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Production, Reproduction and Appropriation of Metropolitan Space

A Case Study of Sikh community in the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona

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Abstract

The recent immigration to the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (AMB) has brought a remarkable diversity in terms of religious affiliations and ethno-linguistic backgrounds of its resident population. In 2018, according to the National Statistics Institute (INE), the AMB was home to the individuals born in 120 different countries around the world. All immigrant groups have a tendency to reproduce their religious places at their new places of residence to perform their religious practices, and show their presence to the host society. The public exposure of immigrant groups on the one hand diversifies the human mosaic of the host countries, and on the other hand transforms the urban spaces through restructuring of the existing buildings or by giving them a meaning that converts secular spaces to sacred ones. As 'space' is a contested category, sometime the appropriation of urban space results in conflicts. These conflicts often lead to negotiations between the immigrant groups and the host community, often with the intervention of local authorities.

Sikh community (a religious community from the north western state of India) makes a very small fraction of the total immigration flow to the AMB. During the last two decades, they have managed to produce a community space for themselves, which is an addition to the social fabric of the host society. Moreover, they have started to reproduce their religious places (Gurudwaras) and celebrate their religious processions and functions, which leads to some material and symbolic appropriation of urban space in the AMB. This appropriation of space is mostly ignored by the host society, but sometimes it also causes conflict with natives. These conflicts are mainly confined to the use of public spaces and negotiated by the local administration, which is now trying hard to accommodate different religious and social groups in limited urban space of the AMB. In this paper, with a qualitative research methodology, by focusing on the immigration and settlement pattern of Sikh community, the construction of Gurudwaras, and the celebration of religious functions and processions, I am going to analyse the process of the production of community space, reproduction of sacred spaces, and the temporary or long term appropriation of urban space by the Sikh community in the AMB and the negotiations involved in it.

Introduction

The recent arrival of mass immigration in most of the European cities has brought a remarkable diversity in terms of religions, ethno-linguistic origins, socioeconomic status and cultural backgrounds. It has diversified the human mosaic of the host societies through different physical appearance and traditional outfits of the followers of different immigrant faith groups (like long beards and turbans in the case of Sikhs; and hijabs for Muslim women), and introduced many new religious minorities to previously Christian countries, who are now having secular social and political setup. The entrance of religious minorities has marked the return of religion to the urban spaces and in the public debate (Kong 2010). Knott et al. (2016: 125) explain that by 'crystallizing religious diversity alongside marked secularist positions, cities are prime arenas in which the public presence of religion—through, for instance, modes of dress, buildings, sounds, rituals and performances—is displayed and discussed'. The newly arrived religious minorities have started to produce social spaces for them through the establishment of their religious places (like mosques and temples), and the celebration of processions and other religious festivals in the major metropolitan cities. In an attempt to enhance their visibility in the host society and to appropriate urban spaces, they compete for the key locations with high symbolic and economic values in the cities to establish their religious places and perform their religious events. This desire to appropriate secular urban spaces for religious purposes sometimes create competition between different religious and secular groups, which has a potential to create violent clashes between the host community and immigrant religious minorities.

The construction of religious buildings and the celebration of religious events in a secular urban space has different meaning for different groups of the host society, who are at present engaged in an official discourse of tolerance and diversity (Kong 2005). 'Some people see them as the positive expressions of urban multiculturalism, or the necessary products of freedom and equality; others as signs of the Islamization of society, or as unwelcome evidence that religion is re-gaining ground in public life' (Knott et al. 2016: 126). Some studies highlight the role of religious buildings as reflections of the identities of religious groups, and their growing confidence in expressing their religious identities in urban spheres (Gale and Naylor 2002; Naylor and Ryan 2003), while other focus on the normalizing language of local authorities that often consider the religious buildings as 'antithetical rather than complementary to the existing landscape' (Peach and Gale 2003: 486). Some authors also underline a change in the public discourse over immigration from focusing on crime, irregularity and integration to issues of religion and opposition to foreign cultures (Storm

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2011). This change has escalated a racial bio politics, based on bodily traits and ethnic cultures, that manifests in the form of conflict between the secular western world and the religions of east, especially, 'Islam' (Amin 2012: 98). During the last decades, one of the religious groups who have entered the AMB and trying to make its space in the host society is the 'Sikh' community.

Pioneer Sikhs entered Spain in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Santos 2013). Spain was not their final destination, but they accidently end up here after failing to cross the UK-France border illegally to enter England, which was their most favoured destination. They came from the north European countries to work in agriculture sector of La Rioja region, in northern Spain. Later on, during the decade of 1980s, attracted by the job offers in the food processing industry, a substantial number of Sikhs entered Catalonia, especially, in Olot and neighbouring municipalities where they settled in significant numbers (Farjas 2006a). Regular Sikh immigration to Spain, directly from Punjab, started in the 1990s, when majority of low skilled Sikh males entered Catalonia in search of jobs in its expanding industrial and construction sectors (Garha and Domingo, 2017). Later on, with the help of social networks, a chain migration of Sikhs to Spain got momentum. It resulted in the emergence of small clusters of Sikh population in some major cities of Catalonia. In 2018, half of the Sikh population of Spain (26 thousand) was permanently settled in Catalonia. The Sikh community is neither one of the most numerous immigrant communities, nor does it make political demands, and therefore it does not receive a lot of attention from the host community (Santos 2013). But recently with the reproduction of their religious places and practices in the urban spaces, they have started to show their presence in the host society and appropriation of urban spaces, which were in secular uses before. In Catalonia, during the last two decades the establishment of gurudwaras had not received much attention from the host society, but in the case of the UK (where the size of Sikh community is much bigger than whole EU) many author considered the development of gurudwaras as a symbol of Sikh community building at their new country of residence (Peach & Gale 2003).

In 2018, there were 21 gurudwaras in Spain, in which 10 were situated in Catalonia and 4 of them were in the AMB. The first gurudwara in the AMB was established in the municipality of Barcelona in the year 1998, which was followed by the establishment of other gurudwaras in the municipality of l'Hospitalet de Llobregat, Badalona and Santa Coloma de Gramanet. The Gurudwara of Badalona moved to the neighbouring municipality of Sant Adrià de Besòs in 2016. Apart from providing religious services, gurudwaras in the diaspora also act as socio-cultural centres for the Sikh community. As highlighted by Vertovec (1992, 1997) that

migration transforms the meanings of the places of worship, from merely religious congregations to spaces for socio-political associations, which manifests community's intention of permanent settlement in the new country and design a new geography of belonging based on the 'triadic relationship' of displaced subjects with the place of settlement, the homeland and elsewhere in the diaspora. Similarly, most of the social and associational life of the Sikh population in the AMB revolves around the gurudwaras. As the Sikh community is getting deeply rooted in their new place of residence, their appropriation of public spaces in the form of the establishment of religious places and the public appearances in the form of processions is increasing, which sometimes leads to conflict with the host society.

In the existing studies about the Sikh community in the AMB, some authors have studied their religious beliefs (Panikar 2007), social networks (Molina and Pelissier 2010), internal diversity and conflicts (Lum 2010; Santos 2013), but still no attempt has been made to study the production, reproduction and appropriation of space by the Sikh community in the AMB. In this dissertation, I am going to fill this gap in the existing academic studies. My main hypotheses are:

H1. *Sikh population is concentrated in the poor immigrant neighbourhoods of the AMB, which were initially occupied by the Spanish immigrants.*

H2. *The establishment of gurudwaras on the one hand plays a very important role in the community cohesion, and on the other hand shows the fragmentation or internal conflicts (on the basis of different religious beliefs or castes) in the Sikh community. It also affects their relationship with the host society, other immigrant groups and the local administration.*

H3. *The annual Sikh processions and other religious festivals celebrated at public spaces, enhance the visibility of the Sikh community and contributes to the social cohesion within the community and improves interaction with the host society.*

H4. *The negotiations around the permanent and temporary appropriation of the urban spaces marks the relationship between the Sikh community, local administration and the host society.*

In this dissertation, my main objectives are: firstly, to study the process of the production of community space by the Sikh community in the AMB; secondly, to analyse the reproduction process of their religious places (gurudwaras) in different municipalities of the AMB; thirdly, to analyse the ways and means of permanent (in the form of building gurudwaras) or temporary (in the form of processions and outdoor religious functions) appropriation of the urban spaces by the Sikh community; and finally, to analyse the

negotiations between the hosts, public administration and the Sikh community regarding the appropriation of urban spaces, through an intercultural lens. Owing to the lack of any administrative register that collects data about religious communities and due to the nature of research questions, to get first-hand information about the Sikh community, I am going to conduct a community survey of the Sikh population in the AMB, and going to conduct interviews with some members of the Sikh community (Gurudwara representatives, priests or ordinary Sikhs) and the local authorities to perform a qualitative analysis of the discourse regarding the production of Sikh community space, the reproduction of Sikh temples and appropriation of urban space in the AMB and the response of host community to it.

This dissertation has following sections: section 2 presents a theoretical framework for the study; section 3 describes the data sources and methodology used in this study; section 4 presents the demographic and socioeconomic profile of the Sikh community and their spatial distribution in the AMB; section 5 presents the reproduction of Sikh religious places, the symbolic or material appropriation of the urban space for religious purposes by the Sikh community, and the response of the host community regarding this appropriation and transformation; Section 6 presents some conclusions and forwards a discussion.

2. Theoretical Framework

For this dissertation, I have touched three lines of research: first, that focus on the production of space; second, that deals with the sociology of the religious places and explains the poetics and politics of the sacred spaces; and third about the intercultural approach of public administration towards resolving or negotiating the conflicts around the appropriation of public spaces for religious uses. All these frameworks are discussed below:

2.1 The Production of Space

To understand the process of the production of community space by the Sikh community, I start with the famous text about *the Production of Space*, by Lefebvre (1991), in which he proposes a spatial triad consisting of spatial practice (perceived space arising out of daily reality); representations of space (conceived space and represented space); and representational spaces (spaces experienced through images and symbols, the spaces of passion and action). He argues that each component of this triad contribute in different ways to the production of space according to its qualities and attributes, existing mode of production in the society, and the historical period (1991: 46). Furthermore, he denies space as a piece of a priori data and argues "that every society and every mode of production with

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its sub variants produces its own space" (1991: 31). Therefore, for him "Space is at once result and cause, product and producer…" (Lefebvre, (1991:142). On the other hand, Harvey (1973: 13) also proposed a tripartite conceptualization of space, but his was based on the absolute, relative and relational conception of space: in absolute sense, space becomes a "thing in itself", with an existence independent of matter. It then possesses a structure that we can change and individualize. The view of relative space proposes that space be understood as a relationship between objects that exists only because objects exist and relate to each other. A relational space is regarded as being contained in objects in the sense that an object can be said to exist only insofar as it contains and represents within itself relationships to other objects. He argues that space is not absolute, relative or relational in itself, but it can become one or all simultaneously depending on the circumstances and on human practice.

In Foucault's term, the production of space, is not a neutral social praxis, but one that is appropriated to for the specific goals of implementation of power, which makes the art of space craft a power/knowledge in its essence (Grbin 2015, 309). Space includes its socio-functional properties and goals and has cultural-symbolic and representative layers. Foucault's concept of power/knowledge takes 'space' as -the medium of- and -the instrument for- the practice of power, a power that came from the applied knowledge of space craft. He insisted that the space is very important category of analysis because it reveals domains in which the power becomes visible (West-Pavlov, 2009: 160). An important contribution of Foucault to the studies of the production of space is the concept Heterotopias. Foucault's writings explain that heterotopia is always a space/place which has special characteristics that do not come from their material essence or sole architectural conceivement, rather it defined by the social and cultural praxis that is connected to it, or through the meanings and messages that heterotopic space emits. In other words, a heterotopia is a space that is real and material, possible to locate in the real world, but that at the same time is a mirror of a utopia – a presentation of society in a perfected form, but fundamentally unreal spaces (Foucault & Miskowiec, 1986). An interesting example of heterotopia, (especially, in the context of religious buildings) is the places which are very old and last for very long, yet they have different function(s) in different cultural-historical periods.

While talking about the production of community space, Soja (1996) proposed the concept of thirdspace as "open-ended set of defining moments" that allows radical openness in the understanding of spatiality of life. According to him the thirdspace is space that people construct through social practices. It is a "transcending composite of all spaces". It is the space of the "directly lived", "inhabitants" and "users", containing all other real and imagined spaces

simultaneously. Even though it draws upon both the material and mental spaces of perceived and conceived space, it extends beyond them in scope, substance and meaning. It is simultaneously real and imagined and more. Everything comes in thirdspace: subjectivity and objectivity, the abstract and concrete, the real and imagined, the knowable and the unimaginable, the repetitive and the differential, structure and agency, mind and body, conscious and the unconscious, the disciplined and the transdisciplinary, everyday life and unending history. Anything which fragments Thirdspace into separate specialised knowledge or exclusive domains – even on the pretext to handling its infinite complexity – destroys its meaning and openness (1996: 56-57).

When explaining the nature of space Massey (1992) claims that as time is the dimension of succession, the space is the dimension of simultaneity (existing at the same time) and multiplicity. Her alternative approach to space can be articulated in a set of three intertwined propositions i.e. Space is the product of interrelations; thus we must recognize space 'as constituted through interactions, from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny'. Secondly, it is the sphere of the possibility of the existence of multiplicity; it is a 'sphere in which distinct trajectories coexist; as the sphere therefore of coexisting heterogeneity'. And thirdly, 'it is always in the process of being made. It is never finished; never closed' (Massey, 2005: 9). Hence, it is space that raise social and political questions about how we are going to live together. By following these theoretical aspects over the production of Space, in this dissertation I am going to analyse the production of community space by the Sikh immigrants in the AMB.

2.2 The Poetics and Politics of Sacred Space

As in this dissertation, one of my objectives is to study the reproduction of sacred spaces in the AMB by the Sikh community, firstly I will highlight the existing meanings and interpretations of 'sacred' and 'secular'. In the religious studies, two broad approaches have been advanced regarding the category of 'sacred', i.e. 'substantial' and 'situational'. According to substantial approach, sacred is considered as 'Holy', 'Powerful' or 'Real' (Otto 1950; Van der Leeuw 1986; Eliade 1959) and sacred spaces are identified as an uncanny, awesome, or powerful manifestation of reality, full of ultimate significance (Chidester and Linenthal 1995). Eliade explains sacred space as set apart from ordinary profane space, as the 'Center' or axis mundi through which communication between different domains is possible, and as the manifestation of the 'Real' (or hierophany) (Eliade 1959: 26). Conversely, the situational approach locates the sacred at the nexus of human practices and social projects. According to

this approach, nothing is inherently sacred or full of meaning, rather it is an empty signifier (Van Gennep 1960). As proposed by Levi-Strauss (1950), the sacred is "a value of indeterminate signification, in itself empty of meaning and therefore susceptible to the reception of any meaning whatsoever". Hence, the sacred is only a cultural work of sacralising space, persons and social relations (Chidester and Linenthal 1995).

This divergence between substantial and situational, is most evident in the analysis of sacred 'space'. To defend the substantial definition of sacred spaces Eliade (1958) claims that the sacred irrupted, manifested, or appeared in certain places, causing them to become sacred spaces, which are powerful centres of meaningful world. On the contrary, Smith (1982:63) has shown how the cultural labour of rituals results in the sacralisation of spaces in specific historical situations, involving the hard work of attention, memory, design, construction, and control of place. This clash between both approaches often called as the poetics and the politics of sacred spaces. In the introduction of their book 'American Sacred Spaces' Chidester and Linenthal (1995) summarise the poetics and politics of sacred spaces presented by Van der Leeuw (1993), in his classical text -*Religion in Essence and Manifestation*- in the phenomenology of religion. Poetic of sacred presents a romantic imagination of natural world -the rocks and mountains, forests and caverns, rivers, waterfalls and springs- as the representation of the 'power' and manifestation of sacred. While, the politics of sacred space includes: first, politics of position, which states that the positioning of a sacred place is a political act, that involved, selection, orientation, limitation, or conquest. Hence, every establishment of a sacred place is a conquest of space. Second, politics of property, which presents sacred space as a powerful space because it was appropriated, possessed, and owned. Hence, power, possibility, and property are forces in the production of sacred space. Third, politics of exclusion which presents sacred space, as a space in which relations among persons could be negotiated and worked out. Some persons were excluded to ensure the sanctity of the inside, which was certified by maintaining and reinforcing boundaries on the bases of purity/impurity, that kept certain persons outside the sacred place. Fourth, politics of exile, in which the sacred was positioned in relation to human beings who found themselves to be out of position. According to Chidester and Linenthal:

> *"Sacred places have been exploited by dominant political and economic interests, and they have been reclaimed and even desecrated by those who have been dominated or excluded, all in the context of often violent contests over power and purity. Power and purity are not inherent in sacred space. Power is always at stake in the symbolic, yet also material, struggles over appropriation and dispossession. Purity is always at stake in struggles over inclusion and exclusion"* (1995: 18).

On the other hand, secular spaces include all that is not sacred like schools, hospitals, public offices, parks and the public transport. Some authors claim that the boundaries between sacred and secular are dynamic, which are at some time existing and at other times not existing, because both concepts are relational and nonexclusive (Bangstad 2009; Oosterbaan 2014). Actually, the sacred space is produced by assigning different meanings to a secular space. The sacred and the secular, neither of which exist without each other. In his study Kong (2001) highlights the religious fluidity in time and space, as a space may be sacred for some or in some time, whilst it may be secular in or for others. The appropriation of space for the religious bodies, religious rituals or processions in public space or practicing religion in everyday life blur the lines between the religious and the secular, making them interactive and overlapping categories in time and space (Kuppinger, 2014, Saint-Blancat & Cancellieri, 2014; Ammerman, 2006).

While talking about the production of sacred spaces, during the last decades, sacred spaces are increasingly understood as produced by the human efforts of sacralisation (Knott, 2010; Kong, 1990). Some authors discussed the relations between the body and space, the dimensions, properties and aspects of space, and its dynamics, including the mutual imbrication of space, the "sacred" and sacralisation (Knott 2005). In their book Chidester and Linenthal (1995), explains the production of sacred spaces in following ways: first, sacred spaces are produced through rituals, which are defined as formalized, repeatable symbolic performances Ritual acts of worship, sacrifice, prayer, meditation, pilgrimage, and ceremonial consecrate sacred space. The human body plays a crucial role in the ritual production of sacred space. Consecrate Ritualized disciplines of the body, which regulate its gestures and rhythms, its speaking, eating, and excreting, situate embodied practices in place (Ibìd). Throughout the history of religions, the production of sacred space has depended upon control over purity. According to the classic work of Douglas (1966), purity is connected to constructing boundaries where the pure is separated from the impure. Purity is an important concept in religions. All the rituals have this prime task to create and maintain purity. Second, sacred spaces are produced by assigning meanings and interpretations to physical world. The geographer Neil Smith has observed that "the production of space also implies the production of meaning, concepts and consciousness of space which are inseparably linked to its physical production." As a heuristic device, they distinguish among three domains- natural environments, built environments, and mythic orientations-that represent overlapping and interweaving arenas in which differing interpretations of space as sacred have been advanced. Natural environment domain presents the religious interpretation of land and landscape as

"nature religion". Built environments are more obviously constructed as cultural locations of religious meaning and significance. Places of worship, such as churches, mosques and temples, have been marked off, ritualized, and interpreted as specific sites of sacred space. Interpretations of sacred space entail strategies of symbolic or mythic orientation. As significant space, sacred places focus a classification of persons, carving out a place for a human identity that can be distinguished from superhuman persons, perhaps to be worshiped, and those classified as subhuman who can be excluded, manipulated, dominated, degraded, or sacrificed. Third, sacred spaces are contested spaces, sites of negotiated contests over the legitimate ownership of sacred symbols. "Against all the efforts of religious actors, sacred space is inevitably entangled with the entrepreneurial, the social, the political and other 'profane' forces" (Chidester & Linenthal, 1995, p. 17). As Michel Foucault insisted, "space is fundamental in any exercise of power". Conversely, power is asserted and resisted in any production of space, and especially in the production of sacred space. Since no sacred space is merely given in the world, its ownership will always be at stake. In this respect, a sacred space is not merely discovered, or founded, or constructed; it is claimed, owned, and operated by people advancing specific interests. Sacred places are arenas in which power relations can be reinforced, in which relations between insiders and outsiders, rulers and subjects, elders and juniors, males and females, and so on, can be adjudicated. But those power relations are always resisted. Sacred places are always highly charged sites for contested negotiations over the ownership of the symbolic capital (or symbolic real estate) that signifies power relations (Chidester & Linenthal, 1995).

In their book *Religion and Space*, Kong and Woods (2017) explains sacred spaces are scarce and full of power, so these are contested spaces in all societies. This competition can be categorised in four categories, firstly, intra religious competition, between different groups of a religion regarding the access to, ownership of, and autonomy in religious spaces (like baptised and not baptised Sikhs or different caste groups compete for resources and representation). Secondly, inter religious competition between two religious community living at the same territory, on the ownership claims over the same religious space. Thirdly, entrant and incumbent religion competition between a new religion and the established religions of a territory over the resources and recognition, and finally, religion and secular state competition, between different religious groups and the secular state for appropriation of physical space for religious or secular uses (Demolition or Relocation of religious building for community welfare programs). The Planning authorities and local administration regulate religious practices in religious spaces; regulate religious instruction, like the curriculum of religious schools and

language of sermons; regulate new religious movements; and in some extreme cases regulates the armed occupation of religious spaces by state agencies. It moves religion from officially sacred to everyday, informal, and daily practices of its followers (Brace et al. 2006).

Migrant religious groups often make direct claims to the spaces at their new destinations either to secure their place in the urban areas or to be publicly noticed by the host community via a representative building that can be a mosque or temple (Knot et al. 2016). The reconstruction of an already existing buildings or by changing the function of that building by assigning it different meanings or holding a public procession are the forms of these claims (Kong 2005). The reproduction of religious building shows group's commitment to religious place-making, and its intention to grow and put down roots in the country of destinations (Vásquez and Knott 2014). While the celebration of religious festivals at public places and processions are used to reproduce cultural traditions in a new location, to attract the public attention (Garbin 2012). 'Urban space is densely occupied, highly sought after and in short supply, [hence] interpretations of how such space should be apportioned and used, what buildings or practices are appropriate and where, and what values are expressed and endorsed in adjudicating between religious and other claims are all important' (Knott et al. 2016: 127). Owing to the scarcity of urban spaces these are always contested and their use for religious places arise disputes because sometimes it goes against the will of native people.

In this dissertation, by following the above mentioned discourse about the sacred spaces, I am going to analyse the process of the reproduction of Sikh Gurudwaras in Spain and the long term or temporary appropriation of the urban spaces by the Sikh community for the establishment of Gurudwaras or for the annual processions.

2.3 An Intercultural Approach to Religious Diversity

In the European context, the concept of interculturality entered political debate in the 1990s (Cantle 2013). The failure of multicultural approach in the management of diversity in all major western democracies, paved the way for interculturality, as a new policy to deal with diversity. While explaining interculturalism Bouchard (2011: 466) says that it 'calls for a complex dynamic made up of interactions, continuity, and change that is constantly negotiated and renegotiated on all levels of society, within a framework of respect for basic values and in a spirit that can be summarized in a single maxim—firmness in principles, flexibility in their application'. In this way, interculturalism is entirely focused on the human interactions, which should be based on the basic values of mutual respect and peaceful coexistence. As under the effect of accelerated globalisation, most of the European societies are becoming more and

more divers then 'the spirit of interculturalism invites us to recognize the diversity of situations in order to provide a diversity of solutions within a clear normative framework' (Ibíd: 467). As a political ideology interculturalism puts enormous emphasis on the individual interaction then dividing the population in different categories based on national or religious origins. Interculturalism as governing policy 'built on the basic wager of democracy, that is, a capacity to reach consensus on forms of peaceful coexistence that preserve basic values and make room for the future of all citizens, regardless of their origins or nationalities. (Ibíd: 467). Bloomfield and Bianchini (2004) support a wider view of interculturalism and argue that the intercultural approach goes beyond equal opportunities and respect for existing cultural differences to the pluralist transformation of public space, institutions and civic culture. It does not recognise cultural boundaries as fixed but in a state of flux and remaking. An intercultural approach aims to facilitate dialogue, exchange and reciprocal understanding between people of different backgrounds (as cited in Cantle 2013).

Cantle (2008) presented interculturalism as community cohesion, which promotes positive interaction between different groups that converts the zones of conflict into areas of positive contact, which is essential for the social inclusion of all groups. These conflicts are not only limited to the social disturbances but it also includes the problems related to racism, poverty and social exclusion (Cantle 2012: 102). He identified the key features of interculturalism as a sense of openness, dialogue and interaction. While comparing interculturalism with multiculturalism, Meer and Modood (2011) explains that interculturalism is something greater than coexistence, it is allegedly more geared toward interaction and dialogue than multiculturalism; secondly, it is conceived as something less '*groupist*' or more yielding of synthesis than multiculturalism; thirdly, it is something more committed to a stronger sense of the whole, in terms of such things as societal cohesion and national citizenship; and finally, that where multiculturalism may be illiberal and relativistic, interculturalism is more likely to lead to criticism of illiberal cultural practices.

According to Zapata-Barrero (2015) 'interculturalism presents itself as a framework that tries to challenge the way multiculturalism has always tended to categorize people through origin and nationality, which predetermine certain behaviours and beliefs'. In his words 'without rejecting rights-based and duties-based policy approaches, interculturalism places more emphasis on a contacts-based policy approach, aimed at fostering communication and relationships among people from different backgrounds, including national citizens' (Zapata-Barrero, 2017). Moreover, he suggests that intercultural governance is related to the objectives that intercultural policy pursues: stability, cohesion, and the development of cultural capacities

of its population (Zapata-Barrero 2015). While focusing on the mainstreaming of immigrant and other social minorities he states that 'we are in the process of a policy paradigm change, going from a multicultural to an intercultural policy paradigm, and that mainstreaming is a core driver of this process' (Zapata-Barrero, 2018).

By using this debate on intercultural governance in the Metropolitan cities like Barcelona, we are going to analyse the negotiations between the Sikh community and Public administration regarding the appropriation of public spaces for the religious purposes in Barcelona, which has its own intercultural governing plan (see *Plan Barcelona Interculturalidad* 2010).

3. Data Sources and Methodology

3.1 Data Sources

In Spain, no register collects information regarding the ethnicity and religious affiliations of the resident population. Hence, it is very difficult to know about the exact number of Sikhs in the AMB. But as the National Statistics Institute (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, INE) collects information about the surnames of the whole population registered in the municipal register of inhabitants, I make an indirect estimate of the Sikh population through their surnames. This is possible as in the Sikh population all males share the same first surname of 'Singh' (literally means lions), while all females share the first surname of 'Kaur' (literally means princess). Some other common second surnames among Sikhs (mostly related with caste or clan) like Sidhu, Sandhu, Gill and Virk are also used to make these estimates more precise. But owing to the statistical secrecy these estimates are only available till provincial level. This data is also limited to the absolute numbers and give no other information about the characteristics of the Sikh community. Hence, to study the socio-demographic characteristics and spatial distribution of the Sikh community at the metropolitan level, I have conducted a Sikh community survey with the help of all Gurudwara managing committees, at all Gurudwaras situated in the AMB. The survey questionnaire was prepared to collect information about the demographic characteristics (age, sex, marital status, year of arrival), socio-economic profile (level of education, occupation) and spatial distribution of the Sikh community living in the AMB (See Annex 1). PAPI survey method is used to collect data of each individual. A team of 10 high school students who have collected the data and computerize it. from the Sikh community was used to conduct this survey. The survey was conducted during the weekends of July 2018, when whole community get together at the

existing four Gurudwaras in the AMB. In total 3,800 individuals participated in the survey, which makes more than 60 percent of the total estimated Sikh population of the AMB.

To know about the process of the reproduction of the Sikh Temples (now onwards) Gurudwaras, and the appropriation of urban space for religious festivals and processions in the AMB, we have conducted twenty four interviews, eight with the representatives of the Gurudwara managing committees, twelve with the daily visitors of the Gurudwaras and four with the members of the host community or local administration who deals with the permissions regarding the land use changes and the use of public spaces for the religious events. To the representatives of the Gurudwara managing committees, we have asked about their immigration process, role in the Gurudwara management, responsibilities and powers, ideas about the internal conflicts of the community, participation in the construction of Gurudwara and their relationships with the local administration and the host society. By this we tried to find out the reason for the positioning of Gurudwara at particular places in the AMB, funds collection, selection of building, appropriation and reconstruction of buildings, the division of space in the building, from where to get the religious scripture, appointment of a priest, formation of managing committee, negotiations with the planning authorities, daily functions of the Gurudwara sahib, and the role played by Gurudwara in serving community cohesion and helping the new immigrants. The regular followers were asked to tell about their aspirations from Gurudwaras, their role in the its activities and the importance of Gurudwara in their daily life. Lastly, the members of the host community and the local administrators were asked to tell about their ideas about the construction of religious buildings of other faiths in the urban area, their relation with the Sikh community and the concerns raised by the host community regarding the construction of Gurudwaras in their neighbourhoods.

The interviewees were selected through purposive sampling to answer the research questions (Bradshaw and Stratford, 2010). For the first category of the interviewees, the only prerequisite was that a person should be a member of Gurudwara managing committee of any Gurudwara in the AMB. Two interviews were conducted with the members of the Gurudwara managing committees in each Gurudwara. All the interviewees in this category are males of 35 to 60 years of age, as there is no any female member in the Gurudwara managing committees yet. For the second category, the necessary prerequisite was an interviewee should be a regular visitor of any Gurudwara in Barcelona. In this category, 6 females and 6 males were interviewed. And for the last category of the local members, we have interviewed 2 members of the municipal council (who were the qualified informers) and the 2 members of the host community who have some direct contact with the Sikh community in the AMB.

3.2 Methodology

The Sikh Community Survey data was used to create a demographic and socioeconomic profile of the Sikh community in the AMB. To show the spatial distribution of the Sikh population in the AMB, I have used the Arc GIS 10.5.1 programme. As we have collected the point data of all buildings where the Sikh population is living at present in the AMB, to calculate their level of concentration in different areas I have use Kernel density function in the Arc GIS 10.5.1 programme. Kernel Density calculates the density of point features around each output raster cell. Conceptually, a smoothly curved surface is fitted over each point. The surface value is highest at the location of the point and diminishes with increasing distance from the point, reaching zero at the search radius distance from the point. Only a circular neighbourhood is possible. The volume under the surface equals the Population field value for the point, or 1 if NONE is specified. The density at each output raster cell is calculated by adding the values of all the kernel surfaces where they overlay the raster cell centre. The kernel function is based on the quartic kernel function described in Silverman (1986: 76, equation 4.5). If a population field setting other than NONE is used, each item's value determines the number of times to count the point. As in our case, we have used the number of residents in the same building as population value at each point. I have used the default area unit based on the linear unit of the projection definition of the input point feature data or as otherwise specified in the output coordinate system environment setting.

To analyse the interview data, we have used qualitative research methodology. The 'Grounded theory', which is a rigorous strategy of producing and analysing data, using an inductive approach, where the researcher moves between data and theory in order to understand the case, produce data, produce or modify existing theory, and analyse as one goes along (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). As the main objective of this study was of "giving voice" (Ragin & Amoroso, 201) to the people who participate in the production, reproduction and appropriation of metropolitan space. It has led to the study and analysis having some phenomenological traces as well. All interviews were encoded on the computer programme Atlas.ti, using a thematic classification offered by Boyatzis (1998). After transcribing the interviews, following the steps mentioned by Braun and Clarke (2006) for thematic analysis, we searched for the issues highlighted by the interviewees in their discourse and coded the content of interviews with initial codes. We formed families of primary codes to classify the information related to one theme in one place from all interviews and prepare the primary data for the analysis. Then, we searched for the patterns and themes repeated in all interviews. We

selected quotes to present different views regarding the themes under study. Finally, we prepared a report on the overall pattern and trends regarding the integration of Indians into different spheres of the host societies.

4. Sikh Immigration and Production of Community Space

Sikh community is the fourth largest religious community in India, with more than 30 million people living around the world, in which majority of them are settled in Punjab, a north-western state of India. Sikh religion came into existence in the 15th century, with the birth of first Sikh Guru -Nanak Dev- in the year 1469 at Rāi Bhoi Kī Talvaṇḍī present day Nankana Sahib, near Lahore in Pakistan. Sikh community flourished under the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who built the first Sikh empire, which was stretched from Kabul in the west to the borders of Delhi in the east. Their main occupation is agriculture, armed services or trade. They have a very long history of migration. At present Sikh diaspora extends to more than 100 countries, but almost half of the Sikh diaspora population is settled in three countries Canada, the United States of America and the United Kingdom. Spain is a very recent addition to the Sikh diaspora and still lies in its periphery (Garha and Domingo, 2017). Pioneer Sikhs entered Spain during the late 1970s (Santos 2013), to work on the agricultural fields in La Rioja region of northern Spain. In the 1980s, another wave of Sikh immigrants entered Olot, a municipality in Girona province of Catalonia autonomous community, as industrial workers in the growing small scale industries (Farajas 2006a, 2006b). During this time, most of the Sikh immigrant had no any previous idea about Spain. They were accidently reached Spain, after being refused entry permission to the United Kingdom[1], which at that time was their most favourite destination and other north European countries (Tatla 1999, Thandi 2012).

First immigration of Sikhs directly from Indian Punjab to Spain started during the late 1990s. Unlike their predecessors, they were coming with a clear purpose of to get regularized, participate in the labour market and to get settled permanently in Spain (Santos 2013). The economic boom during the housing bubble in Spain helped the permanent settlement of Sikh workers, who were mainly working in the construction sector (Garha et al. 2016a). The easy availability of manual jobs that requires less skills, relatively high income as compared to their homeland, and the possibility to buy a flat, encouraged many Sikhs to get settled permanently and bring their families to the AMB (Garha and Domingo 2018). It contributed to a rapid increase in the number of Sikhs in the AMB. After the bust of housing bubble in Spain most

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[1] The 1968 Immigration law stopped the free entry of commonwealth citizens to the United Kingdom (Hepple 1968).

of them, who were working in the construction business, either moved to the service sector (mainly restaurant jobs) and migrated along with the Mediterranean coast to south of Spain, or re-migrated to Canada (Garha et al 2015). According to the INE, in 2018 26.2 thousand Sikhs were registered in the Spanish municipal register, of whom 15 thousand (60%) were living in Catalonia, and in these 15 thousand, more than 10 thousand were living in the province of Barcelona alone. As Sikh religion don't encourage proselytization, the number if native people who have converted to Sikhism is very small.

Owing to relatively small size of the Sikh community in the AMB, it is very difficult to get precise information about the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, and settlement pattern of the Sikh community from the administrative records. On the basis of the survey data, we have made a profile of the Sikh community and their spatial distribution in different parts of the AMB.

4.1 The Demographic and Socioeconomic profile of the Sikh population in the AMB

In Spain, 90 per cent of the Sikh population belongs to the first or one and half generation of immigrants (Garha and Domingo, 2018). As per sex composition and age structure, the Sikh population in the AMB is highly male dominated (2.12 male per female) and concentrated in the working age groups (66.8% in the age group of 20-49 years) (Fig. 1). The main reason behind this high masculinity is the patriarchal structure of the Sikh community in Punjab. In the Sikh community, still males are considered as breadwinners and females are housemakers. Hence, males migrate first in search of work and to get settle abroad, and females follow them as trailing-wives or daughters under family reunion (Garha and Domingo, 2017). In the AMB, a large number of Sikhs who were already married before immigration, after their own regularisation have reunited their families under the family reunification laws. While, the other Sikh men who have immigrated single are now returning to Punjab to get married and bring their wives to Spain. Hence, the number of females in the Sikh population is increasing fast. As the main causes behind the recent Sikh immigration were economic; consequently, most of the Sikhs belongs to the working age groups. The share of children (below 20 years) is only 25.2% and that of elderlies (50+ years) is 8%. The share of females in the children's age group is 41%, but that of in the adult age group is 26%. It shows the success of family reunion programs in Spain.

Figure 1. The age structure and sex composition of the Sikh population in the AMB, 2018.
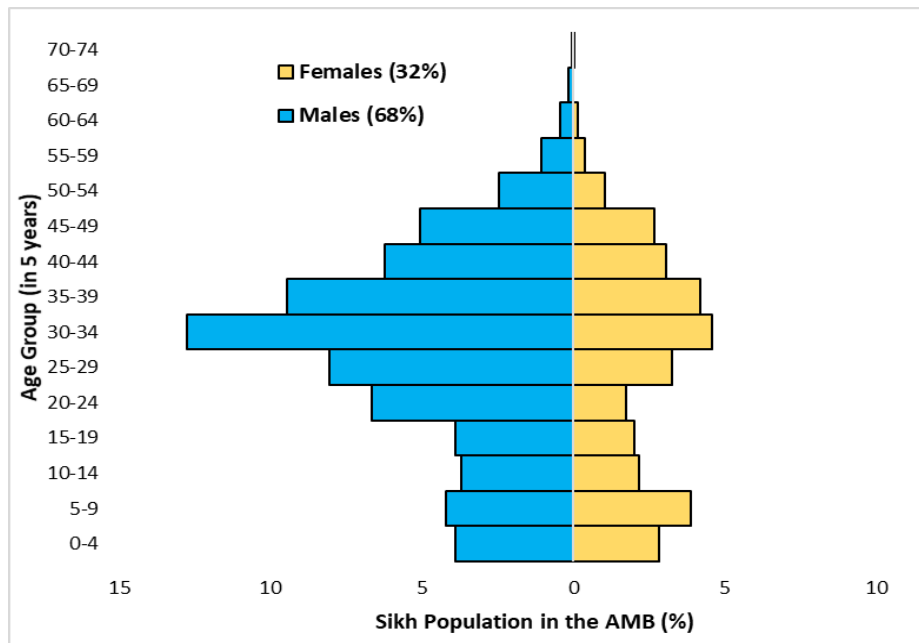
Source: own eleboration, Sikh Community Survey, July 2018.

Sikh immigration to Spain is mainly consisted of the unskilled or semi-skilled workers. Most of the Sikhs in the AMB are engaged in service sector, especially, in the restaurant jobs or the construction work. A small number of Sikhs also work as agricultural labour, which was their family occupation in Punjab. Owing to their hardworking nature and less demands employers like to hire Sikh workers (Santos 2013). Some of the Sikhs who have spent a considerable time in Spain, now have also established their own businesses like small grocery stores, construction material and electronics shops or restaurants. As per the employment level, according to the survey data, 54% of the present Sikh population is working (partially or full time), 21% are unemployed and remaining 25% are studying in schools or Universities (Fig. 2). Women have much bigger share in the unemployed population, as most of them have no or very little knowledge of the host languages and are limited to their domestic chores. Most of the working women are also engaged in their family businesses or work for other Indian businesses. Generally, Sikhs don't indulge themselves in the illegal activities, but it is not difficult to find young Sikh boys who are still in irregular situation selling beer cans on the Barcelona beaches or major tourist attractions in the AMB. There number is small and most of them are waiting for their regularisation to change their profession. Majority Sikhs don't have sufficient knowledge of the host languages; it also reduces their upward social mobility and chances to get decent jobs in the host labour market.

As per the education level, 51% of the total Sikh population have below primary education, and only 10% have the University education. The share of females with university education was higher than males, because males often migrate before completing their studies and females mostly migrate after completing their studies to join their husband (Garha and Domingo, 2017). The education completed in India does not help them to have good jobs in Spain. It is very easy to find young men/women with university degrees in irregular situation and doing precarious jobs in construction sector or restaurants. The education-occupation gap is even wider in the case of Sikh women, who have university degrees from Indian Universities but don't get any job according to their qualification.

Figure 2. The education and occupation structure of the Sikh population in the AMB, 2018
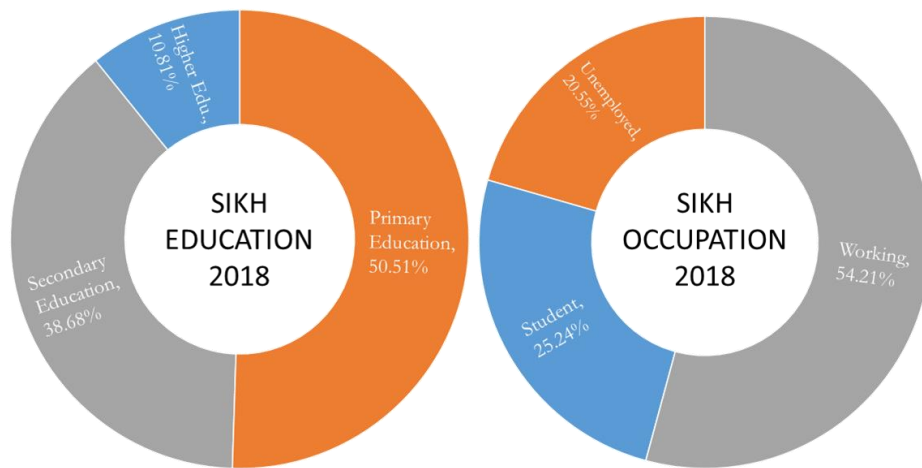
Source: own eleboration, the Sikh Community Survey, July 2018.

The time of stay is a very important factor that shapes the socioeconomic and demographic profile of any immigrant community at their new country of destination. From the survey data, I found that 52.7% of the total Sikh population entered the AMB after 2010 (Fig. 3). The highest number of arrival was recorded in the period of 2007-2010, which was mainly due to the success of family reunion program and the continuous regularisation program for the irregular immigrants. The Economic crisis in Spain, also affected the flow of Sikhs to the AMB during the period of 2010-2014. After 2014, as the effects of economic crisis started to disappear, the flow of Sikhs to Spain revived. Owing to the early settlement of Sikhs and expansion of their social networks, Barcelona served as an entry gate for many new immigrants, who spent some time in Barcelona and then migrate to other places in Spain or other countries in Europe or North America (Garha and Domingo 2017). It shows the continues arrival and departure of Sikh population to and from the AMB. Majority of the Sikhs

who immigrated in the late 1990s, have already re-migrated to other parts of Spain or even some other countries like Canada or England after taking the citizenship of Spain. This regular renewal of population affects the socioeconomic profile of the community in the AMB, as when people improve their economic and legal status they move out to other places and their place again occupied by the new immigrants who generally possess less sources.

Figure 3. The time of arrival of the Sikh population in the AMB, 2018
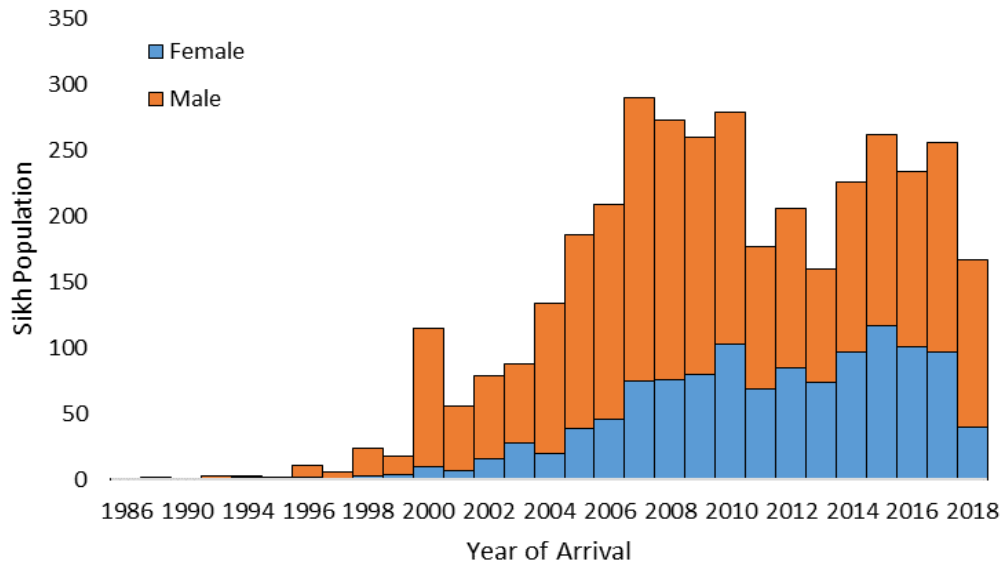
Source: own eleboration, Sikh Community Survey, July 2018.

As explained by the interviewees, most of the Sikh population in the AMB, was originated from three districts of *Doaba* region i.e. Kapurthala, Hoshiarpur and Jalandhar, in the Indian state of Punjab. Although the Sikh community is often viewed as a homogenous religious and ethnic group, easily recognised by public signs and symbols, such as the turban and beard, Sikh identity is diverse and complex (Mcleod 2002). Following Barth's (1976) definition of the ethnic group, we can say that the Sikh community and its members identify themselves and are identified by others as a distinctive and differentiated group: a group which is endogamous, shares basic cultural values, and creates an arena for communication and interaction. In the AMB, it is very difficult for a native person to distinguish between Sikhs and other Indians or people from other South Asian countries like Pakistan or Bangladesh. Owing to the large number of Pakistanis in the central districts of Barcelona, most of the native people confuse Sikhs with Pakistanis. They often call them 'Pakis', which hurts the sentiments of many Sikhs. Sometimes, because of their turban and long beard (especially baptised Sikhs), some natives also think that they are 'Muslims' from Afghanistan or followers

of Bin Laden. As most of the Sikhs coming from Punjab their mother tongue is Punjabi, which is also mother tongue for most of Pakistanis (but they write it differently like Arabic) in the AMB. Owing to their reserve nature and no political demands, Sikh community does not receive a lot of attention from the host community (Santos 2013). Most of the native people who come to Gurudwaras are also come for food only. They know nothing about the Sikh religion and philosophy. The Sikh Gurudwaras are also not trying to spread the massage of Sikhism in the AMB. There is hardly any conversion of native population to Sikhism in the AMB, as the Sikhs encourage all people of different faiths to stay in their own religions and pray the name of god. Sikhs have no social or political agenda regarding the spread of Sikhism in Europe, but the doors are open for everybody who wants to practice the religion or to learn the teachings of Gurus.

As appear from outside, Sikh identity is not homogenous (Gallo 2012). It has several layers based on the 'castes and clans', 'religious beliefs' and 'place of birth'. These internal differences are very difficult to detect for the host community, but within the Sikh community everybody knows his/her position in the social hierarchy. In the Sikh doctrine and religious traditions caste discrimination is strictly prohibited, as it divides the humankind into groups. To uplift the lower caste people, the Sikh Gurus abolished the caste system and encouraged people to treat whole humanity as one (Puri, 2003). But still many people whose forefathers left Hinduism and converted to Sikhism centuries ago, follow their caste rules and discriminate with other Sikhs on the basis of their caste rules. The most disturbing thing is that when they migrate from Punjab they bring these differences to their all new places of residence and pass them to their young generations. In the AMB, one can also find Sikhs from all major internal caste groups also called *'Biradaris'* like *Jatt, Lubana, Ramgarhia, Tarkhann, Chamar, Valmiki* or *Ravidasia.* According to the estimates provided by the interviewees, in the AMB, most of the Sikhs belong to *Lubana Biradari* -categorised as Other Backward Class (OBC) in India-. In India, historically, the *Lobana Biradari* was a trading community, but later on they changed their occupation to agriculture and settled permanently in Punjab. The second major group belongs to *Jatt Biradari,* which is an upper caste group in Indian caste hierarchy. Their main occupation in India was agriculture and they still owned most of the land resources in Punjab. The third largest group is *Ravidasia Biradari*, which is a lower caste group in the Indian society. Owing to the caste conflicts with upper caste Sikhs -who don't treat them properly especially, after the Vienna incidence in 2009, where two radical Sikhs murdered a Saint from the *Ravidasia* community on the charges of blasphemy- they have stopped visiting Sikh temples. Now they have constructed their own *Ravidass Bhavan* in the AMB. They also have support of other lower

caste groups like *Valmikis* and *Chamaras* (untouchables) of Indian origin. The Smallest group is of *Ramgarhia Biradari*. They are the artisan class (carpenters, masons, plumbers or electricians) of Indian society. These caste groups are the basis of kinship networks, which help new immigrants in search of jobs, housing apartments and sometimes marriage partners. The caste differences often become the breeding grounds for the internal conflicts in the Sikh community and divide the community into sects (Gallo 2013) at present many Sikh temples (Gurudwaras) in Spain are affiliated to one or another caste group, which marks the internal division of the community.

Figure 4. The different layers of the Sikh identity in the AMB, 2018.
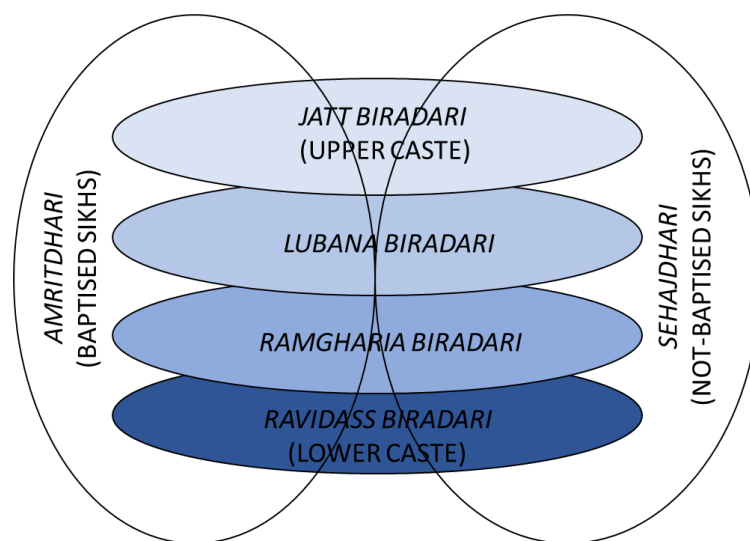
Source: own elaboration, based on interview with Sikh community members 2016-2018.

Apart from the caste groups, on the basis of their religious beliefs of purity and profaneness, the whole Sikh community is also divided into two major group, i.e. Baptised (*Amritdhari)* and the Not Baptised (*Sehajdhari*) Sikhs. Baptised Sikhs are also called '*Khalsa*' (which means pure) and represents the normative identity of Sikhs. In Sikhism the concept of Baptism was introduced by the 10th Sikh guru –Guru Gobind Singh- in 1699 to break the boundaries of castes and clans. A special code of conduct was given to the baptised Sikhs. They wear at all times certain signs known as the five Ks, which are *kes*, the uncut hair; *kangha*, the comb; kara, the steel bangle; *kirpan*, the sword or dagger; and *kacch*, a particular kind of underwear (McLeod 1989: 45). They do not change their physical look, read the religious scripture two times a day, and eat only vegetarian food. In Sikhism everybody is encouraged to get baptised, but it is not compulsory for all. Each Sikh boy/girl decide whether he or she wants to get baptised or not. Still a very small fraction of the community (around 10%) is

baptised in the AMB. It was mainly due to the strict code of conduct, which is difficult to follow in a foreign context, and the occupational restrictions in the host labour market. The second major group is of *Sehajdhari* Sikhs. It is the biggest group of Sikhs in the AMB. They believe in the teachings of Sikh Gurus, but don't follow the code of conduct of *Khalsa* very strictly. Hence, they are not obliged to keep long uncut beards or wear turban. They also change their diet and living style to accommodate with their new context or conditions of the labour market. The baptised Sikhs generally consider themselves superior or pure than others, and claim their legitimate right on the symbolic and material resources of the religious institutions, like Gurudwaras. This desire to have power and control over community affairs often breed conflicts in the community that sometimes leads to violent clashes. Despite all these internal differences, in their formation as a community in the AMB, all Sikhs resort to their community as a category of ascription and identification, which is common among ethnic groups (Barth 1976: 10).

4.2 The Spatial Distribution of the Sikh population in the AMB

The Sikh community is not evenly distributed in the AMB. Most of the Sikhs are living in the immigrant neighbourhoods, where they occupy substandard houses and share public spaces with other South Asian, Africans or Latin American immigrants. With the Sikh Community Survey data, I have identified three major clusters of the Sikh population in the AMB (Fig. 5). The oldest and biggest cluster of the Sikh community is the 'Hospitalet cluster', which includes the neighbourhoods of Collblanc, Florida, Pubilla Cases and Torrassa neighbourhoods of l'Hospitalet de Llobregat municipality in the AMB. Generally, these neighbourhoods are considered as immigrant neighbourhoods and have high concentration of Latin Americans immigrants and gypsy population. It is the biggest cluster of the Sikh population in the AMB. Owing to the large number of family immigration, the share of kids and females in the total population is highest in this cluster.

The second cluster is 'Raval cluster', which includes neighbourhoods of El Raval and Poble sec in the central district –Ciutat Vella- of Barcelona municipality. Owing to the high concentration of immigrant population, mostly from Pakistan and Philippines, these neighbourhoods are also considered as immigrant neighbourhoods and have poor residential buildings, which are available at low rents. Owing to the gentrification of the central parts of Barcelona, the size of Sikh population in this cluster is decreasing rapidly. The average time of stay in this cluster is lowest as compared to other clusters. It is mainly due to the continuous arrival of new immigrants in this cluster and the departure of other immigrants from here to

outskirts of Barcelona municipality. The third cluster is 'Fondo cluster', which is consisted of El Fondo and Santa Rosa neighbourhood of Santa Coloma de Gramenet municipality and extended towards the neighbourhoods of La Salut and Sant Roc in Badalona municipality. This cluster is growing rapidly with the internal migration of many Sikh families who owing to the increased number of tourist flats in the central districts of Barcelona are excluded from their previous neighbourhoods. This cluster has the majority of elder population (50+ years of age) of the Sikh community in AMB, who have moved from the centre in search of cheap affordable houses in the vicinity of Barcelona.

Figure 5. Major clusters of Sikh Population in the AMB, 2018.
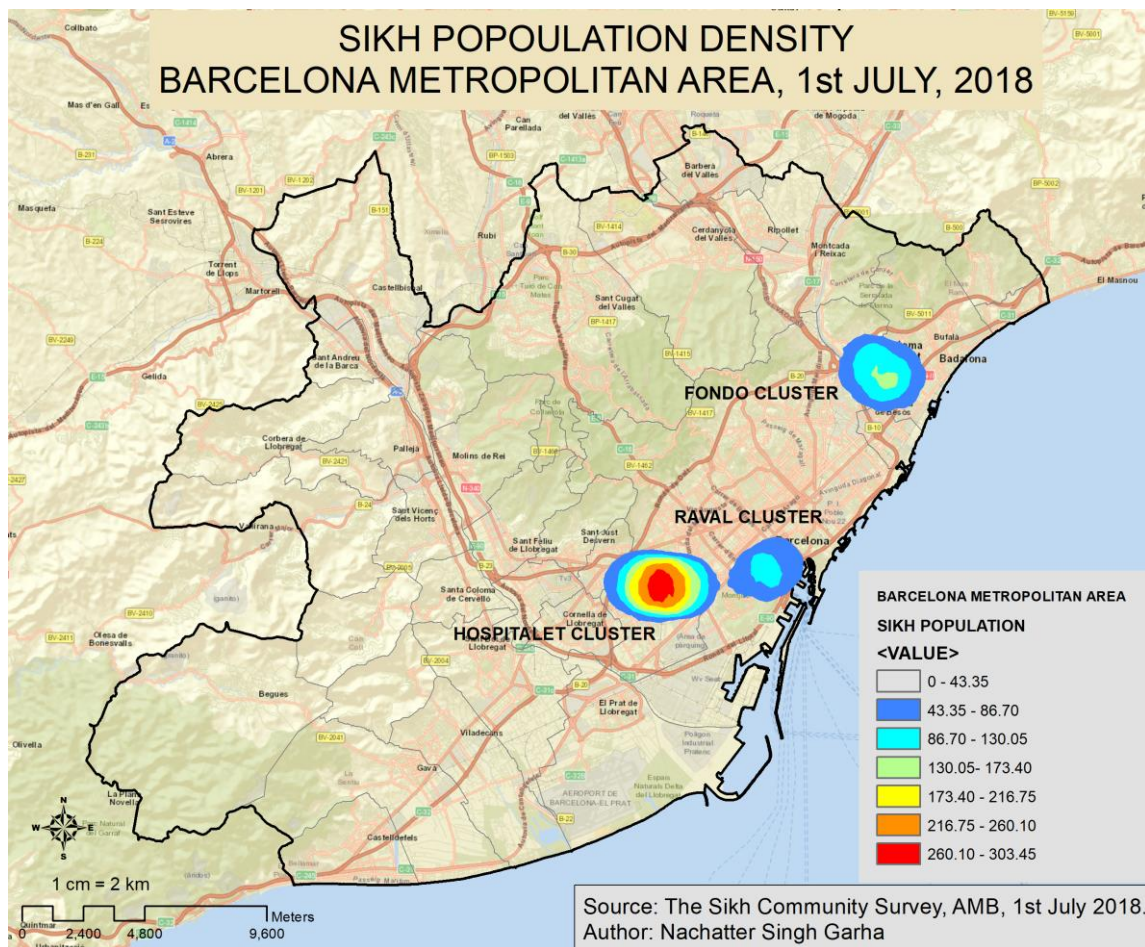
Source: Own elaboration, with data from Sikh Community Survey, 2018.

While looking for the factors responsible for this spatial distribution of Sikhs in the AMB, I have identified three major factors: the proximity to gurudwaras (Sikh Temple), availability of cheap rented apartments, and easy accessibility to public transport (especially underground metro service). For the Sikh community proximity to gurudwara is a very crucial factor that shapes their spatial distribution. Most of the Sikhs like to live close to the gurudwara

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as their whole social life revolves around it. From the survey data, we find that almost 55% of the total Sikh population was living in 1 KM radius of the gurudwaras, and 78% in the 2 KM radius of gurudwaras in the AMB (Fig. 6). The gurudwaras attracts Sikh families from the neighbourhoods, which don't have a gurudwara.

Figure 6. The influence area of different Gurudwaras in the AMB, 2018.
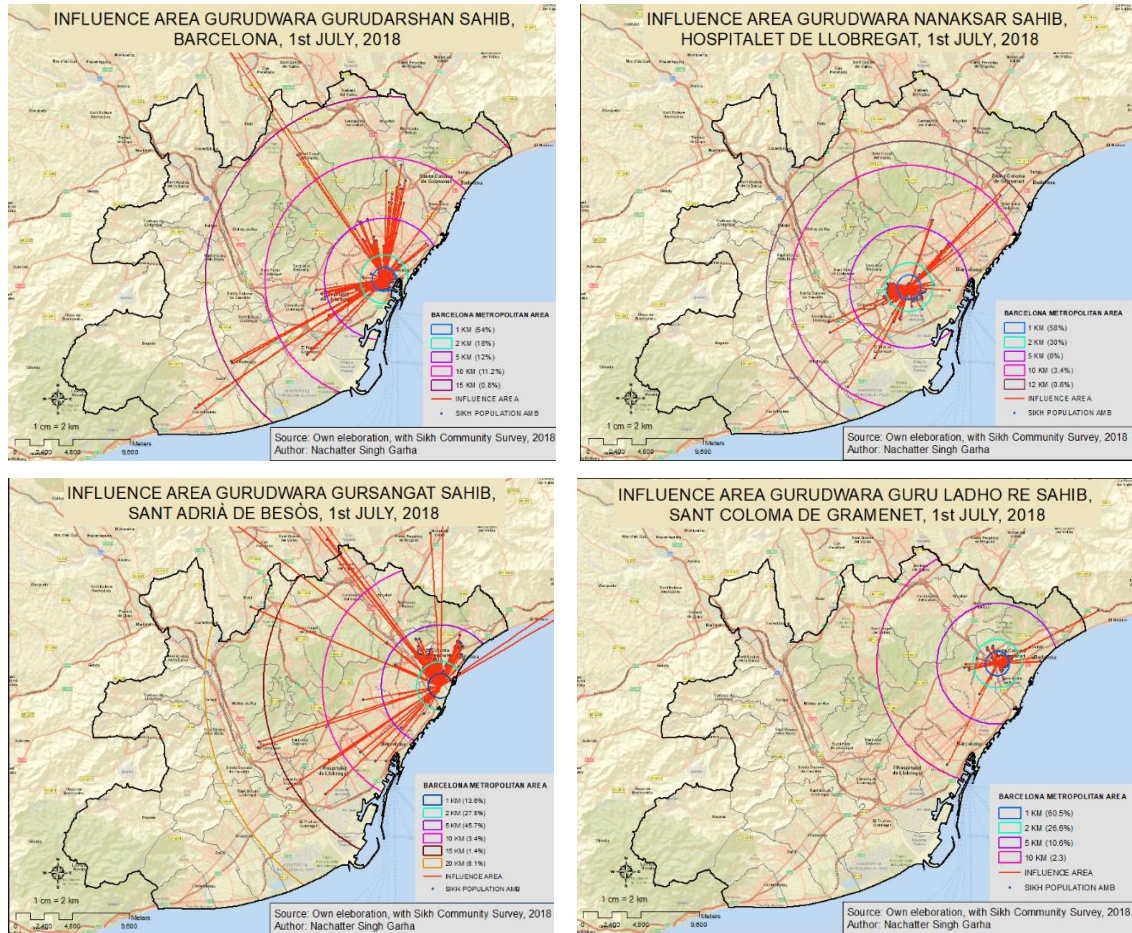
Source: Own elaboration, with data from Sikh Community Survey, 2018.

The second major factor that affected the spatial distribution of Sikhs was the availability of cheap residential apartments in specific immigrant neighbourhoods in the AMB. As explained by interviewees, most of the Sikhs in the AMB belong to the low skilled working class who are engaged in blue colour jobs and in most of the families only one partner earns money (mostly males). Hence, they don't afford apartments in the posh areas of the AMB, which are very costly and out of their reach. Hence, they search for cheap apartments, which they normally get in the degraded immigrant neighbourhoods. All the above mentioned clusters of Sikh population, shows the zones of low rent substandard housing areas in the AMB. Moreover, the house sharing is very common among Indian families in the AMB. It is

very normal to find two or more nuclear families living in the same apartment or an apartment shared by 7 or 8 single men who live together to save more money for remittances. It also contributes to their high concentration in some specific areas. Moreover, as everyone has to rent an apartment for the reunification of family members from India, it facilitates the expansion of Sikh population to other neighbourhoods.

The third main factor that shaped the spatial distribution of Sikhs in the AMB was the availability of public transport (Fig. 7). As most them depend on the public transport for their work and daily mobility, they search for the residential areas which are nicely connected through public transport. The underground metro is the most widely used mode of transport among Sikh immigrants. Hence, 78% of the total Sikh population in the AMB lives in 1 KM radius of Metro lines. The line one 'L1' of the metro also called 'Red Line', which connects the municipalities of Hospitalet de Llobregat, Barcelona and Santa Coloma de Gramenet, is the main source of transport for the majority of Sikh population. This Line has contributed a lot to the expansion of the Sikh community in the AMB, by allowing them to keep their jobs in Barcelona centre, while living in Hospitalet de Llobregat or Santa Coloma de Gramenet. By making connection with some parts of Blue, Green and Purple lines, Red Line serves 90% of the total Sikh population in the AMB and connects all gurudwaras.

The availability of public transport also helped the Sikh population to stay connected with different gurudwaras in the AMB, while living in different municipalities. For example, entire Sikh population who lives in the neighbourhood of Trinitat Vella, Horta-Guinardó or Bon Pastor are connected to the central gurudwara through Red line metro. Apart from the proximate neighbourhoods, the FGC and Renfe train lines also connects the Sikh population living in Sabadell, Terrassa, Viladecans, Sant Boi or Castelldefells municipalities with the central gurudwara in Barcelona. Similarly, all the Sikh families in the Esplugues de Llobregat, Cornella de Llobregat and the neighbourhoods of Pubilla Casses and Florida are settled along with the metro line Red and Blue which connects them with the gurudwara in Hospitalet de Llobregat. The Gurudwara in Sant Adrià de Besòs is connected through the Purple line and the Badalona Renfe Stop and it serves the Sikh population in Badalona and Santa Coloma de Gramanet. Due to the availability of parking spaces it also serves the Sikh population living in neighbouring municipalities, which are not connected with metro service and people have to come Gurudwara on their own vehicles. Lastly, the Red line also connects the gurudwara in Santa Coloma de Gramenet to all other gurudwaras in the AMB.

Figure 7. The effect of Metro Lines on the spatial distribution of the Sikh Population in the AMB, 2018.
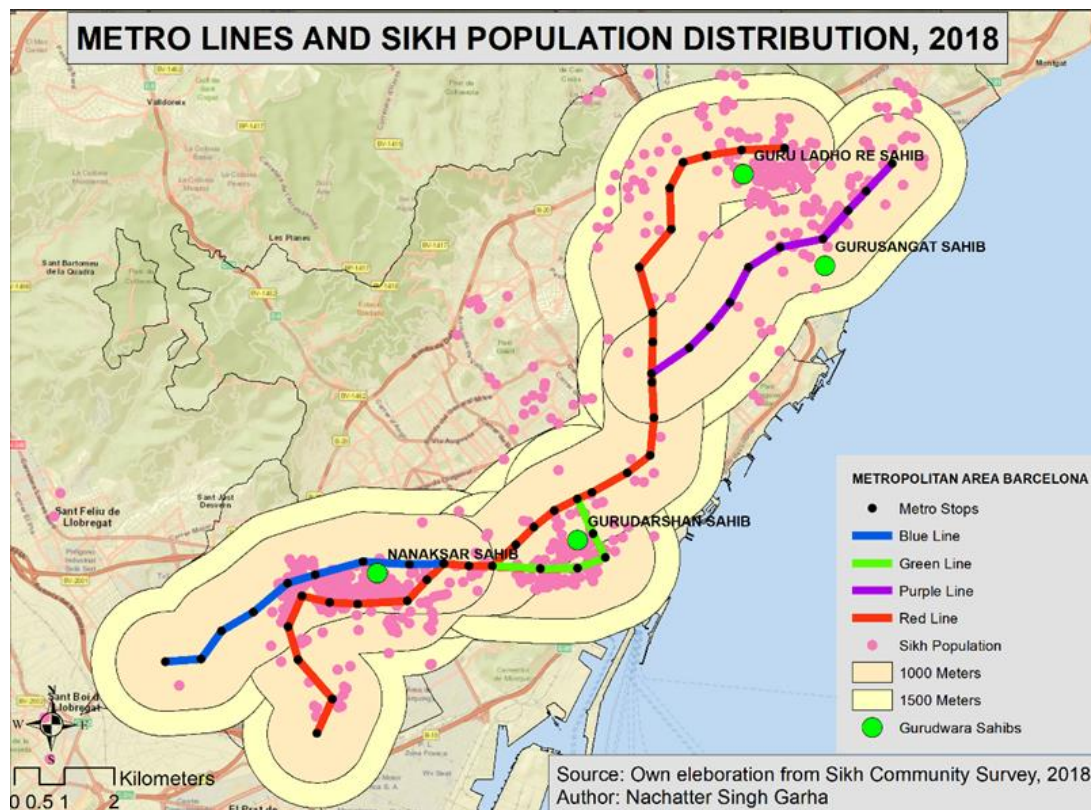
Source: Own elaboration, with data from Sikh Community Survey, 2018.

In sum, with their regular immigration and permanent presence in the AMB, the Sikh community has produced a social space of its own in the host society. Their different physical appearance, dressing styles, religious traditions, eating habits and languages, contribute to the diversity of already diverse immigrant neighbourhoods of the AMB. The growing presence of women and the children in the Sikh community also increase the gendered use of public spaces, which a single man never come in contact with, like schools, child hospitals, language institutes and women NGOs and other organisations. As most of the Sikh women don't work outside they spend more time at home with kids in the neighbourhoods where they live. It allows them to come in connect with the host society. The young kids give them chance to spend time in public parks, where they come in contact with other women from different communities. Similarly, the school going kids opens the way for their parents to come in contact with another public institution that deals with children's education. It expands the Sikh community space in all dimensions. Now, for the native people, especially who live in the diverse neighbourhoods or work in the blue colour jobs, it has become normal to find some Sikhs at their workplaces, in their neighbourhoods, in super markets or at public spaces like

parks and public transport. People have started to identify and accept the Sikh population as a part of the social fabric of the AMB. Similarly, the Sikh population has also started to accept a new layer of their identity as 'Barcelona-Sikhs' or 'Catalan Sikhs'. Moreover, the construction of religious places like gurudwaras, and the celebration of religious and cultural events (processions and festivals) at public places have become symbol of their religious reproduction, and material or symbolic appropriation of spaces in the AMB.

5. Reproduction and Appropriation of Metropolitan Space

The immigrant communities always try to reproduce their cultural and religious entities at all new countries of destination (Cohen 2004). Several authors have recognized how temples, churches, mosques or gurudwaras constitute important migratory places in which a sense of community is reproduced away from home (Peach & Gale 2003: 487), and through which a confident assertion of negotiated belonging to the new context is promoted (Ansari 2002, Henkel & Knippenberg 2005). It also helps in negotiating and transmitting migrants' culture and identity and in providing new generations with a link to their homeland traditions (Knott 1986, Ebaugh & Chavetz 2000, Hirvi 2010, Nesbitt 2007). But often religious buildings are also seen as foreign disturbances in the city landscape, which are often become a source of conflict between the immigrating religious groups and the host society. As explained by Oosterbaan (2014: 596), 'despite constitutional protection of religious diversity, the urban struggles of new religious movements are not about gaining a place in religiously neutral societies, but about achieving presence, physically and otherwise, in cities where particular notions prevail about the form and shape that public religion should have'.

Sikh immigrants are not an exception to it. Whenever they enter a new country of destination, it is considered to be their prime duty to get together as early as possible and establish a gurudwara in their new neighbourhood. The establishment of a gurudwara also acts as a physical symbol of the presence of the Sikh community at any place around the globe. The main purpose behind this is to remained connected with the Sikh beliefs and values, and pass it to the coming generations so that they feel connected with their ancestral culture and traditions (Singh 2012). It also unites the community at new destinations and promotes social cohesion. The role of gurudwara is 'more wide ranging and subtle than the simple remembering of rituals from a mother tongue within an alien culture. It would appear not to be a backward-looking space, but a dynamic and creative one, putting religious and cultural capital to not only adapt but also shape the wider, pluralized culture in which they are located' (Baker and Beaumont, 2011, p. 39).

The reproduction of religious buildings at new destinations, involves temporary or sometimes permanent appropriation of urban spaces, which were in other secular uses in the past. This conversion of secular spaces to sacred ones is done through rituals, or by assigning meanings and interpretations. As the construction of a Gurudwara results in the material and long term appropriation of urban space, the religious procession and the functions organised at the public places leads to the temporary and symbolic appropriation of urban space. This symbolic appropriation is used to show the presence, normative identity, beliefs, traditions and strengths of the community to the host society. This reproduction and appropriation of urban space sometimes seen in the host society as the infiltration of a foreign religions into their social space, and receives harsh treatment from the host community. It may create some community conflicts, when the immigrant culture and religious practices collides with the native beliefs. These community conflicts often lead to 'negotiations' between the immigrant groups, public administration and the host society. These negotiations are used to accommodate all groups in the same urban space.

5.1 Reproduction of Sacred Spaces: Gurudwaras

A gurudwara is a Sikh place of worship used for daily prayers, celebration of religious festivals, weddings, name ceremonies of new born kids, baptising ceremonies, and to celebrate other social or cultural events related to the Sikh history, politics and culture. The word gurudwara literally means 'House of the Guru'. In each gurudwara resides the *Adi Granth* or *Guru Granth Sahib*, the religious scripture compiled by 6 Gurus and 30 other saints of different faiths (Ganeri 2003, 28). The *Guru Granth Sahib* is considered the last and eternal *Guru* and Sikhs consider and venerate it as a living *Guru*, treating it with the highest respect and turning to it for guidance and inspiration (Santos 2013). Apart from the religious services, a gurudwara also provides food to the visitors, temporary shelter to the homeless Sikhs, classes of Punjabi language and religious scripture to all, a platform for the community to raise social and political concerns, and a place for socialising. Especially, in a foreign context, it helps in negotiating and transmitting Sikh identity, providing new generations with a link to their homeland traditions, and giving shelter and guidance about the job market and the process of regularisation to the new arrivals (Garha and Domingo, 2017). The construction of Gurudwaras in a country is also considered as a process of community building (Singh and Tatla 2006). It strengthens the transnational relations of the Sikhs living in different countries around the world. These transnational relations help in the exchange of resources, expertise

of rituals and support at the time of conflict within the Sikh community or with the host communities (Garha and Paparusso 2018; Garha and Domingo, 2018).

5.1.1 Twenty years of gurudwaras in the AMB, 1998-2018

The year 2018 has marked the two decades of the inauguration of the first gurudwara in Spain 'Nanaksar Sahib' in the year 1998 (Fig. 8). It was situated at Segunt street of Sants neighbourhood in the municipality of Barcelona. It was situated close to the metro stop named 'Mercat Nou' of Red Line, so it was commonly known as 'Mercat Nou gurudwara'. This gurudwara was constructed by few not-baptised Sikhs who were migrated to Barcelona in search of manual jobs in the sales and hospitality sector, and eventually got settled here permanently. To perform weekly prayers, initially they started to gather in a residential apartment of an elderly Sikh. Later on, they saved some money and rented a commercial place –which was a grocery shop in its previous land use- to organise weekly prayers. They bring a replica of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, which is an indispensable part of all gurudwaras, from the Gurudwara Singh Sabha situated at Vicenza in Italy. At that time the number of Sikhs in the AMB was very limited, hence, to pay the monthly rent of the building and other services, they started to collect a monthly amount equivalent to 20 euro per person now. For the general public the gurudwara used to open only on weekends.

In the coming years, owing to the announcements of the regularisation program of the year 2000, the inflow of the Sikhs from other countries of Europe or directly from India to Barcelona increased manifolds. In this flow a majority upper class *Jatt* Sikhs entered Barcelona and got settled in the central districts of Barcelona municipality. Initially, they started to visit the gurudwara in Mercat Nou, but most of them were not happy with its functioning. They started to criticize openly the way the rituals were performed in the gurudwara. Actually, an underlying motive was to take the control of the gurudwara, and to shift it close to their homes in Ciutat Vella, a central district of Barcelona. When the people in Mercat Nou refused to shift the gurudwara from its initial place, the unsatisfied group established another gurudwara – *Gurudarshan Sahib*- on the Union Street of Raval neighbourhood in Barcelona, in the year 2002. This gurudwara was established in a residential apartment, which was rented to organize daily prayers. Two copies of the sacred scripture were brought from Italy. A full time priest -who was a baptised Sikh- was appointed to conduct daily prayers (*Nit name*). Owing to the establishment of gurudwara, the size of Sikh population in the neighbourhood started to grow rapidly. As the number of visitors increased, the space in gurudwara was not enough for all. Then the decision was made to shift the gurudwara to a new place, where the space should be

enough for whole congregation, and there should be permission to install a kitchen for the preparation of food for all visitors. In the year 2005, the gurudwara was moved to its present location in the Hospital Street of Barcelona. An abandoned factory was reconstructed to use as gurudwara. It used to open during the week days also. During the regularisation of 2005, it served as a shelter for many new arrivals, mostly irregular immigrants, who were coming to Spain for regularisation.

Meanwhile, the first gurudwara of Mercat Nou remained functioning as it was. But with the establishment of a new gurudwara in the central district of Barcelona the Sikh population got divided into two groups. New Sikh immigrants have started to settle around both gurudwaras. Initially, the population around the central gurudwara increased rapidly, but due to the high house rents and bad conditions of residential buildings, people also start searching apartments in other neighbouring municipalities, like l'Hospitalet de Llobregat, Esplugues de Llobregat, Badalona and Santa Coloma de Gramenet. At the time of housing bubble many of them brought apartments in l'Hospitalet de Llobregat, and moved there for family reunion and permanent settlement. The increased settlement of Sikh population in l'Hospitalet de Llobregat raised the demand of shifting the Mercat Nou Gurudwara (which was at the municipal borders of Barcelona and Hospitalet municipalities) to l'Hospitalet de Llobregat. The small size of gurudwara building, which was not sufficient to serve the rapidly increasing population in the area, was the main reason behind this change. The Sikh population of l'Hospitalet de Llobregat municipality succeeded to convince the Mercat Nou Gurudwara managing committee to shift gurudwara to a new building on Rafael Campalans street of Collblanc neighbourhood in l'Hospitalet de Llobregat municipality, in the year 2007. The new building was a car parking in its previous use. Initially, the building was rented on a monthly rent but later on, it was brought by paying the full price. Now it is a property of the Sikh congregation of the l'Hospitalet area, represented by a Gurudwara managing committee of 5 members. This gurudwara is still functioning at the same place and serve the maximum number of Sikhs in the AMB.

On the other side, the increase of population and the arrival of more baptised Sikhs in Barcelona, started a debate about the roles, rights and responsibilities of baptised and not baptised Sikhs in the central gurudwara in Barcelona. It ignited the power politics in gurudwara affairs: the election of managing committees and the allocation of funds were the major issues of conflict. A group of orthodox baptised Sikhs was not in the favour of the participation of not baptised Sikhs in the gurudwara management committee. They tried to capture the control of gurudwara and to change the rituals according to their own beliefs. It increased the

polarisation between baptised and not baptised Sikhs in the community. Owing to the strong resistance from the not baptised Sikhs, who were in majority, the baptised Sikhs group initiated a plan to establish a new gurudwara in Badalona. It resulted in the establishment of third gurudwara in the AMB –*Gursangat Sahib*- on Ramon Llul street of Sant Roc neighbourhood of Badalona municipality, in the year 2006. An abundant car parking was rented and reconstructed to use as gurudwara building.

In 2007, owing to the grouping of Sikh population, this time on the lines of castes, a new gurudwara was inaugurated by Ravidasia community in El Fondo neighbourhood of Santa Coloma de Gramenet municipality. The reasons behind the inauguration of this gurudwara was the stated discrimination suffered by the *Ravidasia* Sikh community in other gurudwaras, mainly regarding the representation in gurudwara managing committees and the allocation of funds during the religious functions. The mainstream Sikh community was also unhappy with the *Ravidasia* group, due to their traditions of following living gurus, which is strictly prohibited in the Sikh code of conduct. After the incidence of Vienna, the Ravidasia gurudwara in Barcelona was closed and the Sikh religious scripture was returned to the gurudwara in Badalona. Now in the *Ravidasia* temple they pray from their own religious scripture -*Ravidass Bani*-, which contains only the hymns of Saint *Ravidass*.

Later on, in 2013, another clan based group, who call themselves *Lubanas*, also separated from the Badalona gurudwara, to set up a new gurudwara in Verdi street of Santa Coloma de Gramanet municipality. The main argument behind this separation was the discriminatory policies regarding the role of not baptised Sikhs in the activities and management of gurudwara affairs. The *Lubana* group, who were mostly not baptised Sikhs, were unhappy with the expulsive behaviour of Badalona gurudwara managing committee. It was the first gurudwara in the AMB that suffered some protest from the local community members, who were explicitly suffering from NIMBY syndrome (Not in my backyard) and not allowing the opening of any religious institution in their neighbourhood. Most of them were not even aware about the Sikh religion and protesting as it was a mosque. During this time, the same kind of agitations were also suffered by the Sikh community at the municipalities of Olot, Salt and Vic. Owing to the objection of the local people, and to resolve the conflict, the municipal council of Santa Coloma de Gramanet provided land and resources on the out-skirts of the municipality in the Avenida Pallaresa street to construct the gurudwara. This gurudwara start functioning in 2014. The temporary building structure provided by the municipal council was made of fibre sheets, that caught fire in a very suspicious way during the first year of its establishment. After a fire incidence in 2015, it was moved to a commercial

Figure 8. The evolutionary history of gurudwaras in the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona, 1998-2018.

Twenty years of Gurudwaras in Metropolitan Area of Barcelona, 1998-2018

2014
- Gurudwara Guru Ladho Re was shifted to Avenida Pallaresa in Santa Coloma de Gramenet.
- Building was provided by Municipal council.
- After few months, the building of Gurudwara caught fire in a very suspicious manner.

2015
- Gurudwara Guru Ladho Re was shifted to Avenida Santa Coloma in Santa Coloma de Gramenet municipality.
- In a reconstructed commercial building.
- Daily prayers are performed and the free food has been served to all visitors.

2013
- Fourth Gurudwara -Guru Ladho Re Sahib- was inaugurated in Verdi Street of Fondo neighbourhood in Santa Coloma de Gramenet.
- By a group of Lubana Sikhs, who were unpleased with the radical approach of Gurudwara Gurusangat sahib towards not baptised Sikhs.
- A commercial building was rented (No permission of kitchen).
- It used to open everyday for prayers.

GURU LADHO RE SAHIB SANTA COLOMA DE GRAMENET

Owing to Fire Incidence

Owing to host population's protest

Owing to conflict between baptised and not baptised Sikhs

2005
- Gurudwara Gurudarshan Sahib was shifted to Hospital street in Barcelona.
- An abandoned super market building was reconstructed.
- It opens everyday for prayers.
- It has a fully operational kitchen and daily meals served to all visitors mostly natives (+400 individuals daily).
- It is also known as central Gurudwara in AMB.

GURUDARSHAN SAHIB BARCELONA

2007
- Gurudwara Nanaksar Sahib was shifted to Rafael Camplan street, in Hospitalet de Llobregat municipality.
- A car parking was reconstructed to use as Gurudwara.
- It opens everyday for prayers.
- It has a fully operational kitchen and daily meals are served to all visitors.
- It represents the highest share of present Sikh community in AMB.

NANAKSAR SAHIB HOSPITALET DE LLOBREGAT

Owing to the shortage of space

2007
- Ravidasia Temple was inaugurated in 2007 in Badalona municipality. Initially, Ravidasia community used to pray from the Sikh religious scripture, but after the Vienna incidence in 2009, they returned the Sikh scripture to Badalona Gurudwara and now they only read prayers from Ravidass bani.

Owing to conflict between baptised and not baptised Sikhs

Owing to caste conflicts and representation in Gurudwara management

Owing to the shortage of space

2006
- Third Gurudwara -Gurusangat Sahib- was inaugurated, in Ramon Llull street of Badalona municipality.
- By baptised Sikhs who separated from the central Gurudwara.
- A reconstructed car parking was used.
- Two replicas of religious scripture brought from Central Gurudwara.
- It has kitchen and free food was served to all visitors.
- It used to open everyday for prayers.

GURUSANGAT SAHIB SANT ADRIÀ DE BESÒS

Owing to a conflict between baptised and not baptised Sikhs regarding rituals and functioning of Gurudwara and to control the resources.

2016
- Gurudwara Gurusangat Sahib was shifted to Arquemedis street, in Sant Adría de Besòs.
- An industrial complex building was rented and reconstructed to use as Gurudwara.
- Only baptised Sikhs can become member of managing committee.
- It opens everyday for prayers.
- It has a fully operational kitchen and daily meals are served to all visitors.
- It represents the largest territory in AMB.

Owing to the shortage of space

Owing to a conflict between two groups regarding rituals, and to control the resources.

2002
- Second Gurudwara -Gurudarshan Sahib- was inaugurated in Union Street of Raval neighbourhood in Barcelona.
- By a group of baptised Sikhs who were unpleased with the first Gurudwara.
- In a small residential apartment.
- Two replicas of religious scripture was brought from Italy.
- Gurudwara used to open on weekends.

1998
- First Gurudwara -Nanaksar Sahib- was inaugurated, in Sants, Barcelona.
- By 10-20 not-baptised Sikhs.
- A commercial building was rented and reconstructed (no permission of kitchen)
- A replica of religious scripture was brought from Italy.
- Gurudwara used to open on weekends.

● Functioning Gurudwaras   ○ Previous Locations   ⟹ Shifting of Gurudwara   ⤾ Splitting of Gurudwara

Source: Own elaboration, based on the interviews conducted by the author (2016-2018).

building rented to establish the gurudwara on the Avenida Santa Coloma street in Santa Coloma de Gramanet municipality. Owing to the lack of permission to install a kitchen in the building, this gurudwara had some problems with the local administration. Later on, with some restructuring of the building, they got this permission and now the gurudwara is functioning smoothly.

In the year 2016, owing to the demand of people, especially who were coming to the Gurudwara with their own vehicles from the outer municipalities, the Gurudwara Gurusangat Sahib Badalona was shifted to an industrial complex on the Arquemedis street in the Sant Adrià de Besòs municipality. The main reasons behind this move were the shortage of space for the increasing number of visitors and the problem of parking for the vehicles of the visitors at the previous location. The building of the gurudwara was an industrial warehouse which has been rented and reconstructed to establish gurudwara. Now this is the biggest gurudwara –in terms of area- in the AMB, which receives a large number of followers' form nearby municipalities.

In 2018, when I am writing this thesis there are four Sikh gurudwaras in the AMB, which are situated in the municipalities of Barcelona, l'Hospitalet de Llobregat, Santa Coloma de Gramenet and Sant Adrià de Besòs.

5.1.2 The establishment of gurudwaras in the AMB: Poetics and Politics of Sacred Spaces

Following the poetic or substantial approach towards sacred, the concept of sacred spaces in Sikhism is very inclusive. According to Sikh beliefs -as explained by Mukhtiar, 47, a priest in a gurudwara in the AMB- there is only one universal creator, and truth is its name, it exists everywhere, has no physical form, fearless, immortal and transcends time, space and gender. As god is omnipresent and the whole universe is its creation and inherently sacred, a person cannot construct a sacred space, everything which is visible or invisible is already sacred. At the individual level, for a Sikh the whole universe is sacred. As per Gagan, 23, a baptised Sikh student, "a Sikh can pray anywhere where he/she wants to pray and perform his religious duties. Therefore, for the Sikhs their homes, work places or even public spaces can be used for prayers". It raises a question that if Sikhs can pray anywhere then what is the need behind the establishment of gurudwaras?

The answer to this question, as explained by Gurnam, 54, a gurudwara managing committee members, "gurudwara, as a sacred space, is important at the community level. In gurudwara different community members come together to perform daily prayers and share their resources and experiences". Gurudwara accumulate community resources, which makes

it a centre of power and influence in the community and paved the way for the politics of sacred. According to Harsimran, 26, a regular visitor, "due to the accumulation of resources and power, everybody wants to be the head of gurudwara managing committees, which starts power politics in gurudwaras". Sacred as a contested category give birth to conflicts between pure and profane forces that with the tools of inclusion or exclusion, appropriate material and symbolic resources of the community. The politics of sacred affects the establishment of gurudwaras in several ways starting from their positioning in the city; the appropriation and control over their material or symbolic resources; and the inclusion or exclusion of people who are categorised as pure or profane on the basis of their religious beliefs.

Firstly, the positioning of a gurudwara at a particular place in a new city is a politically charged issue. As explained by Kuljit, 36, a member of gurudwara managing committee, "it mainly depends upon the desire of the powerful sect [it may be caste group or socioeconomic group] of the Sikh community, as mostly they prefer to have it in the vicinity of their homes". Additionally, it depends upon the availability of suitable place, financial resources, the concentration of Sikh population, the land use regulations of the municipal council, accessibility to public transport, and finally, the attitude of the host society towards immigrants. The symbolic importance and centrality of some areas in the city also affects the positioning of gurudwaras. In the AMB, the positioning of all gurudwaras was affected by different above mentioned reasons. As explained by the interviewees, the main reasons behind the positioning of the first gurudwara -Nanaksar Sahib- in the Sants-Mercat Nou neighbourhood were the concentration of the Sikh population in this area and the accessibility provided by the Sants station, that was the main entry gate for the Sikhs who were immigrating to Barcelona from different countries. The availability of cheap commercial shops on rent, and the closeness of metro-stop also favoured this positioning decision. Later on, this gurudwara was moved to l'Hospitalet de Llobregat, the main reasons behind this shift were shortage of space at the previous location, and the increasing concentration of Sikh population in the Collblanc-Torassa neighbourhood had shifted the pendulum of power in the favour of the congregation of l'Hospitalet de Llobregat. Again the easy accessibility through underground metro service 'Red and Blue Lines' facilitated the establishment of gurudwara at the Rafael Campalans street. The decision behind the positioning of the second gurudwara – Gurudarshan Sahib- in the Union street of El Raval neighbourhood was mainly based on the desire of the members of a particular sect who were not happy with the functioning of the first gurudwara. They provided the argument of centrality to justify their move to the central district of Barcelona. But there are some people who criticise the positioning of a gurudwara

in a neighbourhood, which is still infamous for the illegal drug trade and prostitution like Jagtar, 47, a regular visitor, "Raval is not a good area for the establishment of a gurudwara, here when you come out, first thing you see are drug peddlers and prostitutes. Raval is full of criminals, many Sikh families feel scared to come here". Now the demand is emerging to shift this gurudwara to Poble Sec neighbourhood.

The third gurudwara –Gurusangat Sahib- was initially positioned in the municipality of Badalona, mainly because of the availability of cheap buildings on rent. Later on, this gurudwara was moved to an industrial complex in the municipality of Sant Adrià de Besòs. This move was supported by two arguments: firstly, the availability of space to replicate all elements of a gurudwara (which will be discussed ahead) in Punjab, and secondly, owing to the availability of car parking facilities for the visitors who come from outer municipalities. The choice of this location is unique in the sense that the size of Sikh population living in the neighbourhood is very small and most of the visitor comes from the neighbouring municipalities of Badalona and Santa Coloma de Gramenet. Another cause behind the selection of this location is the desire of local administration to exclude religious entities from the residential area to an industrial area, where they are not visible to the native population. The positioning of fourth gurudwara –Guru Ladho Re- created a conflict between the host community and the Sikh population in the neighbourhood of El Fondo. As explained by Sukhbir, 45, a gurudwara managing committee head, "the native people in this area were against the establishment of a Gurudwara in a commercial shop, which was rented by us. Hence, to resolve the conflict municipal council of Santa Coloma de Gramenet offered us an open space on the outskirts of the municipality and resources to construct a temporary gurudwara". Again it was a policy driven decision to exclude the gurudwara from the centre of neighbourhood to the outskirts of the municipality. The new place for the gurudwara was a public park close to the river Besòs. After the fire incidence, now this gurudwara is again shifted to a commercial building in the Santa Coloma de Gramanet municipality. This time they have not faced any problem from the neighbours yet. The Santa Coloma metro stop of Red Metro line connects this gurudwara with others in the AMB.

After the positioning of gurudwara, the next main important thing related to the politics of gurudwara is the appropriation and control over their material or symbolic resources. Gurudwaras as a social and symbolic centres of the Sikh community, accumulate resources and influence power of the community in the AMB. The appropriation of the material and symbolic resources of the community by controlling the gurudwara managing committee is the main cause of conflict among all sects of the Sikh community. As explained
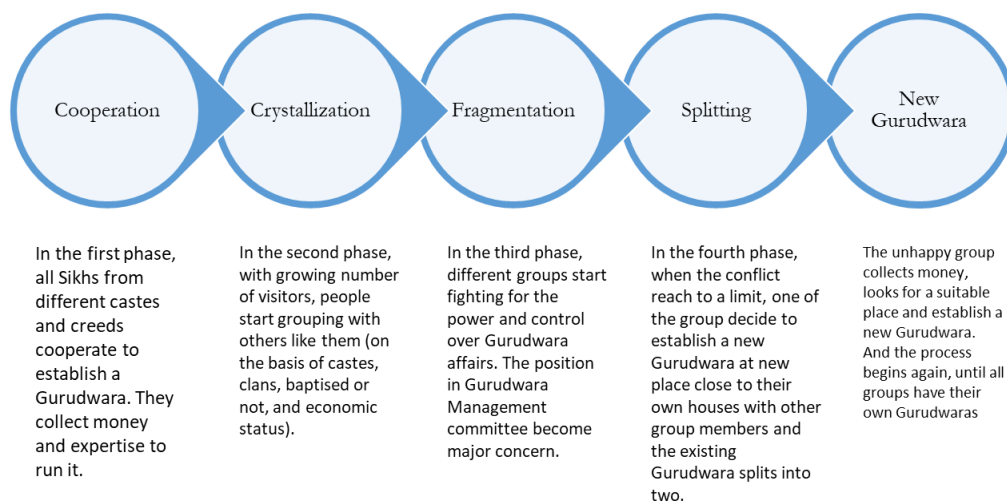
by Gurjot, 32, a regular visitor, "all groups want to control and run the gurudwara managing committee, which allocates community funds. They don't want to serve the community but they want to promote their own version of Sikhism through their specific beliefs and rituals". These sects often use their caste alliances (as in AMB one of the Gurudwaras is based on the caste and other belongs to a particular clan) or the assumed religious purity (as in Gurudwara Gursangat Sahib only baptised Sikhs can be the members of Gurudwara managing committee) to legitimize their control over the managing committee. These power conflicts often result into violent clashes and the fragmentation of community, which often results into the establishment of new gurudwaras. The groups with competing interests regarding the appropriate management of the gurudwara began to separate and establish other gurudwaras, where they could have more control over the nature of its political, religious and social function. In the AMB, all gurudwaras are the results of these internal clashes, which started with the establishment of the first gurudwara and still going on.

The third form of gurudwara politics is the inclusion or exclusion of people who are categorised as pure or profane on the basis of their religious beliefs. In the AMB, this gurudwara politics moves around the alliances of different sects, which formulates measures to exclude some of the community member from the representation in Gurudwara managing committees on the basis of their caste affiliations or their level of purity. As explained by Kuljit, 36, a regular visitor, "here in Badalona Gurudwara they [current members of gurudwara committee] don't allow not-baptised Sikhs to become member of the gurudwara managing committee. They treat them as impure. In all other gurudwaras there is no member from the lower castes". This process of exclusion is also used to demarcate the role of different community members in the gurudwaras. As there are many places and rituals in the gurudwaras which are reserved for the baptised Sikhs. This division was created and maintained to preserve the sanctity of the gurudwara. The role of females in the gurudwara management is inexistent. They are said to be auto excluded from the managing committees. As stated by Gurmukh, 56, member of Gurudwara managing committee, "women don't want to take part in the committees, when we ask them to join they respond that they are busy in their domestic chores". But it is very difficult to accept that this auto-exclusion is the only reason, as even in India now women are increasingly participating in gurudwara managing committees.

The establishment of a gurudwara is a community project that requires a lot of material resources and human efforts. It has several phases that on the one hand symbolize the community building process at new places and on the other hand shows the internal fragmentation of the community (Fig. 9). On the basis of the interviews and my ethnographic

research over the community, I have identified different phases of the establishment of first and consecutive gurudwaras at a new city of destination of the Sikh immigrants. During the first phase, mostly Sikh immigrants start gathering in a residential apartment of a community member to perform weekly prayers or to celebrate religious festivals. In this phase, which I named as the phase of 'cooperation', Sikhs from different castes or clans or religious believes, team back to establish a gurudwara. They collect money to rent a building that can be restructured to serve as a gurudwara. This building should have adequate space for the Guru's seat and the rest room, kitchen permission and enough space for the visitors. It should also be in the affordable price range of the community. When the building is selected, then the change of land use and necessary restructuring of the building is negotiated with the city planning authorities. After the reconstruction of the building, the sacred religious scripture was brought from a nearby gurudwara. With the entrance of Guru in the building, that building converts into a gurudwara 'the house of Guru'. Till this moment everybody cooperates to establish the gurudwara, as the number of followers is limited and the contribution of everybody is required. The construction of gurudwara attracts people from other places. The number of visitors start increasing rapidly, which multiplies the resources and power of gurudwara managing committee. With the increased number of visitors, the second phase of 'Crystallization' begins. The people start making groups on the basis of their caste or religious beliefs and practices. These groups try to get control over the gurudwara managing committee and the resources of gurudwara. To gain this control often arguments are made on the basis of the reproduction of rituals or the privileges of the baptised Sikhs over not baptised Sikhs.

Figure 9. The different phases of gurudwara establishment process in the AMB.

Cooperation	Crystallization	Fragmentation	Splitting	New Gurudwara
In the first phase, all Sikhs from different castes and creeds cooperate to establish a Gurudwara. They collect money and expertise to run it.	In the second phase, with growing number of visitors, people start grouping with others like them (on the basis of castes, clans, baptised or not, and economic status).	In the third phase, different groups start fighting for the power and control over Gurudwara affairs. The position in Gurudwara Management committee become major concern.	In the fourth phase, when the conflict reach to a limit, one of the group decide to establish a new Gurudwara at new place close to their own houses with other group members and the existing Gurudwara splits into two.	The unhappy group collects money, looks for a suitable place and establish a new Gurudwara. And the process begins again, until all groups have their own Gurudwaras

It results into the beginning of the third phase 'Fragmentation' in the community on the bases of internal diversity. This fragmentation sometimes leads to violent clashes in the community, which are often visible in the gurudwaras in the AMB. When these conflict reaches to a stage of no consensus, one of the group who was unhappy with the functioning of the gurudwara and still have no power to change it, start planning to establish another gurudwara that leads to the forth phase of 'Splitting'. In this phase, the discontent group gather some resource, rent a building, reconstruct it, and brought the religious scripture from other gurudwara and establish a new gurudwara. This process goes on till all the sects have their own gurudwaras. All gurudwaras follow the teachings of same sacred religious scripture but with their own interpretations, and all claims that their version is the purest one and others do it in a wrong way.

5.2 Material and Symbolic Appropriation of Urban Spaces

The conversion of secular buildings to religious places like gurudwaras and the celebration of religious festivals and processions on the public spaces leads to the material (long term) and symbolic (temporary) appropriation of urban spaces.

5.2.1 Material Appropriation in the form of Gurudwaras

The establishment of a gurudwara leads to a long term or sometimes permanent material appropriation of a building. Mostly in the already constructed urban agglomeration like the AMB, where the space is scarce, it is very difficult to convince authorities for the construction of a purpose built building to establish a gurudwara. In several countries of the Sikh diaspora, gurudwaras are established in the buildings which were commercial locations or antique catholic churches in their previous use (Stoker 2013). There are very few gurudwaras in Europe which are established in a purpose built buildings one of them is in Southall, England (Fig. 10). The reconstruction of buildings to serve as Gurudwara can be seen as the conversion of secular buildings into a religious entity. The most basic ontological notion is that there is nothing inherently religious about buildings rented or brought for the construction of a gurudwaras. The buildings were not sacred, they were made sacred, and it is this process of conversion that is of interest. Actually, in Sikhism all buildings that hosts the religious scripture are termed as 'Gurudwaras'. The material characteristics of the gurudwara depends upon several factors like the socioeconomic status of the Sikh community, the time of stay in the neighbourhood and the political image of the community. In Punjab, where the community is in majority all gurudwara are purpose built buildings made with great

architectural skills. In the diaspora also where the community has plenty of resources and good image in the political circle, they have succeeded to build beautiful buildings for the establishment of gurudwaras. But in the new locations of destination like the AMB, where the Sikh community lacks resources and negotiating power, the Sikh Gurudwaras are in reconstructed buildings in the poor residential areas.

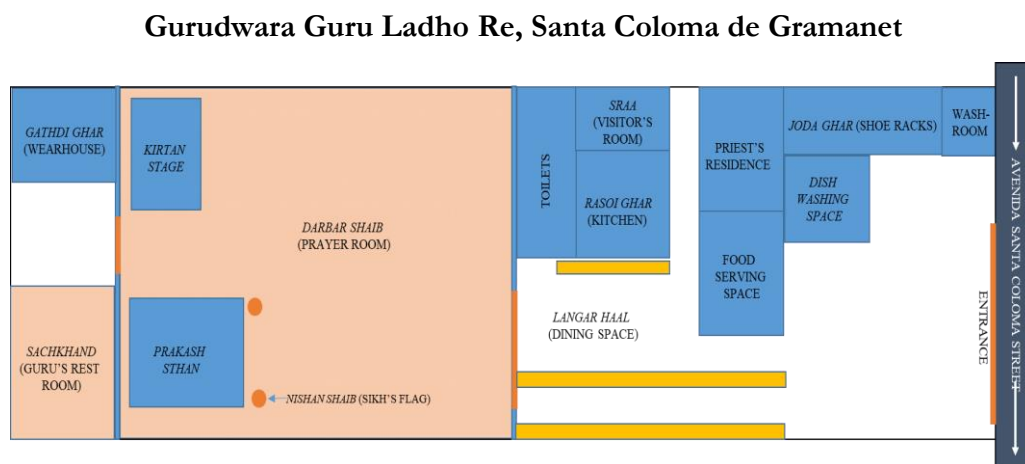Figure 10. Sikh gurudwaras in India, England and the AMB.

Source: own elaboration, photos from Discover Sikhism and AFP/Getty Image.

In the AMB, before the establishment of gurudwaras, all buildings were in another use, like Barcelona gurudwara building was an abandoned factory; the Hospitalet gurudwara building was a car parking, Sant Adrià de Besòs gurudwara building was an industrial warehouse, and the Santa Coloma de Gramanet gurudwara building was a commercial shop. Hence, in Spain the establishment of a gurudwara is a process of giving meanings to already constructed buildings with the help of rituals and within the building, spaces have been divided into the categories of profane and pure on the basis of the uses assigned to them. While restructuring the buildings, the Sikh community in the AMB always tries to replicate the interior division of space as in a normal village gurudwara in Punjab, and special care has been

given to follow the details about the use of space in the gurudwara premises (Fig. 11). Singh and Tatla state that, despite clear diversity in the Sikh community, there has been 'very little substantive evidence… of its reflection in gurudwaras' (2006, 77). A gurudwara building consists of following sections: *Darbar* is the main hall used for the prayers; *Parkaash Asthan* where the religious scripture was enshrined on a beautiful throne with very colourful cloths; *Kirtan* stage, which is used to sing the hymns from the religious scriptures with musical instruments; *Sachkhand* is the rest place for the religious scripture because all Sikhs treat it as living Guru. All these places are considered as of supreme purity and the most sacred. The entry in these places demands a high level of purity (in some gurudwaras only baptised Sikhs claim the right to enter these places). While other spaces like *Langar* hall (dining room), where all visitors sit on the floor and eat vegetarian food; *Rasoi ghar* (kitchen), a space assigned for cooking, *Sraa* (rooms for visitors), *Shnaan Ghar* (separate bathrooms for males and females); *Joda ghar* (space assigned for the shoe racks), and *Gathdi ghar* (warehouse to keep the luggage of visitors) are open for everybody. The level of religious purity (baptised or not baptised Sikhs) determine the entry of different sects of Sikhs to the different spaces in the gurudwara. The entry into some places like *Parkash Sthaan* and the *Sach Khand,* which are considered as pure, is reserved for the baptised Sikhs in the AMB. As per the gender difference, in all gurudwaras there is no gender discrimination of any kind regarding the use of spaces. A woman can do all activities like a man in the gurudwara but still it is very difficult to see a woman at the *Prakash Sthaan*, they are mostly busy in the cleaning and cooking services.

Figure 11. The basic elements and the floor plain of all Gurudwaras in the AMB, 2018.

Gurudwara Guru Ladho Re, Santa Coloma de Gramanet

Gurudwara Nanaksar Sahib, l'Hospitalet de Llobregat

GROUND FLOOR

RAFAEL CAMPALANS STREET

ENTRANCE

JODA GHAR (SHOE RACKS)

PRIEST'S RESIDENCE

WASHROOM

TOILETS

NISHAN SHAIB (SIKH'S FLAG)

DARBAR SHAIB (PRAYER ROOM)

SACHKHAND (GURU'S REST ROOM)

PARKASH STHAN

KIRTAN STAGE

FIRST FLOOR

GATHDI GHAR (WEARHOUSE)

TOILETS

SRAA (VISITOR'S ROOM)

LANGAR HAAL (DINING SPACE)

GATHDI GHAR (WEARHOUSE)

RASOI GHAR (KITCHEN)

DISH WASHING SPACE

FOOD SERVING SPACE

Gurudwara Gurudarshan Sahib, Barcelona

GROUND FLOOR

HOSPITAL STREET

SRAA (VISITOR'S ROOM)

EMERGENY EXIT

PRIEST'S RESIDENCE

FOOD SERVING SPACE

TOILETS

WASHROOM

ENTRANCE

JODA GHAR (SHOE RACKS)

GATHDI GHAR (WEARHOUSE)

LANGAR HAAL (DINING SPACE)

NISHAN SHAIB (SIKH FLAGS)

DARBAR SHAIB (PRAYER ROOM)

PRAKASH STHAN

KIRTAN STAGE

FIRST FLOOR

RASOI GHAR (KITCHEN)

SACHKHAND (GURU'S REST ROOM)

DISH WASHING SPACE

Gurudwara Gursangat Sahib, Sant Adrià de Besòs

Source: Own elaboration.

Until 2018, the material appropriation was limited to the buildings, which were already constructed and restructured to establish gurudwaras, but now a project is under formation in the Sikh community, which is focused on the establishment of a big gurudwara in a purpose built building, on the outskirts of Barcelona city in the AMB. As explained by Kashmir, 57, a gurudwara committee member, "main idea is to establish the biggest gurudwara of Europe in Barcelona on the lines of the architectural style of ancient gurudwaras in India. Where there should be space for 30-40 visitor rooms, a Sikh reference library, a school for Sikh children, where the knowledge of Punjabi language and Sikh religion will be provided to the European born Sikh children". This is a very ambitious project that requires the cooperation of the whole Sikh community in Spain and in the diaspora, but owing to the internal conflicts of the community, it will take a long time to become a reality.

5.2.2 Symbolic Appropriation in the form of Processions and Religious Functions

The appropriation is not only limited to the material or physical form. It also takes place in the form of the use of public spaces for the religious functions and processions. Goheen (1993: 128) claims that the processions serve "as a means to focus attention of private people on their collective life and the values they embrace through it". The performance of procession in public streets turn the secular public space into "a landscape

that could be exploited effectively through the collective performance of particular rituals to communicate, legitimate, and politicize values" (Goheen 1993, 128). According to Kong (2005), processions are the most visible of religious activities in public spaces and have the greatest opportunity for contact with secular activities and religious practices of other faiths. As in the words of Saint-Blancat and Cancellieri (2014: 646) "The request for visibility implies a demand for social recognition which entails becoming full actors who can display their identity and specificity in public space".

For the Sikh community around the world, Nagar kirtan (processions) is a very important part of their religious and social life. It is a Sikh custom involving the processional singing of holy hymns throughout a community. The Nagar Kirtan is mainly organised to commemorate the creation of Khalsa. Traditionally, in a Nagar Kirtan, the procession is led by the *Panj Piare* (the five beloved of the Guru[2]). They march with naked swords in their hands pointing towards the sky. They are followed by the *Guru Granth Sahib*, the holy scripture, which is placed on a vehicle (normally a truck has been used to place the seat of Guru). Everybody follow this vehicle and sing hymns from the religious scripture. The roads reserved for the procession are cleaned and decorated with flowers. The normal traffic is stopped to clear the way for procession. Everyone is given sacred food (*Langar)*. During the procession martial art groups demonstrate their fighting skills. At an open public space, a stage is organised to conduct religious prayers and public announcements for the community. The local politicians, people who have performed some important community services, and other invitees are honoured by gurudwara managing committee for their services to the community. The procession concludes at gurudwara with a final prayer.

In the AMB, as explained by the interviewees, Gurudwaras follow all the rituals of procession, as dictated by the Akaal Takhat Sahib, which is a supreme authority among Sikhs. Gurudwaras in the AMB celebrate three processions annually i.e. first, to celebrate the creation day of Khalsa, which is also called 'Baisakhi Nagar Kirtan' (13th or 14th April every year); second, to celebrate the birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Ji (1st Sikh Guru, mostly in the month of November); and third, to celebrate the birthday of Guru Gobind Singh Ji (10th Sikh Guru, mostly in the month of January). Despite their internal differences, all gurudwara managing committees in the AMB work together to celebrate these Nagar Kirtans. To decide that which Nagar Kirtan will be celebrated at which gurudwara, they use a lottery system. Normally, the decision is accepted by everyone, as god's will. The preparations for the Nagar Kirtan starts

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[2]It is to commemorate the five Sikhs who were baptised by the tenth Sikh Guru Guru Gobind Singh Ji in 1699.

with the collection of funds. Whole community contributes financially (as per their salaries or working conditions) by giving some money to the organisers. Then permissions for the Nagar Kirtan are applied in the municipal council. These permissions are applied almost 2 months before the event, so that the municipal council have enough time to make necessary provisions for the procession. After the permissions, the invitations cards and the information pamphlets are printed. The invitation cards are sent to the dignitaries, leading businessmen, local administrators of the city, and the participants of the martial arts and *kirtan* groups from different countries of Sikh diaspora.

Normally, in all gurudwaras of the AMB the processions begin at 10:00 am with a starting prayer (*Ardas*) by the head priest of the gurudwara. A vehicle is decorated to carry the religious scripture, head priest and the Kirtan group members, who sings the hymns from the religious scripture with musical instruments. Then the religious scripture is carried by the head priest to the vehicle and placed on a well-furnished seat. The vehicle is decorated with beautiful cloths, lightings and flowers. The Panj Paire (5 baptised Sikhs from the local Sikh comunity) walks in front of the vehicle and guide the way. Before the procession some *sevadar* (Sikh devotees) clean the roads and decorate it with flowers. The procession begins with 5 war cry slogans (*Jo Bole So Nihal, Sat Siri Akaal*). During the procession, two or three stops (depending on the availability of space) are made to show the martial arts skills, to serve food to the congregation and to make announcements for the community. After reaching the place prepared for the congregation, religious scripture is place on a high seat, decorated with colourful cloths. All kirtan groups perform according to the schedule designed by the organisers. Honours are given to the distinguished dignitaries. The free food served to the whole congregation. The procession ends at 16:00 and the religious scripture returned to the gurudwara Sahib, where the last prayer is offered by the gurudwara priest and the religious scripture is placed in *Sach Khand* (Guru's rent room).

The celebration of processions has different meanings and motives for different Sikhs. But commonly, it is considered as a way to show the presence of Sikh religion and the strength of the Sikh community to the host society. In the procession, many people from host society who know nothing about 'Sikhism' and have never been to any gurudwara, also have a sacred vision of the Sikh religious scripture *Guru Granth Sahib*. They have first contact with Sikhism, and the whole city got blessed with the presence of Guru. As explained by Manjit, 34, a gurudwara committee member, "it [Nagar Kirtan] provides a chance to the local people to see the Guru Granth Sahib Ji, and it makes them clear that our god is different from Hindus and Muslims". Some Sikhs also believes that Nagar kirtan provides a chance to show the normative

look of the Sikh men or women, and the Sikh traditions and culture that shapes their unique identity. During the processions most of the Sikhs men (*Kurta-Paijama and Turban*) and women (*Salwar-Kamiz and colourful Dupattas*) wear their traditional cloths. Especially, all baptised Sikhs wear their traditional dress of Khalsa, and their arms to show their martial background. Normally, most of the not-baptised Sikhs don't wear traditional dresses, and for the local community it becomes very difficult to distinguish between a Sikh and another South Asian. But during procession, even the not-baptised Sikh men are encouraged to wear turbans and the women to wear their traditional Punjabi outfits. When the congregation comes out in traditional outfits, for a moment the street of the AMB starts looking like the streets of Punjab. For the host community, it is the time to see the presence of a new religious community on their streets and in their neighbourhood, which in normal days disappear in the category of immigrants or others. As pointed out by Param, 24, a regular visitor to Gurudwara, "when the local people see men with turbans and women with colourful dupattas, they get amazed by the diversity we bring to the host neighbourhoods, and the dress of Khalsa shows our martial background".

The importance of procession also lies in the fact that it revives the memories of the major events of the Sikh history. For the young generations, it works as a remembrance of their glorified past. Many events of the Sikh history are related to the procession of Baisakhi, including the creation of Khalsa on 13th April 1699, and the Jallianwala Bagh massacre of 1919. During these processions many writers, poets and the Sikh priests give accounts of the history of Sikhs and explain the sacrifices made by the Sikhs for the community and nation. They often criticize the discriminatory attitude of Indian government towards Sikhs and some of them even compare the Catalan freedom struggle with the Sikh's Struggle for their imaginary homeland 'Khalistan'. Kuljit, 36, a Gurudwara committee member, claims that "it provides us a chance to remember the sacrifices of our Gurus and ancestors to save the humankind and to fight against injustice". The processions are also very efficient in transmitting the main principles of Sikhism i.e. *Simran* (Chanting the name of god) and Seva (service of humankind). In procession, people sing the hymns from sacred scripture, while walking along with the Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Kirtan groups sing prayers with musical instruments like *Tabla* and *Harmonium*. The voice amplifiers are used to amplify the sound of Kirtan to make it audible for the people on the road and to attract attention in the neighbourhood. As per *Seva*, all roads reserved for the procession are cleaned by the devotee Sikhs. The free vegetarian food and fresh fruits are served to all, irrespective of their religion or socioeconomic status. People of all religions and sects are encouraged to join processions. Harsimran, 26, a regular visitor, states that, "During

procession with our actions we tell the host society about the two basic principles of Sikhism i.e. *Simran* and *Seva"*.

Many Sikhs also feel that the processions help in uniting the Sikh community in the AMB, which is divided into four different Gurudwaras. At the time of processions all Gurudwaras support each other to make these events big success. They coordinate with each other over the applications of permissions, preparation of food for the congregation, and in the collection of funds for the procession. The whole community contribute financially or *Seva* (other services) to make these event possible. Gurmukh, 56, Gurudwara managing committee member says, "it is better that we have processions, at least in processions the whole Sikh community works together, forgetting their internal differences of castes and religious beliefs". But some also says that it creates a competition among different gurudwaras regarding the organizing efficiency of the gurudwara managing committees, and the services provided by different gurudwara in their processions, which sometimes leads to the wastage of community resources that can be used for other purposes.

Behind the celebration of processions, an implicit desire is to show the presence of Sikh community in the city to the host society. It is a way to reclaim the territory and a safe space in the host social fabric. The congregation gives a massage to the host community that we are part of this society, and we want to share our traditions and beliefs with everyone who lives in the city. While, passing on the streets, procession also creates a sense of belonging among the Sikh community to their new home. It is a way to show that they belong to this land and they are going to stay here permanently. As explained by Kamal, 46, "the procession gives a massage that we are here for permanent settlement. We are not tourists, we are part of this society and now this city also belongs to us, equally as it belongs to any other individual". Owing to the presence of whole community in processions, they also show the size and strength of the Sikh community in the AMB. The demonstration of the martial art stunts during the procession is used to convey the martial background of the Sikh community. It gives a message to the host community that Sikhs always fight for injustice and if somebody tries to hurt the people and property of the host society, we will fight against him. Kartar, 45, a gurudwara managing committee member, says "Sikh martial arts are used to fight against the injustice and crime, by the public demonstration of these martial techniques we convey the host society that we are ready to fight any crime and injustice in the host society, we never hurt the innocent and everybody who comes to seek help, we protect them".

Many local leaders and civil servants are also invited to the procession. They are honoured by the community with some trophies or models of historical gurudwaras, as a

symbolic gesture of showing respect. The procession provides chance to come in contact with the local administration and political parties. Sometimes, it also used as a platform to raise the demands and concerns of the community regarding their public life and social cohesion. As explained by Gurumukh, 56, a gurudwara managing committee member, "we invite the political leaders and the local administrators to the procession, as it helps to get the necessary permissions easily and to pass our community demands to the local administration. It also fosters the relationship between the Sikh community and the local administration".

The processions contribute to foster the relationship with the Sikh diaspora. Many people from the Sikh diaspora, visit Barcelona to take part in the processions. Many religious experts, kirtan groups and martial art performers are invited from different parts of the world. It strengthens the relationships between the Sikh diaspora community. Kuljit, 36, a gurudwara managing committee member, says, "during processions many Kirtan groups come from other countries like Germany, France or Italy. It widens our community network. People from these countries also send money for these events". Now with the help of telecommunication technology, these processions are broadcasted by several TV channels, like Sikh Channel UK and Chardi Kala TV, in the diaspora. Many people around the world participate in the procession through live telecast. Sometimes they also donate money through international transfers to contribute in the procession. During the procession, pamphlets about the Sikh religion and the main teachings of Gurus distributed to the host population by the Sikh youth clubs. The main purpose of these pamphlets is to spread the massage of guru and give visibility to the community. The pamphlets are published in three languages Spanish, Catalan and English. Harsimran, 26, a regular visitor, explains that "in procession we spread the massage of Gurus to the local people. They don't know Punjabi so we publish papers in three languages". Sometimes the local municipal council also helps to provide funds for the publication of pamphlets.

In sum, we can say that the Sikh processions have very explicit and implicit meanings for the different sections of the Sikh community. They are used: to commemorate the Sikh history, to reproduce the Sikh culture and traditions, to give visibility to the community, to make connections with the host society and the local administration, to show the basic principal of Sikhism and the martial art skills to the host population. But these are the perceived meanings for the Sikh population, we don't know anything about how the native community feel about these processions, as we don't have interviews with the local people. But as per the counts given by the local administrators and some Sikhs, I can say that the response of the native community is ranging from strictly against to the most welcoming.

Figure 12. The different routes of processions in the AMB, 2016-2017.

NAGAR KIRTAN GURUDARSHAN SAHIB BARCELONA, 2017

GURUDARSHAN SAHIB

Source: Nachatter Singh Garha, Photos Lovely Digital Studio, BCN.

NAGAR KIRTAN NANAKSAR SAHIB HOSPITALET DE LLOBREGAT, 2016

NANAKSAR SAHIB

Source: Nachatter Singh Garha, Photos Lovely Digital Studio, BCN.

Source: Own elaboration, based on the interviews conducted by the author during 2016-2018.
Photos by Lovely Digital Studio, Barcelona.

There are people who consider these processions as an invasion to their public space or their neighbourhood, but there are many people who look them as a part of diversity. Similarly, the presentation of swords and martial art demonstration, which for a normal Sikh is an essential part of the processions, but for the local community is a symbol of aggression, because they know nothing about the folkloric history and traditions of the Sikh community. It creates fear in the mind of native people regarding the armed men, and they start questioning the idea of Sikhism as a 'religion of peace'. The attitude of natives or other immigrants regarding processions is also affected by 'generation' and 'time of stay' in the different neighbourhood. Especially, the old people who have spent their whole life in the neighbourhood where these gurudwara are established now, they feel that their streets and squares are invaded by others who don't belongs to this land. But for the other immigrant groups, these processions are a part of their new highly diverse neighbourhood.

5.3 Space of conflict and Negotiations: Intercultural Approach

The material and symbolic appropriation of the urban space often leads to some conflicts between immigrants or minority group and hosts or majority group. The presence of

any foreign religious entity (a temple or a mosque) is often seen as a source of conflict in many European countries (Cesari 2005). These conflicts are negotiated by the local administration to make the peaceful coexistence of different groups possible in the city. The resolution of these problems are mainly depends upon the guiding principles and policies of the local administration towards diversity management. In the AMB, most of the municipal councils are promoting the intercultural approach that aims to boost positive community life between individuals from various cultures and religions by focusing on individuals as a central element and holders of rights. The municipal policies are focusing on the creation of places of interaction. Hence, the construction of religious buildings and the celebration of religious functions are encouraged as a way of interaction between the immigrant minorities and the host society. The negotiations around the construction of gurudwara and the celebration of Sikh processions are discussed below:

5.3.1 Negotiations around the establishment of gurudwaras

The establishment of a gurudwara, as it is related to the material appropriation of space, sometimes leads to social-conflicts. In the AMB, the establishment of first three gurudwaras had not attracted much attention of the host society, as their visibility from outside was very limited. They were enclosed to the four walls of their rented buildings. But in the first decade of the 21st century, especially after the terrorist attacks in various European cities, the tension regarding the establishment of religious building also entered the AMB. First time in the municipality of Santa Coloma de Gramanet people openly protested over the establishment of a gurudwara in the Fondo neighbourhood. This rise of intolerance has also extended to the neighbouring municipalities, like Badalona and Sant Adrià de Besòs, where now host population is against the opening of any new religious entity. In Catalonia, same problem also occurred in Olot, Salt and Vic municipalities, where the Sikh population struggled to establish gurudwaras. An interesting fact about the protests in Fondo neighbourhood, as mentioned by Gurmukh, 56, a member of Gurudwara managing committee, was "most of the protesters had no knowledge of Sikhism and they feel that all places of worship are Mosques, which are the breeding grounds for Jihadists". Their little knowledge about the Sikh religion and philosophy shows the failure of the Sikh community in the AMB to convey the massage of Sikhism to the host society. To resolve this issue, as gurudwaras are stated to be open for everybody and can be a place of interaction between different groups, the local authorities provided a public space for the construction of new Gurudwara.

Broadly, the establishment of Gurudwara in the AMB leads to two levels of negotiations: firstly, with the local planning authorities to reproduce all the elements of Gurudwaras; and secondly, within the community to adapt the rituals and use of space to make a peaceful coexistence possible. With the municipal planning authorities, negotiations are made to have the best suitable location, visibility, and the permissions regarding the use of space. At present, all the existing gurudwaras are situated in the reconstructed buildings. The appropriation of these buildings for the religious purposes involved a change of land use permissions from the municipal councils. As Sikh religion is not a registered religion in Spain, all the gurudwaras are registered as cultural associations. Hence, they follow all the rules and legislations set for the cultural associations in the AMB.

From gurudwaras a managing committee consisted of 5 or 6 members selected by the community represent the aspirations and needs of the Sikh community. Anybody from the Sikh community can become a member of the managing committee. They receive no income for their service, but as a member of committee they have control over the Gurudwara resources and symbolic influence in the community. They contact the local administration to make all necessary paper-work and other arrangements. Regarding the permission of the location of Gurudwaras in the AMB, as explained by Judit, a cultural mediator in Barcelona, "municipal council follows the criteria that the place should by open for all, easily accessible for the visitors and don't create problems of traffic and sound or air pollution for the natives of that neighbourhood". The main ideas behind this approach is to encourage the religious spaces that invites members of all faiths and promotes social cohesion in place of proselytization. The Sikh Gurudwaras fit well in this definition of a place of interaction.

After the selection of a building, permissions are applied to the municipal urban planning authorities for the reconstruction of building to make it fit for gurudwara. Generally, in the AMB no permissions were given to change the front and the basic structure of the buildings, but some minor internal changes are allowed, to use the space according to the needs and desire of the owners or renters. These restrictions are applied to preserve the original look of the urban landscape and to hide the religious symbolism (which are sometimes provocative for the native population) in the secular urban landscape. It limits the visibility of Gurudwaras as a distinct place of worship. Hence to increase the visibility from the street, all Gurudwaras put some name boards on the entry gates. The other symbols of visibility, like the use of loudspeakers to read the daily prayers and the *Nishan Sahibs*, which are Sikh flags to show the presence of Gurudwara are also not allowed, to control the noise pollution and to maintain the urban landscape.

For the establishment of a Gurudwara, it is necessary that the place must have the permission of a Kitchen that requires a went for the smoke. All Gurudwaras in the AMB, negotiated for the permission of Kitchen, as most of the Gurudwaras were established in the buildings which were constructed as factories, parking or warehouses. As explained by Manjit, 34 a member of Gurudwara managing committee, "the main problem is of smoke and fumes from the kitchen. The local people don't like smell of spices used in our kitchen. It has created some problems with the neighbours". These conflicts manifested in the form of complaints against the Gurudwaras in the municipal councils of the AMB. Normally, planning authorities tries to suggest fit-for-all solutions, like in this case they force Gurudwaras to put powerful smoke extractors and safe went for the smoke and fumes from the kitchen.

Secondly, some features of a Gurudwara which are indispensable in Punjab, are negotiated and compromised by the Sikh community in the AMB, which we termed as internal negotiations. These negotiations are mainly caused by the restrictions posed by the lack of resources and space, or sometimes by the local authorities. Firstly, in Punjab all Gurudwara have a separate kitchen and dining space (*langar hall*), which is used for the preparation and service of sacred food (*langar*). But due to the shortage of space in the AMB, some Gurudwaras use the same *darbar hall* as the dining space, and the food is mostly prepared in the same building. This interchangeable use of space blurred the boundaries between pure and profane spaces in the Gurudwara. Another area of negotiation deals with the visibility of Gurudwara, in Punjab all Gurudwaras must have a *Nishan Sahib*, which is a 20 to 50 feet tall religious flag, mostly placed close to the main entrance of the Gurudwara. This flag is a physical symbol of the presence of Gurudwara, and it was used to give visibility to the Gurudwara from long distances. In Spain, as most of the Gurudwaras are in the buildings which have no open spaces, so it is very difficult to put a *Nishan Sahib* at the entrance. A solution for this problem has made by placing two small flags in front of the sacred scripture, as symbolic *Nishan Sahib*. Only the Gurudwara in Sant Adrià de Besòs has a *Nishan Sahib* at its entrance door, because this Gurudwara is situated in the industrial complex. Moreover, all Gurudwaras in Punjab used to have loud-speakers to read daily prayers for the whole community. As in the AMB, it is not allowed to use loud-speakers, the local Gurudwaras use audio amplifiers, which are limited to the buildings of the Gurudwaras. The use of musical instruments for the prayers is also limited to some specific hours during the day. These rules are made by the Sikh community on the suggestions of the local municipal council to create peaceful environment in the neighbourhood.

5.3.2 Negotiations around the processions and religious festivals

As processions or religious festivals also leads to a temporary appropriation of public spaces, it has potential to create some conflict between different groups regarding the use of public spaces. Normally, a Sikh procession involves a temporary appropriation of some streets and public squares for religious gathering and the demonstration of martial art skills. This temporary appropriation of public spaces is negotiated by the Sikh community with the local public administration. As explained by Kartar, 45, a Gurudwara managing committee member, "the main demands of the Sikh community for the processions are: first, to reserve major roads for the procession; second, to have maximum possible time for the procession; third, to have suitable space for the congregation; and lastly, to have the provision of public services, like police, ambulance or public toilets for the procession". While, on the other hand for the local administration their main priorities are to create least disturbance for the host community, maintain the regular traffic open for the general public, regulate the use of sound amplifiers to avoid noise pollution, safety of people involved in the procession and the by-passers, maintain the roads clear and clean, and promote the social cohesion and avoid the situation of conflict between different groups.

The negotiations regarding the procession and other religious functions are made between the representatives of the Sikh community and the local authorities, while having in minds the above mentioned interests. Regarding the celebration date of the event, in the AMB, most of the Sikh processions and religious functions are not celebrated on the exact date of the event, which they commemorate, like the Nagar Kirtan of Baisakhi can be celebrated two or three days before or after the 13th of April, depending on the closest weekend. Mostly all the processions and religious functions at the public spaces are celebrated on the weekends. It also serves the demand of the local Sikh population as most of them work during weekdays. The selection of the date for the procession and religious functions is mainly depends upon the local administration. Mostly, the Sikh community inform the authorities about the upcoming events, and the authorities decide for a weekend close to that date and give the community leaders several options regarding the availability of public spaces. Then the community representatives select a date and inform the public administration and the Sikh congregation about the celebration of that event.

As per the availability of space for the procession and religious festivals, the local administration demarcates the roads and the public squares that can be reserved for the procession or religious gatherings. The roads selected for the processions are normally roads with less traffic. The Sikh people always try to get permission for the main roads with some

symbolic importance (like the organizers of Gurudwara Gurudarshan Sahib, Barcelona always try to get the permission to enter La Rambla which has a greater symbolic importance in Barcelona and the organizers in Sant Adrià de Besòs reserve the square in front of the municipal council for the gathering), but the local administration mostly avoid the use of main roads, to reduce disturbance for other users. The public school ground, auditoriums or play grounds are allotted for the congregation, as they are easily available on Sundays. The organizers were encouraged by the municipal council to allow free entry for all residents of the neighbourhood, irrespective of their religion or social status. By doing this the local administration tries to use these functions as a meeting place for different groups. As per the time for the procession and religious festivals, the local administration in the AMB, mostly provide the Sunday morning hours from 10:00 am to 04:00 pm, as this time is normally less disturbing for the local population because most of the host population don't work on Sundays. The Sikh community also like this time slot as mostly in India also the processions has been organized during this time of the day. Another motive behind this timing is to give a chance to the local population to participate in the events of their neighbourhoods and to enjoy the diversity it brings.

6. Conclusions

During the last three decades, the Sikh community has produced its physical and social space (as explained by Lefebvre, 1991) in the host society of the AMB. Starting from their first presence in the municipality of Barcelona in the late-1980s they have grown in numbers and occupied different parts of the central municipalities of the AMB. With their different physical appearance and outfits, they make a contribution to the human mosaic of the host society. Like most of the immigrant communities from South Asia, the Sikh population is also male dominated, but the number of females is increasing very rapidly as most of the men are bringing their families to the AMB. Another main demographic characteristic of the Sikh population is their concentration in the working age groups (20-49 years old), which reflects their main motive of immigration to Spain, but with the entrance of families the size of children group is also increasing fast. Owing to the increasing number of females and children, the lived spaces of the Sikh community is expanding. Firstly, with the entrance of new families Sikhs are moving to other neighbourhoods where there were no Sikhs in the past. Secondly, with the presence of females and children, their interaction with public institutions like schools, female and child health care centres, and other NGOs for women is also increasing. Thirdly, with the presence of small children, the Sikh community has started to gather in public

parks where they come in contact with other immigrants and the hosts. As per their socioeconomic status, they have very low profile as more than half of the Sikh population have below primary education and occupied in the manual jobs. Most of the females are unemployed and limited to their domestic chores. As seen from outside, Sikh community is not a homogeneous set of people. The Sikh identity has many layers based on the caste system or the religious beliefs. These internal boundaries create conflicts in the community and often leads to the fragmentation of the community.

The spatial distribution of Sikhs in the AMB, shows that they are concentrated in three major clusters i.e. Hospitalet, Raval and Fondo. Hospitalet cluster is the biggest, with a highest share of young population and relatively high share of female population. The Sikh population in the AMB mostly occupy the poor immigrant neighbourhoods, which were initially occupied by the Spanish immigrants and now are transferred to Sikhs on cheap rents. Their high concentration is also because of their tendency to share apartment with their countrymen and to settle close to their community people where they have strong social networks. They are sharing these neighbourhoods with other immigrant groups like Latin Americans in the Hospitalet cluster, Pakistanis and Philippines in Raval Cluster and the Chinese and Pakistanis in Fondo cluster. The main reasons behind their residential concentration are the availability of cheap housing in these neighbourhoods, the presence of Gurudwaras and the availability of public transport system (especially, underground metro). Again with the entrance of families in the AMB, people who were living in the poor residential areas are moving to better housing areas of the city. They look for the proximity of schools, hospitals and other public services for immigrant families.

Apart from the production of a Sikh community, they have also reproduced their religious places in different parts of the AMB. This reproduction of gurudwaras is considered as the milestones in the process of community building in the AMB. While reproducing the gurudwaras they have tried to replicate all the elements of gurudwaras in Punjab. These gurudwaras apart from the religious services also provide a platform for the community to discuss community affairs and to socialize with other members of the Sikh community. These gurudwaras also provide shelter for the new immigrants, and work as a school for the young generations who born in the AMB. Gurudwaras promote the importance of unique Sikh identity among the young generations and prepare them for the preservation of this identity. As a centre of spiritual and symbolic power gurudwaras also sometimes become a place of conflicts, where all sects of the Sikh community (based on castes or religious beliefs) fights to get control over the material and symbolic resources of gurudwara. Often these conflicts result

in the crystallization of the Sikh community in different sects, along the internal boundaries, which leads to the fragmentation of the community and the creation of new gurudwaras in the AMB. The existing four gurudwaras in the AMB are the results of these internal conflicts.

The reproduction of gurudwaras and the celebration of religious processions and festivals leads to the material and symbolic appropriation of the public space in the AMB. All gurudwaras in the AMB are established in reconstructed buildings. The establishment of gurudwaras in the urban areas add diversity to the existing urban landscape and give visibility to the Sikh community. In place of constructing new buildings, the Sikh community adds a new layer of meanings to the already constructed public spaces in different parts of the AMB. The visibility gained through the establishment of a gurudwara is a reward of social upward mobility, which can imply a change on space, but also a change in the representation of space [as religious]. Apart from this material appropriation, the religious processions and festivals celebrated by the Sikh community at the public places lead to the symbolic appropriation of these spaces that transforms the streets and squares to the spaces where cultural interaction take place. The processions result in the production and representation of space (both religious and community) at the same time. Its ephemeral and negotiated character subject to the municipal regulations, but also to the image of the group (in this case Sikhs) for the representatives of the public administration. It reveals the hierarchical (normative) limit in which the religious and community space is produced. What for the Sikh community is the production and reproduction of the sacred and communal space, ends up being also the necessary representation of the diversity, according to the regulation of the public space where interculturality is the dominant discourse.

This material and symbolic appropriation of urban spaces, sometimes leads to the clashes between the Sikh community and the host society. These conflicts are negotiated by the local administration with their direct and indirect interventions. The local administration of the most of municipalities in the AMB, is moving towards an intercultural approach to solve the conflict between different groups. It works well with the basic principles of Sikh religion i.e. *Seva* and *Simran*, as in Sikhism the service of humankind is of utmost importance and while serving it is prohibited to discriminate with anyone. Hence, Sikh Gurudwaras and processions can be used as the places of interaction between different communities. The local authorities always negotiate the construction of Gurudwara and the celebration of religious events to increase the social cohesion at the administrative level and the community level to make the peaceful coexistence possible.

It is tempting to think about the relationship between the production and reproduction of space and the process of subjectivation. From this perspective, the appropriation of space by the Sikh community depends upon its perception in the public administration, who allows the use of public spaces within the framework of diversity management. These sacred and profane discourses, which should be sought in the AMB, are the substratum of the process of castration of the identity of the second generations. Process that includes the dualities of the Sikh community (baptized/unbaptized, high caste/low caste, gender man/woman) and those of the host society, about racism, equality/inequality and gender discourse. Now the second generation of Sikhs have to find their own meanings for their ancestral religious practices in this new context. But slowly a new layer of identity as 'Barcelona-Sikhs or Catalan-Sikh' is emerging in the Sikh community, which is entirely a result of their immigration to the AMB. Until 2018, most of the Sikh community in the AMB belongs to the first or one and half generation of immigrants. Their recent arrival and limited knowledge of the host languages is limiting their participation in the social sphere. It will be interesting to see how the coming generation of Catalan Sikhs (children of Sikh immigrants born in Catalonia) will respond to the task of negotiating the appropriation of urban spaces and their religious identity in the highly diverse society of the AMB.

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Annex:

1. Survey Form used to conduct Sikh Community Survey

S.NO.	AGE	SEX	MARR.	EDU.	OCC.	ARRI.	TOT	MUNICIPI	STREET	NO.
1		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
2		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
3		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
4		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
5		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
6		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
7		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
8		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
9		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
10		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
11		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
12		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
13		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
14		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
15		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
16		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
17		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
18		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
19		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
20		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
21		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
22		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
23		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
24		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
25		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
26		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
27		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
28		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
29		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					
30		M/F	M/S	P/S/H	W/U/S					

2. Guide for the Interviewer

Thematic blocs for the Interviews of Gurudwaras Managing Committee Members

1. **Personal Information:**

➢ Personal information: Name, address, age, place of birth, marital status, education level, family situation, occupation, present position in Gurudwaras management

➢ Migratory experiences: First migrations, further migration, push or pull factors.

➢ Relationship with origin, destination and diaspora: Remittances, family relations, socialising, transnational projects, desire of return migration.

2. Gurudwara Characteristics:

➢ Circumstances at the time of inauguration: Year, place, funding, external support of other Gurudwaras or diaspora.

➢ Objectives of the Gurudwara: Main objectives, Daily activities; major festivals and celebrations.

➢ Relationship with other Gurudwaras in Spain, in diaspora and in India: Mutual projects and community welfare programs.

➢ Characteristics of Sikh community: Number, family characteristics, interests, demands, demography, role of women.

➢ Role in the expansion of diaspora: Transnational links, support to immigrants

➢ Internal conflicts and cooperation: conflict between different sects (Caste based or Religious beliefs based), conflicts between different Gurudwaras

3. Major Challenges for Sikh community in Foreign Context:

➢ The quest of identity and transfer of Sikh values.

➢ Sikh matrimony: Inter religion or caste marriages, gender bias, problems related to match-making and the part played by Gurudwaras in it.

➢ Sikhism and challenges in the European labour market demands and social setup.

➢ Young generation and the transfer of religious and social values.

4. Neighbourhood Relations

➢ Relations with neighbours.

➢ Attitude of Local people.

➢ Participation in the local politics?

5. Future of Sikhism in Spain and diaspora

➢ Future of young Generation.

➢ Role of Gurudwara to promote Sikhism.