members and c) the nuclear family. During the whole period of fieldwork, not one case of single woman migration was identified.

a) The young sinlge male

The most common scenario observed within the Sikh Punjabi community in Portugal, is the migration of the young single man. Families with a middle socio-economic status collectively invest into the migration of one of their sons, mostly the eldest, in order for him to be the pioneer of a family migration project. The initial idea is to send one son aboard so that later after regularization and/or citizenship, he can allow the migration of other family members. This phenomena as largely been described by Jacobsen and Myrold (2012) when looking at transnational practices of European Sikhs. Sometimes these men migrate in small groups with peers and in some cases they already have contacts in the country of destination.

It is the case of Dalwinder, 31 years old in 2018. He is the youngest child of the family. His family's home is located near to the border with Pakistan. His parents, his both sisters and him used to live together before he left Punjab to Europe. As per Punjabi tradition, his eldest sister was the first to get married. He assisted to the wedding and performed all his duties during the ceremony, such as the traditional of the "goodbye moment" where both the bride and her brother are expected to act emotional and even cry. At that time, the decision of his migration to Portugal was already taken. He left his hometown in 2013, shortly after the sister's wedding, to first migrate to Germany.

"At that time migration was open there for like some homeless situation but then it didn't work and I do some work there for the money and then with friends we decided to come to Portugal because we know here it is easier for the papers, because my mum and dad want me to go back and with no papers I cannot go back" (Excerpt, Interview n°2)

His migration was taken care of by an agent in his home city and his parents covered all the financial costs, including the financial support during the initial few months in Germany. His father operates as a religious leader within his community. 5 years after his migration to Europe, family pressure was high. Initially the parents were expecting their son to return home within a couple of years so that they could arrange his wedding, but legal constraints came in the way. When visiting the family's house in Punjab in 2018, Dalwinder's parents had recently arranged their youngest daughter's wedding and she had left. According to the parents, it was not the ideal situation as they would have preferred to arrange Dalwinder's marriage first, but they had to do it because the daughter's age was becoming an issue. She was married in the end of 2017 to a Punjabi migrant living in Italy and was shortly after the wedding

called to Italy through a family reunification process. The parents proudly showcases all the electro domestics bought with the remittances sent by their son.

In 2019 Dalwinder got his residency permit through a regularization process and was planning to go back to his hometown to get married. He told to me:

"Now is the good age for marriage. (...) First, she will stay with mum and dad because now they are old and need help but I want to make them come all to Portugal. It is better everyone come here later because in India now no one respect the rules. Here we can life with the family." (Excerpt, Interview n°2)

[Field notes] Dalwinder, man, 31 years old, emigrated in 2013, high school diploma, construction worker, living in Lisbon since 2015

Dalwinder's situation is a situation several times observed during the multi-sited field experience. The investment in the migration of a single son to Europe is mostly a decision made by the father, or in absence of the father, by the parent recognized as the family leader. The choice of the destination and of the modes of migration depend on the existence of accessible regular migration options and their financial resources. The main source of information for families when taking this decision is from close social connections such as families, friends and neighbors. Often these sources are more trusted than official sources, which makes it very common for people to have misleading information before arrival to the host country. As in the case of Dalwinder, a regularization in two years was promised when in reality it took 3 times longer. This puts enormous pressure on migrants who have little to no impact on how long their regularization can take. Trends were observed in several villages: in a few a large part of their young male population had migrated to Italy for examples, in others it was Spain. The choice of the destination has more to do with current offers by "travel agents", or with what other men in the village did, than with some other kind of informed decision.

For most families who sent their sons to Europe, migration represents a potential reward even if it is for the next generation. From Punjabi's perspective, migration, even if irregular and operated with the coordination of agents, is a safe investment for future taking into account the Indian context characterized by lack of economic opportunities for them. Throughout the fieldwork, when asked, migrant families admitted investing the equivalent of 8000€ to 15.000€ into their, or their kin's migration to Europe. This price includes the complete administrative procedure for the visa, the training for the interviews, the passing of language exams if necessary and the transportation. Punjab being a state of massive emigration also increased the

reliance of families on remittances as key components of household income, as it was show for other migration flows. For most Punjabis, impressions gained through television, cinema and social media of the wealthy west are reinforced by the new houses built in Punjab with the money remitted from migrants oversees. Their arrival to Portugal often initially comes as a disappointment.

The money that Punjabi families invest into the migration of their sons can be compared to the investment made into education. There is supposed to be a return on investment for the whole family. The tradition of dowry such as previously described (Sharma, 1993) increases the value of the investment. In fact, in Punjab, the desired men for marriage are medical doctors, civil servants, engineers, company executives and most importantly in the contemporary Punjabi context: men who have a residency permit in an occidental country and therefore could represent an opportunity of upward mobility for the bride.

Discussing numbers and dowry was a very difficult and delicate task during fieldwork, but according to observations, the gifts given as dowry could somehow match the investment done for the migration of the son. During one wedding, a recently married men explained, in line with the parenthood anthropological studies, that, the dowry is not really a cost for the bride's family, it is simply a compensation for all the money that the "new" family will have to spend as a result of having a new family member to take care off, including the family unification that costs money.

> In this sense it is also interested to highlight the case of Pardeep, 29 years. He had been in Portugal for a total of 4 years before getting his residency permit. He worked in a Chinese grocery shop and lived with two other Indian families. He was the only single man in the domestic unit and spent most of his time at home or at work. He was off only on Sunday mornings to go to the *gurdwara* for praying. Despite his low salary of around 500€, he sent money to his parents every month. His parents in Punjab have a comfortable situation compared to his own lifestyle in Lisbon. They are both still in their late forties and are owners of a well-equipped and modern house. His mother is a homemaker and his father owns a small cement business. Despite his difficult situation in Lisbon, the migrant explains that it was a question of pride for him to send money to India, even if his parents did not need the money. Pardeep talked about it as a form of saving, it is money that stays in the family and that will be spend in for the family. He returned to his village near to Jalandhar in January 2019 and married a couple of weeks later and I was invited to the ceremony and celebration.

> His wedding lasted for a total of 5 days. On the final day, his bride came back to his parental home. Both bride and groom were given privacy while the house was still filled with family members sleeping in each room of the house. The following day, the new bride dressed up and sat in the room all morning in order

for extended family members and people from the neighborhood to come and welcome her. While she was sitting with the guests and with Pardeep's female cousins in the room, the parents were receiving gifts that arrived in a minivan that had to do several rounds. A big box full of clothes, for the groom, the bride but also for the groom's parents, furniture for the house including a full bedroom set and electro domestics for the kitchen, decoration such as curtains and paintings and several sets of bedsheets. Later in the morning, the groom also received a new scooter. These "gifts" were sent by the bride's family that the newly married couple and all their relatives went to visit in the afternoon. It is said to be tradition, to visit the bride's family on the day after the weeding in some communities. The bride's family was composed by her parents, her brother who was in Punjab for the wedding but lived in Italy and worked in agriculture and other extended relatives.

[Field notes], Jahlandar (Punjab), Pardeep's family house, January 2019, Pardeep's wedding]

The obstacles to migrate legally make transnational marriages and the following reunification important means for Sikh women to migrate to Portugal. These marriages are in large majority arranged and facilitated by the family in respect for Sikh Punjabi social customs. Within this modern phenomenon of transnational marriages, the form remains very conventional and often leaves little to no agency to both the bride and the groom. The dowry as well as the patrilocal residence result on keeping women in a position of subordination. The groom being a migrant just increases the burden of dowry on the bride's family and often represent a huge economic loss. As it later happened in Pardeep's case, brides are almost never immediately reunified. This has to do with both legal reasons, considering that the procedures for a family reunification can be heavy and slow, and family reasons, due to the fact that in-laws might want to new bride to stay with them and contribute to the domestic tasks and all types of care work.

Pardeep's wife stayed with her in-laws when he left back to Portugal, two months after the marriage. Meanwhile she had a child and Pardeep did not assist the pregnancy nor the delivery because he could not come back as he had already spent 3 months outside of Portugal on his residency permit. Travelling again could have made the renewal of his permit difficult. In 2020, Pardeep called his wife and his son to Lisbon where they now live together with another Sikh Punjabi family.

b) The married man, migrating alone and leaving his family members behind

Another usual migration profile within this flow is constitute by men who migrate on their own after their marriage and after having children in origin. In some cases observed, this is a temporary situation but for some people the reunification with their family members becomes difficult because of obstacles such as legal constraints, inability to match the migration requirements, especially when it comes to the minimum earning or in more rare cases,

disconnection with the family or even health concerns such as addictions. It has been observed that the expectations by the family in origin are difficult to match in the current Portuguese socio—economic reality. Most of migrants struggle financially and have difficulties contributing to life in origin or to regularize their situation in Portugal. While working in Solidariedade Imigrante, it was common to see Punjabi men suffering from depression, anxiety or/and addictions. Others have a more stabilized life, but have a too large family to think about reunification.

It is the case of Sonny, 33 years. Sonny has two brothers, one elder and one younger. They all used to live together in their family home with their parents. His older brother left the family after his wife passed away in tragic circumstances, leaving behind one son. Sonny married in 2012 and has since then taken care of Amit, his brother's son, as if it was his own. He has legally adopted the child in 2019. In 2013, Sonny's wife gave birth to a boy. In the same week, Sonny emigrated toward France to join a cousin. As he told to me: *"The agent called me and said I have to go day after, I had taken Vinod in my arms only one time. Then I left"*. First, he picked apples in France during a few months without contract before moving to Portugal and finding a job in a Kebab restaurant and legalizing in 2018. His father died in 2016 and there are 5 people at his home in Punjab: His mother, his wife, his younger brother and his two children. Since he has a residency permit, he returned to Punjab twice but is not planning to make his family come to Portugal for now:

"Normally I can decide but my mother talked with me, how can she live alone? This is one problem. Mum needs my wife because she take care of children also. This is not a problem for us." (Excerpt, Interview n°1)

As his earnings do not allow him to make the whole family come, he cannot take away his wife from his dependent mother. His brother is currently 29 and jobless and is trying to go to Europe. He has by now already tried once, but was sent back by immigration enforcement in Qatar.

During Sonny's interview and two previous visits to his family home in Punjab, it was observed that the couple had no private and individual projects and no display of complicity. They met on their wedding day and were separated by Sonny's migration less than one year later. Sonny sent the remittances to his mother and not to the wife and communication between Sonny and other family members was filter by his mother or his brother. If he for example wants to talk to his wife, he would mostly call his mother first and ask to talk to his wife.

The migration of Sonny did not really change the expectations towards Sonia, the wife. She spends most of her day taking care of the children and of her mother-in-law while being responsible for all the domestic work. Sonny and her wife have had very serious crisis in the past, as she returned to her father's house for a few days without taken her adoptive child. This was, in his words, "a shameful situation" that created

a lot of tensions within the family. The relationship between her and Sonny's brother was similar to what was observed in other families between married couples. She did not show any sign of affection and never directly talked to him, but cooked according to his preferences, served him first and asked him to go with her whenever she needed to go to a market or do something outside the house.

Sonia did express interest in travelling to Portugal but responded to my questions with a lot of distrust. Several times, Sonia did use the time when she was alone with me to inquire about her husband's life in Portugal. She asked about the existence of other women in his life and wondered about his daily habits.

[Field notes], Amritsar (Punjab), Sonny's family house, November 2018 & February 2019]

I also commonly observed that the men of the household who did not migrate often take up the leaving husband's responsibilities and authority. This is always done in accordance with the hierarchy rules within the family, which follow the hypergamic principle and always asking the approval of the elders (Das, 1976),

An interesting experience in this line was also the one of Kulwinder, 46 years old in 2019. Kulwinder migrated to Portugal in 2007. He was caught up in an illegal immigration network arrested by Borders and Foreigners Service (SEF) and denied entry in Portugal during 5 years. During that period, he continued working in Portugal, in agriculture and to paying social security taxes without being able to apply for a residency permit. In 2015, he finally applied for a permit that was only granted in 2019. In Portugal, he has mostly lived between Lisbon and Algarve, always in shared apartments with other South Asian migrants.

His family composed by his father, his wife, two daughters (15 & 20 years old) and one son (19) live in a small village in Haryana. He did send remittances whenever he was able to but admits that he often spends long periods not being able to send any money. The remittances were sent directly to his father.
I visited his hometown during the fieldwork in 2019 while Kulwinder was also there for the first time after leaving in 2007. In that moment, the focus of the family was on trying to find a way to make the Kulwinder's son migrate to Europe. As his son was already coming on age and was not enrolled in any school anymore, it was too late for a family reunification. During the field visit that lasted two days, Kulwinder's daughters shared their school projects with me and expressed no interest in migrating or marriage. The youngest wants to work in the fashion industry while the eldest was pursuing education to become a schoolteacher. During my 2 day stay in the family house, Kulwinder and his wife did not really interact with each other. They did not share a room at night. Kulwinder slept in a bed in the living room while his wife shared her bed with her daughters. I was in no position to understand if this was because of my presence or if it was the usual situation as asking the question would have been considered inappropriate.

[Field notes], Kurukshetra (Haryana), Kulwinder's family house, February 2019]

As observed in Kulwinder's case, most migrants who have been away of their families for a long time or who have more than one child, end up not immediately considering reunification. Kulwinder's interest in making his son migrate is logical in a patrilineal and patrilocal kinship system as it is a way to insure better opportunities for the next generations in the family through migration. The lack of interest for the migration of the daughters, for whom the legal procedure would be much easier as both are still in school, correlates with the fact that it would be an investment for another family. After the wedding of their daughters, they would leave the parental home, making their migration an unnecessary investment. This is the same reasoning that discourages parents in Punjab in investing in their daughter's education and rather save for the dowry.

c) The nuclear family

In more rare cases, the whole nuclear family migrates together, sometimes composed by only a couple, more seldom by a couple with children. In recent years, civil society organizations that work with migrants in Lisbon such as GABIP Almirante Reis (Gabinete de Apoio aos Bairro de Intervenção Prioritária) observed an increase of the cases of pregnant couples arriving in Portugal from Punjab. Numerous projects have been developed over the past 5 years, to inform and guide migrant pregnant women who are in an irregular situation. These projects usually focus on how to safely navigate the healthcare system.

> An emblematic case found in my fieldwork of this type of migration is the Harpreet one. She comments; "*I love my family but without husband it is difficult because I have no another guy in my house which I am going to market or another place. I would have been only alone. Sukhraj decided when we are going to foreign country we are both going because it is better for our own life. After the paper we can apply mum dad and then they can also come here.*" (Interview n°3)

> Harpreet married in 2014 when she was 21 and moved to Portugal only a couple of months later. After the wedding, she lived for a short time with her in-laws, her husband and her husband's brother. The family decided that the three family members would migrate together. With the guidance of an agent, they first arrived in Belgium for 2 weeks and then moved to Portugal. When she arrived in Portugal, Harpreet was pregnant and sought for help in Solidariedade Imigrante.

> I visited the the Hapreet's family in a small village near Mohali in March 2019. Sukhraj parents were in very good shape and both were still working. The father owns land and coordinates laborers who came from Bihar to work on it while the mother works at home and takes care of the kettle. During the stay in the family, Harpreet and Sukhraj were there for holidays with their daughter Rupi.

For Harpreet, the absence of a young men in the new family seems to justify her migration to Europe. Even though Sukhraj's father is still present, she seems not to take him into consideration. It is also important to underline that the investment for the migration of 3 adults is high and that the family's comfortable financial situation made it possible. When talking with families that have migrated jointly, this was a common feature. In some cases, when families were larger, the presence of other daughters in law in the house were also a reason for facilitating migration. During the fieldwork, it was also observed that a significant number of women who migrated during their pregnancy with their husbands were misinformed about citizenship rules for their future child. The recent changes made to the law (2020) allow the children of immigrants who have lived in Portugal for at least one year to have Portuguese nationality at birth but it is not automatic. In most of the cases encountered during the period of fieldwork, not only the children could not apply for citizenship, but they were also kept in an irregular situation, not having a residency permit.

Migration during pregnancy was often a family strategy to insure a more stable future life for the child and regularization for the family but this does not always succeed. There was no migration of a pregnant woman on her own during the whole period of the fieldwork.

4.4. Women labor here and there

While the caste and class play a role in women's occupation, housekeeping and domestic care work was observed as the main activity of married women in Punjab within transnational families. Fieldwork observation confirmed an existing segregation of time allocation by gender within the transnational Sikh-Punjabi family both in Punjabi and in Portugal. In Punjab, I generally observed that men work for wages mostly outside their home while women and daughters have overlapping household chores. In most of the cases analyzed in this research, men do not only work outside the home but also outside of the country, while women often still fulfill their role within their homes in origin. Along with household tasks, a small amount of women is employed, though many tend to be in the informal sector, especially when living in India. According to the primary census abstract of Punjab (2011), the total female labor force participation in Punjab is of 12,39 percent. This means that only a small proportions of women

is employed. For Lisbon, no data is available because of the previously described reasons, but empirical notes suggest similar trends.

An insightful way to understand gender roles and how they potentially change within the migration process is to look at what kind of work women do, here and there.. By work we understand any type of work that is carried out and expected by women, be it paid or unpaid, inside or outside the domestic sphere. Sikh Punjabi women in transnational families face the challenges of a patrilineal and patrilocal kinship system (cDas, 1967) with its expectations in a changed cross-border context.

To understand to what extent migration has affected gender roles it is important to compare the labor that women do in Punjab when they stay behind, as well as in Lisbon when they migrate. As discussed in chapter 2 and 3, Sikh Punjabis still mostly live in a joint family system in which the male head of the family takes up a leader and protector role for the other members of the family, mostly being the only or the main breadwinner. It is the males who own the land and who have the authority to deploy the labor of sons, daughters, daughters-in-law and their children (Gill & Matthews, 1995).

In the Sikh Punjabi kinship system, display of deference is owned by females to males and by younger family members to older ones. This is why, women can most of the time not take their own decisions when it comes to what they want to do for a living. They are often restricted in their movements by the need to protect their reputation, as the honor of their husband and the whole family depends on it. Conventional kinship rules urge women to adjust within their marital homes in order to earn respect from their mother-in-law and win their husband's gratitude (Singh & Uberoi 1994).

In my fieldworkI observed that , that after a marriage women who belong to the husbands' family rise in the family hierarchy the moment their daughter-in-law moves in the household following the patrilocal patterns. As already discussed, the Sikh Punjabi migrant wives mostly originate from rural areas and are unaccustomed to paid work. Moreover they are insufficiently fluent in English or Portuguese.

4.4.1. Women's work in Punjab

During the research period in Punjab, the large majority of women living in transnational families exclusively worked in their domestic sphere. Their role consisted in carrying out a whole range of domestic duties such as cooking, cleaning, making the laundry and taking care

of their and their family members' children if there were any. For those living in rural areas, working the land usually added to women's duties. When looking at women's occupation in general in Punjab, one can see that besides the work in the household, women are concentrated in low-paying jobs, generally overrepresented in clerical, sales, service occupations and care work. Sectors that largely remain undervalued and unrecognized. Some women lived alone with their in-laws and others had a larger extended family. Intersiting in this sense is looking at the case of Simran3 0 years old woman lives in Ambala. She studied until the 10th class and married when she was 23 years old. Since then she is a homemaker.

> Simran is the first to wake up in her household, usually around 6. She lives with her three boys, her parents in law and her brother in law. Her husband migrated to Portugal 4 years ago. Soon after waking up, she goes to the common area in the middle of the apartment and sweeps the floor. After mopping the common areas, she leaves the apartment for less than 10 minutes, crossing the street and visiting the *gurdwara* in front of her home while everyone is still sleeping. After returning, she boils black milk tea and wakes up the children. She does all her tasks very mechanically and repeats them in the exact same order for the 4 days of my presence in the home. She gets the children ready for school while they are drinking tea and eating biscuits. Her brother in law sleeps and her parents in law are sitting on their bed, sipping on their tea while covered by blankets. They sleep in the bed located in the central common area of the house. The mother in law is in her 60ies and she is physically unfit. She usually sits at home and sometime sews clothes that can be sold at the market. It used to be her occupation and today she is doing it more out of a habit but the family does not depend on this earnings. She does not do domestic work. The father in law spends most of his time in temples and meditating at home. After the breakfast, the mother makes her children wash their face and then ties their turban before walking them to their school bus.

> [Field notes], Ambala (Haryana), Simran's family house, February 2019]

This type of situations were not uncommon to observe. Wives often took a serving role towards all the family members, spending most of her time doing domestic chores. In this case, the mother-in-law occupied the role of the head of the family, managing the budget composed by her son's remittances and small earnings from rented land. The remittances were sent from Lisbon directly on the mother's name who then distributed it to the daughter-in-law when needed. This role was also seen to be taken by other men of the family if present. In this particular case, the father in law was very introverted and weakened by his age.

Some families had land, but amongst the families that have been seen during fieldwork, no family had women working on their fields as the families usually hired internal migrant laborers for these tasks. As underlined above, the biggest parts of transnational Sikh Punjabi families

between Lisbon and Punjab are considered to be Jats, the Punjab's most economically powerful and occupationally privileged group (Puri, 2003; Singh, 2003). We find confirmarion also in the literature on this international migrant flows, as underlined in the chapter X, which underlined that the majority of Punjabis residing in Western societies are part of the dominant Jat Sikh caste (e.g. Ballard 1994; Bhachu 1985; Judge 2002; Helweg 1979).

In Punjab, it is impossible to look at women's roles without taking into consideration the phenomenon of caste. Caste distinctions within India and Punjab have been, and still are, related to extreme forms of exploitation, humiliation and poverty and low caste women are overrepresented in production labor, mainly in agricultural activities. Among the families that was observed in this study , no wife worked outside of the household in Punjab. As an interviewees comments:

> "In India if lady works, if she is educated then she can work in teaching or fashion designer. Some ladies can work in parlor, mostly girls who are not too much educated, if she has only plus two they do parlor. My sister in law works in a hospital, as a nurse but now she left that job because my brother opened own jewelry shop." [..] "When arranging the wedding I ask for doing BA in communication but then it was not possible because my husband wanted to come to Europe. I did not do studies then." […]
>
> Harpreet, female, 26, emigrated in 2015, high school diploma, living in Lisbon since 2016 (excerpt of Interview n°3)

As underlines in this interview except, it is often the husband who plays a decisive role in the choice if what his wife should do for a living, In this specific case, Noor talks about a woman who is a trained nurse and who changed to working in a jewelry shop because it belonged to the family. She herself also was no able to do a university course, even though it was one of her requests while arranging her wedding.

4.4.2. Women's work in Lisbon

In Lisbon, it was observed that the majority of women worked at home for their initial times in the country. As the most common way for women to migrate is through family unification, they are less challenged by the irregular administrative situation than men but still tend not to seek contractual employment soon after their arrival.

The houses and apartments in which they live are usually smaller in Lisbon than the houses people lived in in Punjab. It was observed, that even in small spaces, many families chose to

share living spaces, pushed by the housing prices but also by the tradition of living in larger groups and not only with the nuclear family members. Women in Lisbon who work exclusively at home, were observed to be isolated from the local communities.

> The walls are white and there is no decoration but a small portrait of Guru Nanak, Sikhism's founding guru, hanging in the bedroom. There is two suitcases and only the bare minimum of furniture: a bed, a small kitchen table, a few plastic chairs. Dajit and Manmeet share this flat with another Sikh migrant who has been living in Portugal for 7 years and who regularly leaves for Germany. The couple has been living in Portugal for almost one year. Daljit, the husband works in a restaurant and leaves the house around 12am to come back after his night shift, often after 10pm. Manmeet is 4 months pregnant and stays at home all day. While taking care of the domestic work she spends large parts of the day using online applications to have video calls with her sister and mother back in the city of Amritsar. In Lisbon, she knows two other Punjabi women who live in her street and me, in my role as a social worker. Both, her husband and her, are in an irregular administrative situation.

> [Field notes], Cacém (Lisbon), Daljit and Manmeet's family house, May 2017]

While many of the women seen between 2017 and to 2019 had a very similar situation to Manmeet's, another part of them worked outside of their home. The most common scenario is the couple owning a shop and both working in it. It is not rare to see Punjabi Sikh women work in family ran businesses as in the case of Harpreet.

> "Now I sit here with Rupi all day. She has no place in school yet". Rupis 3 and she spends her whole day with her mother in a mini-market. Harpreet works as a cashier in her shop and speaks a lot better Portuguese then when I met her in 2015 and was pregnant and undocumented. Now both her husband and her have regularized their administrative situation and they own two small mini-markets. She sits in the shop and serves clients while her husband takes care of the logistics and the paper work.

A smaller percentage of women work outside the family. When employed, Sikh Punjabi women also tend to work in low paying, low skill jobs in the service sector. It was interesting to observe that Sikh Punjabi women who work outside of their household often work as domestic workers for settled Indian families, mostly from Gujarat. Usually no formal contracts are established. In some families, women have become financial contributors, sharing the breadwinner role. The women who go out to work becomes more mobile and independent, travelling to work on their own and making her own social relationships but it is still not the preferred option. Resistance to women's income-earning activities has been linked to low levels of education and insecurity as breadwinners in males (Safilios-Rothschild, 1990). The Punjabi notion of honor and shame plays an important role in stopping women from having their financial independence as it makes it more difficult to have control over them.

Deepu, for example is a woman of 27 years old, emigrated in 2015 to Lisbon. She did a professional course in Punjab. She cleans the home and the two parlors of a Gujarati-Mozambican family. She is in an irregular administrative situation but does not have a working contract. It does not bother her too much as her husband is contractually employed. The couple is counting on that work relation to legalize their status while Deepu is working in order to earn money to make the end meets

> Deepu. Today she come to me seeking for help as she is having difficulties in navigating the national health service. She is worried she could not get pregnant. Her job is located in Pontinha and even though she complains about her employer being strict, she still refers to her as "auntie" as a sign of respect. Deepu's husband is not opposed to her working in Portugal as a common goal would be to later open their own parlor.
>
> [Field notes], Solidariedade Imigrante (Lisbon), Conversation with Deepu, February 2017]

Indian women in Lisbon tend to be employed by other immigrants, specially other South Asian migrants. The encounters are usually informal, in events, temples or at specialized food markets and the work relation often stays informal.

The first and most important recognition was that care work is central to the Punjabi Sikh woman in Lisbon as well as in Punjab. In both places, the woman's primary work is to provide care work, both paid and unpaid. As underlined by Lagomarsino and Castellani (2016), women's assignment of domestic and childcare responsibilities has not only a material function, for sustaining and reproducing the family group in destination, but also a symbolic one, for controlling girls.

Even when employed, the women are expected to have responsibility over all the domestic tasks. As seen in the previous chapter, the need for care work in Punjab by the in-laws can define if the woman is going to emigrate or not. Commonality it was observed that women have little agency about what they are doing for a living. Except from one Sikh Punjabi woman who separated from her husband because of domestic violence, no of the women met during the period of the fieldwork had financial independence.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions

This study has the objective of bringing about better understanding of transnational Sikh Punjabi migration between Lisbon and Punjab in terms of their transnational practices, belonging, maintaining, and renegotiating gender roles between here and there, through an insight of migrant's practices within a transnational social space taking into account their own point of view and perceptions about their lived experiences.

Through an extensive ethnographic research work, we found out that migration from Punjab to Lisbon is largely male inscribing itself in a family project that follows Sikh Punjabi kinship rules and social norms. The migration process from Punjab to Portugal is, in the majority of the cases, initiated by a male family member. As underlined in this wor, the migration of a Sikh Punjabi migrant, as it was observed in other migration flows (Mand, 2002) is not an individual and personal decision but it is part of a larger plan put together by the head of the family, mostly the fathers or grand-fathers. Kinship rules of patrilineage and patrilocality incentivize families (Bertonlani, 2012) to invest in the migration of their sons, who later can, if they have the conditions and resources for it, regroup other family members in destination. The decision of reunifying with the wives left behind often depends of the need for care work in origin to elder and younger members of the household. The wives are expected to be the primary care providers and their mobility will depend on where they are needed.

Our presence on the field allows us to conclude that migrants coming from Punjab belong to a specific group of Sikh Punjabis and are not representative for all the social groups of Punjabi society. Migrants coming to Portugal usually have a middle-socio economic status in origin and are mostly low-schooled. Legal constraints to migrate to Europe as well as Portugal's need for unskilled labor (Myrvold, 2012) and somehow flexible migration policies (Padilla & Ortiz, 2012) attract this particular group. As underlined in the discussion, migration to Portugal represents a significant cost for the families but it is seen as an investment. This excludes a whole group of people with a lower social-economic status for whom migration is not a feasible option. A large part of Sikh migrants in Portugal belongs to the Jat caste which is a socially and economically dominant group (Kaur, 1986). While only a few of the participants during the

fieldwork belonged to lower castes such as members of the Ravidassia community, it is possible to conclude that most Sikh migrants in Portugal have a financially privileged situation in origin.

It is important to take into consideration that the conclusions drawn on gender roles and gendered division on labor would be very different if looking at Punjabi Sikhs from a lower social status. As mentioned in the empirical part, women pertaining to low-status families (class and caste), do and have been doing production work, mostly in agriculture, outside of the domestic sphere, and care work, mostly as maids in other people's homes.

Observations allow us to draw the conclusion that women of transnational families in Lisbon and Punjab are, similarly as men, low-schooled. They are largely confined to the domestic sphere, be it in Lisbon or in Punjab, and the transnational family practices did not seem to significantly increase their freedom and autonomy. It was observed that women moving to Lisbon, even after obtaining legal residence, still embraced a mostly self-effacing caring role. In the rare cases of employment, Sikh Punjabi migrant women tend to focus on care activities such as industrial cleaning or housekeeping. The empirical work allows us to conclude that women of transnational Sikh Punjabi families between Lisbon and Portugal nowadays have only little influence on where they live or what they do in life.

This work proved that borders and distance do not challenge the Sikh Punjabi family structure within its tradition gender roles that are reproduced within the transnational space (Kofan et al., 2000). While the authority in the family is sometimes shifted from the husband to other male or senior family members, the conventional gender roles are not only mostly maintained across borders, but also permeate and shape the whole migration project.

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Appendix

A. Anonymized and randomized excerpts of the field diary

Scene 1: Arrival Mohali, Punjab – 14.03.2019 – 6.a.m.	
Contextualization: I am going to Mohali because it is Rupi's birthday. Haprpreet and Sukhraj came to India for holidays but Sukhraj already left back. Harpreet is going to stay longer. I don't know the exact reasons why. The family has invited me to the birthday.	
Observational	Before I reach Harpreet calls me to inform be that it is her brother that will pick me up from the bus stand with his wife and their child. She sends me a picture of him and gives me his phone number.
	When I reach the smiling strangers that I recognize from the picture welcome me warmly with flowers and immediately call Sukhraj by video call, Harpreet's husband who is in Portugal right now. He welcomes me to his family and informs me that Manu (the woman in the couple) is his real sister. He is joyful and tests my Punjabi over phone. They called Sukhraj who is in Portugal as soon as they reached me. Shows transnational communication.
	Usually in Punjab, brother and sister also refers to the maternal and paternal direct cousins. When they specify "real" sister or "real" brother, it means that they have the same parents.
	Harpreet stayed at home with Sukhraj's parents and her daughter Rupi.
	After picking me op we stopped at a dhaba to have tea and snacks before driving back home. The family members take a lot of pictures with me.
Methodological	No specific observation. Participant observation. I don't know if they know about my dissertation. I informed Harpreet before coming but as I supported her in her pregnancy in Portugal, we have developed a friendly relationship, so it feels more like I am simply visiting a friend. It was easy to enter the field as Harpreet simply invited me. She knows I am working on the dissertation and that I am living in Delhi but I am not sure if she understood that I am going to use this visit for observation. I did explain it over phone but I will again.
Theoretical	Interesting how they use category like "brother" and "sister". Read more about denomination and role of all the family members. Still to read:

	• Masks and faces: an essay on Punjabi kinship (Das – 1976)
	• Punjabi Kinship and Marriage (Herschman - 1981)
	• Family, Kinship and Marriage in India (Uberoi - 1993)
Emotional	I feel bit disappointed that it is not Harpreet who came to pick me up because I have the feeling she would have loved to. I will be in the car for around an hour to reach her village. I am also tired from the travelling and there is one hour more to go now. I spent the last 7 hours in a sleeper bus. I hope I'll be able to take a shower when we will reach home.

Scene 2: Arrival at the home in Mohali, Punjab – 14.03.2019 8.a.m.	
Observational	Gurpreet is standing in front of the door with Soni in her arms (2 years old) and Harpreet's mother. Both welcome me with a hug and the mother blesses me (by touching my head with her hand). Gurpreet is dressed up and is wearing a lot of make-up. They welcome me into the house that looks big from the outside but that is not finalized as it is yet to be painted and the floor has no tiles.
	They make me sit in the living room where Harpreet's father immediately joins me. He introduces himself and tells me that he knows how to speak English because he was in the army and travelled a lot. That is all he will tell me. He sits on the opposite side of the living room and doesn't say anything anymore. Pardeep's sister joins her mother and Gurpreet in the kitchen while her husband comes and sits with me. He shows me pictures on the phone of his son on a horse.
	The women come back with tea, dry fruits and biscuits. They tell me I should rest after the snack as I had a long journey. It is 8a.m.
Methodological	No specific observation. Participant observation.
Theoretical	Gender roles. The men sit with me in the living room while the women prepare the tea. Had the similar situation in every family I went to until now. Look at these readings again.
	• Gender, Kinship and Power: A Comparative and Interdisciplinary History (Maynes - 1996)

	• Women and Kinship: Comparative Perspectives on Gender in South-Asia (Dube - 1997) • Region, Caste and Family Structure – A comparative Study of the Indian "Joint" Family (Kolenda – 2007)
Emotional	Gurpreet seems a bit uncomfortable. It has been over a year we didn't meet because she left to the South of Portugal when I was still living in Lisbon. She looks nervous which made me a little nervous too. Vinod, the brother-in-law, seems to be very dominant. He is the one speaking the most and the loudest which is intimidating.

Scene 5: Breakfast, Amritsar, Punjab – 05.11.18 – 8 a.m.	
Contextualization: I arrived two days ago and I am waking up. Sonia, the wife, left to drop the children to their school bus. Sonny, the husband, lives in Portugal and is currently on holiday. We know each other well as I followed Sonny's regularization case.	
Observational	While we are drinking tea, Sonny explains me that his cousin-brother is going to come to pick us up to visit a village not too far from the city. He explain that there is a land that he wants to maybe buy. We are having Aloo Parathas, which is layered flatbread made with flour, salt, ghee and water and filled with potatoes. They were made by his wife before she left. While eating he comments on the fact that her parathas are not as good as his mother's. He criticizes her for always doing things in a quick and sloppy manner.

Methodological	As Sonny's knows that I am observing the roles within the family he often takes extra time to explain things to me. Sometimes he would say things like "in my family it is…" but normally in Punjabi culture "…". I fear that the fact that he is so aware of what I am looking at might change his behavior.
	
	        Look up reflexivity
	        Impact of researcher in field

Theoretical	Nothing new.
Emotional	As much as I like Sonny as a person and I knew the struggles he faced in Portugal, I dislike the way he acts with his wife. I try not to comment too

	much on it even though I sometimes tell him not to say bad things about her when she is not there. I am unsure if the fact that I am in the house intensifies this behavior or not. When in Portugal, I did not picture him as being a rude person. I find his behavior quite rude.
	The fact that he is nicer to me than to his wife is also worrying me because I don't know how she feels about it.

B. Field diary snaps – confidential

Hospital
Lisbon
Sikh Punjabi women sitting in the waiting room

July 2017

Home of two Punjabi couples and children living together

Lisbon

Welcoming a new family member

January 2018

Solidariedade Imigrante
Lisbon

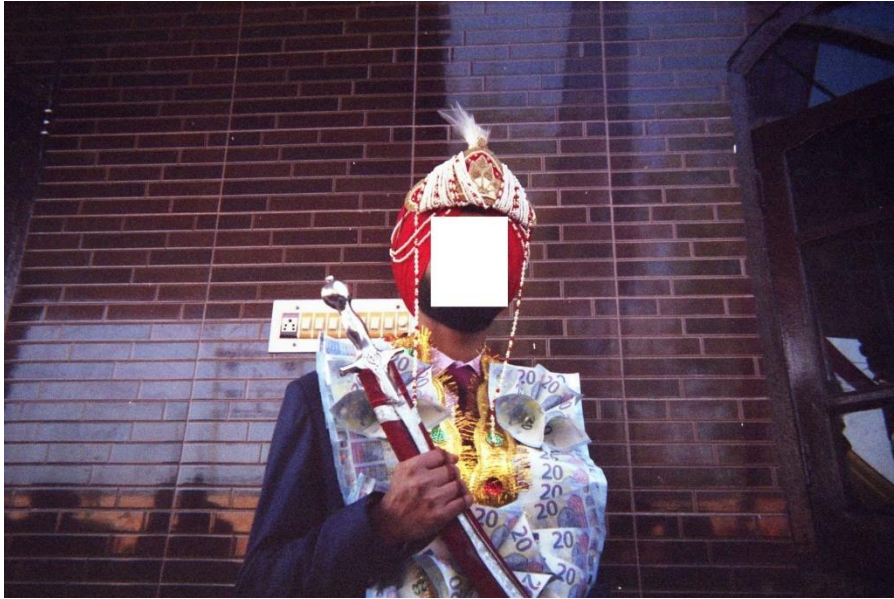Information session on
reproductive rights for
migrant women

September 2017

Home o
Punjab

Welcoming me with tea
and biscuits
(the women are still
bringing food)

October 2018

Groom dressed with a 20€ collar

Punjab

January 2019

Wedding in Punjab

Bride moving to groom's house for the first time
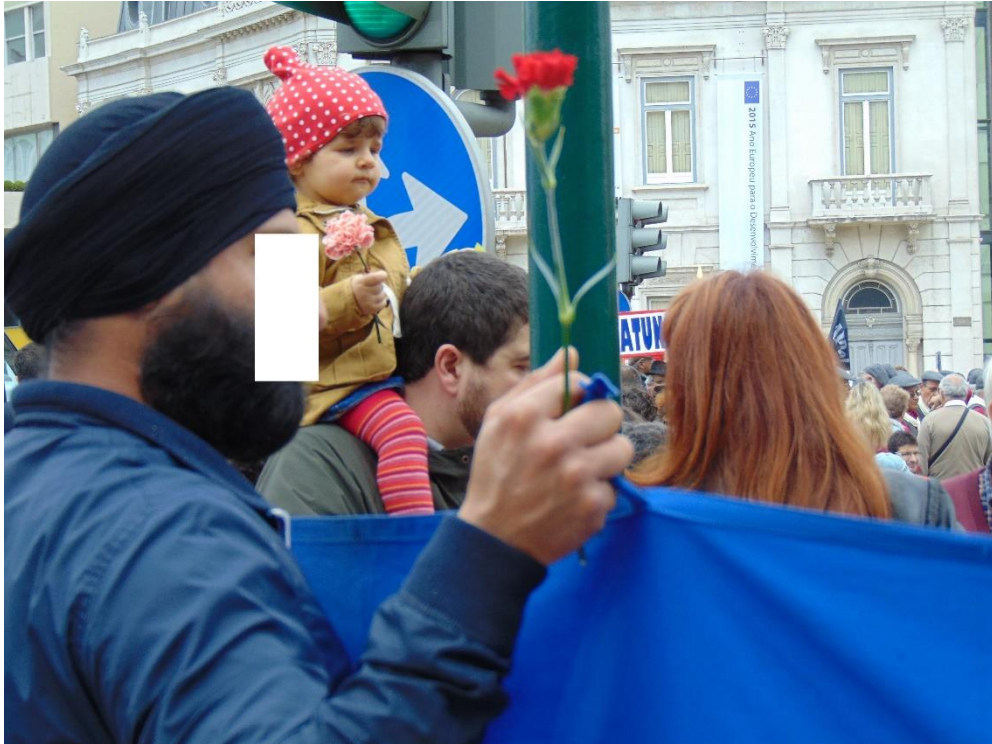
December 2018

Nagar Kirtan

Lisbon

April 2019

Mama (mother's brother) shopping before nephews wedding

Punjab

Febuary 2019

Revolution
Day in
Lisbon

April 2017

Women
preparing
dinner

Lisbon

December
2017