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Contemporary Sikh architecture in the Canadian diaspora

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Contemporary Sikh Architecture in the Canadian Diaspora

By

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A design thesis | project

Presented to Ryerson University

in the fulfillment of the
requirement for the degree of
Master of Architecture

School of Architectural Science

Ryerson University

Toronto, Ontario

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Abstract

Gurd-wara [gur-dwahr-uh] [Punjabi : ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ]
noun, a Gurdwara is a place of worship for the Sikhs. Gurdwara literally means “Guru’s Door” or “Doorway to the Guru’s house”.

Sikh [si:k] [Punjabi : ਸਿੱਖ]
noun, a title and name given to an adherent of Sikhism. The term has its origins in Sanskrit “disciple”, “learner” or “instruction”.

Very little has been contributed to the research of Sikh Architecture. Any research that does exist offers little understanding and analysis of Gurdwaras in the Diaspora. This thesis explores the design possibilities of a contemporary Gurdwara in a Canadian context.

Part of living in a multi-cultural society is the synthesis of cultures, identity and values that come with each group. Little has been discussed or researched on the architecture that has been transplanted by the Diaspora from their homelands. Many of these religious institutions are erected in rural and urban centres. Part of this transplanted architectural movement is from the Sikh Community. The first Sikh settlers arrived in British Columbia, Canada in the 1890’s. Over time this small community of Sikhs would build a temple that would become the first of many erected temples. This emerging architectural style would be a distinctive fusion of Sikh and Canadian architecture. This notion of blending of Sikhi and Canadiana would come through the symbolic gestures on the exterior façade detailing and usage of interior space within the worship place.

Today, in Canada there are upwards to one hundred Sikh Temples, known as a “Gurudwara”. Very little has been contributed to the research and academia on Sikh Architecture. The research that does exist offers little understanding and analysis of Gurudwaras in the Diaspora. This paper explores the state of design and history of the Gurdwara(s) in a Canadian context. Some of the key difficulties in understanding the Sikh Diaspora architecture are: What constitutes a religious place of worship? How does a Sikh Gurdwara manifest in a contemporary Diaspora form? What is the architectural definition of a Gurdwara as it pertains to semiotics?

Caught between a struggle with their new homeland – Canada – and their native soil of the Province of Punjab, Sikhs search to find a Canadian Diaspora identity. This disengagement can be

connected with examining the historical and present state of Gurdwaras in Canada. The discourse of contemporary Canadian Sikh identity is clearly indicated through the architectural representation of their worship centres, the Gurdwara.

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Dr. June Komisar, for me is living proof that in academia, there are still individuals who understand, care, and genuinely support the work of graduate students. She has shared her wisdom, design opinions and directed me to push forward my research outside the university boundaries (i.e. The SSAC 2009 Conference).

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the exploration of Sikh Architecture.

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CHAPTER ONE THE PUNJAB

Introduction

This chapter gives a brief introduction to the complex history of the Sikhs and the Punjab region. Why and what is it to be Sikh and Punjabi is a key aspect of Sikh struggles in their own province and its continuation through their migrations into other countries. Before understanding Sikh architecture, it is important to understand the historical context of this culture and region. This provides a context to focus on contemporary Sikh Worship place.

The Punjab

Modern day Punjab is vastly different from the one Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims prior to independence in 1947. The previous borders of the region, referred to as Punjab, once incorporated East Pakistan and North-West India. Punjab is now one of the provinces of Northern India. The word Punjab means the land of the five rivers: the Sutlej, the Beas, the Ravi, the Chenab and the Jhelum. The history of this region dates to the *Harappan* civilization (3000-1500 BC). During the Rig Vedic Aryan civilization (1500-1000 BC), the lands of modern day East Pakistan and West India were called *Sapta Sindhu*, the land of the seven rivers. Poets and writers would romanticize about the flowing rivers and hills of ancient Punjab, an indication of the significance of these waterways in the culture. The region was part of the Indian subcontinent where the classical melodious hymns of the Samaveda were sung (Arshi, 1986, p. 1). It was here that Rishi Valmik composed his celebrated work, *the Ramayana*. The love for the Punjab has deeper connotation to those who left this region. This region was sought after by many rulers and empires owing to its geographical location on important trade routes, fertile cropland, ample water and transportation.

Punjab's location has had tremendous impact on its history. Its capital Lahore, was once a central trade city for Europe, China, Russia, Middle East and Southern India. Through the ages, invasions and feudal clashes have disrupted the landscape. With each passing empire or ruler, the border of the province were altered which affected the cultural ethos and psyche of its people. It was in this contested region that Sikhism evolved during the rule of the Mughal Empire early in the 1500s. The first Sikh Guru, Nanak Dev Ji had a revelation of One Ultimate Reality and One Creator, that pervaded all existence. "It was an alternative to the fatalism generated by the bigotry and superstitions prevalent in the 15th century India (Mitra, 2004, p.5)". Sikhism would flourish after Guru Nanak Dev Ji, with nine successors, from 1504 to 1708. Sikhs throughout the ages would fight to protect their honor against

ruling dictators of Punjab. This continued through a number of Anglo-Sikh Wars against the British Empire, in the early 1800's under the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The Sikh sovereignty survived up until 1849 when the Sikh Kingdom became a part of the British Empire (Mitra, 2004). Throughout the history of colonial invasions, the British had not fought an empire with such military intelligence and tactics. The British lost more soldiers invading Punjab than in conquering all of the Indian sub-continent. For the Sikh military this became the most prominent aspect of the Anglo-Sikh relationship. Owing to the gallant display of chivalry, Sikhs were recruited into British Indian Army. This flourishing relationship lead to an increase in Sikh migration throughout the British Empire.

During the Colonial period, Sikhs migrated to Australia, New Zealand, Britain, America and Canada. Sikhs aided in the development of infrastructure in building roadways and rail lines and in military duty through postings and military deployment with the British. During the post-colonial period, Sikhs continued to migrate, travelling to East Africa, the Middle East, Europe and North America. Today the Sikh Punjabi community numbers 26 million worldwide. Early Sikh settlers arrived in Canada in 1897 and in America in 1899. The settlers struggled to find an identity in their new homeland. In Canada, Sikhs are increasingly becoming an integral part of the complex mosaic that defines this nation. In the past thirty years, Sikhs fought both governments and corporations for basic and fundamental civil rights. This struggle parallels the struggle for the identity of a Sikh architecture in the Canadian Diaspora.

Within less than a century, 100 'Gurdwaras' or Sikh temples have been built throughout North American. The Gurdwara houses the most sacred of Sikh Scriptures, the 'Guru Granth Sahib. This 1,430 page document contains more than 5,984 hymns. The holy book is worshipped as the timeless Guru. Sikh temples also serve as important social spaces for weddings, family functions, and the offering of meals. In the Canada, the Gurdwara has become more than just a place of worship. It is providing services for its local and regional communities.

The intent of this thesis is to create a contemporary place of worship for the Canadian Sikhs. The proposed design of a contemporary Gurdwara in the new homeland of the Diaspora will based on the struggles Sikh Canadian identity and reference to the scriptures of the Guru Granth Sahib. These embody the principals and values in the function and design of a temple. The thesis also investigates the history of the design and construction of Insi's Golden Temple. It reviews the Canadian architectural development of Gurdwara construction from the early 1900s to 2000. This thesis aims to start a discourse about the practice of Sikh faith, identity within the Canadian context and to develop the boundaries of Sikh Gurdwara design.

CHAPTER TWO THE SIKH DIASPORA

Introduction

Canada is well known for its diversity and culture. It is home to multitudes of different faiths and cultures from around the globe. This chapter looks at Sikh migration to Canada and the issues of modernity and the particular problems of the Sikh community as it merges into Canadian Society.

Sikh Migration to Canada

The increased migration in the 20th century has shaped the diverse cultural mosaic of Canada. Each community has their desire to create their own sense of place, one that resembles their native land and reflects their culture. Increasingly, many individuals, couples and families leave their country of birth to search for better opportunities. It is a vision or passion deep within that brings them to these new worlds. They begin to shape the new society they live in, not only from a cultural and diversity standpoint, but also by contributing to its labour force, politics and regional and federal policy development. "A popular research theme among many scholars has been the Diaspora; the fragment of



Figure 2.01 Three Sikh Gentlemen cross a busy street in Downtown Vancouver, 1907. Credit:Vancouver Library.

an ethnic community that exists outside of its homeland” (Nayar, 2004, p.3). The focuses of much of this chapter is on migration patterns, adaption of immigrants and social issues surrounding generations. In recent decades Canada’s relaxed on immigration has seen an increase of migrations underdeveloped areas in Africa, South America and East Asia. This diversity has helped Canada which was virtually racially, culturally, and linguistically homogenous become increasingly heterogeneous (Basran, 2003).



Figure 2.02 Early Sikh migrant workers in a British Columbia sawmill. Credit: Vancouver Library.

Canada is increasingly characterized as a country that is tolerant of various racial, cultural, ethnic and religious communities. Each of these communities carries the societal ideals and standards of their places of origin. They face pressure to conform to a different set of values and institutional protocols. When the first Sikh came to Canada in 1897, it was a very different society than today. To understand the Sikhs experience would require an understanding of their historical context from their origins to their migration to Canada and the context of Sikh immigration in the early 1900s to the present.

The Sikhs are an important immigrant group in Canada. Like the Chinese, the Sikhs worked for the Canadian Pacific Railway and in British Columbia’s sawmills in the early 1900s. Sikhs also helped

build the Panama Canal in 1904. Sikhs share many common Diaspora issues, paralleling to the broader group of South Asians. However, they differ in many ways.



Figure 2.03 Image of typical farm area in a Punjab village. Credit: Author.

Sikhism was founded in the region of Punjab located in the northwestern part of the Indian subcontinent. The region served as an important bridge between the Far East, the Middle East and Central Asia. It was sheltered by the Himalaya mountains in the North and Rajputana desert in the south. Its rich alluvial plain is composed of silt deposited by the five great rivers, of which gave the region its name Punjab: Satluj, Beas, Ravi, Chanab and Jhelam (Gosal, 2004). With about 90 per cent of the total area comprising the low lying flood plains along the rivers and the monotonously flat upland plains between them, the Punjab is an extensive level tract of land. Such a characteristic of the region’s relief, among, other factors, has facilitated cultivation of the land to the farthest limits (Gosal, 2004). A region that has been blessed with great agricultural land, here Punjabi farmers would cultivate endless fields of corn, grain, rice, mangos and vegetables. Punjab is a region of farm land and villages (also known as Pind) and very few major cities. Traditionally land and farming knowledge and traditions are passed down by one generation to the next. Villages are therefore very self-sustaining and minimally engaged with urban life.

Now imagine the first wave of Sikh settlers to Canada, from 1897 to 1960. The Sikhs for the most part are from the rural villages of Punjab described above, unlike their counterparts the Hindu migrants, many whom are from urban, educated classes of India. Their rural heritage contributes to an extremely high hurdle of culture shock among the Sikh Immigrants. Author, Kamala Elizabeth Nayar, describes three key distinctive areas the Sikhs differ in her book, *The Sikh Diaspora in Vancouver* (2004). Before venturing into these key difference, we need to identify who are the Sikhs and where do they originate from. Nayar writes, the "Sikh community has been directly transplanted into a modern society without having undergone the experience of industrialization"(Nayar, 2004). Taking the same context and applying it to the second wave of immigrants from 1960 to 1984, she writes, "like other immigrants communities, the Sikh community in Canada encounters modernity, in the context of a predominantly Western culture, notwithstanding that Canada is a diverse and multicultural society"(Nayar, 2004). In their home land, "Sikhism, the religion founded and developed in the region of Punjab, faces issues of modernity; but on the top of that, it is confronted by the issue of universalism. Although Sikh scripture is universalistic, the religion has been followed mainly by people from the regional linguistic-cultural group known as the Punjabis"(Nayar, 2004) Sikh Canadians are therefore encountering issues of modernity, urbanism, language and multiculturalism, and at the same time they are an emerging as the fifth largest world religion.

CHAPTER THREE SIKHISM

Introduction

Chapter Three introduces the Sikhism as a religion. What are the belief systems and values that play a vital role in being a Sikh? This section will investigate the writings of the Sikh Scriptures from the Guru Granth Sahib.

Sikhism

The Holy Cross represents a person of the Christian Faith; the Om symbol is one of a Hindu dharma; and the Star of David symbolizes a person devoted to the Jewish faith. The Sikh's emblem is comprised of four symbols that represent their faith. The emblem is known as the 'Khanda'. Sikhism is the fifth largest religion. There are approximately 26 million followers of the Sikh faith. More than eighty percent of them live in their homeland of Punjab and adjacent provinces. The other twenty percent live in the Diaspora, in countries like the United Kingdom, the USA, Canada, East Africa, Singapore and Australia. Most of them still keep ties with their homeland.



Figure 3.01 Sikh symbol Khanda. Credit: Sikhiwiki.org

The opening verse of the Sikh scripture is only two words and reflects the base belief of all who adhere to the teaching of the religion, 'Ek Onkar.' 'Ek' is the representative of the 'One' and 'Onkar' is god, 'there is only one God.' The first passage reflects on one Holy Being:

ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥ (1-1)

ik-oo^Nkaar sat̄ naam kartāa purakh̄h nirbh̄a-o nirvair̄h akaal moorat̄h ajoonee saibh̄a^N gur parsaad̄.
One Universal Creator God. The Name Is Truth. Creative Being Personified. No Fear. No Hatred.
Image Of The Undying, Beyond Birth, Self-Existent. By Guru's Grace ~

॥ ਜਪੁ ॥ (1-3)

jap.

Chant And Meditate:

ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥ (1-4)

aad̄ sach̄ jugaad̄ sach̄.

True In The Primal Beginning. True Throughout The Ages.

ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥੧॥ (1-4)

hai bh̄ee sach̄ naanak hosee bh̄ee sach̄. ||1||

True Here And Now. O Nanak, Forever And Ever True. ||1||

ਸੋਚੈ ਸੋਚਿ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇ ਸੋਚੀ ਲਖ ਵਾਰ ॥ (1-5)

sochai soch̄ na hova-ee jay sochee lakh̄h vaar.

By thinking, He cannot be reduced to thought, even by thinking hundreds of thousands of times.

ਚੁਪੈ ਚੁਪ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇ ਲਾਇ ਰਹਾ ਲਿਵ ਤਾਰ ॥ (1-5)

chupai chup̄ na hova-ee jay laa-ay rahaa liv̄ taar.

By remaining silent, inner silence is not obtained, even by remaining lovingly absorbed deep within.

ਭੁਖਿਆ ਭੁਖ ਨ ਉਤਰੀ ਜੇ ਬੰਨਾ ਪੁਰੀਆ ਭਾਰ ॥ (1-5)

bhukhi-aa bhukh̄h na utree jay bannaa puree-aa bhaar.

The hunger of the hungry is not appeased, even by piling up loads of worldly goods.

ਸਹਸ ਸਿਆਣਪਾ ਲਖ ਹੋਹਿ ਤ ਇਕ ਨ ਚਲੈ ਨਾਲਿ ॥ (1-6)

sahas si-aan̄paa lakh̄h hohī tā ik na chalai naal.

Hundreds of thousands of clever tricks, but not even one of them will go along with you in the end.

ਕਿਵ ਸਚਿਆਰਾ ਹੋਈਐ ਕਿਵ ਕੂੜੈ ਤੁਟੈ ਪਾਲਿ ॥ (1-6)

kiv sachi-aaraa ho-ee-ai kiv koorhaī t̄utai paal.

So how can you become truthful? And how can the veil of illusion be torn away?

ਹੁਕਮਿ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾਲਿ ॥੧॥ (1-7)

hukam rajaa-ee chalnaa naanak likhi-aa naal. ||1||

O Nanak, it is written that you shall obey the Hukam of His Command, and walk in the Way of His WFig. ||1||

(Guru Granth Sahib, p. 1)

With the universal ideal of one true being, the teachings of the ten Sikh Gurus are enshrined and embodied within the holy scriptures of the *Guru Granth Sahib*. The teaching of these scriptures propagates key values each Sikh must perform. They are as follows:

To value and respect positive ideals like truth, compassion, contentment, humility, and love; (a reflection of God-like features).

To suppress the inner evils like lust, anger/rage, greed, material attachment, ego, etc; (a reflection of anti-God features).

To aspire and engage in useful, productive, honest and peaceful life of a householder; to work diligently while holding the image of God within you; (*Kirit Karni*).

To engage in selfless service (*Sewa*) and help build a loving community life; to be a contributor to society whenever possible; (*Wand kay shakna*).

To be ready to protect and stand for the rights of the weak among us; to fight for justice and fairness for all.

To always accept the Will of God, (*Hukam*) and stay focused and in "Positive Spirits" (*Chardikala*).

The *Guru Granth Sahib's* divine message is conveyed in the form of spiritual poetry, composed to a select set of prescribed 'ragas' of Sikh Classical Music (Sikh Network, 2002). The book is considered to be living and to be their eleventh and final Guru. The sacred text is comprised of 1,430 pages and written in the classical Gurumukhi script. "Including stanzas (pauris) and slokas Guru Nanak represented by 974 hymns, Guru Angad with 62 slokas, Guru Amardas with 907 Hymns, Guru Ramdas with 679 and Guru Arjan with a staggering 2,218 hymns (Mitra, 2004, p.47)". Additional compositions came from the Bhakta and Sufi poets, both from Muslim and Hindu of all castes, more importantly including the 'untouchables'.

Sikh worship consists of listening to, reciting and singing the praises of God. Anyone may join in the service. The Sikh scriptures contain the revelations of men of God from various castes and creeds, along with those of the Sikh Gurus. Sikhism does not, therefore, claim the exclusive monopoly of truth

and accepts the validity and coexistence of all faiths. If the beliefs and practices of a faith are not amenable to reason, if its doctrines come into conflict with known facts, or impinge upon the natural rights of human equality and brotherhood, then a Sikh will not hesitate to criticize it. No one who is indifferent to the suffering's of others is really spiritual, hence the Sikh emphasis on the selfless service to others. To be a Sikh today is to share the teaching of the Sikh Gurus, to attempt to be faithful to them and put them into practice in the daily life.

CHAPTER FOUR THE EARLY GURDWARA

Introduction

The idea of a worship centre was a later formation in the History of the Sikh Religion. The original Sikh meeting place or place to congregate was called dharamsalas – where dharam would take place. The section develops the idea of the Gurdwara can be traced back to the first Guru, Nanak Dev. This chapter will relate that the evolution of Sikhism through the Gurus have helped with the functional, architectural and symbolic elements of the Gurdwara.

The Early Gurdwara

In the early 15th century Sikhism emerged as a new faith. Sikhism would follow through an evolutionary path to become a major religion. With the maturity of the new faith, Sikhism would see its population increase and the philosophy of their Gurus spread throughout India and beyond. Eventually the need for a worship place for the growing number of disciples soon became apparent. This form of temple would not evolve until the 5th Guru, Guru Arjan (ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜੁਨ ਦੇਵ), when the compilation of the holy scriptures, the *Guru Granth Sahib* was finished. The first evidence of Sikh architecture came with Guru Arjan. This thesis will reflect on the previous four Gurus achievements and establish key components that would lead to an understanding of the functional environments and space in the design of the Gurdwara.

Guru Nanak was born in the village of Talwandi on April 15, 1469. It is 65 kilometers to the south west of Lahore in present day Pakistan (now known as Nankana Sahib in commemoration of the founder of Sikhism). Brought up in a middle class Hindu family, his father Kalyan Das Mehta kept the revenue accounts for a feudal Landlord, Rai Bular (Sambhi, 1989). Growing up, Nanak was never at peace with wealth and the status of caste structure, at the time was deeply immersed with society. He longed to serve the people and to work for their spiritual and moral welfare (Sambhi, 1989). During his twenties Nanak had powerful spiritual experiences, which lead him to leave his job as a store keeper and his domestic responsibilities to travel for 20 years (Mann, 2001). His extensive travels led him to sources of wisdom and knowledge. Nanak visited great places across Asia, such as Sri Lanka, Kabul, Tibet and Mecca. Efforts were for understanding Islamic and Hindu thought, the Koran and the Vedas for insights into the principles and philosophic concepts that had for long been obscured by the extravagant claims of both Hindu and Muslim bigots (Mitra, 2004). Nanak strived to overcome past injustices and inequality of the current dominant religions.

At that time, Muslim rule was well established in the major part of Northern India. Both Hindu and Muslims had completely separated themselves, religiously and socially (Sambhi, 1989). In these conditions, Guru Nanak began a new movement that would evolve into a major religion; a religion that would challenge and question the ways of the current era of belief systems. "Guru Nanak Dev's message was simple regarding rituals and superstitions, the role of the priesthood, the widespread idolatry and the whole caste system as pernicious" (Mitra, 2004). One who followed the decree of Guru Nanak would be known as a Sikh (ਸਿਖ), derived from the Sanskrit term Shishya (the vernacular form of which is sikhya), meaning devoted followers (Mitra, 2004).



Figure 4.01 Guru Nanak with Mardana (left) and Bala. Coloured woodcut Amritsar or Lahore 1875. Credit:sikhiwiki

Guru Nanak advocated the reverence of one true being. His sermons would stress the importance of collective worship in addition to individual private prayers. It also was a call required by a Sikhs to perform selfless service to others as the word of God. Other forms of worship were followed by daily meditation and singing of God's praises. There are three major contributions to Guru Nanak's faith and to humanity that included Western ideals. Equality of women was placed as a crucial tenet of the Sikh faith, especially significant at a time when females were seen as unequal to men. Women were welcomed to the congregations and encouraged to join fully in the religious and social activities of the

community (Sambhi, 1989). The following passage from *Guru Granth Sahib* makes reference to women and the importance of equality.

ਮਃ ੧ ॥ (473-7)

mehlaa 1.

First Mehl:

ਭੰਡਿ ਜੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਨਿੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਮੰਗਣੁ ਵੀਆਹੁ ॥ (473-8)

bhand jammee-ai bhand nimmee-ai bhand mangan vee-aahu.

From woman, man is born; within woman, man is conceived; to woman he is engaged and married.

ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਦੋਸਤੀ ਭੰਡਹੁ ਚਲੈ ਰਾਹੁ ॥ (473-8)

bhandahu hovai dostee bhandahu chalai raahu.

Woman becomes his friend; through woman, the future generations come.

ਭੰਡੁ ਮੁਆ ਭੰਡੁ ਭਾਲੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਬੰਧਾਨੁ ॥ (473-8)

bhand mu-aa bhand bhaalee-ai bhand hovai banDhaan.

When his woman dies, he seeks another woman; to woman he is bound.

ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਨ ॥ (473-9)

so ki-o mandaa aakhee-ai jit jameh raajaan.

So why call her bad? From her, kings are born.

ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੀ ਭੰਡੁ ਉਪਜੈ ਭੰਡੈ ਬਾਝੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥ (473-9)

bhandahu hee bhand oopjai bhandai baajh na ko-ay.

From woman, woman is born; without woman, there would be no one at all.

(*Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 473)

Punjabi (ਪੰਜਾਬੀ) was the language of the people and spoken when worship was offered, which meant it could be led by anyone regardless of their gender or caste status. During Guru Nanak's time most of the Indian sub-continent, slavery, class, caste and race discrimination were rampant. The writings of Guru Nanak prohibited any form of inequality to be present in God's universe. The Sikh scriptures contain the revelations where all faiths respect and coexist with each other. "Sikhism does not, therefore, claim the exclusive monopoly of truth and accepts the validity and coexistence of other faiths. But if the beliefs and practices of a faith are not amenable to reason, if its doctrines come into conflict with known facts, or impinge upon the natural rights of human equality and brotherhood, the a Sikh will not hesitate to criticize it." (Sambhi, 1989, p.2) The following passage cites that as humans we have one true being:

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥ (611-18)

ik-oaⁿkaar satgur parsaad.

One Universal Creator God. By The Grace Of The True Guru:

ਏਕੁ ਪਿਤਾ ਏਕਸ ਕੇ ਹਮ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਤੂ ਮੇਰਾ ਗੁਰ ਹਾਈ ॥ (611-19)

ayk piṭaa aykas kay ham baarik tū mayraa gur haa-ee.

The One God is our father; we are the children of the One God. You are our Guru.

(*Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 611)

Guru Nanak's lessons centred on unity, equality and of God, the creator lord of the universe (called Kartar), who governs the world with commands based on twin principles of justice (nian) and grace (Nadar) (Mann, 2001). The practice of equality was further developed by Guru Nanak in the form of the institutions of known as *Sangat* (ਸੰਗਤਿ - worshipping together) and *Pangat* or *Langar* (ਲੰਗਰ - eating together). Therefore, after every act of worship it was instilled into the faithful that the sharing of a meal while sitting together as a community promoted unity and breaking down caste barriers was vitally important.

ਲੰਗਰੁ ਚਲੈ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦਿ ਹਰਿ ਤੋਟਿ ਨ ਆਵੀ ਖਟੀਐ ॥ (967-1)

langar chalai gur sabad har tot na aavee khatee-ai.

The Langar - the Kitchen of the Guru's Shabad has been opened, and its supplies never run short.

(*Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 967)

On the banks of River Ravi in Punjab, Guru Nanak established a community known (post independence) as Kartarpur. Kartarpur is located in present day Pakistan about two kilometers from the India-Pakistan border. It is not known if a religious structure had been constructed on this site. However, this is quite probable, as Guru Nanak's teachings were the basis of the function of a worship centre. The concept and singing of hymns is present in a congregation. Perhaps the concept is being distilled of a central area or room which would be used to preach the word of the *Guru Granth Sahib*. This area would be for all, a room which would be for both men and women; those of other faiths, castes, classes and creeds – all shall sit as one and cite the praises of God. The second, function would be an area which housed the activity of *Langar* or meal sharing (ਲੰਗਰ), a area designed to further uphold the principle of equality between all people of the world regardless of religion, case, colour, creed that all must attend sermons



FIGURE 4.02 – The preparation of meals (Langar) are prepared in the communal kitchen. Credit: sikhwiki.org

and singing of hymns is present in a congregation. Perhaps the concept developed that a central area or room which would be used to preach the word of the *Guru Granth Sahib*. This area would be for all, both men and women of all faiths, castes, classes and creeds. All would sit as one and cite the praises of God. The second function would be an area that housed the activity of *Langar* or meal sharing (ਲੰਗਰ). This area was designed to further uphold the principle of equality between all people regardless of religion,

case, colour, creed age, gender or social status. In addition to the ideals of equality, the tradition of *Langar* expresses the ethics of sharing, community, inclusiveness and of the oneness of all.

The langar has an adjacent kitchen to prepare communal meals. Any individual can help prepare the food for Sikhs and non- Sikhs. Yet, another aim to break down caste prejudices and reinforces human equality.

It should be noted in the time of Guru Nanak, who encouraged a tradition of eating together that Guru Amar Das institutionalized the *Langar*. It is considered an honour to prepare and serve a vegetarian meal for the faithful, or visitors and those needing a meal. It is important that every member of the Sikh community part takes in this service, regardless of their position and wealth.

By the time of his death in September 1539, Guru Nanak Dev had established Kartarpur as the centre of Sikhism and had strengthened the new faith along with his followers. One of these followers

was Bhai Lehna, a worshipper of Durga (a Hindu deity), from the village of Khadur. Bhai Lehna listened to Guru Nanak's words and soon became a disciple. Devoted to his new faith and committed to Sikhi, Guru Nanak saw fit to give him the name of Angad, meaning "my limb" (Sambhi, 1989 p.4). Angad was nominated as Guru Nanak's successor to carry on the divine undertaking which he had begun.

In Guru Angad Dev Ji's era, Sanskrit was the religious language of the Hindus and the scriptures were written in Devanagari. "The seventeenth century traditions refer to the existence of a Pothi (literally, book or volume) compiled at Kartarpur, which contained the hymns of Guru Nanak and was ceremonially given to Guru Angad at the time of his ascendance to the office of the Guru" (Mann, 2001, p. 10). Punjabis then wrote in a rough and crude script known as Lande (meaning clipped). "Lande was also used extensively by the mercantile classes for keeping accounts, and Guru Angad was trader. He improved and perfected the Lande script on the lines of the Devanagari alphabet and used it for writing down the Bani (Revelations) of Guru Nanak" (Sambhi, 1989, p.5). Guru Angad is largely known for his work in developing the Sikh Scriptures of Gurumukhi, meaning 'from the mouth of the Guru.' Guru Angad Dev's compilation of the hymns of Guru Nanak was the stepping stone to the development of the holy text. This formally would be known as the *Guru Granth Sahib*, which is the holiest object in any Sikh temple.

Guru Nanak's older son, Baba Sri Chand, inherited Kartarpur, forcing Guru Angad had to return to his native village Khadur (Mann, 2001). This move however, established the growth of Sikhism beyond the borders of Kartarpur. Guru Angad Dev's thirteen years of tenure ended in 1552. Before his death he appointed a successor and when doing so he searched for someone who would serve the faith well and chart the next course of Sikhi development. That person would be found within the Sangat (the congregation) who is known as Amar Das. Through Guru Amar Das's rule Sikhism would expand territorially and further reinforce the notion of equality of men and women.

Amar Das became Guru at the age of 73. In 1552, Guru Amar Das established a new town on the right bank of the Beas River based on the Kartarpur model and named it Govindal (Mann, 2001). The people of Govindal would see major developments in Sikh institutional structures. This period would see the introduction of festivals to enable distant congregations to come together and participate in the communal life in Govindal. These distant congregations were formalized into 22 branches called Manjis. In each Manji, Guru Amar Das appointed a local devout Sikh preacher who would conduct sermons and daily prayers. By establishing the formation of an administrative system, Guru Amar Das set the stages of establishing the future construction of religious buildings. This enabled the development of Sikh architecture the Majha region, Jalandar Doab, Kangra Hills, and the Malwa region

and Sind area. Ultimately, his aim was to ensure the cohesiveness of the new religion as well as the continuity of its practices and precepts (Mitra, 2004).

Further contribution of Guru Amar Das came in social reforms relating to women. The practice of 'Sati', the self-immolation of widows on their husbands' funeral pyres was forbidden under Guru Amar Das. He allowed widowers their choice to remarry or not and also stopped the public veiling of women. This emancipation of women would further develop by appointing women as preachers. These steps of equality of sexes became an integral part of design of a Sikh Temple.

Guru Amar Das's death came at the age of 95 and he named his son-in-law Ram Das as the 4th successor. Guru Ram Das's Guruship initiated two developments that would further the need for a Sikh temple. Guru Ram Das, orchestrated the compositions of four hymns for union of two souls during marriage, which is commonly known as the Anand Karaj – Anand is Joy, Karaj is an act or undertaking. The following passage in *Guru Granth Sahib* reflects on the union of two people:

ਧਨ ਪਿਰੁ ਏਹਿ ਨ ਆਖੀਅਨਿ ਬਹਨਿ ਇਕਠੇ ਹੋਇ ॥ (788-11)

Dhan pir ayhi na aakhee-an bahan ikthay ho-ay.

They are not said to be husband and wife, who merely sit together.

ਏਕ ਜੋਤਿ ਦੁਇ ਮੂਰਤੀ ਧਨ ਪਿਰੁ ਕਹੀਐ ਸੋਇ ॥੩॥ (788-12)

ayk jot du-ay moortee Dhan pir kahee-ai so-ay. ||3||

They alone are called husband and wife, who have one light in two bodies. ||3||

(*Guru Granth Sahib* p. 788).

The passages symbolize the spiritual union of the believer with God. Each hymn is represented and explaining the journey of the two souls in holy union. It depicts the duties that each person undertakes in a life of marriage. The customs and rituals of marriage necessitated the need for the sanctity of a religious building.

Guru Ram Das is also credited in establishing the idea of a pilgrimage centre. This developed during the tensions between the sons of Guru Amar Das. Guru Ram Das, assumed leadership and a struggle for authority between the legal and the nominated leader ensued. Baba Mohan and Baba Mohari, the two sons of Guru Amar Das, took control of their father's establishment as his legal heirs, while the nominated successor, Guru Amar Das, had to move to Ramdaspur (Mann, 2001).

Anticipating this issue, the search for another place than Govindal began. "Tradition has it that Guru Ram Das settled down at this place which gradually turned into a place of importance in the faith and also a place of pilgrimage for his successors as well as for the followers" (Arshi, 1989, p.4). This place was given various names Ramdaspur, Guru Ka Chak and Chak Guru Ramdas. Later this area would be

known as Amritsar (meaning pool of Nectar). Guru Ram Das discovered the town that became the location of the Golden Temple or Harimandir Sahib (Temple of God), the pinnacle of religious Sikh architecture. P.S. Arshi writes:

As it appears from various historical writings based presumably on some unspecified evidence, Guru Ram das erected a small Kachcha hut somewhere near the place where the Golden Temple is situated at present. Subsequently, a pre-existing small tank nearby was enlarged with ceremonial excavations so that the tank, thus excavated, could serve as a sacred tank which was destined to be famous later as the "pool of nectar" (Amritsar) to lend its name to that of the place itself. (Arshi 1989, p.7)

Guru Ram Das, encouraged people from all places to take residence in the new town. As a result Ramadapur saw an increase in population and the devotees of Sikhism. A market place was established at the present site of Guru Bazar for a regular supply of essential commodities and exchange of goods (Arshi, 1989).

CHAPTER FIVE HARMANDIR SAHIB

Introduction

The Gurdwara is designed in the personification of the Sikh faith. Its functional space adheres to the values and beliefs of daily Sikh practice. This chapter will look at the primary worship place of Sikhism, the Harmandir Sahib or Darbar Sahib; and more commonly known as the Golden Temple. It has been known by many architecture historians and scholars as the preeminent Sikh architecture. This chapter will review the various architectural, symbolic and artistic elements of the Harmandir Sahib, which clearly expresses the beauty that only can originate from Holy origins. Refer to Appendix E for Site Map of Darbar Sahib Complex.

Harmandir Sahib

Each day, this magnificent Sikh Shrine hosts over 50,000 people. It is a more powerful statement knowing that each visitor without judgment of creed, race, caste or other faiths does not leave its premise without being offered a meal. This gesture symbolizes the Sikh faith embedded within the walls of Harmandir Sahib. The gold-plated shrine embodies the essence of the Holy Scriptures and the path to righteousness. The Gurdwara is located in the holy city of Amritsar, Punjab. The Gurdwara was first conceived by Guru Ram Das and built later by the fifth Guru Arjan Dev. Guru Ram Das inaugurated the digging of the holy pool (pond). There are many legends as to why the location was chosen by him. Many say it was a gift from the Mughal Emperor Akbar to Guru Amar Das's daughter, Bib Bhani, Ram Das's wife. Another, story states that the "the land was received as a gift by Guru Amar das from Emperor Akbar as a token of thanks giving for his victory over Chittor Fort in Rajasthan" (Arshi, 1989). Some historians suggest that the land was presumably given to Ram Das when he had to leave the town of the sons of Guru Amar Das. (Arshi, 1986).

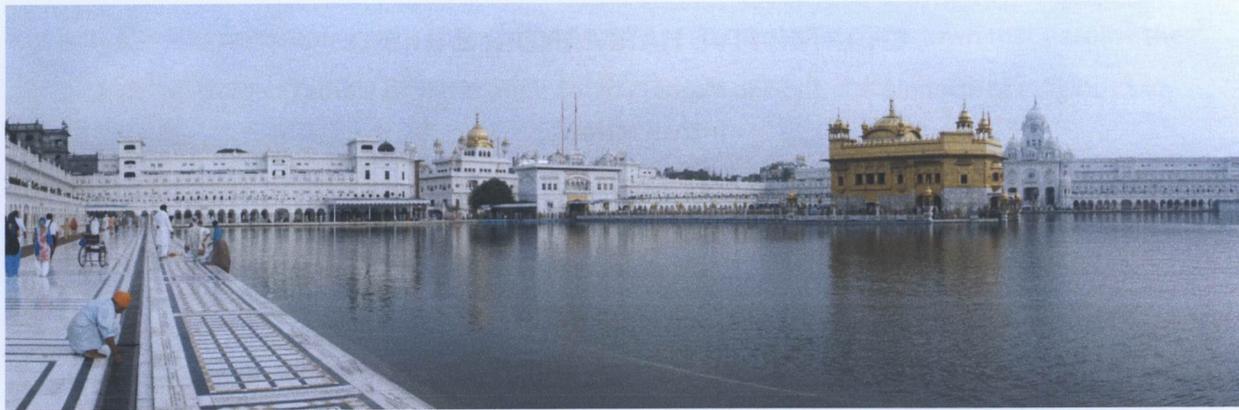


Figure 5.01 Harmandir Sahib or the Golden Temple surrounded by the Holy Pool. Sikhwiki.org

There is one legend that speaks of the spiritual significance of the pond. "It is said that Guru Amar Das found at the banks of the pond a special herb he needed to cure an ailment of Guru Angad. There are many local traditions which speak of the medicinal properties of the water in the pool" (Shankar, 2004, p.8). The following passage from the *Guru Granth Sahib* helps to understand the pool's significance to Sikh architecture:

ਪਤਿਤ ਪੁਨੀਤ ਸਭ ਹੋਏ ॥ (624-3)

paṭiṭ puneṭ sabh ho-ay.
All the sinners are purified.

ਰਾਮਦਾਸਿ ਸਰੋਵਰ ਨਾਤੇ ॥ (624-4)

raamdaas sarovar naatay.
Bathing in the sacred pool of Guru Ram Das,

ਸਭ ਲਾਥੇ ਪਾਪ ਕਮਾਤੇ ॥੨॥ (624-4)

sabh laathay paap kamaatay. ||2||
all the sins one has committed are washed away. ||2||

(*Guru Granth Sahib*, p.624)

Understandingly there are many accounts of the legend of the Sarovar (pond) surrounding the temple. However, these accounts have been based on ancient and potent spiritual influences and it is significant enough that such a site was not arbitrarily chosen by the Sikh Gurus.

The land around the *Sarovar* (pond) was acquired by Guru Ram Das. The area was to be a centre where pilgrims of the Sikh faithful can congregate during festivals and religious functions.

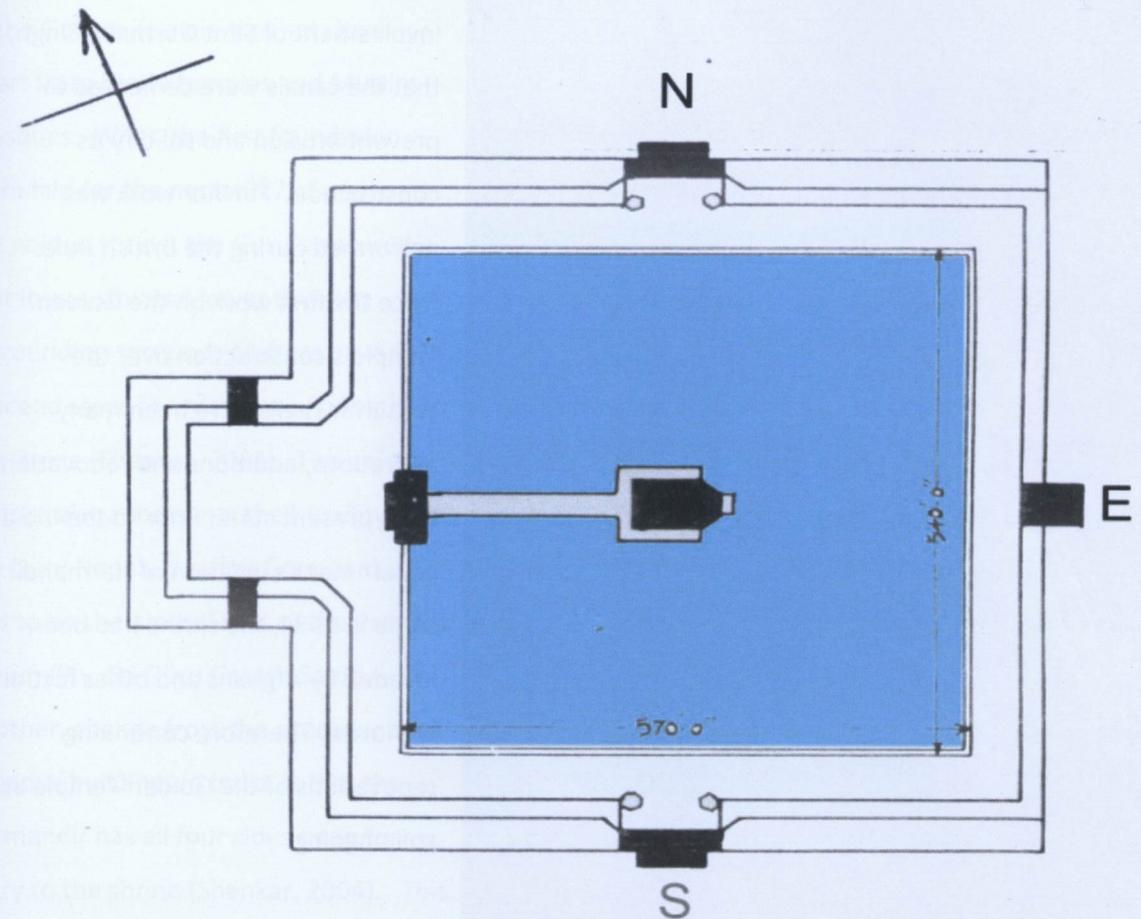


Figure 5.02 Site Plan of the Golden Temple (not to scale). Credit: P.S. Arshi

Excavation and construction began for of the holy tank and a town began to grow around the site. Once completed in 1574 A.D., Guru Ram Das, made his home by its banks. He inaugurated its completion by composing verses on the beauty of the *Sarovar* and asked his followers to take a dip in the Holy tank named "Amrit *Sarovar*" - Pool of Nectar (Shankar, 2004). The Amrit *Sarovar* would remain being a 'Kachcha' construction until 1581 A.D. when Guru Arjan Dev would finalize and made itr *pucca* (solid) with brick walls and side stairs leading into the Amrit *Sarovar*. The pool of water is commonly referred as a tank. It's top perimeter was 510' x 490', the ??? measuring 490' x 470' and the depth 17'0" (Arshi, 1989). The source of the tank's water is from the Ravi River, through canals known as *Hansali* built in 1778. Prior to the construction of the canal system, the sacred pond's source of water would be from the yearly monsoon rains. In 1783, the seasonal rain did not adequately fill the tank and almost dried up. It was then that Bhai Priam Dass and Bhai Santokh Singh solved the draught problem. The *Hansali* were originally plain earth canals dug by the two Udasi saints, both from Amritsar (Arshi,



1989). It was not until the later involvement of Sant Gurmukh Singh, that the canals were cemented to prevent erosion and solidify its construction. Further work was performed during the British Rule. Since the first work on the Golden Temple's construction over the centuries there have been many alterations, additions and renovations to its present state. Prior to the Indian government's invasion of Harmandir Sahib in 1984, the shrine had been invaded by Afghans and other faction warlords. Therefore continuing renovations of the Golden Temple are still ongoing.

Figure 5.03 - Aerial view of Harmandir Sahib. Credit: Sikhiwiki.org.

There are three significant dates of construction and renovations and alterations that should be noted. The first building occurred from 1588 to 1776. Subsequent reconstruction took place between 1765 and 1776. Considerable renovations to the exterior and interior occurred during Maharaja Ranjit Singh period from 1802 to 1839 (Arshi, 1986). There is literature referencing "that Maharaja Ranjit Singh was asked for the models from the then architects, and he selected one of the models submitted by the Ramgarhias who were well known in this branch of art at the time" (Arshi, 1986, p.90). Architectural historian, Pardeep Singh Arshi, concludes with a statement in his book Sikh Architecture, "the problem lies in the determination of whether the present structure follows its earlier model or in the latest construction, the temple building got an altogether new design and plan" (Arshi, 1986, p.91) He is referring to only the golden shrine or the Sanctum Sanctorum.

There are two major differences in the Golden Temple that sets itself apart from Hindu temples and Muslim mosques. When the first foundation were laid for the **nectar???** of pool and the golden shrine, the Guru's ensured that it was situated lower than the surrounding ground. Visitors have to descend steps in order to pay homage to the shrine (Shankar, 2004). The unique feature also represents the humility of the Guru Nanak, the first Guru as this was to be the eternal seat of the Prophet of Humility, Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Another, change from the precedence of religious buildings in India, is that the Harmandir has all four sides open for entry to the shrine (Shankar, 2004). This signifies that God and the *Guru Granth Sahib* are accessible to every person without any distinction of caste, creed,

colour, sex or religion.

The conceptual idea behind the architecture of the Harmandir Sahib is that of spiritual enlightenment. The lotus is the symbol employed to express this inspiration (Shankar, 2004). The vernacular floral design is either painted or embossed in metal and precious stones and the inlay details are richly crafted by number of artisans from various faith groups. It was Maharaja Ranjit Singh who took up the work of illuminating the exterior with sheets of gold-plated metal. Ranjit Singh took an interest in the artistic elements of the Golden Temple. In 1808, an invitation was sent



FIGURE 5.04 – Floral inlays in marble & precious stone.

Credit: Bakshi



Figure 5.05 South gate into the quad area of Harimandir Sahib. Credit: Author.

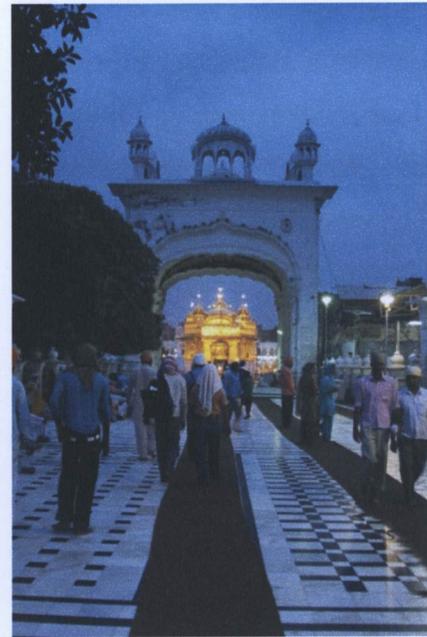


Figure 5.06 East entrance gate, view of Golden Temple beyond. Credit: Author.

for skilled Muslim architects, masons and wood carvers from Chaniot (now Pakistan). A local resident of Amritsar, Mistri Mohammad Yar Khan was the authority on gilding, which was then carried out in 1830 (Shankar, 2004). With his technical background, Bhai Sant Singh Giani supervised the installation and in 1803, the first gilded copper plate was fixed in place. After the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Muslim craftsmen support declined. The task was taken up by Bhagwan Singh Jamadar, Mangal Singh Ramgarhia and Rai Bahadur Kalyan Singh. Completion of the work was done by local artisans.

The Golden temple is situated within a building quadrant. There are three main gateways (see Figures 6.05 & 6.06) on the north, south and east, all directly in alignment to the entrance doorways of the Sanctum Sanctorum (refer to Appendix 13.09 for an overall plan of the religious complex). The western side of the complex, is a five storey building known as the Akal Takhat, meaning the Thorne of the Immortal. It is the highest political institution of the Sikhs (see Figure 6.16). The building is a fraction lower than that of the Golden Temple, implying the order of importance. The positioning of the Akal Takhat is another significance in the religious order. Note that the Akal Takhat positioning is not in symmetrical balanced to the rest of the complex. It is from this building, Akal Takhat that *Hukamnamas* are announced to provide guidance or clarity to Sikh doctrine or practice. A *Hukamnama* is a formal order issue by the Sikh religious body. Thus, order is not given to the Supreme Being or the Holy Sikh Scriptures but to the Sikhs that follow the principals of Sikhism.



Figure 5.07 View of Golden Temple in the evening. Credit: Author.



Figure 5.08 East elevation of Golden Temple at sunrise. Credit: Author.

The interior of the gateways and the quadrangle serve as the parkarma and are surrounded by a series of colonnaded verandahs. Just opposite the Akal Takhat is an arched pavilion severing as the entrance gateway known as the Darshani Deohri (see Figure 6.09). The gates or doorway of the arch stands about 10'-0" in height and 8'6" in breath. Each door is richly decorated and only close during early morning cleaning, when the Guru Granth Sahib is transported to the Akal Takhat (see Figure 6.16). Through the large door way, the Darshani Deohri opens on to the bridge the leads to the Golden Temple or Harimandir Sahib (see Figure 6.10). The length of the ornate marble causeway is 202' long and 21' wide, trimmed with gold brass guardrails and rows of marble and gold lamp posts. This leads to



Figure 5.09 Bridge or causeway leading to the Darshani Deohri from the Golden Temple. Credit: Arshi.

entrance connected to a 13'0" wide Pardakshna, a circumambulatory path. The Pardakshna surrounds the golden shrine and it leads to the 'Har Ki Paure' or steps of God.

Evenly located at the centre of the pool of nectar or tank is the Sanctum Sanctorum. The entrance that faces the bridge is decorated with repeated cusped arches. The shrine is a three-storey square building and is approximately

40'4"x40'4", and rests on a square platform. At the back of the building a two-storey half hexagonal shaped building located with two separate staircases leading to the second level gallery overlooking the main worship area (see Figures 6.11 & 6.12). The height of the ground floor to the second level is 26' 9". The main worship area houses the *Guru Granth Sahib*, it is here the Holy Book is read on a daily bases and hymns are song (refer to Figure 6.13 on page 30). The third level is a terrace level or roof top with a 4' high parapet (see Figure 6.14). Each corner rises above four feet to expose four 'Mamtees'. Precisely on the top of the central hall of the main sanctuary rises to the third floor (see Figure 6.13). At which point the main dome is situated above the worship area on the second floor roof.

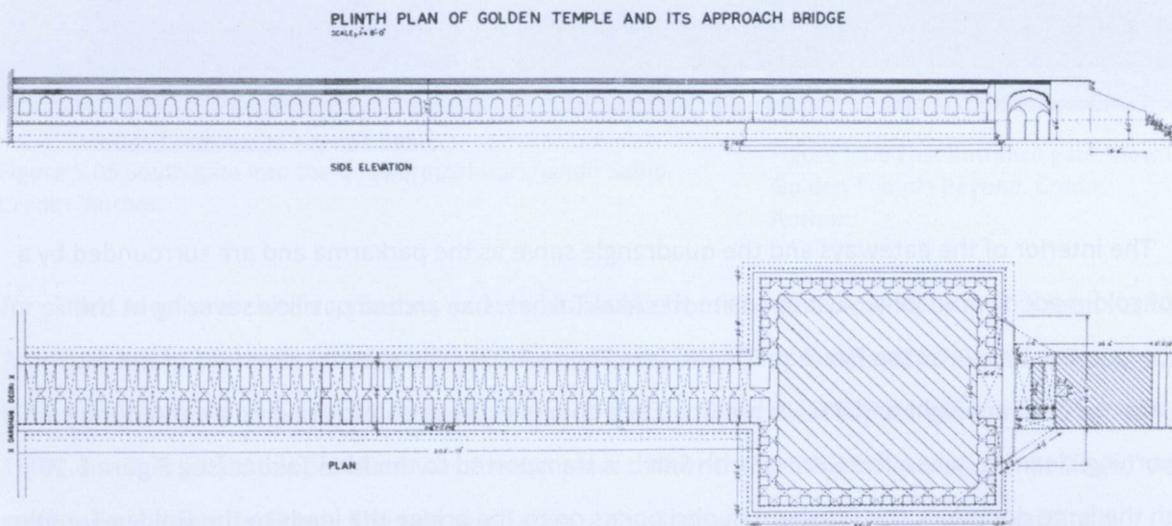


Fig. A : Ground Plan and side elevation of the causeway.

Figure 5.10 Plan and side view of the bridge or causeway leading to the Golden Temple. Credit: P.S. Arshi.

The main square building pinnacle is surmounted by a central dome structure with a number of kiosks at the cardinal sides of the building. The base of the dome is a square in nature and is approximately 19'3" x 19'3", and has perimeter windows that admit light into the space below. The dome is known as a low fluted 'Gumbaz' having lotus petal motifs in the reliefs. "The main dome of the golden temple is a synthesis of details and ornamentation of all Sikh Shrines (see Figure 6.15). However, this in no way means that the dome of the Golden Temple has drawn from other shrines; on the contrary, the domes of most Sikh Shrines have derived their character and inspiration from the unique dome of the Golden temple" (Mitra, 2004 p.82). The Harmandir Sahib represents a unique harmony of

Islamic and Hindu construction and design. It is often quoted that this architecture has created an independent Sikh school of architecture in the history of Indian art.

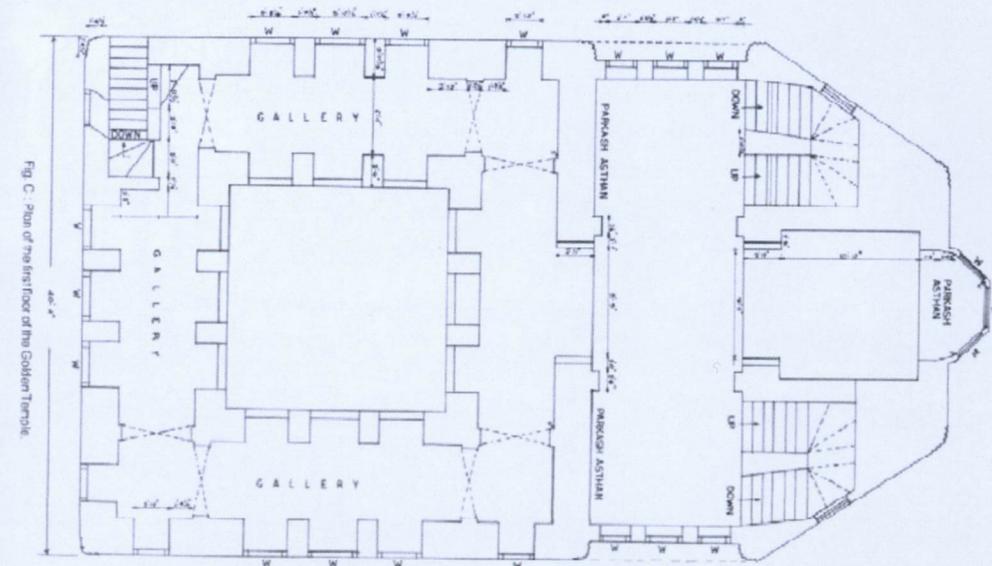


Figure 5.11 Ground floor plan of the Golden Temple. Credit: P.S. Arshi.

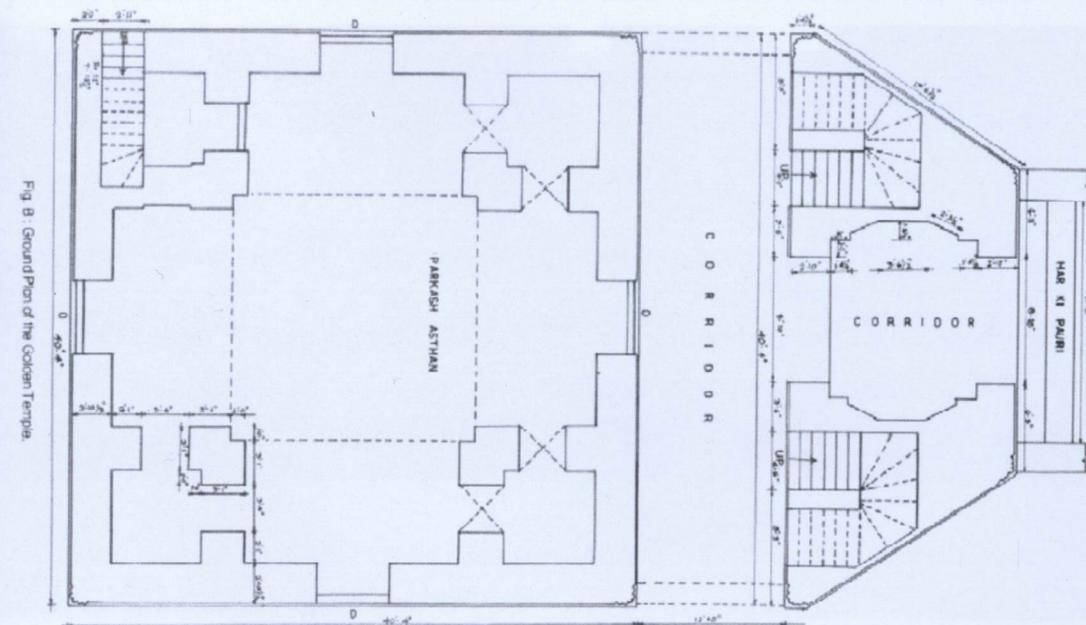


Figure 5.12 Second floor plan of the Golden Temple. Credit: P.S. Arshi.

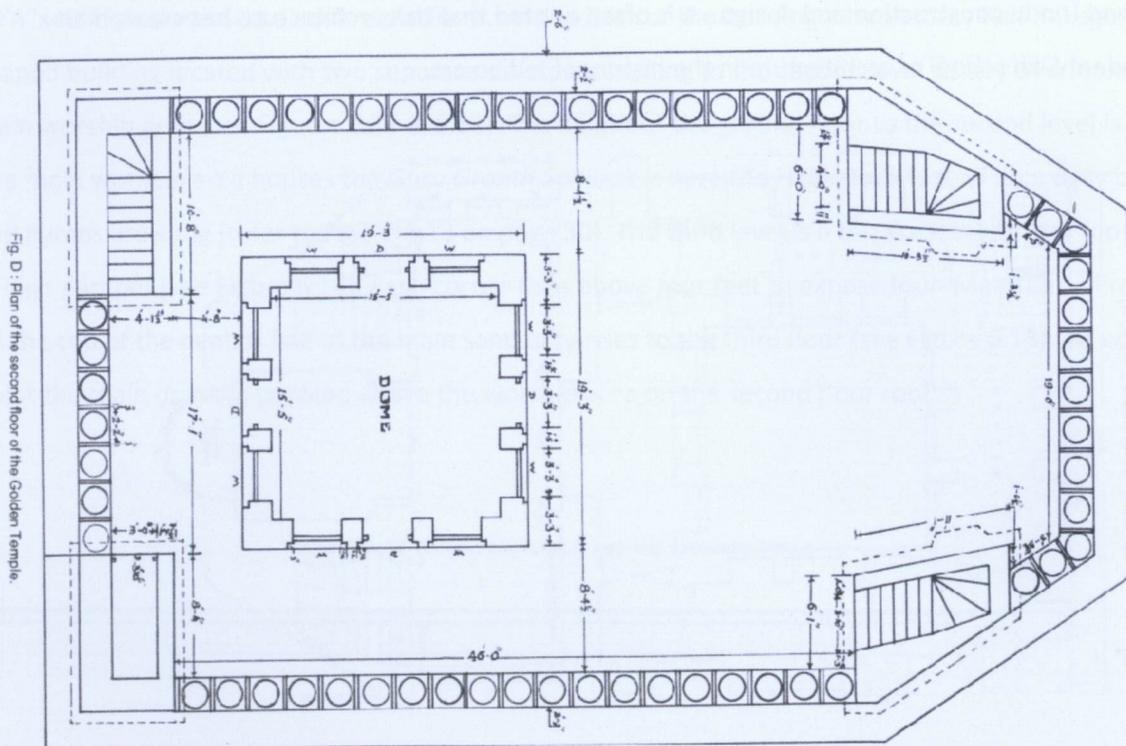


Figure 5.12 Ground floor plan of the Golden Temple. Credit: P.S. Arshi.

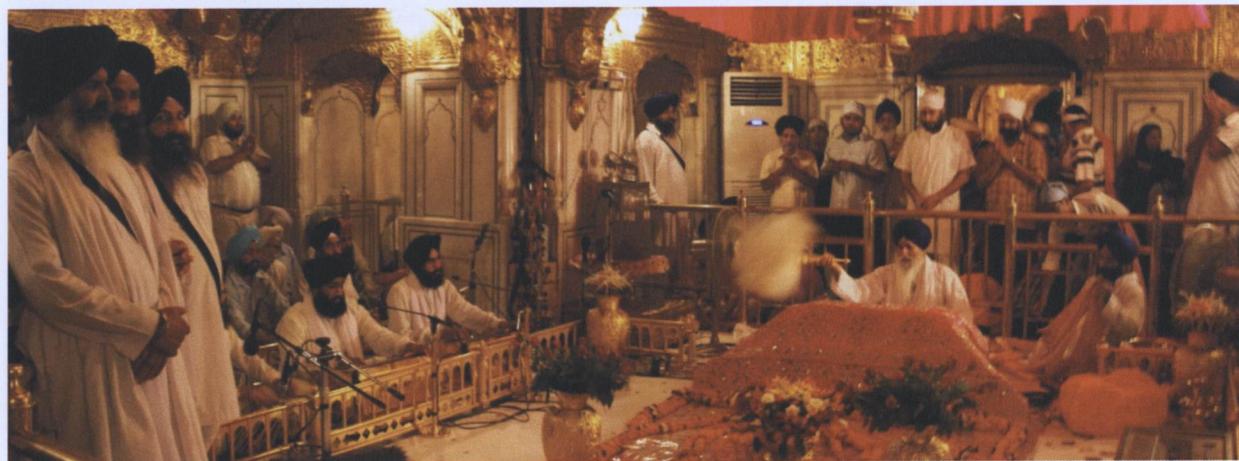


Figure 5.13 Interior view of the Golden Temple, where the *Guru Granth Sahib* is placed. Credit: Author.



Figure 5.14 The marble parapet surrounding the roof of the Golden Temple. Credit: Author.



Figure 5.15 View of the main dome. Credit: Author.

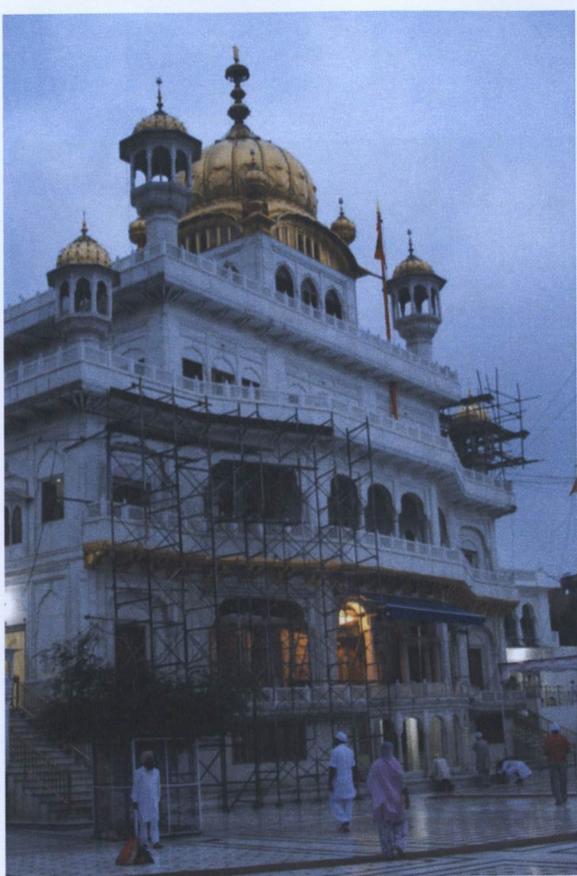


Figure 5.16 Elevation of Akal Takhat. Credit: Author.



Figure 5.17 View of the colonnades and arches. Credit: Author.



Figure 5.18 View of the gallery space at the second level of the main religious room. Credit: Author.

To summarize this section, the Harmandir Sahib is and always has been devoted to religious functions. Other activities such as *Langar*, *Hukamanams*, *Akal Bunga* and other functions are held in surrounding separate buildings within the ground of the temple. Traditional temples in India often take their architecture, layout, functional spaces and form using the Harmandir Sahib as a model. Most medium to large Gurudwaras were two-storeyed religious centres. The first floor would house the Guru Granth Sahib and the second floor raised on pillars overlooked the ground floor. What is imperative to note that there is nothing except for the main roof or clerestory and/or a canopy above the Holy Book. The architecture is demonstrating the importance of the *Guru Granth Sahib*. The congregation sits around the outside of the Holy book and hymns are sung. There are doorways from all sides of the building. This a distinctive characteristic of all Sikh Temple in India and Pakistan.

Traditionally Sikh Architecture will always have domes. A traditional dome shape is in the form of a lotus flower. The *Guru Granth Sahib* makes reference to the lotus flower in a number of passages in its text. The domes are wide and reach their maximum circumference less than half way up, hence their characteristic shape (Dhanjal, 1994). The domes are fluted with a cylindrical form, as the flutes reach the top there is an inverted lotus symbol. Sometimes the tops of the domes have *kalas*, a spherical form made from brass or gilded copper.

The entrance to the temple often has a prominent feature known as the *Deorhi*, the ornamental gateway to the sanctuary. Large ornamental doors are sometime hung from a separate building or part of the perimeter brick fenced walls.

The Harmandir Sahib is an outstanding architectural monument for the Sikhs. Historian and Author, P.S. Arshi, once wrote, "The Golden Temple is not merely a pilgrimage centre but a source of continuous spiritual and mystical inspiration for the hundreds of thousands of devotees who draw the very essence of their life from its holy presence. (Arshi, 1986, p.1).

CHAPTER SIX EARLY DIASPORA GURDWARAS (1900 to 1950)

Introduction

There are over hundred Gurdwaras in North America. In the early 1900's, the first Gurdwaras were in the British Columbia, Canada. In the United States, the Gurdwara movement began in Stockton, California. This chapter highlights the early Gurdwara movement in Canada.

Early Diaspora Gurdwaras (1900 to 1950)

Captain Kesur Singh is one the first recorded Sikh soldiers who arrived in Canada in 1897. Standing proud and statuesque, draped in the green, red and gold symbolic of the British Empires Sikh Regiments. He was a soldier who has fought hard battles and travelled to far off place (see Figure 7.01). He and others were invited to attend Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in London. When returning from the Royal event their Hong Kong regiment travelled through Canada. Their journey back home led them to the British Columbia coast. They were deeply moved by the rich landscapes and climate there as it brought back memories and images of their homeland if the Province of Punjab. The word of this new found place soon travelled to villages back home, promising of opportunities of Canada and favorable conditions. This gave birth to the beginnings of the first wave of Sikh Immigrants into Canada.

Passage from the Guru Granth Sahib of a Sikh Traveller:

ਵਾਟ ਵਟਾਉ ਆਵੈ ਜਾਇ ॥ (931-16)

vaat vataa-oo aavai jaa-ay.

The traveller comes and goes along the highway.

ਕਿਆ ਲੇ ਆਇਆ ਕਿਆ ਪਲੈ ਪਾਇ ॥ (931-17)

ki-aa lay aa-i-aa ki-aa palai paa-ay.

What did he bring when he came, and what will he take away when he goes?

(Guru Granth Sahib p. 931-16/17)



Figure 6.01 – Captain Kesur Singh

By 1903, there were approximately three hundred East Indians. The numbers increased from 1904 to 1907 as 5,185 immigrants arrived in Canada: 5158 were men, 15 women and 12 children (Nayar,

2004). According to James Chadney, author of *The Sikhs of Vancouver*, “the rather sudden influx of East Indian immigrants with the first for years, apparently was initiated by two major factors (Refer to Appendix D and E). Most important were the job opportunities available in British Columbia. In addition, an investigation by the Canadian Deputy Minister of Labour indicated that steamship companies had induced immigration by the distribution of exaggerated accounts of employment opportunities in Canada, especially in British Columbia” (Chadney, 1984, p.27). Virtually, all immigrants were males. Most of the Sikhs found jobs in remote rural areas vacated by white Canadians. Similar to their Chinese counterparts, Sikh Immigrants found opportunities as labourers in agriculture, railway, construction, and most importantly, the lumber industry.

During this early period of immigration, there were no regulated policies in effect. But discrimination was profound, particularly targeting to the Chinese, Japanese and Canadian native communities. The climate of the time was harsh and immigrants were attacked by the provincial government, and disenfranchised groups. Unions refuse to accept non-white members. Sikhs were socially isolated and were denied access to retail shops (Singh, 1994). Prior to the early Sikh settlers, Chinese immigrants paid a \$50.00 entry tax into Canada, which increased to \$100.00 in 1901. It was under these circumstances that the first Sikh pioneers arrived.

By 1907, the issues surrounding immigration policies and labour issue brought forth further animosity towards the new comers. “In the disturbed labour situation of 1907, anti-oriental riots took place in Vancouver when Chinese were used as strike breakers. Coupled with labour unrest and mistrust of Asiatic labour because of their willingness to work for comparatively low wages, ‘racial’ resentment soon arose and agitation started against the immigration of East Indians (Chadney, 1984, p.27)”. It wasn’t until 1908, that the Canadian government decided to erect a barrier against Asian immigration, partially in response to the 1907 anti-Asian riots in Vancouver against the Chinese, Japanese and East Indians (Nayar, 2004). The Canadian government passed two orders in council, which were specifically designed to prohibit East Indian immigration to Canada by raising the head tax from \$25.00 to \$200.00 and the other prohibited entry into Canada of people unless they came directly from the country of their birth or citizenship by a continuous journey (Chadney, 1984). No other immigrant groups were restricted entry to Canada without \$200 dollars in their possession. Furthermore, they could not arrive unless on a ship sailing directly from India to Canada with no other ports of call.

The early periods of Sikh immigration in Canada was historically marked by deep racial tensions. Quite often small communities of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs would informally gather to fight, poverty, racism, immigration restrictions and living conditions. Most notably, a group of Sikhs in 1906 formed a

congregation known as the Khalsa Diwan Society (Nayar, 2004). The newly formed committee held democratic elections for board members or senior committee members. A sub-group of elected official was also formed known as the Gurdwara Management Committee. They secular leaders within the community. More importantly Committee became primary body for day to day Gurdwara matters. No formal religious institution was erected but congregations would gather at members houses to hold prayers and discuss community issues and affairs. In essence, the Gurdwara Management Committee and the Khalsa Diwan Society were the main Sikh Canadian institutions engaged in guiding and cultivating the Punjabi Community (Singh, 1994). By 1908, this group would build one of the primary Gurdwaras in Vancouver.

Less than two year after the formation of the committees, the congregation banded together to raise funds of \$6000.00 towards the construction of the Gurdwara. They moved from their temporary rented accommodation to the new 1866 2nd Avenue West Vancouver location (Singh, 1994). “Hundreds of Euro-Canadians were among the crowd of over one thousand who attended the dedication” (Singh, 1994, p.41). The Gurdwara would serve not only as a place of worship but additionally for social, political, community activities. More importantly, it would be a beacon for new East Indian immigrants.



Sikh Temple, 2nd Avenue, Vancouver, B. C., Canada
built in 1907 (now replaced)

Figure 6.02 Opening day of the Gurdwara.
Credit: sikhpioneers.org



Figure 6.03 Gurdwara over the years.
Credit: sikhpioneers.org

Walter W. Baer from the Canadian Courier wrote, “the temple cost nearly \$10,000 and is a monument to religious zeal and faith of a people far from home, in a strange land which has not treated them justly and among a people to whom they are united by but two bonds. The first of these is their attachment to the throne and empire of the British people who delivered India and the second is their unconquerable conviction that ‘God hath made of one flesh the nations of the earth’. It is the last rather than the first which makes the Sikhs tolerant of the abuse and misrepresentation to which he has been subjected by the people who send missionaries to show him the way to salvation” (www.sikh.org).

Many of the Sikh men of Vancouver worked in the lumber industry. Managers of two lumber companies provided the Sikhs with the necessary lumber for construction of the Vancouver Gurdwara. Lumber was given at cost to keep their Sikh workers from moving elsewhere (Singh, 1994, p. 41). This was the first of many Gurdwaras that were constructed with cooperation between the lumber yards of British Columbia and their Sikh employees.

The Vancouver Gurdwara met all the needs of a Sikh place of worship and as a community centre. Construction of the Gurdwara was far from the traditional forms of Sikh architecture, both in the use of materials and construction procedures. However, the Gurdwara maintained a distinctiveness of Sikh identity. Unlike traditional Sikh buildings which are extremely detailed with precious stone inlays, gilded gold lotus domes and marble facades, the Vancouver Gurdwara was decorated with simple geometrical forms, arches and patterns. The second floor colonnade had gestures of traditional forms, with repetitive simply decorative column arches which stretched around the building. The main entrance gates were elegantly designed with two high concrete columns topped by spherical lights. The same spherical lights also adorned the corners of the Gurdwara, almost mimicking the lotus domes of Punjabi temples. At the top of the pitched roof façade, a portrait of the Guru Nanak Dev Ji (First of ten Gurus’s in Sikhism, refer to Appendix F) hovers over the entrance. This is an indication or a sign distinguishing the temple from other buildings in the neighborhood. Stairs led devotees to the main gateway of the sanctum on the second floor. Below the prayer hall houses was the communal kitchen (Langar), rooms for accommodation and a meeting hall.

The symbolic meaning of the Vancouver Gurdwara made a large impact for the small Sikh community. The Gurdwara served the true sense of Sikh philosophy and code of conduct: allowing all new comers, such as the Hindus, Muslims and other faiths from India to discuss and resolve their mutual problems. The Khalsa Diwan Society would oversee construction of Gurdwaras in New Westminster, Victoria, Nanaimo, Golden, Abbotsford, Fraser Mills and Paldi.



Figure 6.04 Elevation of the Abbotsford Gurdwara, British Columbia. Credit:

Without the signage designating the Abbotsford Sikh Gurdwara, one might suggest or remark the building is right out of a Western movie. The building is located on South Fraser Way in the centre of Abbotsford. The Gurdwara represents an astonishing dream of the Indo Canadian immigrants. Prior its completion, the small Sikh community would congregate in a house in the community of Maple Grove. With an already difficult situation of melding into the society and their minimal income, the dream of a Gurdwara seemed far from reach.

Most of the community’s population was concentrated in the Fraser Valley on Vancouver Island and in Vancouver. Most of the men worked for the Abbotsford Lumber Company. The dreams of the Gurdwara come to fruition when the Trethewey family



Figure 6.05 Trethewey family, right. thunderbird

operated lumber company donated all the lumber to build the Gurdwara.



Figure 6.06 Sunder Singh (third from the right) and family. Credit: abbotsford.net

This donation represented the connection between the Sikhs and the lumber industry of Abbotsford and the trust of the Tretheway family as the largest employers of Sikhs.

Construction began with the leadership of Sunder Singh, who also represented the Indo-Canadian community. Sunder Singh and another visionary supporter, Arjin Singh, persuaded others to loan \$2,000 to support the project (MSA Museum Society). A site was chosen and purchased of \$3,000. Construction began on the temple in 1910 and was complete by 1912. Lumber for the new Gurdwara was carried to the site by physical hard labor by the Sikhs.

The Gurdwara was designed to help assimilate the community into western culture (see Figures 7.06 & 7.07). This explains the false front parapet of the Gurdwara and the simple rectangular floor plan.

The gabled roof also a reflection of the climate conditions of the area and typical construction of the vernacular commercial buildings of the period. The 1 ½ storey worship centre contained an upper

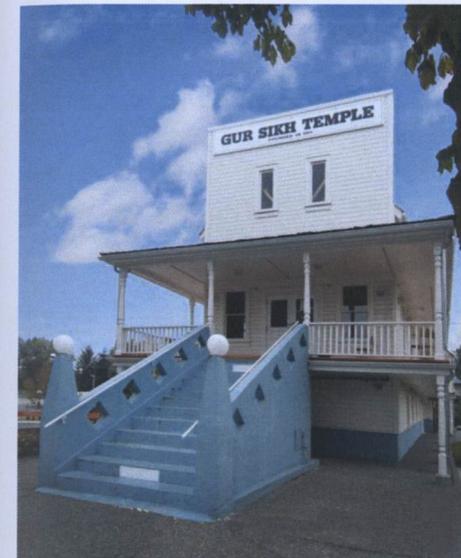


Figure 6.07 Front Elevation. Credit: canadianheritage.ca.



Figure 6.08 Side Elevation. Credit: canadianheritage.ca.

balcony running along three of the facades and a prominent stairway leading to the main central entrance on the upper level. "The utilitarian interior, with tongue-and-groove wooden walls and regular fenestration, became common features of early Canadian temples" (Canada's Historic Places, para. 2). The elements of traditional Sikh architecture and principals are evident in the interior spaces of the Gurdwara, included the main prayer hall on the upper level and a communal kitchen and dining area in the lower level. "It was enlarged to the rear in 1932 to extend the prayer hall and a second addition was built in the late 1960s, changes which reflect the growth of the Sikh community, particularly once wives and children were allowed to immigrate" (Canada's Historic Places, para. 3).

The erection of the Gurdwara is a very significant historical event and required celebration. It highlights the acceptance of the Sikh religion by conservative Abbotsford and the openness and prosperous relationship between the Sikhs and their citizens. It also showcases the dedication of the Sikh community to unite and bring change in a community they have called their new home. The temple represented a communal way of living, when there was nowhere else to go. "The Gurdwara became the centre of social life for the men who came to Canada to improve themselves and conditions for their families and villages back home in India (MSA Museum Society, para. 3)." To uphold the principles of Sikhism, the doors of Abbotsford Gurdwara were open to all. Hindus and Muslims found refuge, acceptance and a meal.

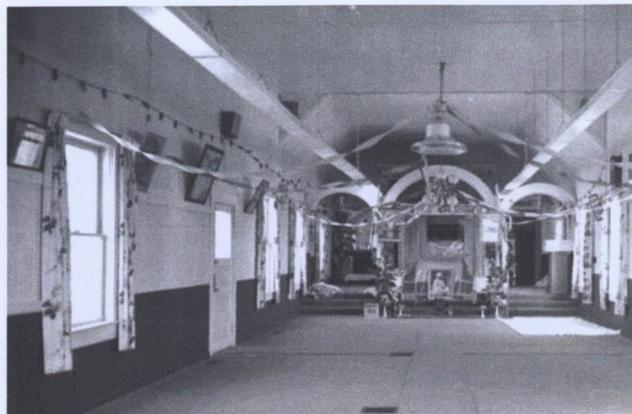


Figure 6.09 Interior Sanctum in early 1900's.
Credit: canadianheritage.ca.

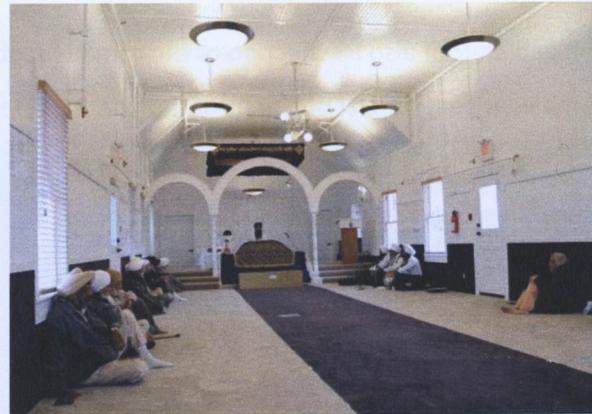


Figure 6.10 Interior Sanctum, present day.
Credit: canadianheritage.ca.

In July 31, 2002, the Government of Canada designated the Gurdwara as a National Historic Site, includes the original Temple building with its additions, the present 'Nishan Sahib' (flag pole) and the bases of earlier flag poles, including the remnants of the base of the original 'Nishan Sahib' (Canadian Sikh Heritage, para. 2).

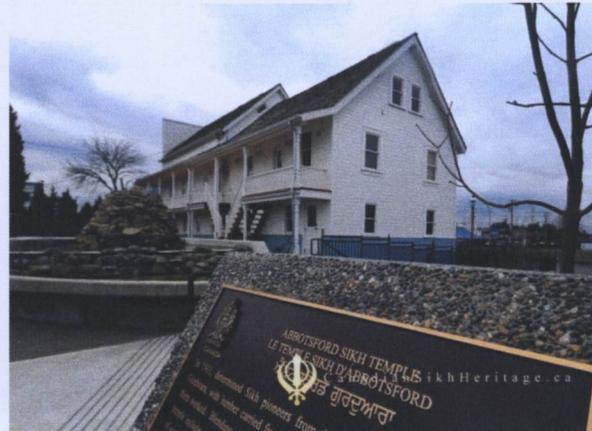
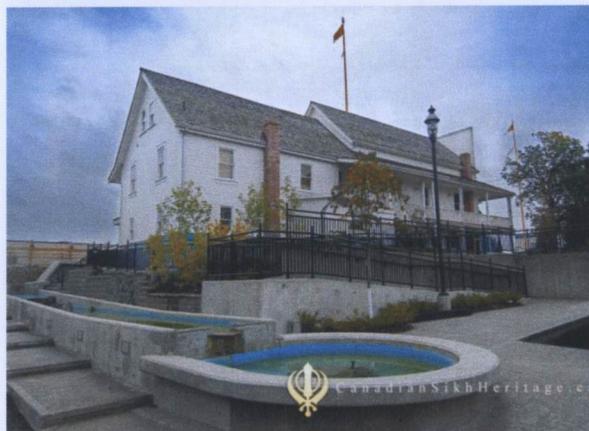
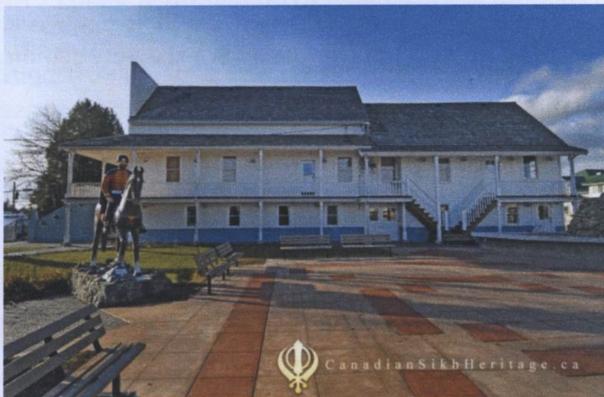
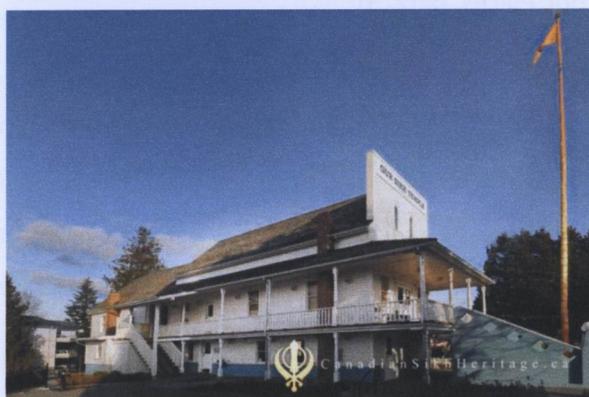


Figure 6.11, 6.12, Images of the re-constructed Abbotsford Gurdwara. Credit: canadianheritage.ca.



Figures, 6.13, 6.14 Images of the re-constructed Abbotsford Gurdwara. Credit: canadianheritage.ca.

The Abbotsford Gurdwara is the only surviving Sikh worship place from the first phase of Sikh immigrants to Canada. It is a symbol of the early roots of the Sikh community and the larger Indo-Canadian community in the history of Canada.

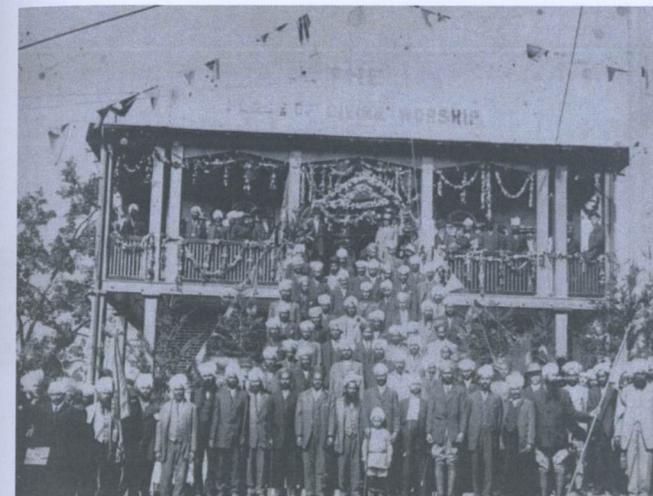


Figure 6.15 1912 opening day of Sikh Temple Victoria.
Credit: sikhpioneer.org.



Figure 6.16 1924 image of Gurdwara.
Credit: sikhpioneer.org.

Within the same year, the Khalsa Diwan Society erected a Gurdwara on Victoria Island. The emerging style of architecture would be similar to the Gurdwaras in mainland Vancouver. With the exception that brick being used on the exterior facades (see Figures 7.12 & 7.13). The rhythm or repeating style is consistent with a grand staircase leading to the second level sanctum of the building with the ground floor used for multipurpose functions. The building would be constructed using simple wood frame methods, with horizontal wooden drop sidings, and door and window moldings. Very little ornament was applied to the architecture. This is probably owing to the use of material and assimilating



Figure 6.17 Mayo Singh and his wife Sardani Bisham Kaur.
Credit: camptocommunity.ca

to the local vernacular of the time. Assimilation goes beyond the architecture to clothing. Men all dressed in three piece suit similar that of the locals. Again, there is link with the lumber industry and the Sikhs.

For the most part, Sikhs had established themselves as a community in British Columbia. The British Empire had

recruited almost 573,000 Sikh men to the army. In a small remote location near Duncan, Victoria Island, Mayo Singh, an entrepreneur, becomes the first Sikh to establish a lumber company (see Figure 7.14). Mr. Mayo arrived in Canada



Figure 6.16 Left: The Industrial Timber Mills, planer day shift. Included in the group shot are Sikh and Chinese crew in 1942. Credit: camptocommunity.ca .

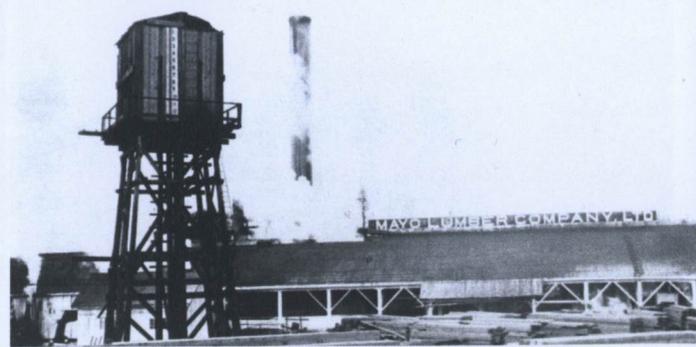


Figure 6.19 Right: The Mayo Lumber Company Credit: camptocommunity.ca

as a teenager in 1906 and first found work with the Canadian Pacific Railway. He soon gained experience in the lumber industry on the mainland of Vancouver, working at the Fernridge Lumber Company. Within three years, the mill had failed and its thirty-five employees including Mayo Singh, purchased the mill and operated it as the Cheam Lumber Company. By 1917 the timber was exhausted, the group then bought the Marcum Lumber Company near New Westminster. When this venture came to its end, Mayo Singh found private reserves in the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway Belt between Duncan and Lake Cowichan. Over time he would seek out and obtain timber rights to land along railway lines of the Canadian Pacific Railway on Vancouver Island. The new sawmill was known as the Mayo Mill and prospered. The Mayo Mill was known to hire Japanese, Chinese and Indian employees (see Figure

7.15). The saw mill location was originally known as Mayo Siding but as the business prospered, its name of the place was changed to Paldi, after the Paldi in the Punjab (www.paldi.info).

The well established lumber company began building housing, schools and religious buildings for their employees. In 1919, Mayo Singh



Figure 7.20 Paldi Gurdwara. Credit: camptocommunity.ca

built the first single storey Sikh Temple in the area. The Gurdwara built with wood construction, supplied by the lumber yard. Its pitched roof and extended canopy at



Figure 6.20 Paldi Gurdwara with the second storey built in 1930. Credit: camptocommunity.ca

at the perimeter roof supported by wood columns were similar in style to earlier Gurdwaras. By 1930, the old Paldi Gurdwara was too small for the community and an additional second storey was added (see Figure 7.17). The flanking wooden stairs on the side of the building did not reflect the Victoria and Vancouver Gurdwaras. However, the other aspects of the building did reflect the overall design of earlier Gurdwaras. The Town of Paldi still exists and its rich history of early Sikh settlers and the lumber community can be still seen.

In 1935, the small community of Hillcrest about four miles from Duncan held their celebration of the opening of their worship centre. This all wood building was constructed in similar style to the Sikh temples but on a smaller scale. The Gurdwara's ground floor was used as the kitchen and communal service area. The second floor is flanked with windows on all sides which housed the *Guru Granth Sahib*.

The tradition flag post, Nishaan, is prominently erected at the top of the roof. Without its sign, the Sikh Temple Hillcrest and its flagpole the building would easily be mistaken for a typical building in the town. The community built in the local vernacular style while still trying to maintain an architectural vocabulary of Sikh Canadian architecture.



Figure 6.21 the Hillcrest Gurdwara.
Credit: camptocommunity.ca



Figure 6.22 The front façade.
Credit: camptocommunity.ca



Figure 6.23 Interior of Temple.
Credit: camptocommunity.ca

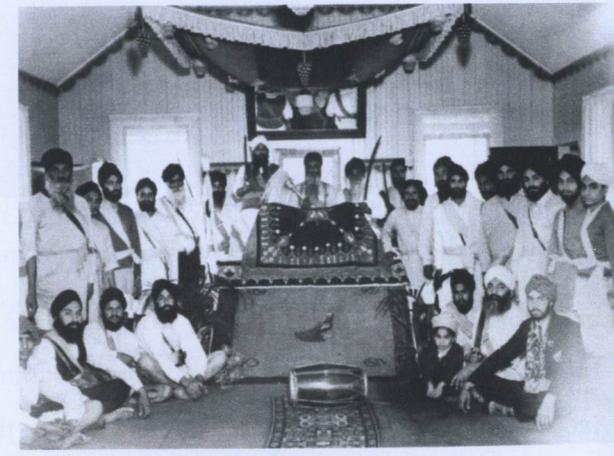


Figure 6.24 Interior of Temple.
Credit: camptocommunity.ca

During the same period, the American Sikh Movement was also developing in the early 1900's. Similar to the Khaslsa Diwan Society, the Sikhs from Stockton, California banded together to form the Pacific Coast Khalsa Diwan Society. In 1915, the Sikh Community there erected the first Gurdwara with the help of architect W.B. Thomas and contractor A.J. Phee. The community raised \$3,400.00 to build the it. The building appears to be based on the first Gurdwara in Vancouver, British Columbia, with a

few difference detail of the façade treatment. The staircase to the second floor is placed at opposite ends of the corners of the front entrance. Secondly, the front entrance is given more prominence by a vertical wood framed treatment, conducive to main entranceways of Gurdwaras in India.



FIGURE 6.25 & 6.26 – Images of the exterior and interior of the Stockton Gurdwara in California, U.S.
Credit: wingluke.org

The early Sikh Gurdwara movement in Canada was definitely a defining moment of the early Sikh settlers of British Columbia, Canada. The Gurdwara represented more than a religious institution but marked major early achievements of the new comers to Canada. It also solidified the beginning of new movement in transplanted architecture from India.

CHAPTER SEVEN THE SIKH GURDWARA MOVEMENT, 1960 to 2000

Introduction

With relaxed immigration policies, the second wave of immigration to Canada began in the 1960's and later in the early 1980's. This brought new Sikh immigrants to Ontario, Quebec, Alberta, and Atlantic Provinces. Early 1960's Gurdwara design, were very similar in nature but owing to economic conditions and population. Sikhs congregations would gather in rented community centres and single family houses. It wasn't until the later part of this movement that a clear distinctive architecture emerges in corresponded to Sikh population, wealth and the development of the Sikh community to main stream Canada.

Sikh Gurdwara Movement

Today, there are approximately 100 Sikh temples in Canada. Most of these religious buildings were built from the 1960's to the present day. This chapter will explore only a few of the major religious centres in Canada that are significant to the understanding of Sikh architecture in Canada. We first examine the Paldi Gurdwara in Victoria, British Columbia.

With an increased population in the town original two storey temple did not serve the community needs. In 1960, the original Paldi Gurdwara was replaced with a larger building. The construction and funds were donated by the Mayo Family. There are major key architectural and community difference to the Gurdwara which is mandated by the regional needs of the community. Firstly, the population of the community is larger and therefore requires increased congregation space in the sanctum and in the Langar hall or room. Unlike the rest of Canada, Victoria and mainland Vancouver have second and third generations of Sikh Canadians. This introduced a number of social issues, such as language, the elderly, learning of Punjabi culture, education and the Sikh religion. These same issues did not arise elsewhere in Canada until the late 1980's and the 1990's.

The newly constructed Paldi Gurdwara used traditional timber construction technique as the earlier British Columbia Gurdwara but with an increased level of decorative style. The wood framed windows have triangular shaped transoms. This form repeats itself in a number of windows in the building but also with wooden guard rails. This repetitive architectural gesture is reflective of Indian Buildings. For the first time, we see the *Nishaan* (Flag Pole) as a prominent architectural feature. The Nishaan, on a separate pole rising from the ground, is higher than the Gurdwara represents the two major notions. Firstly Sikh Canadians as



Figure 7.01 Paldi Gurdwara. Credit: canadiansikhheritage.ca

a community have finally become part of the main stream British Columbia community and culture. Secondly, the importance of the flag is becoming more pronounced. Similar to other earlier Gurdwaras, the lower level houses the communal kitchen and a multi-functional space for their community centre. The upper level serves as the sanctum.



Figure 7.02 Paldi Gurdwara. Credit: flickr.com



Figure 7.03 Paldi Gurdwara. Credit: flickr.com



Figure 7.04 Sikh Temple on 8000 Ross Street. Credit: flickr.com

By the 1970's, the Khalsa Diwan Society had the foresight to commission Canadian architect Arthur Erickson to design their new Gurdwara at 8000 Ross St., Vancouver. This would allow the congregation to move from their modest 1908 temple on 2nd Avenue. The simple forms and volumes are modern reflection of a Sikh Temple. Stacked cubed forms progressively become even smaller and rotate upwardly to a smaller white rectangular level topped with a open metal framed open pointed lotus dome. On the interior sanctum, this rotating exterior forms is reflected in the ceiling plan which ascends in a series of stepped, diagonally interlocking beams, to a large open central dome constructed of curving steel bars, allowing a pattern of sunlight to illuminate the worship area. At the ground level, below the sanctum have living quarters, offices, and a

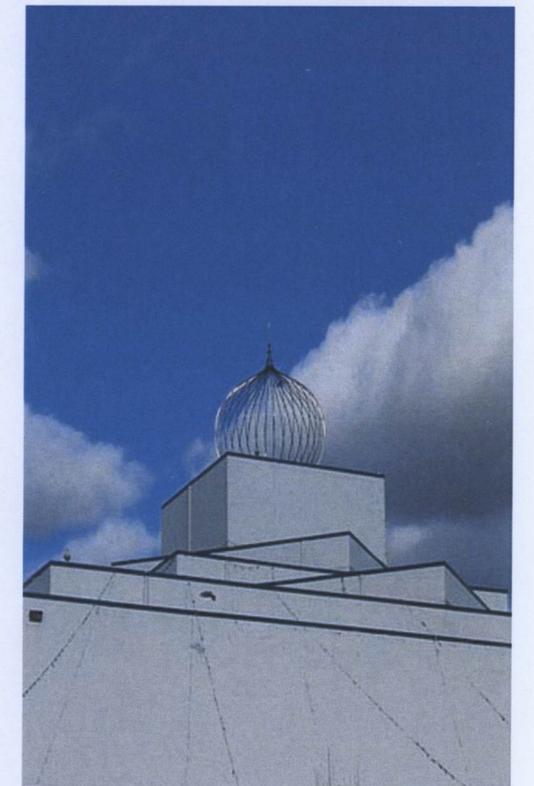


Figure 7.05 Paldi Gurdwara, Credit: Sikhchic.com

communal kitchen. Erickson saw the opportunity to design a temple true to Sikh philosophy, traditional forms and understanding of the vision of Sikh Community of British Columbia.

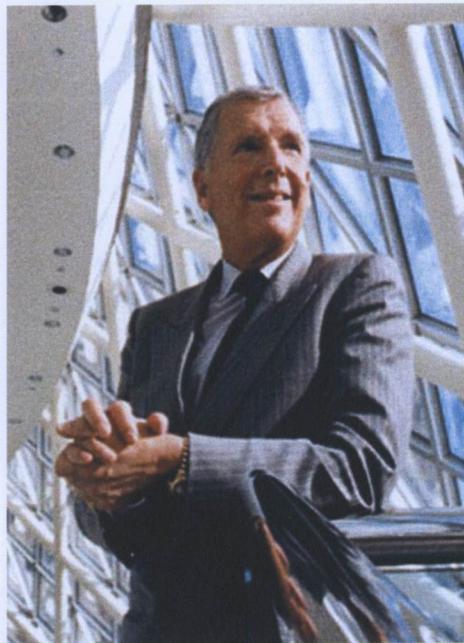


Figure 7.06 Arthur Erickson
Credit: Sikhchic.com



Figure 7.07 8000 Ross Street Gurdwara.
Credit: Sikhchic.com

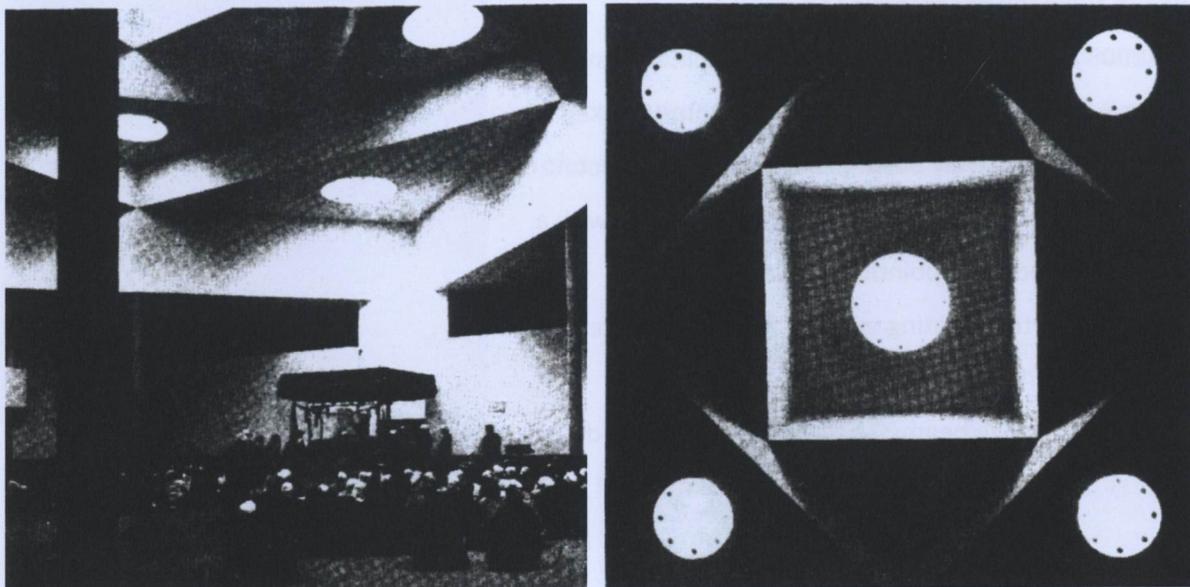


Figure 7.08 – Interior images of the ceiling in the sanctum area. Credit: Architectural Records.



Figure 7.08 Aerial photograph of Erickson's Gurdwara. Credit: Google



Figure 7.09 Typical form of early Temple of Ontario. Credit: By Author.

The Ontario Khalsa Darbar Society opens their doors to a temple in Mississauga in the 1970's. On the corner of Dixie and Derry Road, a single brick two storey house was been converted into a temple. Without the Nishaan (flag pole) erected on the front lawn of the property one would not know it was a place of worship. As with the Sikh settlers of British Columbia, the Sikhs of Ontario were small in number and with limited economic resources. The ground floor housed the worship area, while the basement was used as the Langar hall/communal kitchen. Figure 7.09 depicts an image of a typical house which would be likely used as temple. During the same time, the Sikh community of Oakville would host Sunday sermons at various individual family homes. This continued until enough resources were available for the community to move to local community centre halls. Like many Sikh communities in other provinces this was the way of establishing Gurdwaras within Canada.

By the late 80's the small community in the Peel region had grown rapidly. The Ontario Khalsa Darbar Society hired architect Haral Dhir to design their new Gurdwara. In 1989, the new temple opened their doors (see to Figure 7.10) and would be known the Dixie Gurdwara. The lower level of the complex housed a large kitchen for the growing population. The second level housed the main worship hall (see to Figure 7.12). Surrounding the main hall there are smaller rooms being used for smaller religious functions for the community. A separate room was included for shoes—a room designated for removal of foot wear (see to Figure 7.15). Included in this room was a sanitation area for

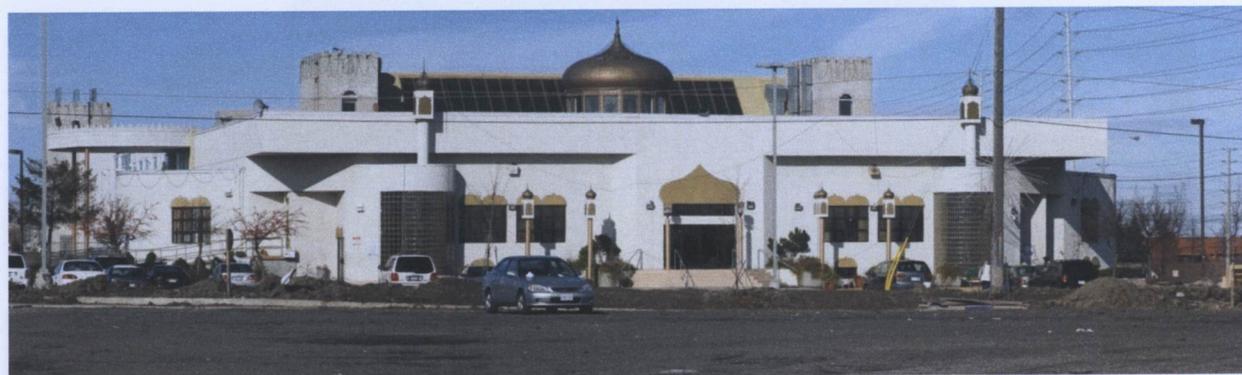


Figure 7.10 – Front elevation of the Dixie Gurdwara. Credit: By Author.

washing of hands and feet before entering the Gurdwara; an aspect which is integrated part in everyday life in India. What's unique about the Dixie Gurdwara is the use of ornamental features its exterior façade treatment and the grounds. Here the use of traditional forms becomes part of the architecture. Lotus type forms are used above the windows and entrances. The central worship hall peaks with a clearstorey with a lotus dome mounted at the top (see to images 7.10 & 7.11). The form of clearstories is similar Indian Sikh Temples. Kiosk posts surround the grounds of the front façade,



Figure 7.11 – Interior view of the clearstorey in the main worship area. Credit: Author.



Figure 7.12 Interior view of main worship area. Credit: Author.



Figure 7.13 Ornamental kiosk. Credit: Author.



Figure 7.14 Interior view of Langar Hall. Credit: By Author.



Figure 7.15 Interior view of foot apparel storage. Credit: By Author.

mimicking those of the Golden Temple (see to Figure 7.13). The use of the traditional colour palette becomes an increasingly important reflection on the interior and exterior – such colours include gold, silver and copper.

Over the next decade the Dixie Gurdwara would have two major building extensions. The first reflected the population growth of the community. The new expanded area included a twenty-four hour communal kitchen and larger community related rooms. These rooms are important to understand and reflect on their key integration of Sikh Canadian architecture. These spaces include a library for Sikh studies; various classrooms to conduct language teaching in both English and Punjabi; and rooms for music lessons. Other Gurdwara's in Canada followed this pattern of fulfilling the needs of the community. The Dixie Gurdwara's second building expansion resulted from a regional need to develop youth, adult and elderly fitness activities. Therefore, a portion of the building is dedicated to an indoor gymnasium (see to Figure 7.16 & 7.17) and the northern portion of the ground is used for an outdoor recreational field and basketball courts. Like other Canadian Gurdwaras, functional programs other than that of religion are based on regional or community needs.



Figure 7.16 Interior view of interior gymnasium. Credit: By Author.

The Dixie Gurdwara is one the largest temples in North America. It has become a beacon for important religious leaders, politicians and dignitaries to attend major religious events and weekly prayers. For locals who work in adjacent factories it has become a support mechanism to provide a free lunch or evening dinner. Both Sikhs and non-Sikhs take advantage of this offering, no one is refused entry or turned away it's a testament to Sikh philosophy and ideology.



Figure 7.17 Exterior view of gymnasium expansion. Credit: Author.

In the early 2000's, a new expression of Gurdwaras began to appear in Canada. The construction of these temples continued to incorporate spaces for community and regional needs. This addition to the new temples was the introduction of a refined vocabulary of Sikh architecture. Diverging away from Canadian influences, these temples would begin to demonstrate Indian vernacular architecture. This results in several factors. Now with more wealth and feeling more integrated into Canadian society, the Sikh community can afford to build in their traditional forms as a way of demonstrating this freedom of expression and choice. Second the increased number of Gurdwaras in Canada has produced Gurdwara associations' at all regional levels. This grouping has increased ties with Sikh religious institutions in Punjab, such as with the Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple). Another rational to this phenomenon could be influenced by construction technologies and cost. Today, it is inexpensive and less time consuming to manufacture exterior envelope and fabricate domes. Therefore, Sikh architecture in Canada is becoming an increase reflecting and imitating traditional architecture of Sikh Temples.

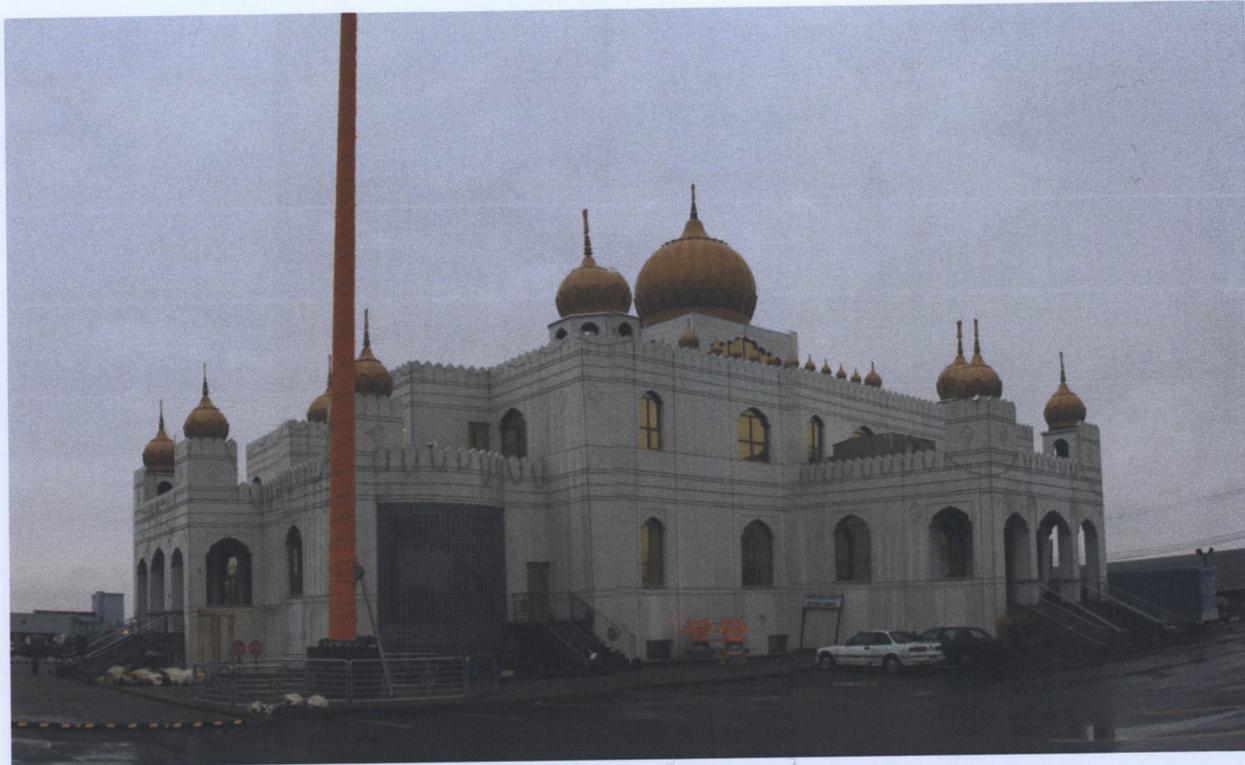


Figure 7.18 La Salle Gurdwara, La Salle, Quebec. Credit: Author.



Figure 7.18 La Salle Gurdwara, La Salle, Quebec. Credit: Author.

This influence is illustrated at La Salle Gurdwara in Quebec. This temple is unlike any other Sikh temples in Canada. The overall shape is symmetrical in plan and in elevation. Three sides of the building are flanked with entrances into the temple, in accordance with the traditional form of the Golden Temple. The forms, volume of spaces and architecture expressions are reflection of Sikh architecture. The windows and entrances have similar arches as those of Sikh temples in India. Each stepped roof line and volume of space is a reflection of the importance of function on the interior. Continually, the lotus domes are exact replicas of those in India. Domes hover over the roof tops each again defining the importance of the interior space in relation to their size (see to Figure 7.19). The exterior building envelope is clad with precast concrete. Each panel is elaborately detailed with repetitive Sikh symbols and forms. The same details are seen throughout the building, such as the guard rails, floors and walls (see to Figure 7.19).



Figure 7.19 – Guard and handrail details. Credit: Author.

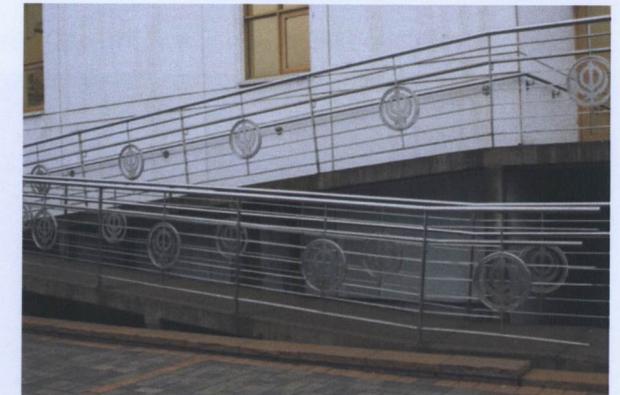


Figure 7.20 Guard and handrail details. Credit: Author.

Typical of many other Canadian Gurdwara the Kitchen / Langar hall is situated in the lower level and prayer hall is located on the main level (the 80'x80' room fits more than 1000 people) (see Figure 7.20). There is however an additional features similar to that of Sikh Temples in India; it's the introduction of a grand clear storey and a second level (see Figure 7.21 & 7.22). An upper level mezzanine walkway opens into the main prayer hall; above this level there are large windows, bringing natural light into the worship space. Adjoining the walkway are rooms and a secondary worship hall used for religious family or community events. The additional rooms at this level are commonly used to facilitate the needs of language lessons, teaching of hymns, and sleeping quarters.



Figure 7.21 Interior view of the main worship hall. Credit: Author.

Architect Hardial Dhir, has designed a building to reflect the needs of the community. Although the building uses modern construction technology and materials, architectural Mr. Dhir has produced a building resembling to Gurdwaras in India. This poses the question, what will the next generations of Gurdwara a reflection be of.



Figure 7.22 Interior view of the second level. Credit: Author.



Figure 7.23 Interior view of the clear story. Credit: Author.

CHAPTER 8 LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This section is dedicated to literature on Sikh Architecture. Very little has been recorded or written about this segment of Indian Architecture. There are some articles and journals that touch upon the idea or development of Sikh Architecture in India but they do not explore its early origins. Furthermore study and research is needed on this topic. Furthermore, there has not been any exploration or understanding of Sikh Architecture in Canada, nor have there been historical accounts of temples in Canada. This area of study needs more further research and development on not just Sikh Canadian Architecture.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are significant identifiers of Sikh architecture. One prime example of Sikh architecture is the sacred temple which is known as the Gurdwara. The architectural attributes of the Gurdwara separates its design from a Mosque and a Hindu temple. The Gurdwara's dome, arches, balconies, columns and most of interior spaces are unique and specific to the identity of the Sikh religion. In the Greater Toronto Area, there are more than a dozen Gurdwaras supporting its growing Sikh Community.

Sikhs arrived in North America as temporary residents in the early 1900's. They are now part of the growing Canadian Diaspora from South East Asia. The Canadian Diaspora is caught between two worlds, one of their origins and the other of their adopted nation. The struggle of identity can be correlated with Sikh religious institutions built in North America. Places of worship are in the form of small industrial warehouses, individual personal homes, and newly erected "cookie cutter" Gurdwaras. The questions that arise are: what constitutes a religious place of worship, and more importantly, how does a Sikh Gurdwara manifest in a contemporary Diaspora form? The following literature review attempts to demonstrate the Canadian Diaspora struggle to become citizens and in defining traditional Sikh architecture in the context of 20th century. These two areas of study will then set the stage for the creation of a new form of Sikh architectural identity within the Canadian Diaspora.

In the most recent publication *Sikhism and Sikh People* by Religion Newswriters Association, its author(s) critically reflects on the North American Diaspora. The book details a number of different categories such as Human Rights, Sikh Arts and Culture and includes a chronology of the first Sikh temples that appeared in North America. The authors develop their essays on both numerical and factual evidence. The material explores early migration patterns of the three million Sikhs residing

mainly in three regions outside their homeland of South Asia. There are well over 700,000 Sikhs living in the United Kingdom, almost half a million each in the United States and Canada and a small proportion in Singapore, Malaysia, Kenya and Australia (Sikh Network, 2002). Each location faced different ranging issues from marginality, identity within a country and establishing their citizenship. The report further states that the laws within each country were repressive, regressive and discriminatory. Immigrants from Asian origins could not become citizens; they could not own land, nor could they sponsor their family members (Sikh Network, 2002). Although Sikhs fought in both the First and Second World Wars and were free to move within the British Empire, countries like Canada and United States did not see fit to abide with the rulings of the British. *Sikhism & Sikh People* clearly illustrates the underlying issues of Sikh Identity in the Diaspora.

The first wave of early Sikh settlers arrived in Vancouver, Canada in 1897 and in San Francisco, in 1899. 1906, Sikhs established their first Gurdwara in Stockton, California. This first Gurdwara is vastly unlike the historical Gurdwaras cited in Pardeep Singh Arshi book *Sikh Architecture*, indicating the beginning of the Diaspora assimilation. Arshi develops the distinctiveness of the Gurdwara through understanding Sikh architecture in the Punjab region between the periods of 1500 to 1800. He writes in particular about the holiest of Sikh Gurdwara, the Harimandir Sahib in Amritsar, Punjab. In the forward to Arshi's book, Kushwant Singh writes, "The piece de resistance of Sikh architecture is of course the Golden Temple in Amritsar" (P.S. Arshi, 1986, p.1). For Sikhs collective body a physical space is defined by their myriad of morals and common union. This basis is deeply rooted in the Sikh scriptures *Guru Granth Sahib* which is housed as the central focus of the all the Gurdwara. Arshi doesn't write about the evolution of the Gurdwara but recites the development of the Sikh Gurdwara in the context of the society and culture in which it exists. Unlike S.S. Bhatia's journal *An outline of Sikh Architecture*, who attempts to illustrate a clear style of architecture, "outlining the main elements, principles and objects of building design with a view to conjuring up an overall picture of a style of architecture, which can be doubtlessly called Sikh Architecture" (S.S.Bhatia, 1985 p.1).

These journals and books are important secondary sources of evidence on Sikh architecture of India and Pakistan. Both Arshi and Bhatia demonstrate the importance of identifying historical Sikh architecture in the context of history and location. However, *Sikh and Sikhism* is a critical take on the discourse of the Diaspora of North America.

CHAPTER 9 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Introduction

This section outlines the design hypothesis, by summarizing critical question on early Gurdwara of India, the Sikh Temple in Canada from 1900's to 1944's as the first Gurdwara movement and the latter half of the 20th century Gurdwara design in Canada.

Research Hypothesis



Figure 9.01 – Golden Temple. Credit: Flickr.com.



Figure 9.02 – Khalsa Diawa Gurdwara. Credit: Sikhpioneers.org



Figure 9.03 – Golden Temple. Credit: author.

This thesis has reviewed three major areas of Sikh architecture and design progression. Firstly, taking a look at traditional style of Sikh architecture in the India, more specifically the Harmandir Sahib, most commonly known as the Golden Temple (see Figure 9.01). Review the history of the culmination of this temple and its reflection to the philosophy and ideologies of Sikhism. Secondly, examining the early Gurdwara in Canada from 1900's to 1940's. Taking a look at how early Sikh settlers erected a temple that blends in the vernacular style of Canada, while maintaining hints of traditional Sikh architectural style. This can be seen in the first temple built in 1908 by the Khalsa Diawan Society of Vancouver (see Figure 9.02). Lastly, this paper explored the design and functional uses of Gurdwaras being designed from 1960's to 2000's. Take for example the La Salle Gurdwara in Montreal, Quebec. It reflects modern day construction, and yet it clearly illustrated a non contemporary style. The design of the building is based on temples from India.

What does the future hold for Sikh Canadian architectural design? Will designers and architects of Canadian Gurdwara move towards a traditional design, such as the La Salle Gurdwara. Or keep creating box type warehouse temple with no articulated architectural style, such as the Dixie Gurdwara and other temples built in North America.

It should be the mandate of Gurdwara associations and the Sikh community to work alongside Canadian architects to arrive at an articulate and functional temple that upholds the values of traditional

forms and yet be part of Canada. Sikhs have over 100 years of settlement in Canada. They, like other immigrants of Canada are part of the growing history of Canada.

It is estimated that there will be one million Sikh in Canada. This number is outstanding for any Diaspora community. Less than one hundred year there is one hundred temples established in North America. This number will increase due to the population growth and community needs. With dialogue between architects and communities the next generation of Canadian Gurdwara, through the use of material, eco technologies and contemporary design can be a reflection of our current era.

Design Summary

The proposed Gurdwara design should reflect a number of crucial points. The design should consider the historical context of Sikh in Canada, as well as the architectural style of the early 1900's. The focus of the design's main focus has been on religious matters, where Canadian Gurdwaras have incorporated a community based approach to facilitate the needs of their congregations. The design is based on regional needs and in addition to the Sikh community keep its traditions, culture, and language and values. Furthermore, a contemporary design will use modern day construction and green technologies. A design methodology or process must be one of integration of computer applications, such as descriptive methods to define architectural forms. In addition, with the use of 3D printers and laser cutter to produce tangible outputs, modeling techniques become part of the design research, such as digital to understand architectural forms and construction techniques.

Site Location

The selection is an important part of the design a contemporary Gurdwara. The selected location decided to be within the city limits of Toronto. The City of Toronto is a multicultural centre in Canada. It is a city with a diverse population, including Sikh, Hindu and other faith religious institutions. Selecting Toronto as the location for a Gurdwara is making a statement to the rest of Canada. Up to now there are only seven Gurdwaras in Toronto which do not have the capacity to facilitate large congregations. Canadian Sikhs contribute to the local service through local community, cultural programs, and social development and are part of daily life.

Chapter 10 Design Summary

Introduction

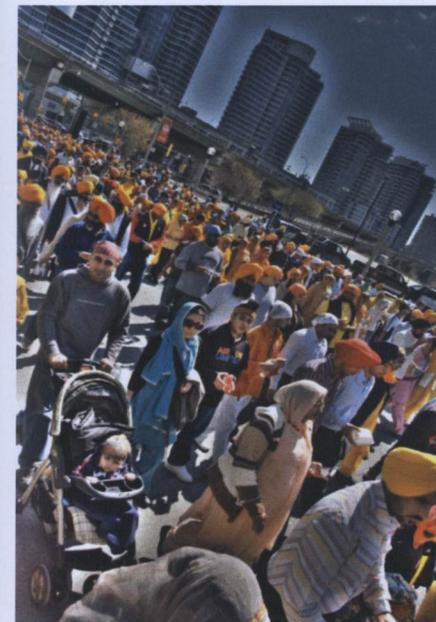
This chapter is the proposed conclusion or design output of the research and study conducted in the previous chapters. Previous chapters brought forth a number of key identifiers that will result as the bases of a contemporary Sikh place of worship.

Design Summary

The proposed Gurdwara design should reflect a number of crucial points. The design should consider the historical context of Sikhs in Canada, such as their relationship with the lumber industry in the early 1900's. The Indian Gurdwara's central focus has been on religious matters, where Canadian Gurdwaras have incorporated a community based approach to facilitate the needs of their congregations. This is partially based on regional needs and in addition to help Sikh community keep its traditions, culture, and language and values. Furthermore, a contemporary design will use present day construction and green technologies. A design formulation or process must be one of integration of computer applications, such as scripting methods to define architectural forms. In addition, with the use of 3d printers and laser cutter to produce tangible outputs, modeling techniques become part of the design research methodology to understand architectural forms and construction techniques.

Site Location

Site selection is an important part of the design a contemporary Gurdwara. The selected location decided is the within the city limits of Toronto. The City of Toronto is a metropolis centre in Canada. Many faiths, such as the Jews, Muslim, Hindus and others have religious institutions. By selecting Toronto as the location for a Gurdwara is making a statement to the rest of Canada. Up to now there has only been two Gurdwara in Toronto which do not have the capacity to facilitate large congregations. Canadian Sikhs contribute to the public service through local community outreach programs, all levels of government and are part of daily life.



Figures 10.01 Toronto City Hall. Credit: Flickr.com

The site is located within University of Toronto campus, south of Bloor Street, on the east side of Devonshire Place (see Figure 10.02 and 10.03). The area is rich with academic and other religious institutions, like the St. Thomas Aquinas Church and Department of Religious Studies. There are also major centres of public building nearby the selected site, such as the Royal Ontario Museum, Massey College, Trinity and the Art Gallery of Ontario.

In this era it is important to understand issues of global warming and our environment. Therefore, its vital to respond to LEED's code of conducts and mandates. The chosen location is near public transportations as in LEED guidelines. A subway station is minutes away from the site. The GO Transit and TTC systems enables all GTA residents to access this location.

Every year, the larger Sikh Community of Southern Ontario conducts their annual parade from the C.N.E. Grounds to Toronto City Hall. It is to celebrate Vaisakhi, which marks the beginning of a new solar year and new harvest season (see Figure 10.01).

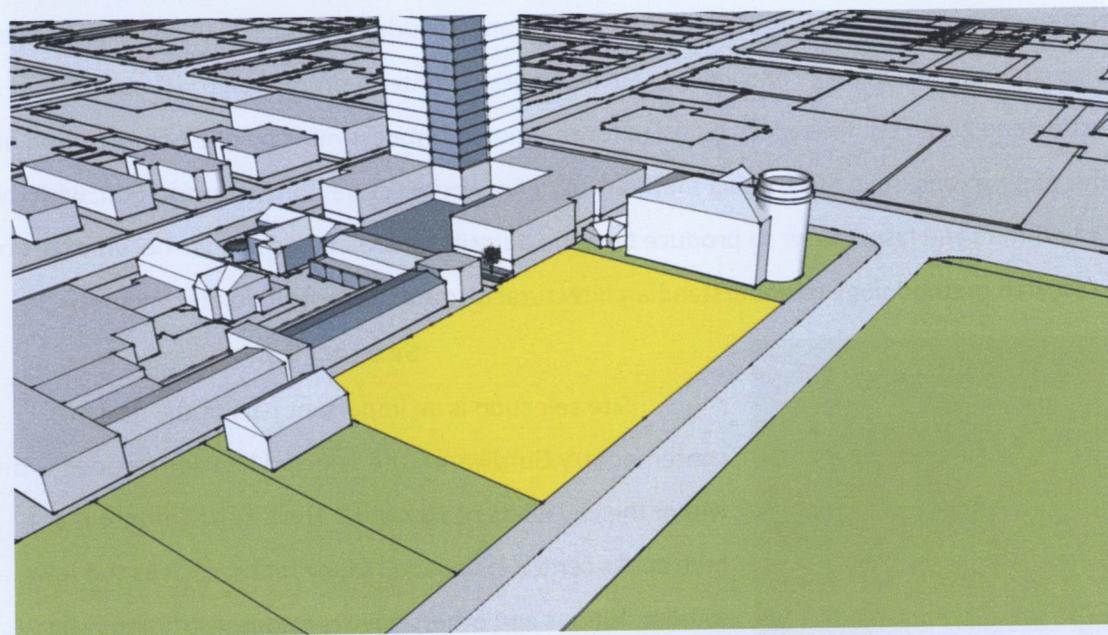


Figure 10.02 Site Location. Credit: Author



Figure 10.03 Site Location. Credit: Author.

Sketch Studies

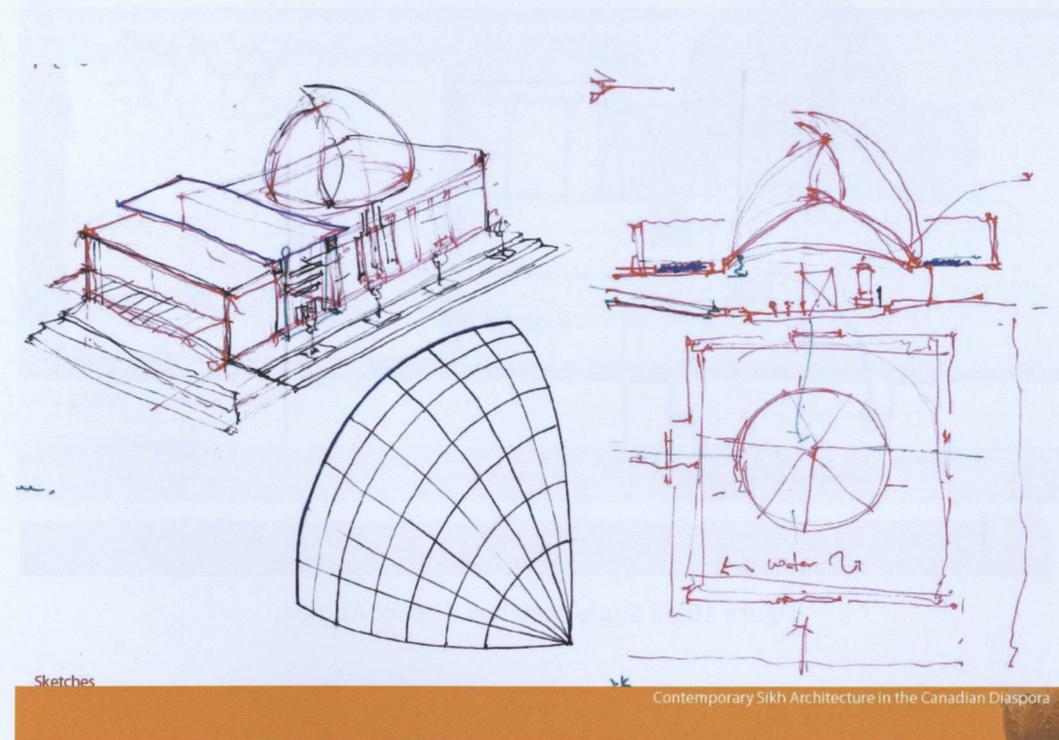
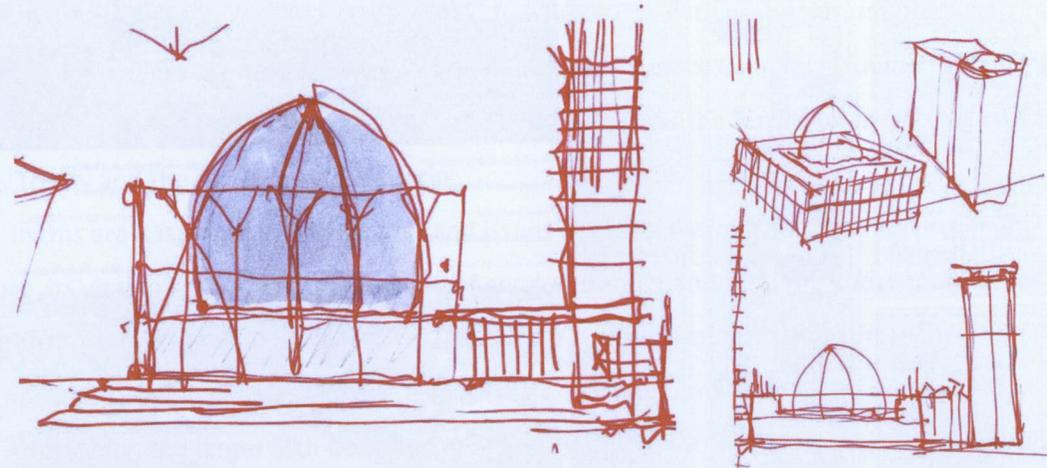


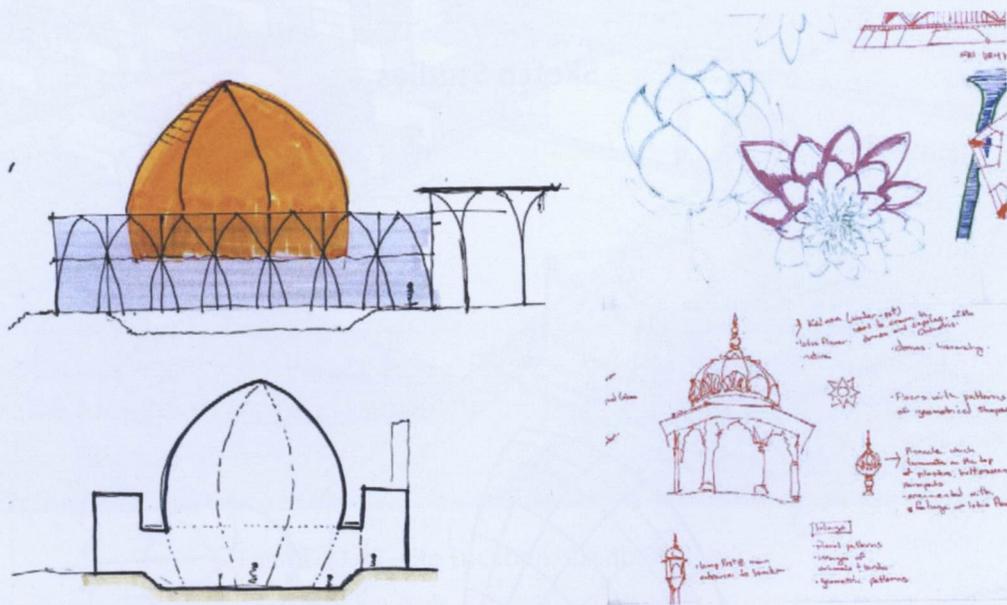
Figure 10.04 Study sketches. Credit: Author.



Sketches

Contemporary Sikh Architecture in the Canadian Diaspora

Figure 10.05 Study sketches. Credit: Author.



Sketches

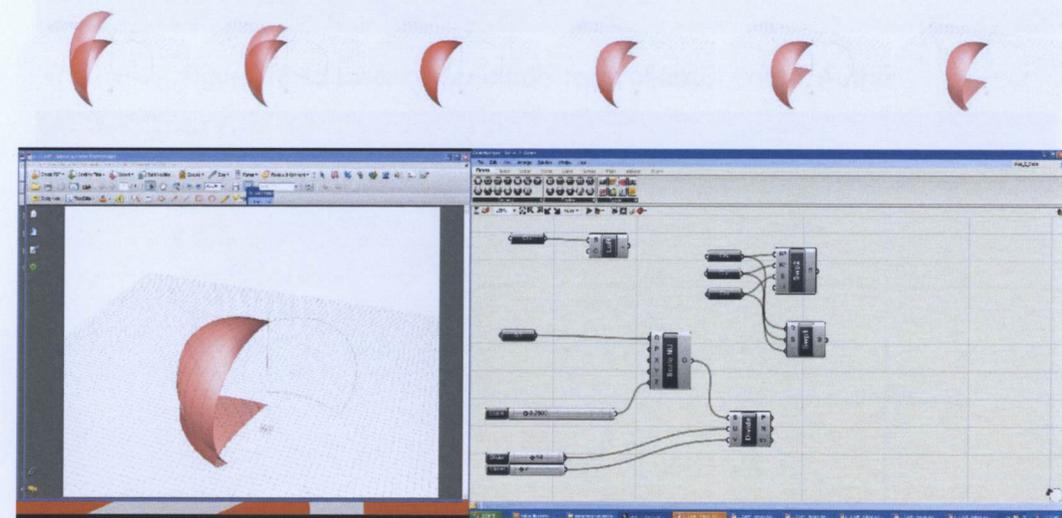
Contemporary Sikh Architecture in the Canadian Diaspora

Figure 10.06 Study sketches. Credit: Author.

Research Methodology Studies

Part of this design research is to explore the form of the lotus dome. It is the one most defining architectural features of a Sikh temple. The *Guru Granth Sahib* makes reference of the lotus flower in many of its passages. The relationship with the lotus dome defines the location of the *Guru Granth Sahib* is located.

Exploring and manipulating this form can only come from scripting methods and CAD related computer programs. Rhino 3D was used to understand the form of a single petal of the lotus dome (see Figures 10.07, 10.08). To create the final lotus form for the Gurdwara, more than one type of application must be used, such as Grasshopper and AutoCAD. The Grasshopper scripting program was used for manipulating the height and width of the lotus. Through the use of scale bars the height and width of the lotus can be quickly drawn within seconds, a process which would normally be tedious.



Form Generation - Lotus

Contemporary Sikh Architecture in the Canadian Diaspora

Figure 10.07 Rhino & Grasshopper scripting techniques. Credit: Author.

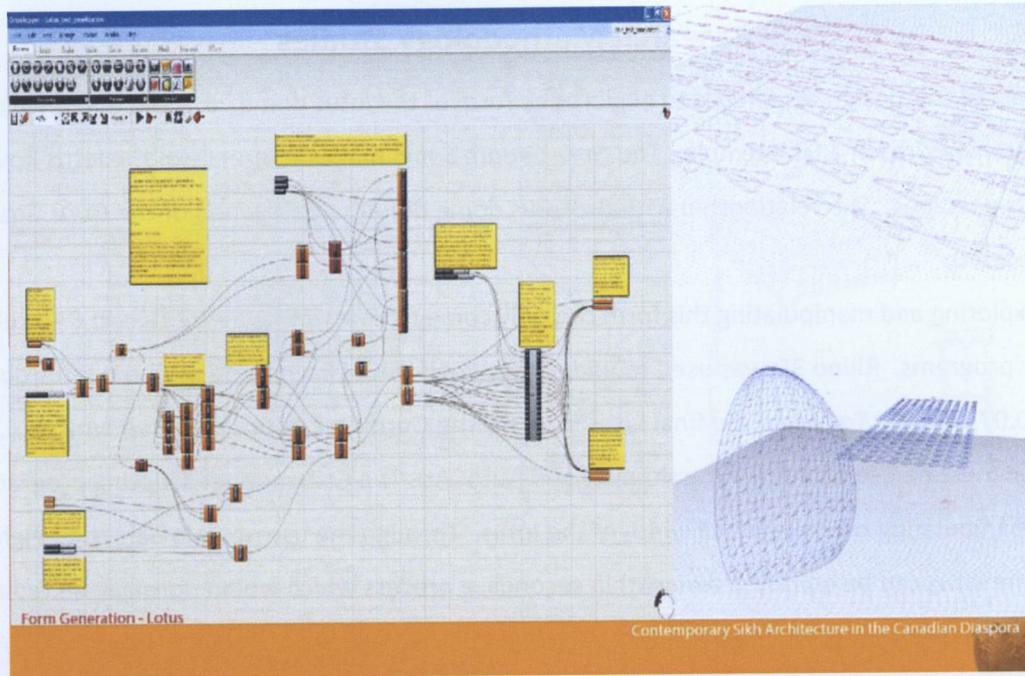


Figure 10.08 Rhino & Grasshopper scripting screen. Credit: Author

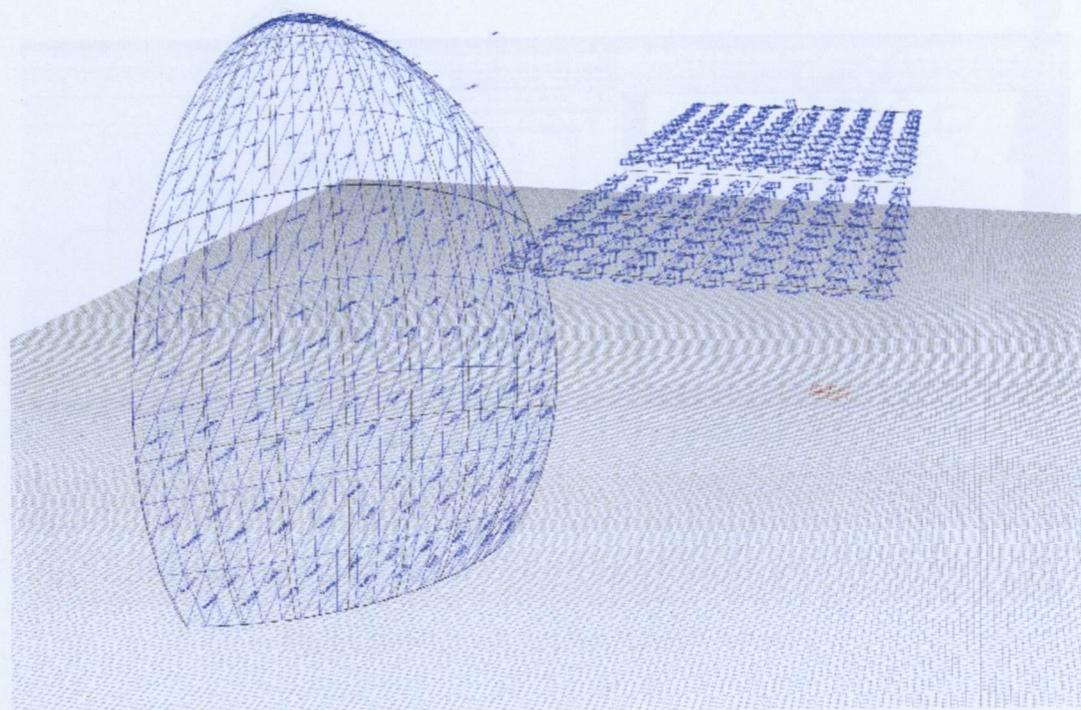


Figure 10.09 Rhino to flatten form for Laser cutter. Credit: Author.

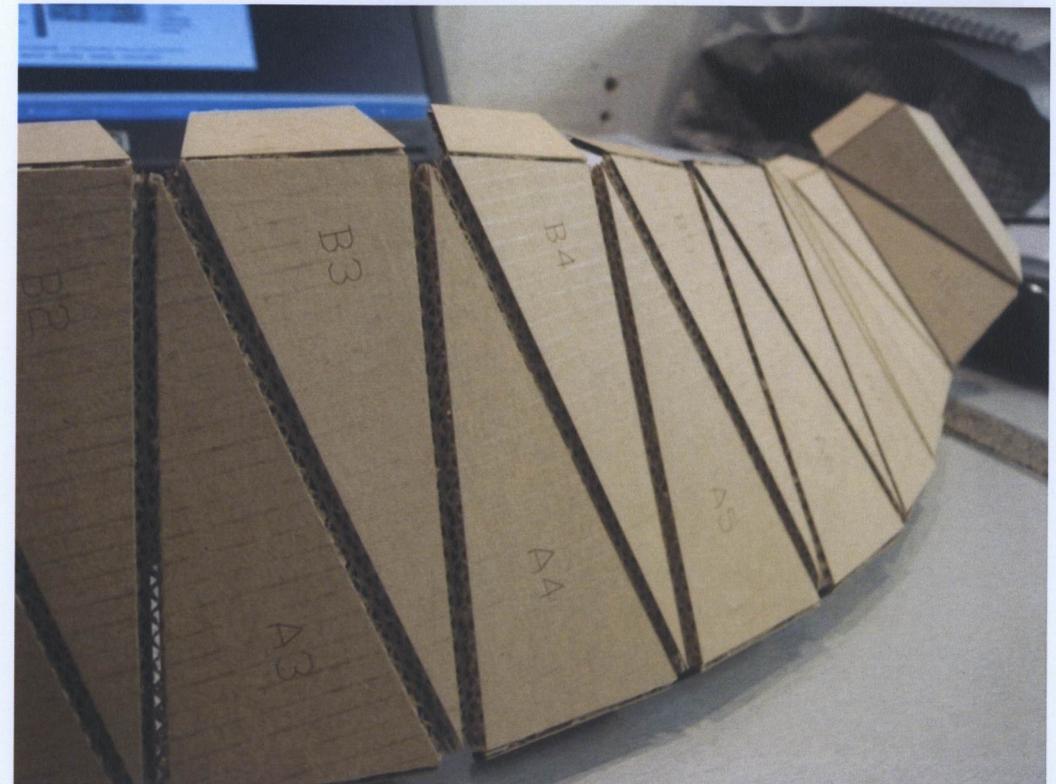


Figure 10.10 Laser cutter model form of lotus. Credit: Author.



Figure 10.11 Laser cut pieces of model form of lotus. Credit: Author.



Figure 10.12 – Laser cutter model form of the lotus. Credit: Author.



Figure 10.13 Laser cutter model form of the lotus, individual section. Credit: Author.

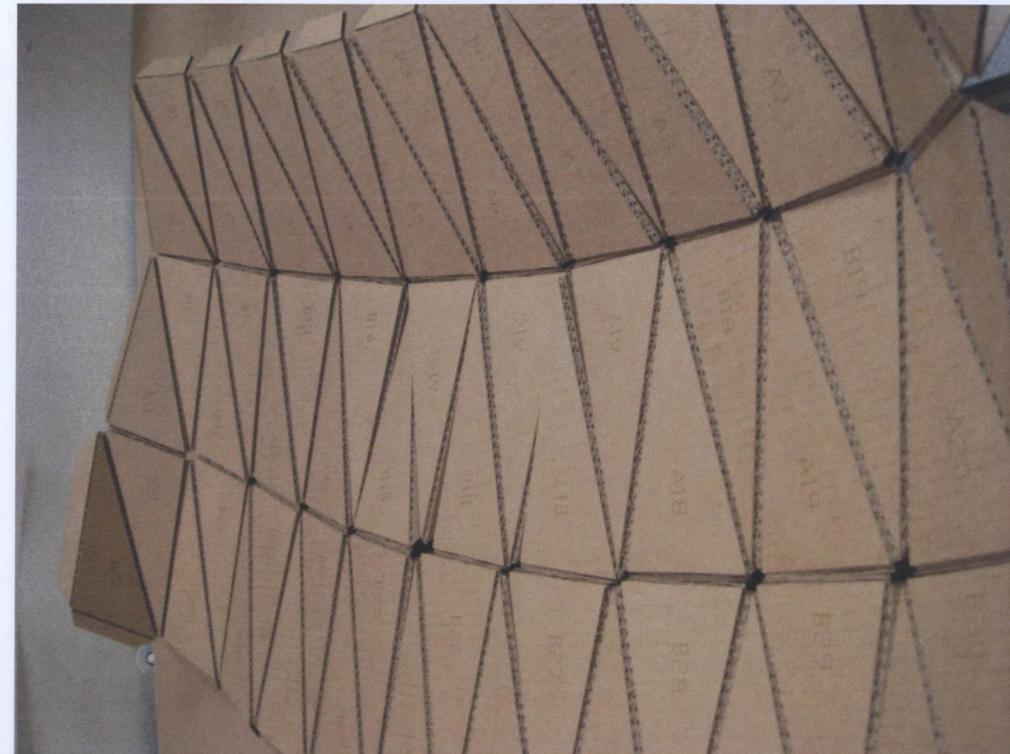


Figure 10.14 Cut panels joined together at flaps. Credit: Author

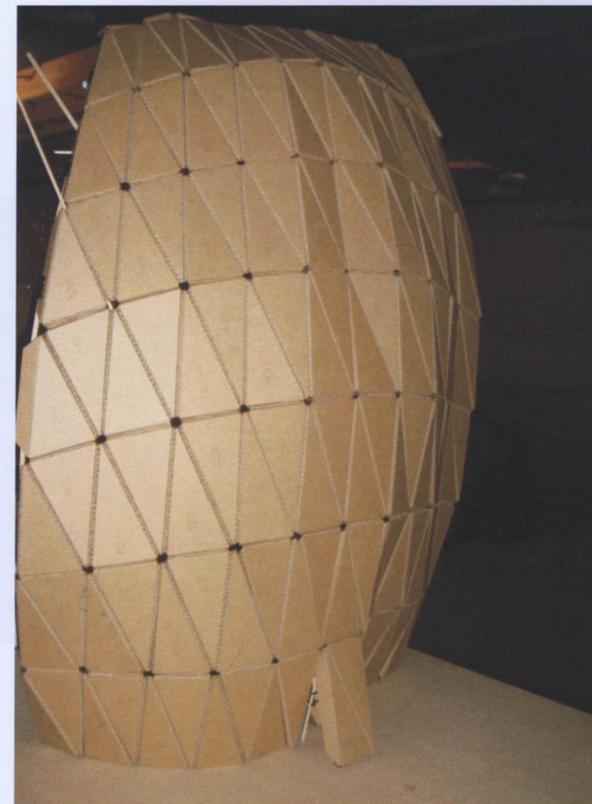


Figure 10.15 Lotus petal form. Credit: Author



Figure 10.16 Lotus petal form. Credit: Author

Once a form was finalized the use of the 3D printer was used to produce a model. Four versions were created to understand the interior space relationships with number of pedal forms, height and width of the lotus form (see Figures 10.17 to 10.19)



Figure 10.17 3D Printer. Credit: Author

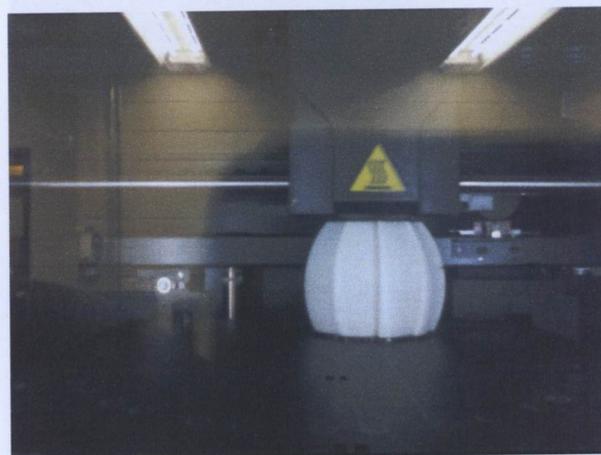


Figure 10.18 3D printer. Credit: Author.

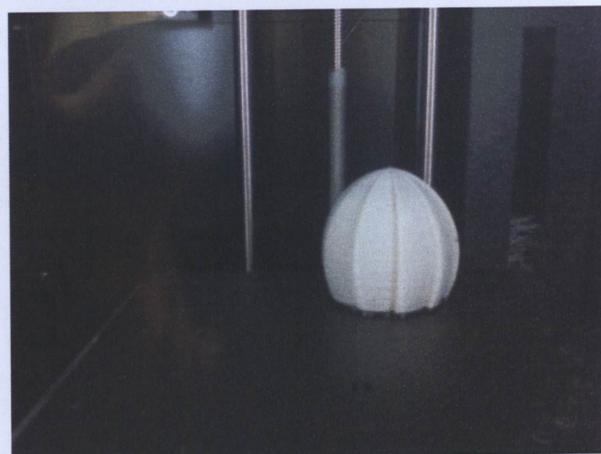


Figure 10.19 3D printer. Credit: Author

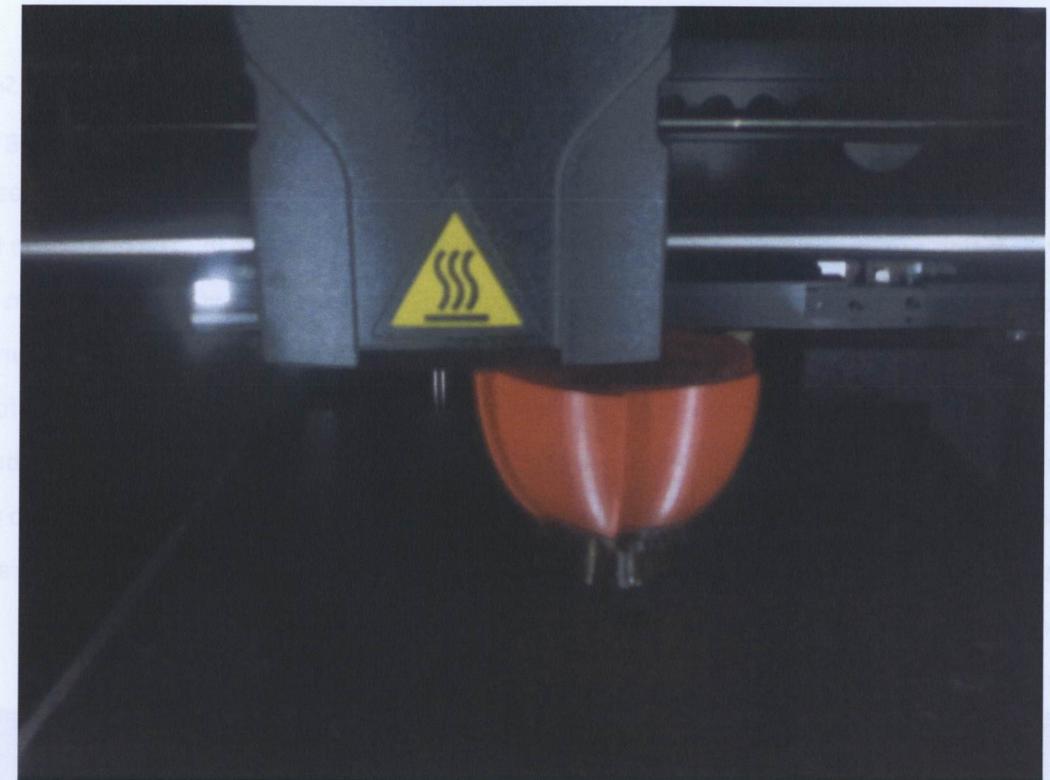


Figure 10.21 3D printer constructing model forms. Credit: Author

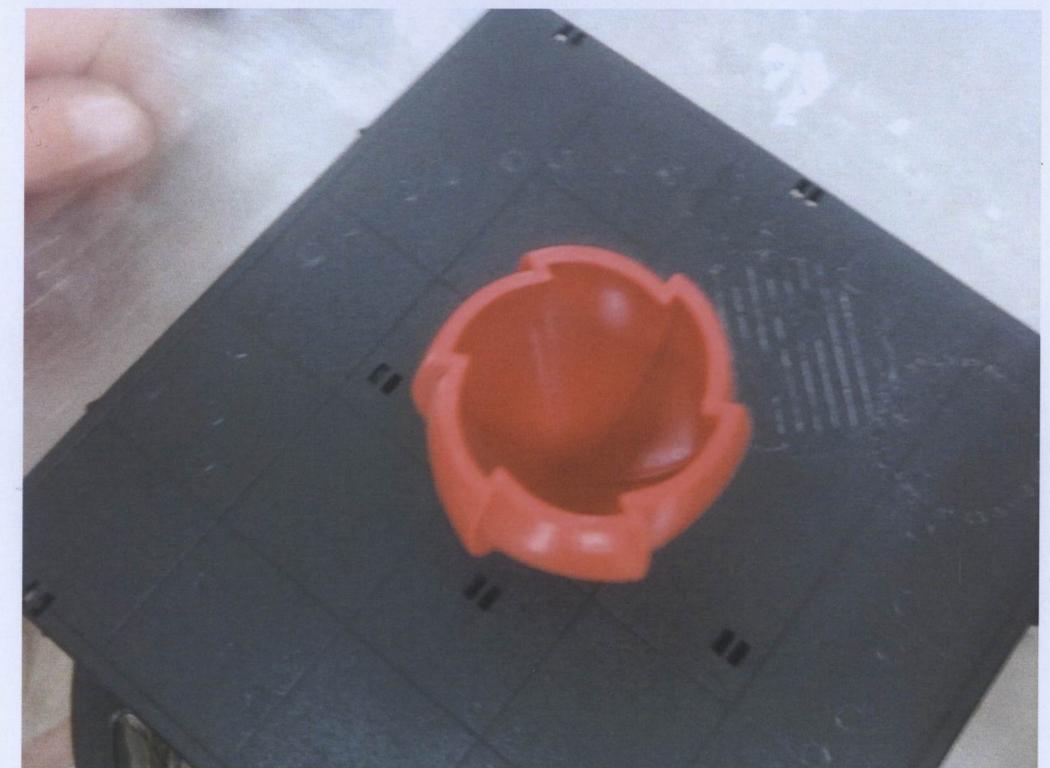


Figure 10.22 3D printer constructing model forms. Credit: Author.

Final Output Design

Part of this design research is to explore the form of the lotus dome. The *Guru Granth Sahib* makes reference of the lotus flower in many of its passages. The lotus is exploited by increasing the volume of the entire form to encompass the sanctum. The lotus dome is then enclosed in a glass cube form. Presenting a unique dialogue of forms from the inside out and outside in. The glass cube houses the precious elements of the lotus. The lotus in turn contains the holy Sikh text. The lotus form is held by vertical timber structure – representing the relationship between early Sikh settlers. The Gurdwara is depressed to exemplify the importance of its content from other adjacent buildings. It allows for a relationship with the large urban context, where both non-Sikh and Sikhs can engage with the building at various personal levels. Due to climate conditions the building uses eco-technologies to help provide comfortable interior conditions. Exterior sun shading devices, double skin membrane and operable windows allow various passive interior environmental controls.

Exterior glass is fritted to help with sun exposure and glare.

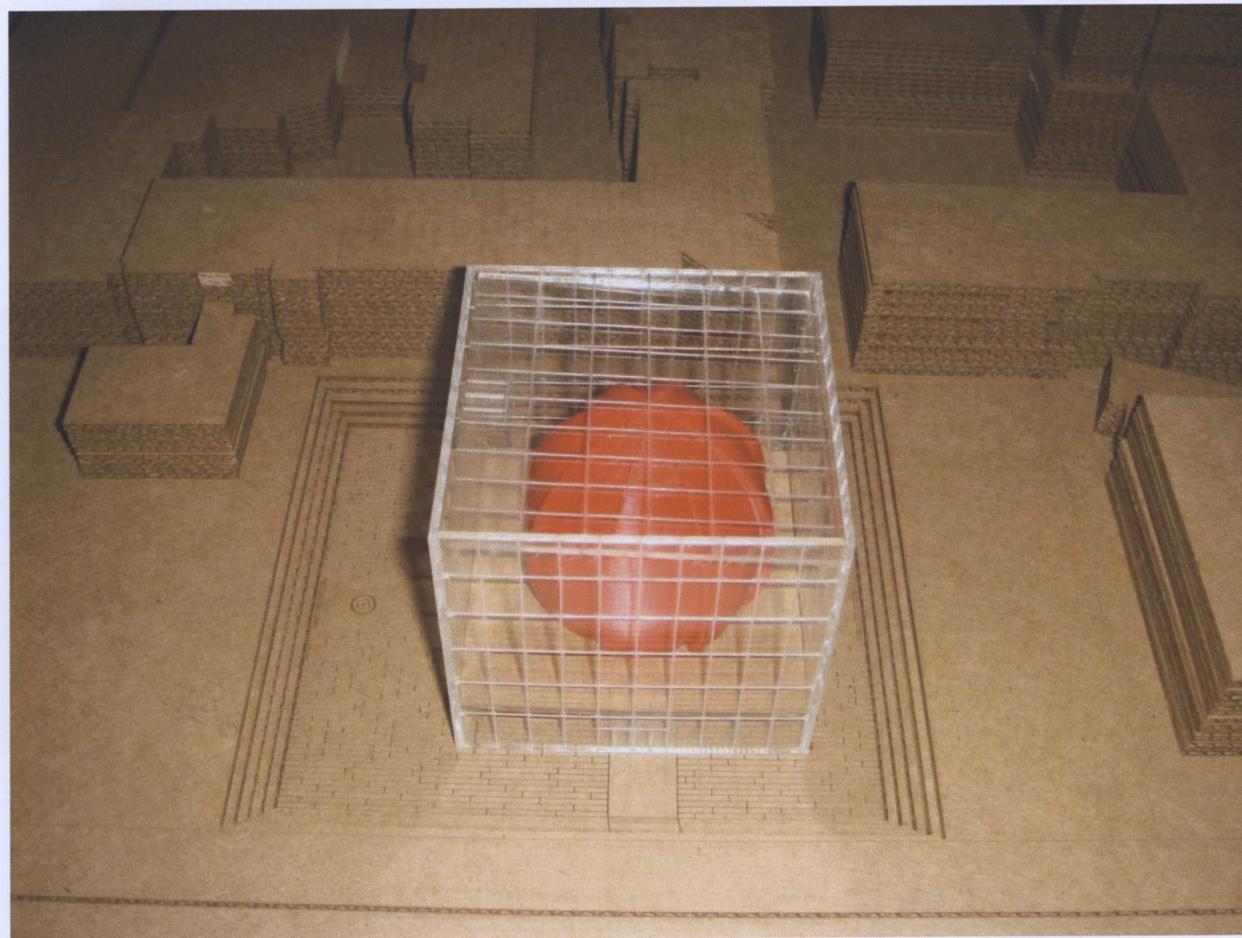


Figure 10.23 Site model. Credit: Author

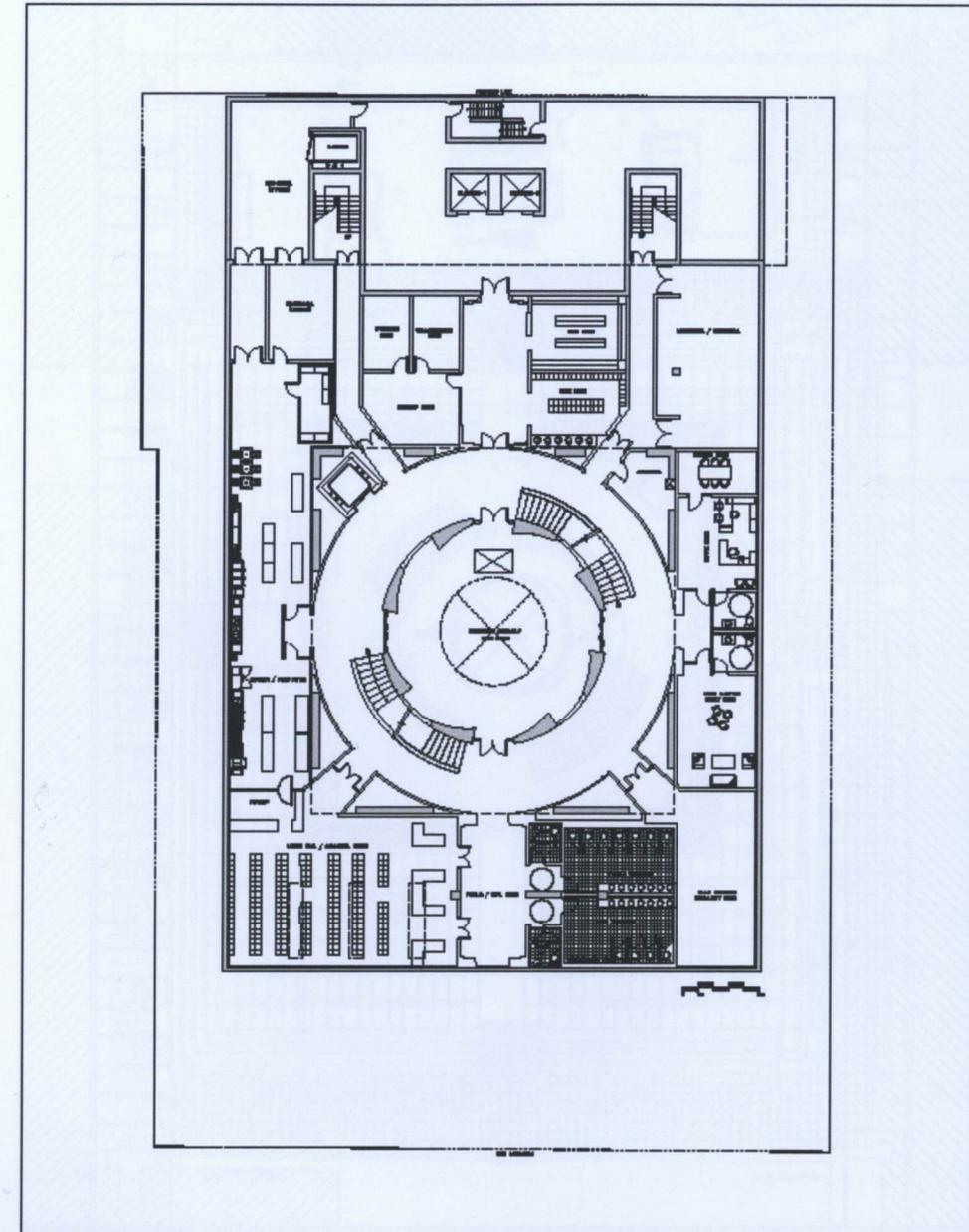


Figure 10.24 – Lower Level Plan. Credit: Author

Lower level houses the Langar hall, kitchen, secondary support room, community rooms and for multi-purpose room.

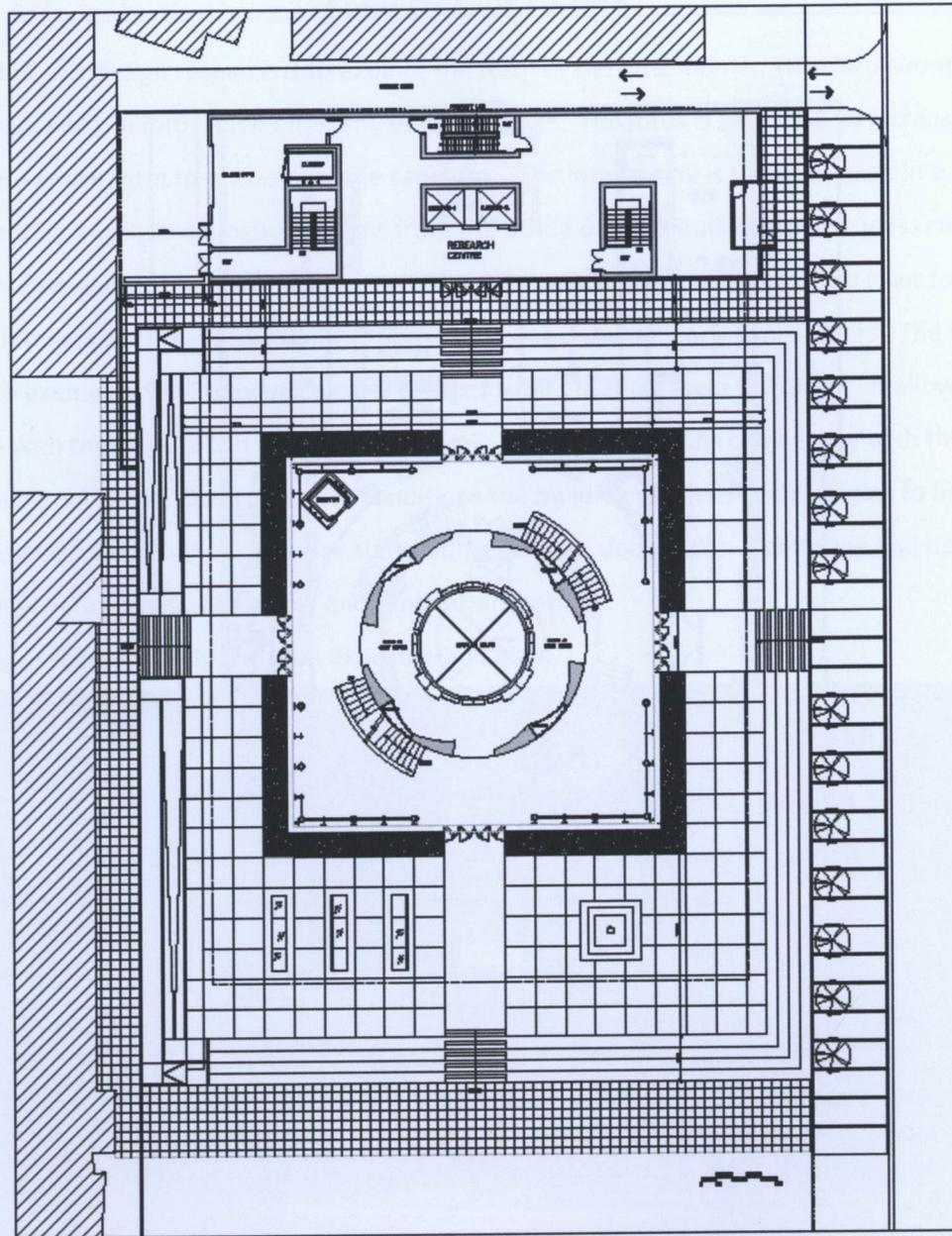


Figure 10.25 – Ground Level Plan. Credit: Author.

Ground floor has four entrances, typical of Sikh temple in India. A water feature surrounds the cube, a reflection temples in India.

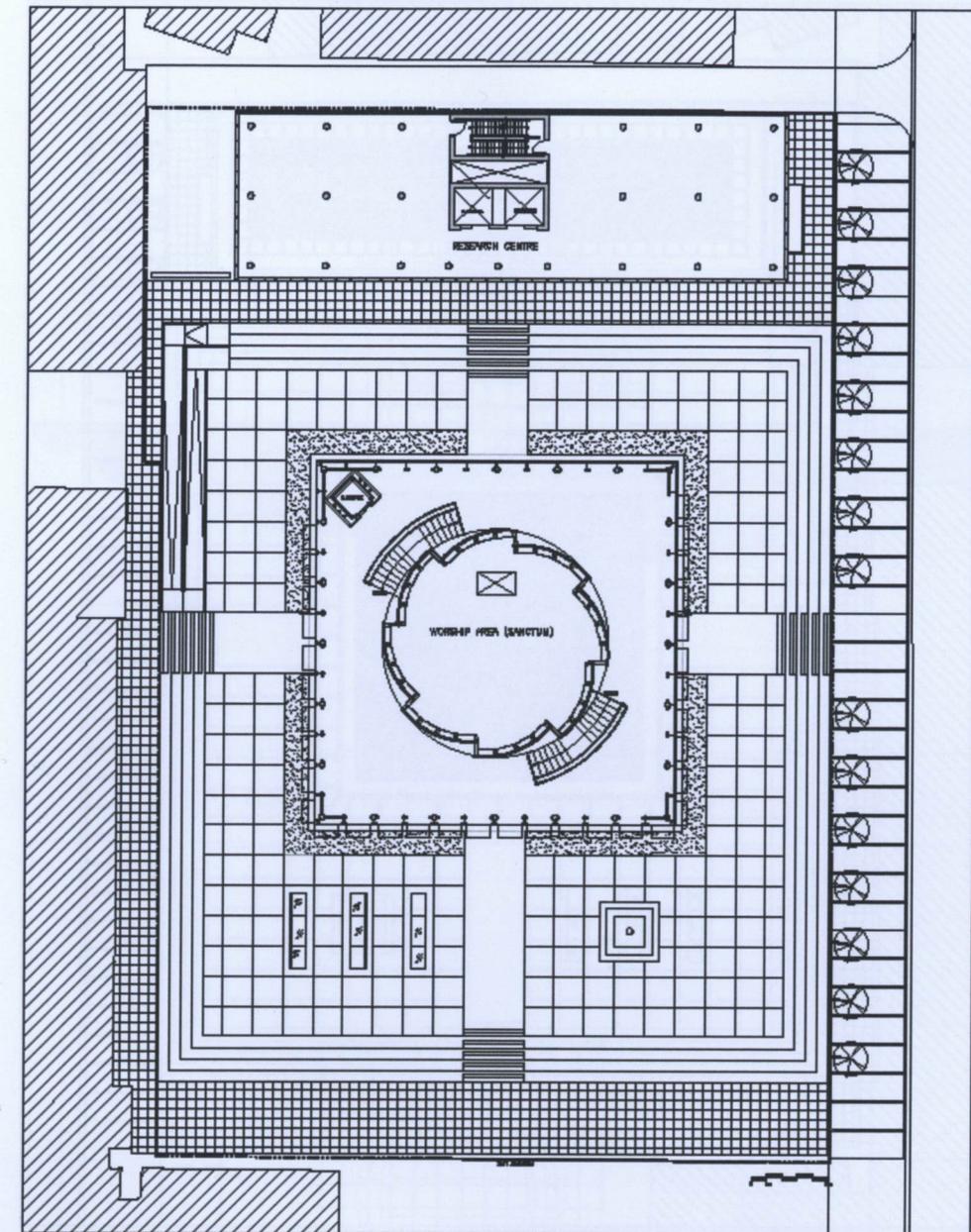


Figure 10.26 – Second Level Plan. Credit: Author.

Second floor, sanctum area houses the holy Sikh scriptures.

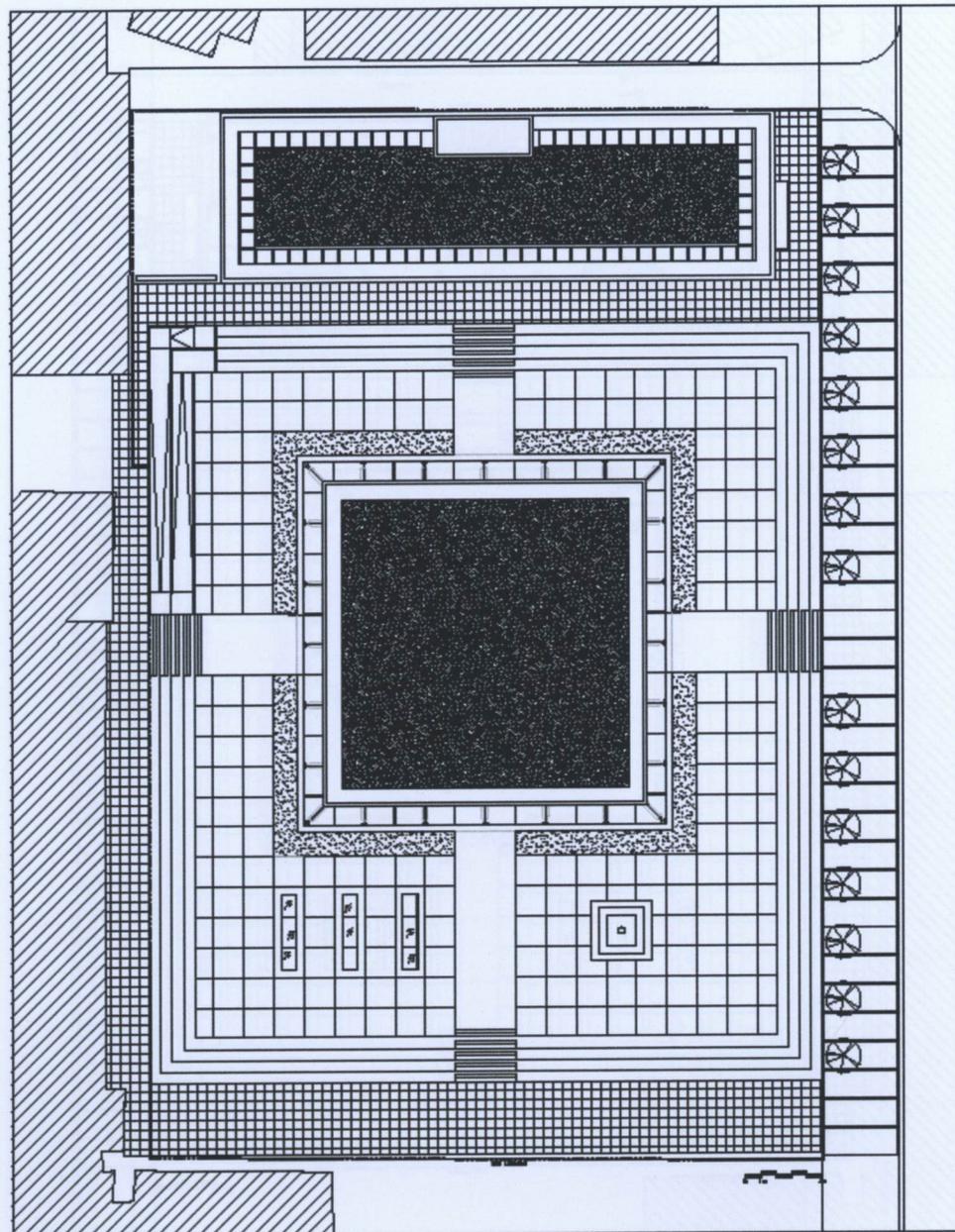


Figure 10.27 – Roof top garden plan. Credit: Author.

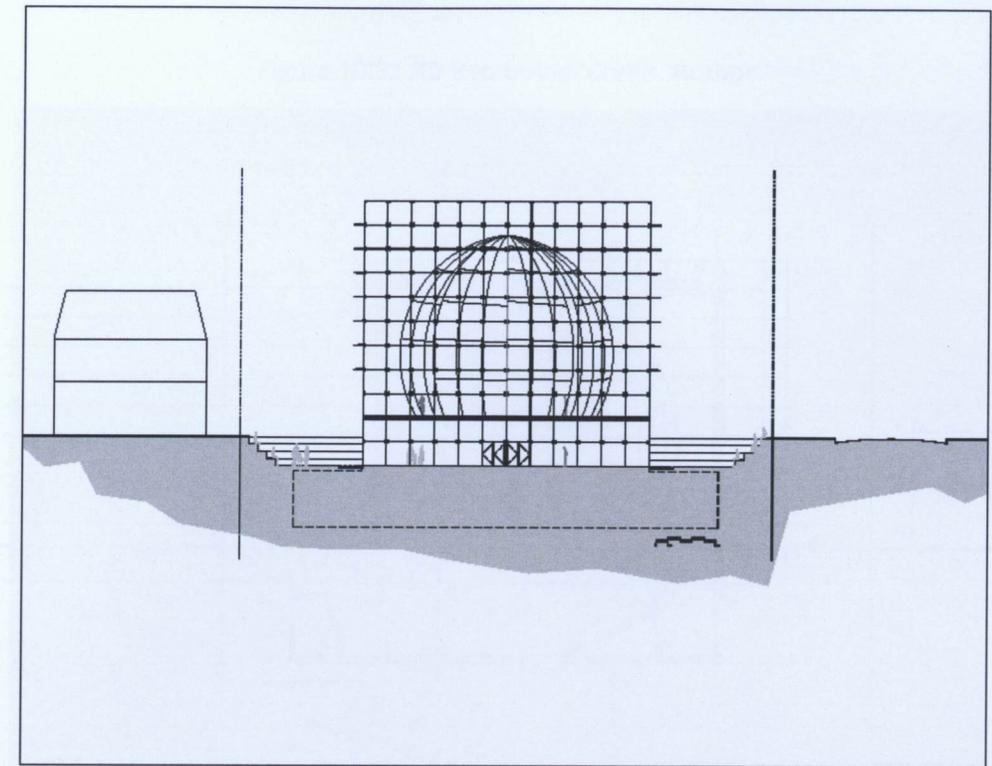


Figure 10.28 South Elevation. Credit: Author.

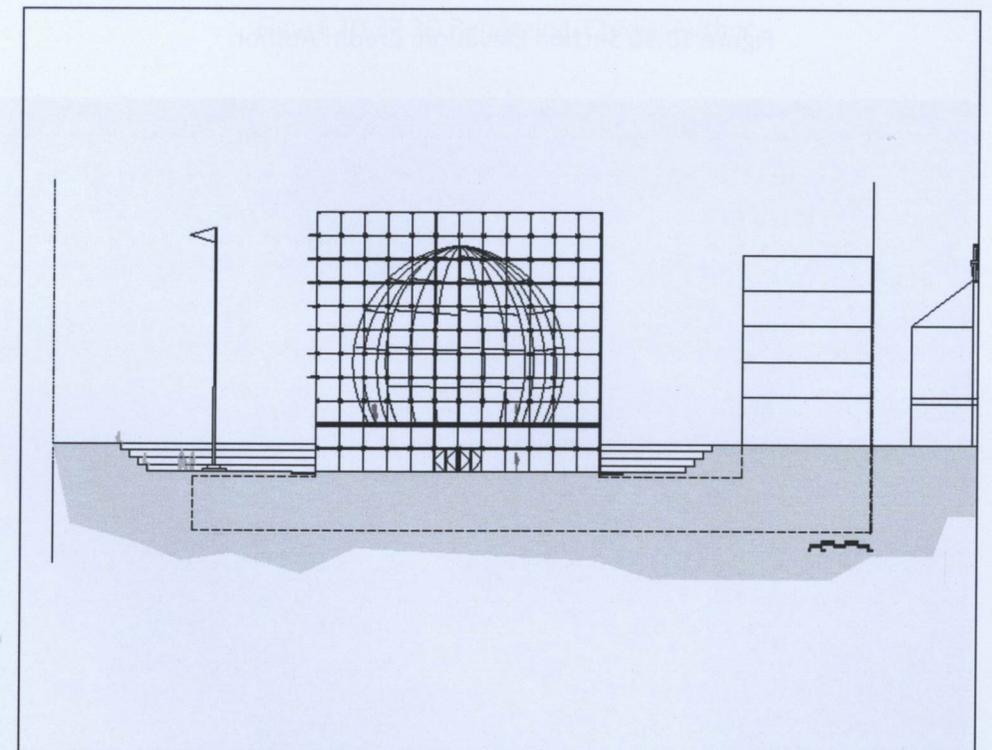


Figure 10.29 East Elevation. Credit: Author.

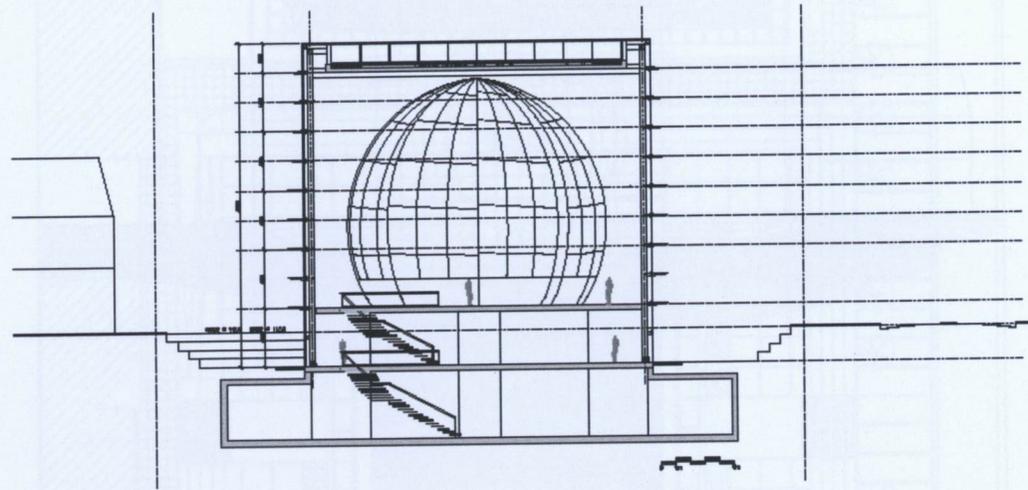


Figure 10.30 Section Elevation. Credit: Author.

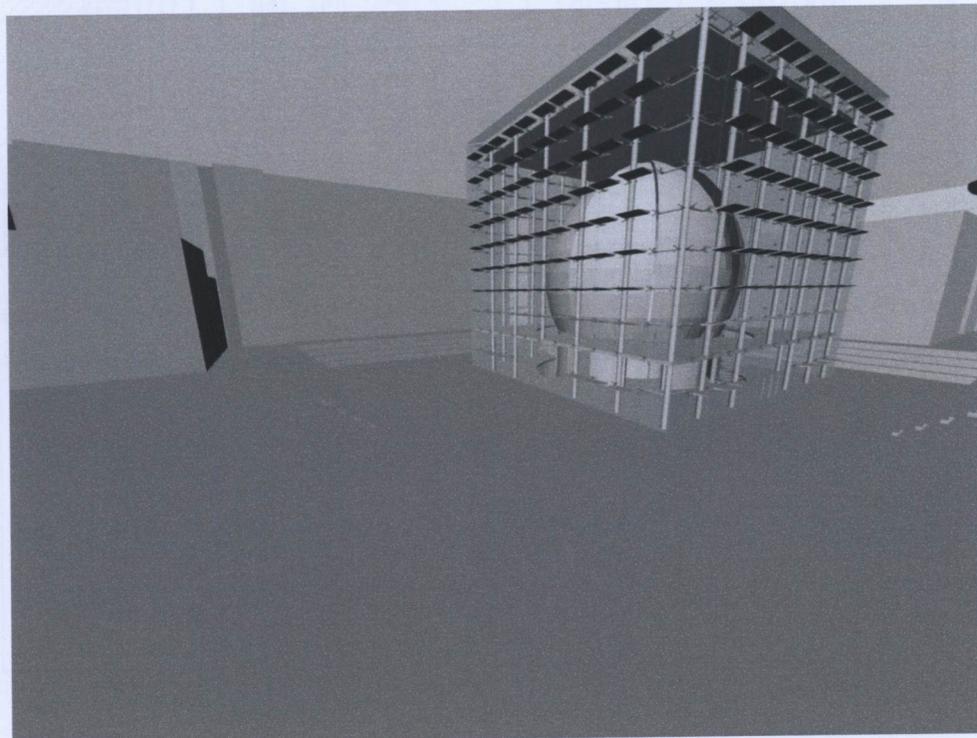


Figure 10.31 3D Rendering. Credit: Author.

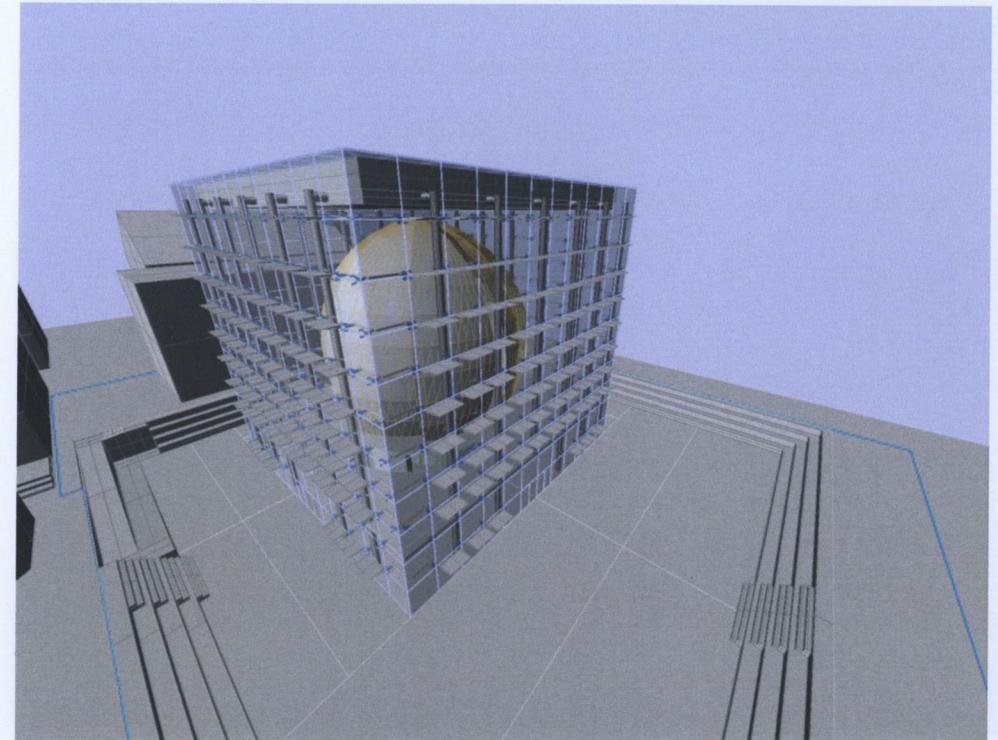


Figure 10.32 3D Rendering. Credit: Author.

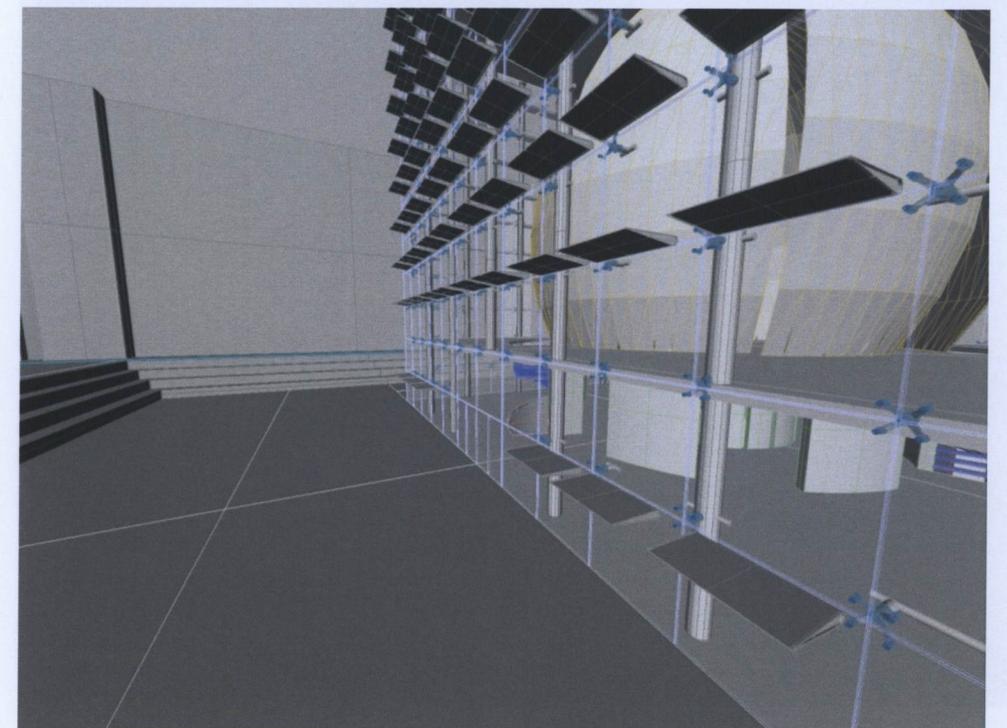


Figure 10.33 3D Rendering. Credit: Author

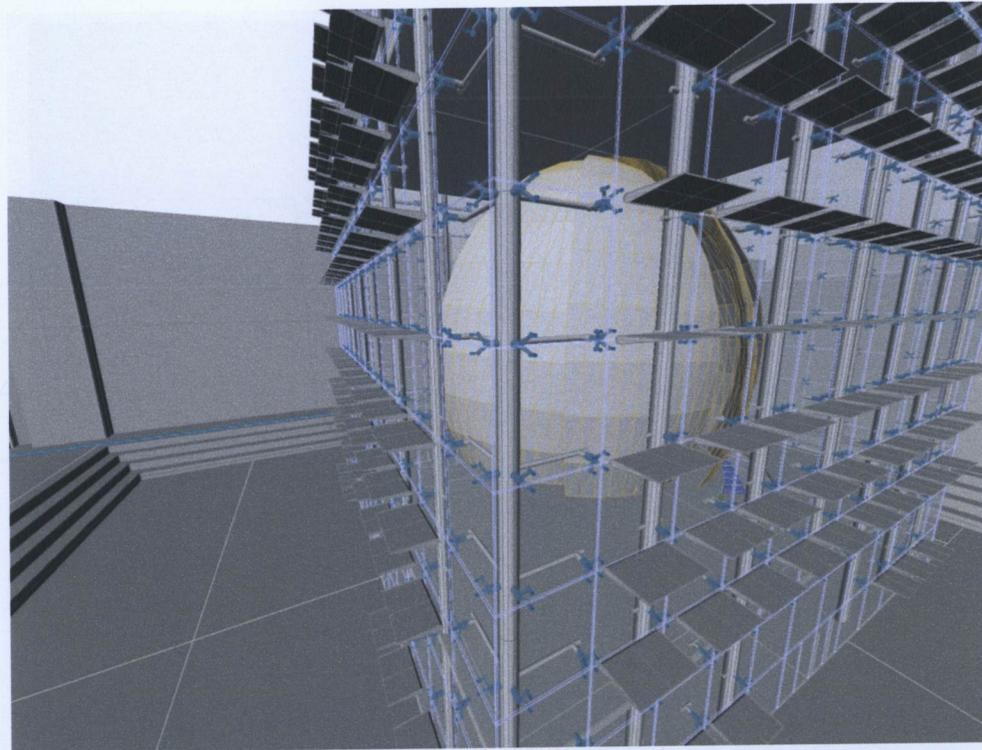


Figure 10.34 3D Rendering. Credit: Author

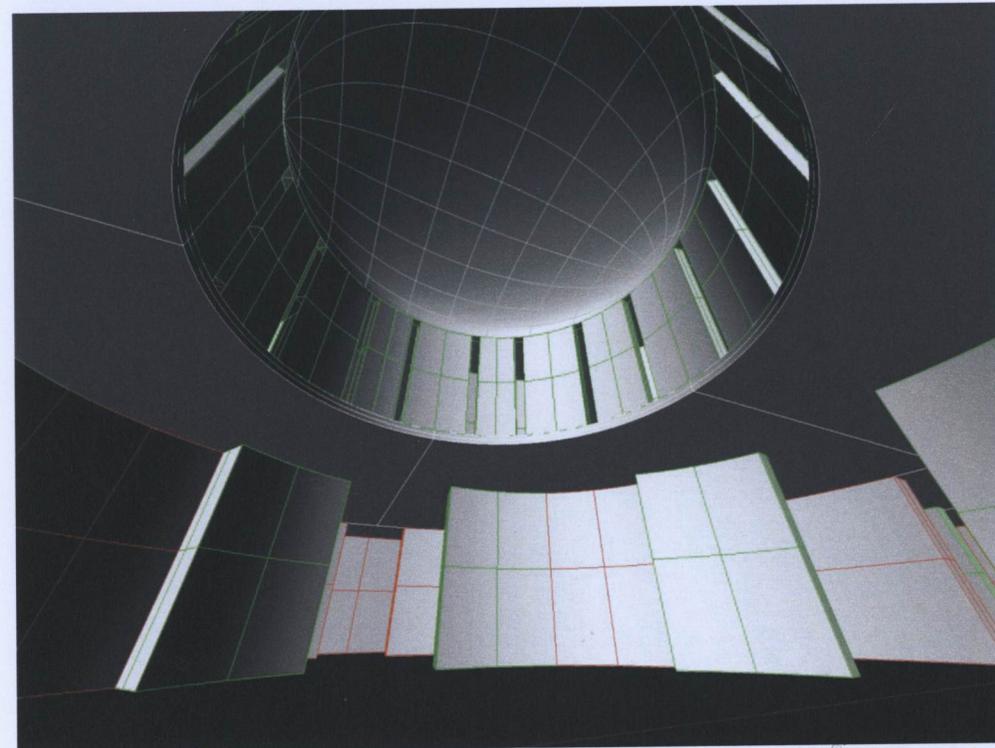


Figure 10.35 Interior lower level community room. Credit: Author

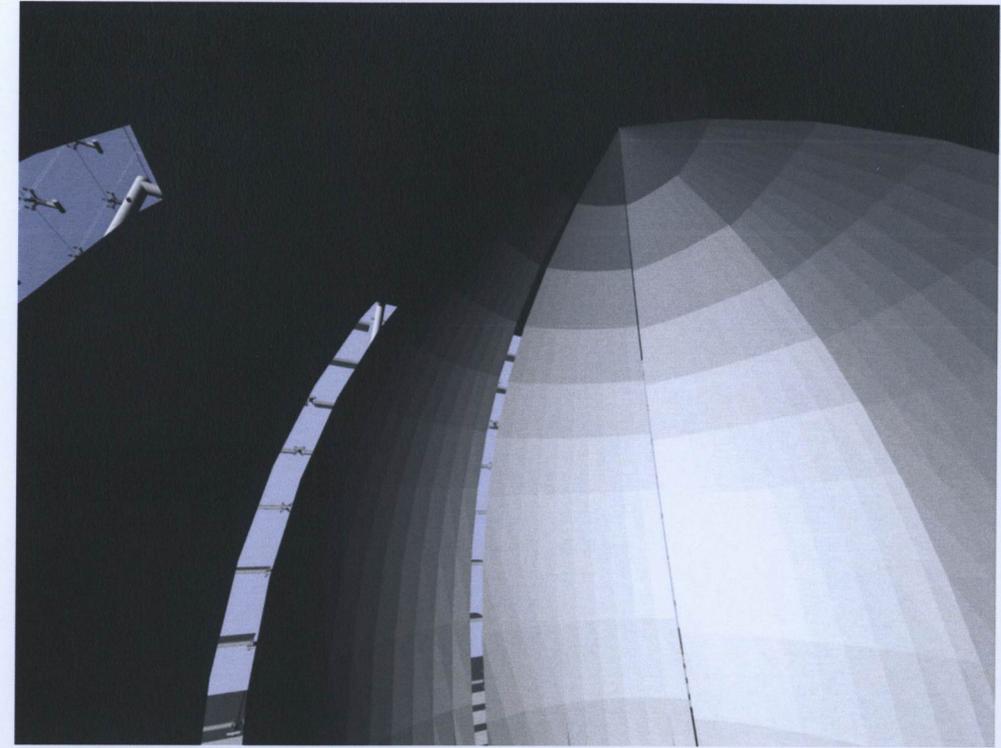


Figure 10.36 Interior of lotus dome. Credit: Author

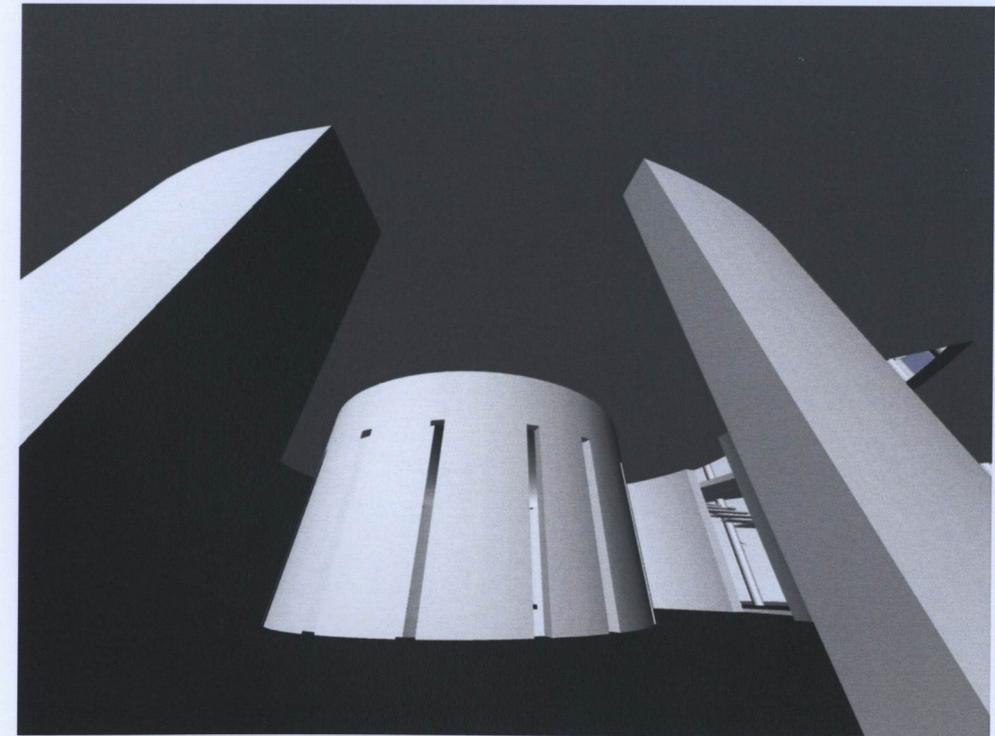


Figure 10.37 Entrance to reception area. Credit: Author

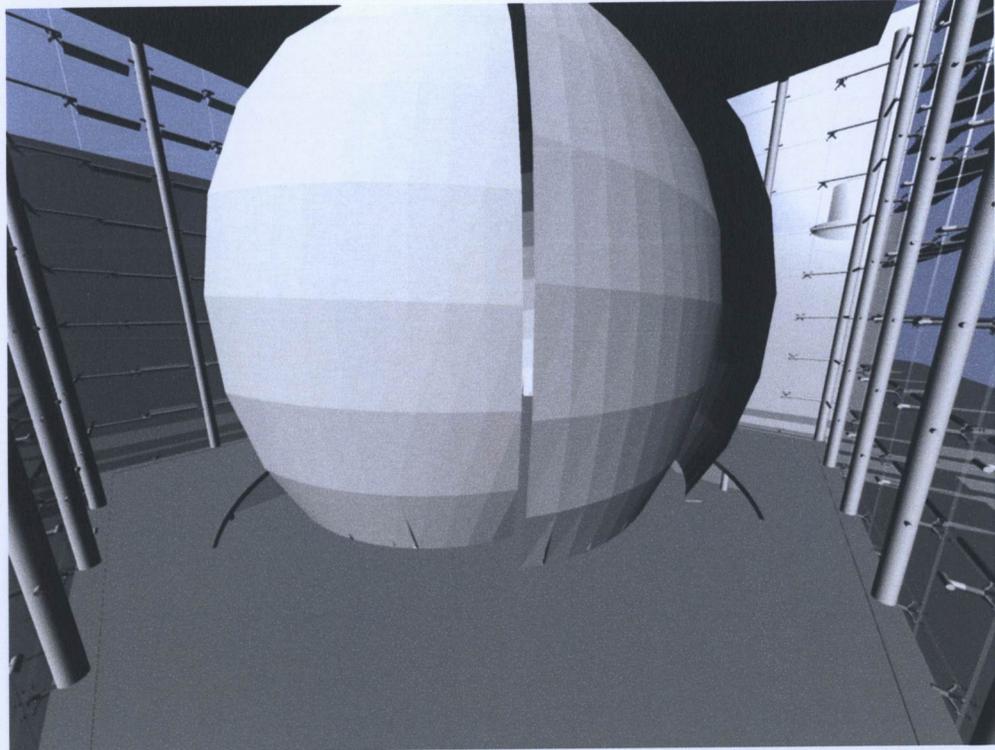


Figure 10.38 Lotus dome view. Credit: Author

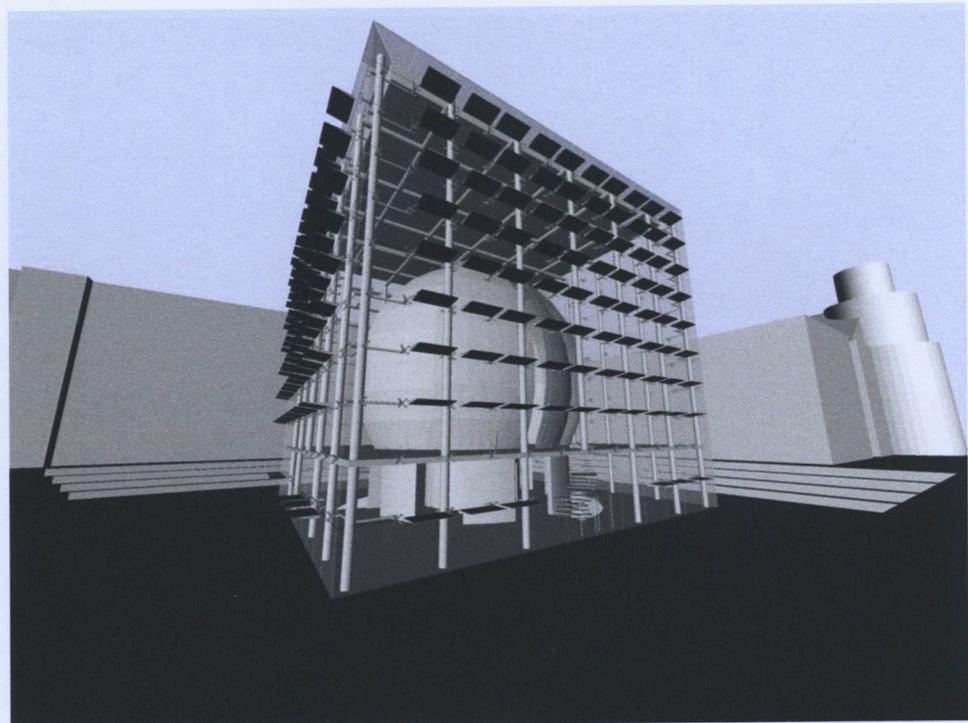


Figure 10.39 South East View. Credit: Author

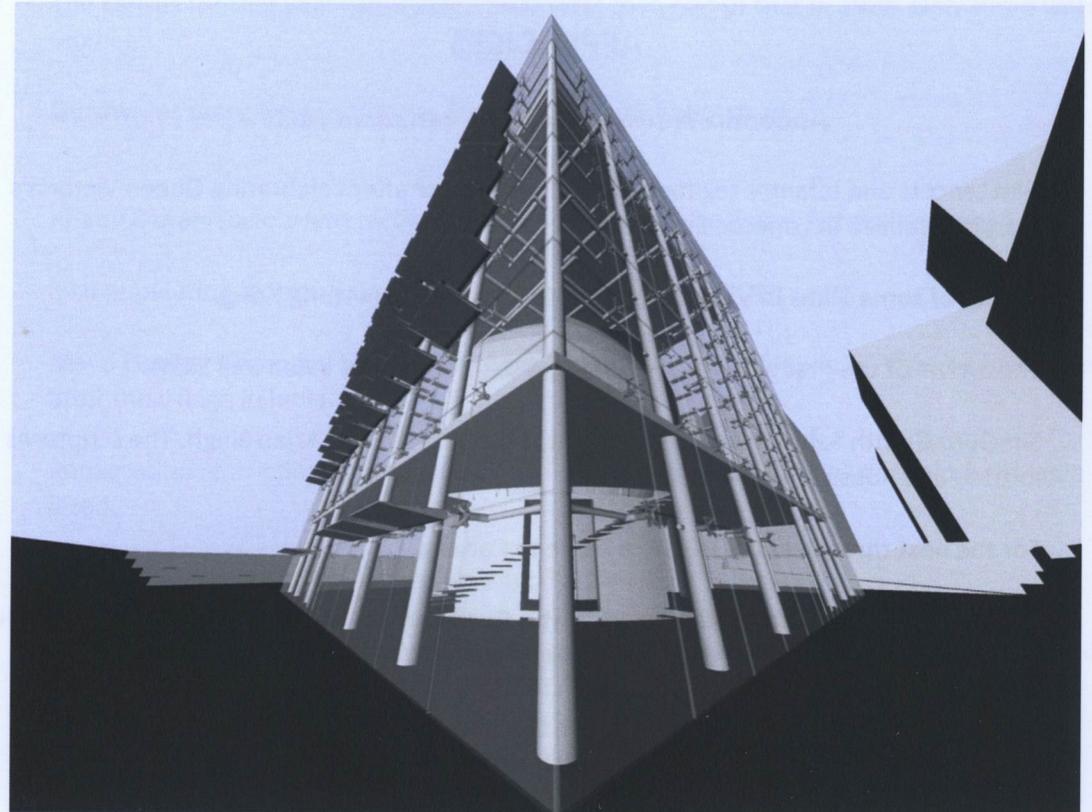
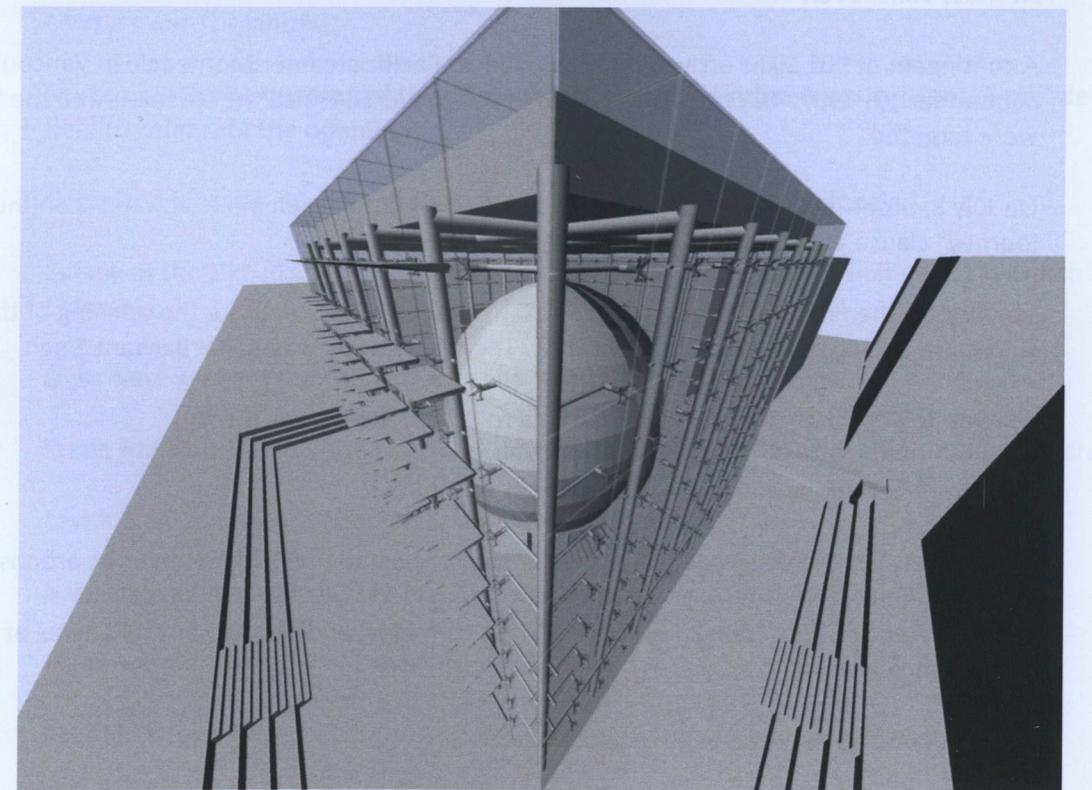


Figure 10.40 South East View. Credit: Author



APPENDICES

Appendix A | Historical Sikh Canadian Facts

- 1897** Sikh Lancers and Infantry regiment visited Vancouver after celebrating Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in London, England.
- 1899** **Arrival of some Sikhs in Vancouver and Victoria are from Hong Kong.**
- 1904** The arrival of the first wave of Sikh immigrants. The census listed 258 Sikhs.
- 1904** Siri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was first brought to Canada by Bhai Arjan Singh. The scriptures were located at a house in Port Moody.
- 1905** For the next three years, 5000 Sikhs came to Canada.
- 1906** **A house was rented in Vancouver to start a Gurdwara. A resolution was adopted on July 22 to start the establishment of Khalsa Diwan Society.**
- 1907** Sikhs were denied the right to vote when the government of B.C. passed a bill to disenfranchise all natives of India not born of Anglo-Saxon parents.
- 1907** Foundation stone of the Gurdwara for Khalsa Diwan Society was laid at 1866 West Second Avenue, Vancouver.
- 1907** A contingent of 901 Sikhs arrived on the Canadian Pacific steamer Monteagle in Vancouver on September 12, 1907. Race riots were held in Vancouver in which the Orientals and the Sikhs were targeted.
- 1908** On July 8, order-in-Council designed to stop all immigration from India with the "continuous journey" clause and "possession of \$200" was passed.
- 1908** January 19, the first Sikh parade (Nagar Kirtan) took place to celebrate the opening of the Gurdwara on Second Avenue in Vancouver. The first Granthi was Bahai Balwant Singh.
- 1908** Scheme to deport all the Sikhs from Canada to British Honduras (Belize).
- 1908** First Amrit ceremony in Canada took place in Vancouver.
- 1909** On February 13, the congregation at the Gurdwara rejected the British Honduras proposal.
- 1909** Establishment of Guru Nanak Mining and Trust company, and plans to buy 440 acres of land in West Vancouver.
- 1909** **Khalsa Diwan Society was registered on March 13.**
- 1911** The census for that year listed 2,342 Sikhs, less than half of that in 1908. Only three were women.
- 1912** **Gurdwaras were built in Vitoria, Fraser Mills, and Abbotsford.**
- 1915** Khalsa Diwan Society was incorporated under the B.C. Societies Act on February 23.
- 1918** Sikh population in British Columbia dropped to as low as 700.
- 1918** Mayo Lumber Company built a Sikh temple near Duncan, B.C. at Paldi. This town was named after the village in India.
- 1919** Immigration restriction on bring wives and children under eighteen years old from India were lifted.
- 1920** Sikh women and children started arriving from India.
- 1925** Khalsa Diwan Society had autonomous branches at Vancouver, Abbotsford, New Westminster, Golden, Duncan, Coombs, and Ocean Falls.
- 1929** Khalsa Diwan Society invited Charles Andrew, a friend of Mahatma Gandhi, and Sir Rabindranath Tagore, Nobel laureate, to see firsthand the unfair treatment of the Sikhs.
- 1933** Vancouver Sikhs formed the India Grass Hockey Club. Annual sports in memory of Babar Akali Martyrs were organized.
- 1935** **September 7, the opening of the Hillcrest Sikh temple (4 miles from Duncan). A parade was held to celebrate the opening.**
- 1943** Organized labour helped the Sikh with the "fair pay to the Sikh" campaign.
- 1944** Survey of the Sikh in Canada showed that there were 1,756; 98% of them lived in British Columbia.
- 1947** Sikhs were granted franchise to vote and become Canadian citizens.
- 1949** Prime Minister Nehru visited the Vancouver Sikh temple with his daughter Indira Gandhi.
- 1950** East Indian Canadian Welfare Association was formed.
- 1950** Narajan Singh Grewal was the first Sikh elected to a city council in Mission, B.C.
- 1951** There were 2,148 Sikhs in Canada.
- 1952** Akail Singh Sikh temple was formed after the conflict of religious practices.

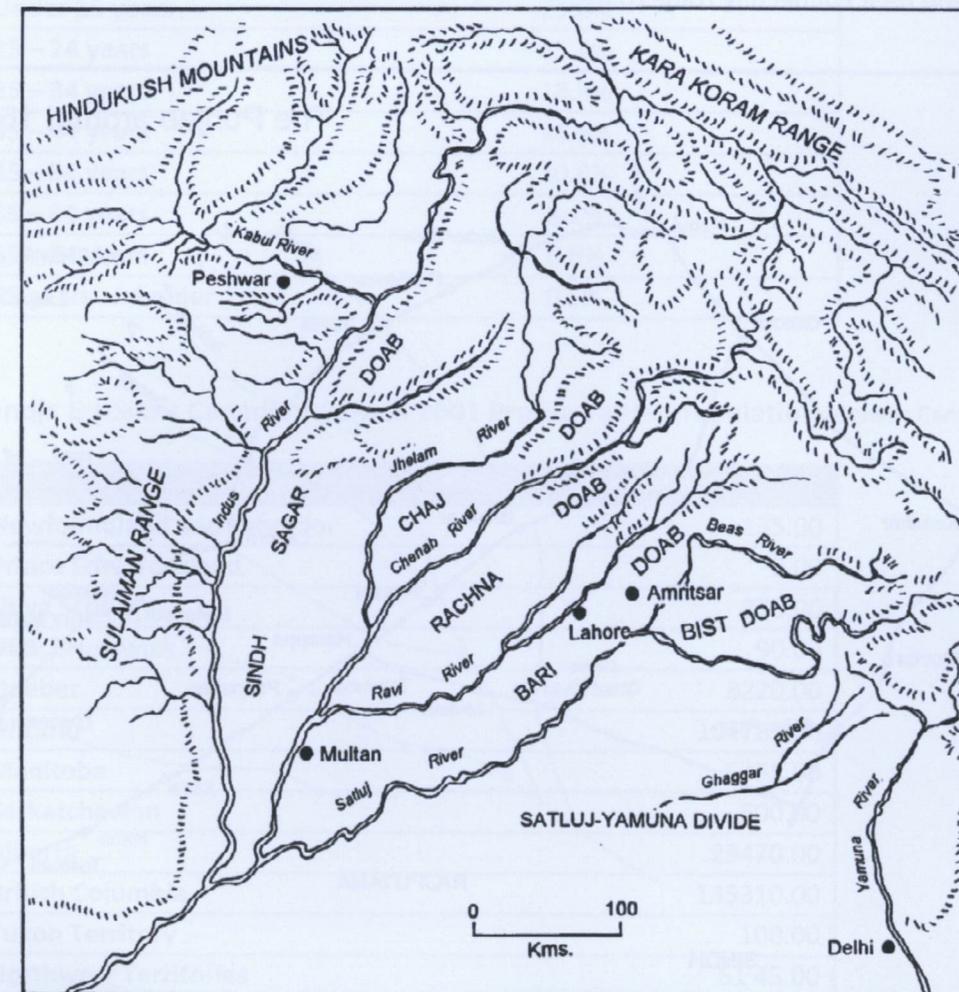
- 1957 Quotas from India increased to 300 per year.
- 1962 Quota system was dropped in favour of non-discriminatory immigration law.
- 1965 **First Gurdwara in the province of Ontario.**
- 1967 New immigration regulation based on point system was introduced.
- 1969 **March 30, foundation stone for the Khalsa Diwan Society Gurdwara at 8000 Ross Street was laid.**
- 1969 Khalsa Diwan Society celebrated the quincentenary birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Ji at its new Gurdwara at 8000 Ross Street on November 23.
- 1970 **April 25, Khalsa Diwan Society officially opened its new Gurdwara at 8000 Ross Street, following a Nagar Kirtan from 1866 Second Avenue.**
- 1970 Commencement of Ladies Sat-Sang and Saturday evening Kirtan Diwan at Khalsa Diwan Society.
- 1970 **Punjabi classes started at the Gurdwara at 8000 Ross Street in July.**
- 1972 **Punjabi classes started in the evening at David Thompson Secondary School in September.**
- 1974 Celebration of centenary of the Singh Sabha Movement, with tour of Sikh dignitaries around B.C.
- 1974 The tradition to enter a Sikh temple with a head covering (which had been neglected for a few years) was received by a special resolution.
- 1975 "Sikh Samachar" a newspaper, was published by the B.C. Sikh societies.
- 1975 Commemoration of the Tercentenary of Siri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji.
- 1975 First Ragi Jatha (Bhai Bakhshish Singh Ji) that came from Shiromni Gurdwara Parbanhak Committee (S.G.P.C.)
- 1978 The executive committee of the Khalsa Diwan Society, Vancouver was elected for the first time by a ballot voting system.
- 1979 The 500th birthday of Guru Amar Das Ji. Since that year, an annual Vaisakhi Parade (Nagar Kirtan) is held in Vancouver.
- 1979 **October 2, Khalsa Diwan Society purchased an adjoining building named "Guru Amar Das Niwas". This building has a school, daycare, museum, Gurdwara and guestrooms.**
- 1980 Federation of Sikh Societies of Canada was the first Sikh organization registered nationally.

- 1980 January 6, broadcast started of the Sikh religious program "Gurmat Sandesh".
- 1982 **Khalsa Diwan Society purchased 28 acres in Richmond, B.C. to build a sports complex.**
- 1982 Two Jathas from Canada went to India to participate in the "Dharam Yudh Morcha"
- 1982 Honourable Wally Oppal was appointed a Supreme Court judge. He later conducted the Royal Inquiry to Policing in British Columbia.
- 1983 A Sikh Chair was established at the University of British of Columbia.
- 1984 A Sikh Chair was established at the University of Toronto.
- 1986 Metro Toronto Police permitted Sikhs to wear their turbans while on duty with the force.
- 1986 Khalsa School, a full time private school was established in Vancouver. This school teaches Sikh religion and Punjabi language classes.
- 1986 Khalsa Credit Union was registered on February 19, to provide financial service to the Sikh Community. Today there are five branches with assets of over a hundred million dollars.
- 1986 First Sikh elected to any provincial legislature in Canada was Manmohan (Moe) Sahota from Esquimalt, British Colombia.
- 1987 Protest by 3,000 Sikhs against Human Rights violation during Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's visit at the Commonwealth Prime Minister's Conference in Vancouver on October 12.
- 1988 February 25, Canadian Prime Minister Joe Clark asked premiers to boycott activities of three Sikh organizations.
- 1988 March 10, the Canadian Parliament devoted a whole day to debate the issue of the Sikh's rights and the issue of Khalistan.
- 1988 Dr. Gulzar Singh Cheema was elected as an M.L.A. to the Manitoba legislature.
- 1990 March 15, the solicitor General of Canada announced that the RCMP dress code would be amended to have a turbaned Sikh join the force. Constable Baltej Singh Dhillon had the honour of becoming the first baptized Sikh to join the RCMP.
- 1991 Three Sikhs were elected to the British Columbia legislature. Manmohan (Moe) Sihota, and Ujjal Dosanjh have held various cabinet posts, and the other M.L.A. is Harbhajan (Harry) Lalli.
- 1992 **Khalsa school opened its facility with a Gurwara in Surrey, B.C.**
- 1992 **Formation of the Ontario Gurdwara Management Board.**

- 1993 Gurbax Singh Mahli and Harbans (Herb) Dhaliwal were the first Sikhs elected to the Canadian Parliament in Ottawa.
- 1993 In July, Vancouver Punjabi Market at Main and 49th Street was officially recognized with bilingual signs in English and Punjabi.
- 1993 A 24 hour radio program featuring Sikh religion and Gurbani Kirtan started to transmit from Vancouver. It broadcasts across Canada and America VIA satellite.
- 1993 Five Sikh veterans were invited to participate in a Remembrance Day parade on November 11, but were denied entry to the Royal Canadian Legion in Newton, B.C.
- 1994 Akhand Path and Vaisakhi Day celebrations were held at the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa.
- 1994 **The foundation stone for the Sikh Resource Centre was laid by the Akal Tahat Jathedar on July 24. Senior Centre for the Sikhs was opened on November 29, in Surrey, B.C.**
- 1995 The B.C. Government officially recognized the Vaisakhi Parade and published a brochure.
- 1996 February 15, the Supreme Court of Canada reaffirmed a Sikh officer's right to wear a turban.
- 1996 In September, British Columbia schools started to offer Punjabi language in its regular curriculum from grades five to twelve.
- 1996 **There were over a hundred Gurdwaras across Canada. Fifty of them were in B.C.**
- 1996 **Opening of the Sikh Resource Centre in Vancouver to celebrate the centennial of the Sikhs in Canada on July 28.**
- 1997 January 11 was the sad day when the sanctity of Guru Nanak Sikh Temple in Surrey was desecrated with the intervention of the dispute over the serving of Guru Ka Langar (community kitchen).
- 1999 First Sikh Canadian Stamp released.
- 2000 Ujjal Dosanjh is British Columbia, first Sikh Premier (February 2000 to June 2001)
- 1999 First Sikh Canadian Stamp released.
- 2002 Prime Minister gives Abbotsford, British Columbia Sikh Temple Heritage Status

Appendix B | Physical Map of Punjab

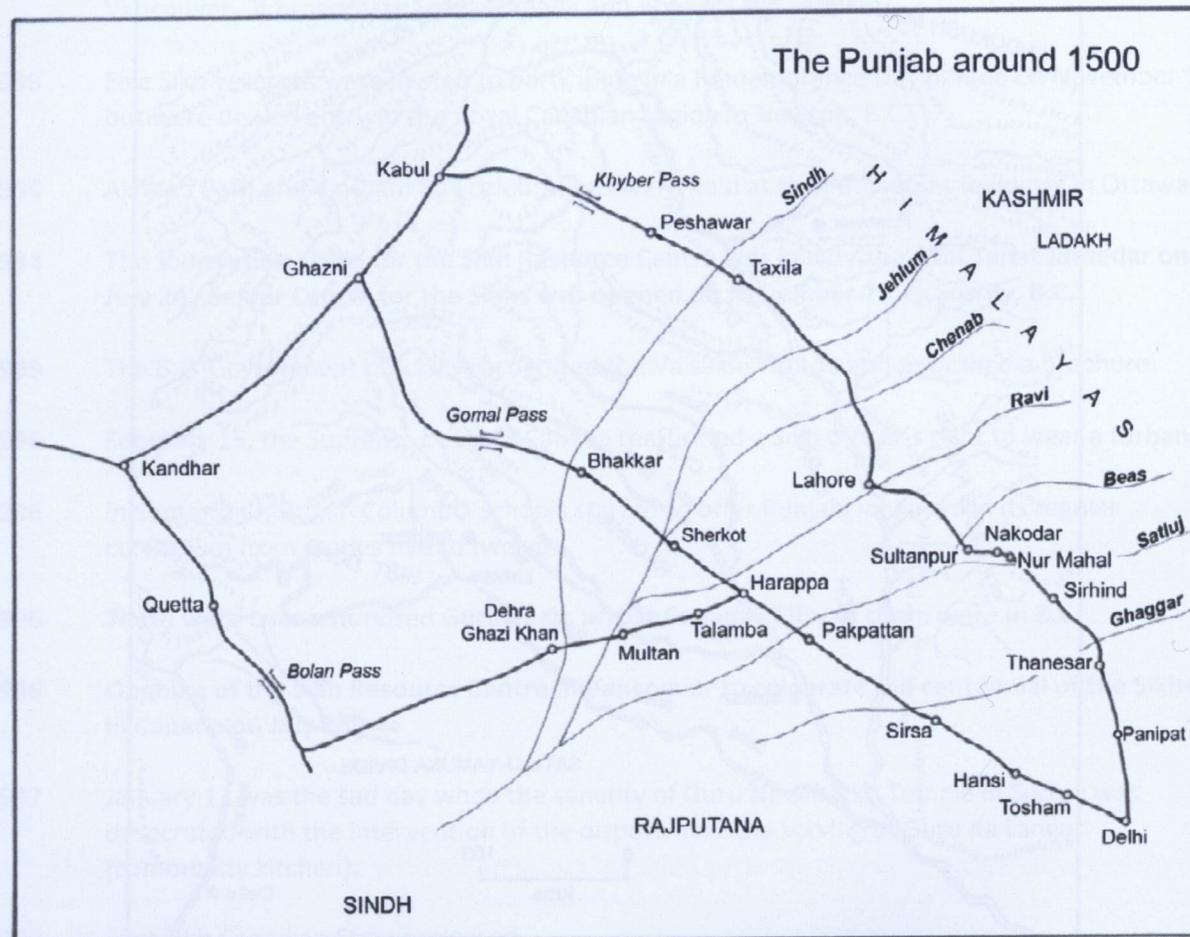
THE PUNJAB (PHYSICAL)



(From the Center for Sikh and Punjab Studies University of California, Santa Barbara)

Appendix C | Rivers of Punjab - 1500

Map of the seven major rivers (Sindh, Jehlum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, Satluj and Ghaggar) and the major destinations and their connecting trade routes.



(From the Center for Sikh and Punjab Studies University of California, Santa Barbara)

Appendix D | Age Group of Sikhs in Canada (Census Canada 2001)

Age Group	Sikh
Under 15 years	25.8%
15 – 24 years	15.4%
25 – 34 years	18.8%
35 – 44 years	14.5%
45 – 54 years	10.6%
55 – 64 years	8.1%
65 – 84 years	6.6%
85 years and older	0.5%

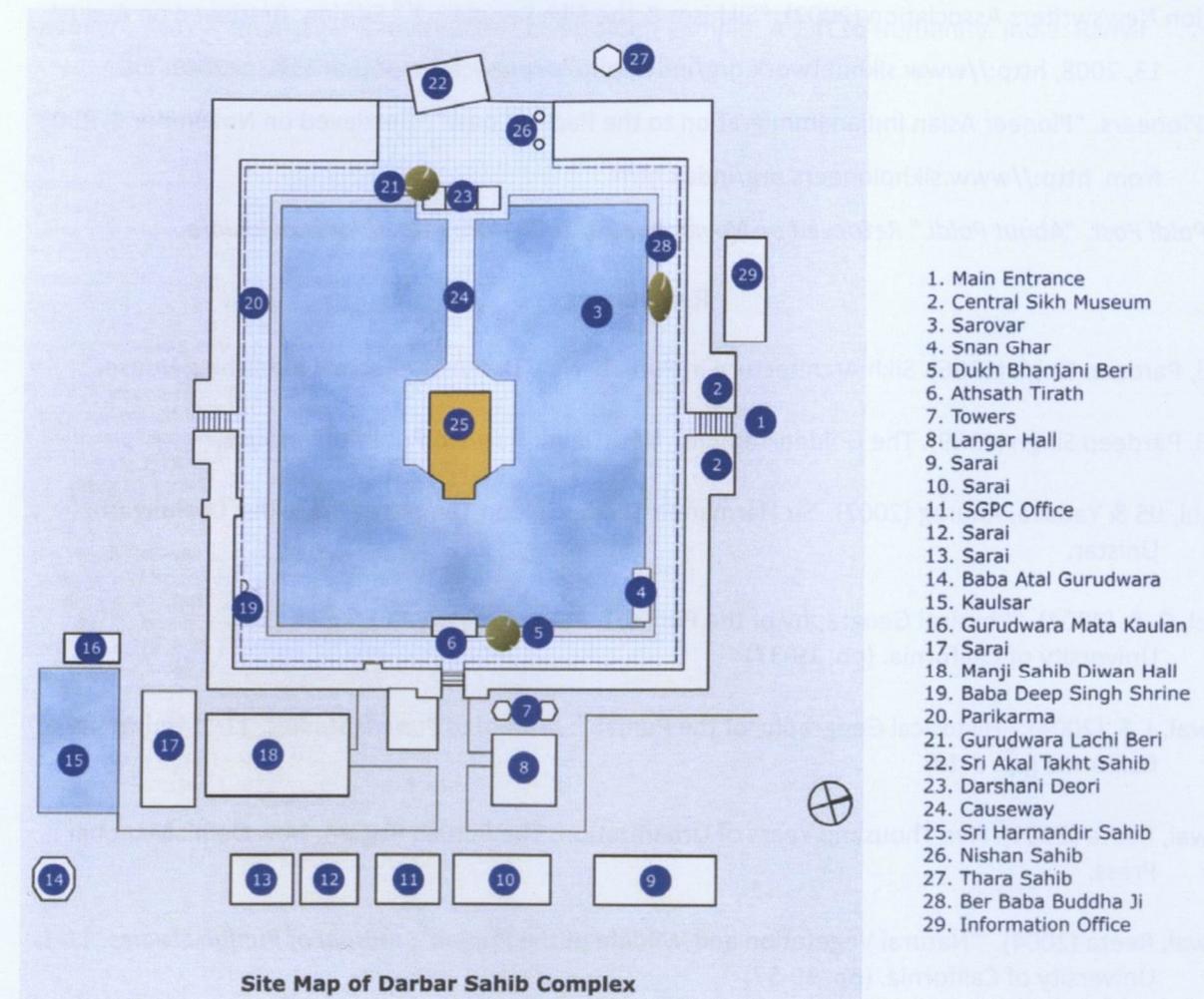
Appendix E | Sikhs Canadian Census 2001 Profile Tables population (Census Canada 2006)

Region	Population
Newfoundland and Labrador	135.00
Prince Edward Island	0.00
Nova Scotia	270.00
New Brunswick	90.00
Quebec	8220.00
Ontario	104785.00
Manitoba	5485.00
Saskatchewan	500.00
Alberta	23470.00
British Columbia	135310.00
Yukon Territory	100.00
Northwest Territories	61 45.00
Nunavut	0.00
Canada	278415.00

Appendix F | the Ten Gurus

	Guru's Name	Years of Guruship
First Guru	Guru Nanak Dev	1469 to 1539
Second Guru	Guru Angad Dev	1504 to 1552
Third Guru	Guru Amar Das	1479 to 1574
Fourth Guru	Guru Ram Das	1534 to 1581
Fifth Guru	Guru Arjan Dev	1563 to 1606
Sixth Guru	Guru Hargobind	1595 to 1644
Seventh Guru	Guru Har Rai	1630 to 1661
Eighth Guru	Guru Harkrishan	1656 to 1664
Ninth Guru	Guru Tegh Bahadur	1621 to 1675
Tenth Guru	Guru Gobind Singh	1666 to 1708

Appendix G | Overall Plan of the Golden Temple & Supporting Facilities



(From Sri Harmandir Sahib: Golden Temple of the Sikhs by IJS Bakshi)

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GLOSSARY

Adi Granth Adi means first, Adi Granth is the first edition of the Guru Granth Sahib as was compiled by Guru Arjun in 1604.

Amrit It means nectar. It is sugar water which is used during the Khalsa initiation ceremony.

Anand Karaj The Sikh wedding ceremony.

Baisakhi The celebration which takes place every April 13th. Guru Amardas initiated the annual gathering of Sikhs at Goindwal in 1567. In 1699 Guru Gobind Singh founded the Khalsa order on this day.

Bani	An abbreviation of Gurbani, applied to any of the writings which appear in the Guru Granth Sahib.
Chandoa	The canopy which is placed over the Guru Granth Sahib.
Charan Pahul	Baptism ceremony involving the drinking of water which the Guru or a member of the Gurus family had dipped their feet in.
Dasam Granth	The book of writings of Guru Gobind Singh compiled after his death by Bhai Mani Singh and finished in 1734.
Daswandh	Giving of one-tenth of ones income to charity.
Dharma	Religion or teaching or lifestyle, as in Sikh Dharma.
Diwali	Indian festival also celebrated by Sikhs. From the time of Guru Amar Das onwards Sikhs annually gathered on this day. In 1577 the foundation stone of the Harmandir Sahib was also laid on this day.
Granthi	One who performs the reading of the Guru Granth Sahib at religious occasions, it may be a man or women.
Gurbani	The writings of the Gurus.
Gurdwara	Name given to a Sikh temple. It means 'Gateway to the Guru'.
Gurmukh	Someone who has become God oriented and God filled instead of self centred (manmukh).
Gurmukhi	The written form of Punjabi used in the Sikh scriptures, propogated by Guru Nanak and Guru Angad.
Gutka	Book containing the daily prayers of the Sikhs.
Hukam	The ordered will of God.
Hukamnama	Instructions issued by the Gurus, or other people in Sikh authority.
Ik Onkar	It is found at the beginning of the Mul Mantra meaning there is Only One God.
Janam Sakhi	A bibliographic account of the live of Guru Nanak, or other Gurus.
Jathedar	The appointed head of one of the five Sikh Takhts.
Kachha	Drawers or briefs. One of the five physical symbols that a Khalsa Sikh must wear. It is a symbol of self control.

Kanga	Comb, one of the five physical symbols that a Khalsa Sikh must wear. It is a symbol of hygiene and discipline.
Kara	Steel bracelet, one of the five physical symbols that a Khalsa Sikh must wear. It is a symbol of restraint and remembrance of God.
Karah Parshad	A standard dish served at religious ceremonies in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib and sanctified by prayers. It is a symbol of equality of all members of the congregation.
Kaur	Middle or last name of a Sikh female. Mandatory last name for a Khalsa Sikh female.
Kar Seva	Term used to describe any voluntary work carried out for religious purposes, especially the building of gurdwaras. Also used to refer to the removal of silt from the tank surrounding Harmandir Sahib every 50 years.
Kes	Uncut hair, one of the five physical symbols that a Khalsa Sikh must have. It is a symbol of spirituality.
Kesdhari	A Sikh who does not cut their hair, they may or may not be amritdhari.
Keski	Head covering worn between the turban and hair by some Sikhs. Also worn by some boys before they begin wearing turbans.
Kirpan	Sword, one of the five physical symbols that a Khalsa Sikh must wear. It is a symbol of the Sikh fight against injustice and religious oppression.
Kirtan	Musical rendering of Sikh gurbani.
Langar	Free community kitchen found in all Sikh Gurdwaras. A cornersone of the Sikh religion and a symbol of equality, it was instituted by Guru Nanak.
Lawan	Circumventing the Guru Granth Sahib during the Sikh marriage ceremony. Also the name of the four stanza composition by Guru Ram Das found on page 773 of the Guru Granth Sahib.
Mela	Any Sikh religious festival other than the birth or death of a Guru.
Nam	Name, name of God. Sikhism places emphasis on the remembrance of God through meditation on Gods name.
Nam Japna, Kirt Karna, Vand Chakna	Meditation on Gods name, honest work and giving to charity. Three fundamental requirements for Sikhs.
Nam Simran	The remembrance of God through meditation.

Nihang	An order of Sikhs who follow the soldier lifestyle of the time of Guru Gobind Singh. They wear blue robes and reject household comforts.
Onkar	God as the Primal Being. Also refers to a composition of Guru Nanak which appears on page 929 of the Guru Granth Sahib.
Palki	The wooden, golden or marble palanquin in which the Guru Granth Sahib is ceremonially installed.
Panj Kakke	The five physical symbols which must be worn at all times by Khalsa Sikhs; kachha (briefs), kangha (comb), kara (steel bracelet), kes (unshorn hair) and kirpan (ceremonial sword).
Panj Piaras	The five beloved ones, referring to the first five Sikhs initiated into the Khalsa order by Guru Gobind Singh. Five Khalsa Sikhs are required for initiation of a new member.
Panth	The entire Sikh community.
Parkarma	The walkway around the sarovar (pool) found at many gurdwaras.
Sangat	Holy congregation.
Sant	A holy person or saint.
Sarovar	The pool for bathing found at many gurdwaras.
Sat Sri Akal	The Sikh greeting meaning "Immortal God is Truth".
Seva	Service to ones fellow beings, a cornerstone of Sikhism.
Seva Panthi	A Sikh whose life is devoted to the service of the Sikh community.
Shabad	The religious hymns contained in Sikh scriptures.
Shromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (S.G.P.C.)	Committee which oversees the administration of many Gurdwaras in Punjab, Haryana & Himachal Pradesh as well as involved in publication and education related to Sikhism.
Singh	Lion, the common last or middle name of male Sikhs. It is a compulsory last name for male Khalsa Sikhs.
Takht	A seat of Sikh authority, there are five gurdwaras which are designated as takhts.

Thambh Sahib	A pole or tower associated with a Guru
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