

Understanding East Indian (Sikh) Culture

Meeting January 4, 1971, 7:30 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.

<u>Present were:</u> Mrs. Joslin Bohanec	Mr. G. Nath
Miss J. Doree (for Mrs. Haluschak)	Mr. G.S. Neel
Mr. Mohinder Gill	Mr. G.S. Rampuri
Mr. I.S. Kohaly	Mr. J. Richardson
Mr. O. Madan	Miss Raminder Sandhu
Mrs. Maling (for Mr. Damen)	Mr. S.S. Sandhu
Mr. A. Messenger	Miss Marjorie Smith

After considerable time exploring the material to be covered in response to the interest of teachers and others in learning more about the cultural background of East Indian people, four main topic areas were agreed upon:

1. The History of Immigration and Cultural Background. This would include mention of the four main ways of immigration, the main features of the cultural background of the people who came, what new influences came into their lives as they tried to adapt to local conditions, the interaction, or lack of it, with the Canadian community. (This might include reference to differences and similarities between Eastern and Western cultures, e.g. attitude toward nature, etc. Also reference to the historical origins of kinship ties.)
A major objective in this session would be to help the audience begin to recognize and understand particular values of the people who came and are coming, so that there might be a better appreciation of, and respect for, the culture of the people and this might be evident in the attitude of Canadians toward them and their children.
2. Family Structure and Relationships. This should provide more information about the authority structure of the family, parent-child relationships, and the difficulties encountered by families in attempting to adapt in their new situation, the different experiences of the younger and older generation, growing differences in expectations for example re marriage and the larger question of reconciling the two cultures in an effort to find one's identity might be considered.
3. The Family and Education. The parents' expectations of education based on their experience in India and the efforts of parents and children to reconcile past experiences in their present situation. Special reference might be made to the different attitudes of students to teachers in India and Canada and the particular expectation of Sikh families for daughters.

4. Religion and Culture. Some background about religious beliefs, music, poetry, architecture, food. This presentation might lead to a discussion about the possibility of cultural integration again from the point of view of recognizing the values in the cultural heritage brought by the people.

Leadership for the Sections

It was decided that the following would work out a presentation lasting approximately 3/4 of an hour for each session, but that the whole group would attend all sessions and take part in the discussion following the presentations as a kind of panel. There may be division of the audience into small groups with one or two resource persons in each.

First Topic: Mr. Kohaly, Mr. Gill, co-chairmen. Mr. Sandhu.

Second Topic: Chairman, Mr. Nath. Om Madan. Dr. Gill. Miss Raminder Sandhu. Joy Inglis.

Third Topic: Chairman, Mr. Nath. Miss Raminder Sandhu. Joe Richardson. Mr. Neel. Dr. Gill.

Fourth Topic: Mr. Rampuri, Chairman. Mr. Kohaly. Mr. Neel. Mr. Madan

Dates: Wednesdays, March 3, 10, 17, 24, 1971. 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Fee: A nominal registration fee of \$2.00 was set. (Resource persons are giving their time and facilities will be provided without cost by the Temple.)

Literature

1. Mr. Sandhu will prepare some notes on historical background which will be mimeographed and sent out before the series.
2. Mr. Kohaly offered to tape the presentations and prepare summaries of the meetings to reproduce in the Centennial issue of the Indo-Canadian in July. He thought that this could later be put into booklet form and distributed to the participants and possibly other people.

Publicity

Again after considerable discussion, it was decided that only the immediate South Vancouver area would be notified by means of a flyer. However, people who enquire will be sent a flyer and we will notify those who have already indicated an interest in the program.