

South Asian Canadians

- The **number of people** in Canada of South Asian origin, as defined by **Statistics Canada**, is growing considerably faster than the overall population.
- Between **1996 and 2001**, for example, the number of people who reported a **South Asian** origin **rose by 33%**, while the overall population grew by only 4%

Mostly 1 generation

- A substantial **majority** of the population with South Asian origins living in Canada was **born outside the country**.
- In 2001, 68% of Canadians who reported a South Asian origin were born outside of Canada, compared to 18% of the overall population.

- The large majority of the Canadian population of South Asian origin is concentrated in **Ontario** and **British Columbia**.
- In 2001, Ontario was home to 62% of all Canadians of South Asian origin, while another 22% lived in British Columbia.

- Canadians of South Asian origin are somewhat more likely than the overall population to be **children or young adults**, while they are less likely to be seniors or approaching retirement age.

- In contrast to the overall population, **men make up a slight majority** of Canadians of South Asian origin.
- In 2001, 50.6% of people of South Asian origin were male, compared with 49.1% of all Canadians.

- Max Weber's **'The Religion of India'** and places it in the wider context of his work. It tries to show in detail how Weber's study of India formed part of the **comparative analysis of world civilizations** which was the natural result of his interest in the causal antecedents of the **rise of industrial capitalism** in the West

Weber's thesis

- The Indian social system was influenced by the concept of caste ([varna](#)).^[2] It directly linked religious belief and the segregation of society into status groups.

The Caste system

- Weber goes on to describe **the caste system consist of five layers:**
- (the Brahmins - priests),
- the Kshatriyas - warriors,
- the Vaisyas - merchants,
- the Sudras - laborers
- and the untouchables).

Power

- Weber pays special attention to **Brahmins** and considers why they occupied **the highest place** in Indian society for many centuries.
- With regard to the **concept of dharma**, he concludes that the **Indian ethical pluralism** is very different both from the universal ethic of Confucianism and Christianity.

Hinduism and Buddhism

- He notes that **the caste system** prevented the development of urban status groups
- Secular ethic and impact of Hindu beliefs on economy
- Weber discussed what influence **Hinduism and Buddhism** had on the mundane activities, and how they impacted the economy

Other wordly Mysticism

- . He noted the idea of unchanging world order consisting of the eternal cycles of rebirth, and the deprecation of mundane world.^[4]
- By the traditionalism of the caste system supported by the religion, **the economic development is slowed..** -

- According to Weber - the "spirit" of the caste system worked against the development of capitalism. [\[5\]](#)

The caste system promote economic and cultural stagnation...a fixed social order with very little mobility...

Sikhism

A progressive religion well ahead of its time when it was founded over 500 years ago.

Sikhs make up 1.8% of India's pop. Sikhs worldwide =-25 million.

Charismatic leader-Guru Nanak

Leader-Guru Nanak

- He had a **revelation** of those who step forward as disciples, or Sikh's which literally means "learners"
- In 1499, found he **had a mission** to awaken people to the presence of God.
- He sought to teach contemporary society about **socially responsible living**.

- The Sikh religion today has a following of over 20 million people worldwide and is ranked as the **worlds 5th largest religion.**

- Sikhism is a monotheistic religion that originated in the **15th century** in the Punjab region...

- The **Five Ks** are five Articles of Faith that Khalsa Sikhs wear at all times as commanded by the tenth Sikh [Guru, Guru Gobind Singh](#), who so ordered it at the Vaisakhi [Amrit Sanchar](#) in 1699.
- **The Five Ks are:**
 - 1 Keski (small turban used to cover the Kesh or uncut hair)
 - 2 Kangha (small wooden comb),
 - 3 Kara (steel or iron bracelet),
 - 4 Kacchera (undergarment) and
 - 5 Kirpan (short dagger).

- **The Five Ks** are not just symbols, but articles of faith that collectively form the external identity and the **Khalsa devotee's** commitment to the *Sikh rehni* "Sikh way of life".

Sikhs in Canada

- In 1897, Queen's Jubilee celebration a Sikh regiment in parade.
- **By 1908**, 5000 had come to Vancouver.
- A Kalsa Diwan Society then opened in West Vancouver
- After that, BC gov't enacted legislation that virtually eliminated entrance .

- **Legislation**-denied right to vote
- Immigrant must have a high amount of money to visit Canada.
- South Asian were described as “**yellow peril**”
“**brown invasion**”

Komagata Maru

- A steamship owned by a wealthy Punjabi businessman, Gurdit Singh.
- The ship carried 376 immigrants from India, 351 were Sikh.
- The ship was denied landing rights and forced to return to Calcutta.

- The Sikh immigration to Canada was almost nothing after this and many in Canada already went to the US or back to India.
- Little immigration prior WW2.
- However, some increase as a result of the **1952 Immigration Act** that allowed quotas.

Point System

- Change immigration laws in 1967.
- Eliminated discrimination based upon race, religion and country of origin.
- Half of immigration of from India were Punjabi Sikh who could enter with “semi-skilled occupations,

1970s

- Some anti-Asian and south Asian prejudice event particularly during economic downturns
- **Multiculturalism** first announced in 1971, helped to change attitudes.
- 1984 a watershed, problems in India...
- Many young men came to Canada

- Canadian Sikh then became concern for building up the economic, social and political base of the community.
- In the last decades of the twentieth century, the Sikh population grew by 89%.

Rituals

- Personal piety and devotion important
- The devout begin their day by “meditating on the devine name”
- Recite five liturgical prayers including the “japji of Guru Nanak.
- Sikh can recite prayer from memory-morning and evening observances.

Social Change

- For first generation Sikh, rituals are without question
- They worry however, that 2nd and 3rd generation are becoming “theologically illiterate” (Scott, 326)
- Visits to gurdwaras, however, help young Sikh’s remain in touch.

Identity

- An ethno religious group
- A religious identity and a national identity
- Sikhs tend to see themselves as Punjabi Sikh Canadians.
- Although Sikhs come from outside India such as East Africa, South Africa and the UK.
- Gurdwaras serve as a bulwak against assimilative pressures.

- **Vaisakhi** ([Punjabi](#): ਵਿਸਾਖੀ) *visākhī*, also known as *Baisakhi*, *Vaishakhi*, or *Vasakhi*) is a festival celebrated in the Punjab region.
- Vaisakhi is especially important for the [Sikh](#) community as it marks the establishment of the [Khalsa](#).

- The **Khalsa** is the collective body of **all initiated Sikhs** represented by the five beloved-ones and can be called the Guru Panth, the embodiment of the Guru and the final temporal Guru/leader of the Sikhs. The word Khalsa translates to "**Sovereign/Free**".
- Another interpretation is that of being "Pure/Genuine

- More recently, this festival is also celebrated around the world by the [Sikh diaspora](#).
- The festival is also celebrated by [Hindus](#) and [Buddhists](#) for different reasons including the start of the solar new year.