

Special Topics: Sikhism and North Indian History

840:29301, Spring 2012

Monday & Wednesday, 2:15-3:35 pm

131 Hickman Hall

Instructor: Ami P. Shah

Email: Ami P. Shah <as1658@rci.rutgers.edu>

Office Hours: Monday 4-6, Room 130 Loree, Douglass Campus

Course Description:

Sikhism is one of the world's newest monotheistic traditions. Founded in the sixteenth century by Guru Nanak (1469-1539) in the Punjab, the Sikh community now comprises 25 million people spread across the globe. Beginning with the life and legacy of Guru Nanak, this class will trace the history of this religious tradition up until the present day. In the process, we will examine the lives of the Sikh Gurus and the rise of Sikh sovereignty (the Khalsa Raj) under Maharaja Ranjit Singh; the impact of British colonial rule on the Sikh community from the 18th/early 19th century up until the Partition of India; and finally, significant developments during the 20th and 21st centuries in Post-Independent India and diasporic communities ranging from Operation Bluestar and 1984 to September 11, 2001.

Course Prerequisites: None

Required Readings:

Book Available for Purchase at Douglass Bookstore:

Gurinder Singh Mann, *Sikhism* (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall Publishers, 2004)

All other readings are available on Sakai

Grading:

Attendance and Participation 10%

In Class Midterm exam; 3/5 30%

Essay #1 (minimum 5 pages); Due 3/26 25%

Essay #2 (minimum 10 pages); Due 5/8 35%

*All assignments will be marked down incrementally for each day they are late. All assignments must be completed to receive a passing grade.

Course Schedule and Readings:

Week One

Wednesday, January 18 – Introduction to the Class and Religious Traditions of the Subcontinent

Week Two

Monday January 23 – Historical Backdrop of the Punjab and North India

Romila Thapar, "Regional History: The Punjab," *Cultural Pasts: Essays in Early Indian History* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 95-108

Wednesday January 25 – Life of Guru Nanak

G.S. Mann, *Sikhism*, pp. 18-28 & 78-83

John S. Hawley and Mark Juergensmeyer, "Nanak," *Songs of the Saints of India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 63-88

W.H. McLeod, "The Nanak-panth," *Sikhs & Sikhism* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 7-22

Christopher Shackle and Arvind-pal Singh Mandair, "Japji," *Teachings of the Sikh Gurus: Selections from the Sikh Scriptures* (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 1-20

Week Three

Monday January 30 – Legacy of Guru Nanak and the Succession of Guru Angad

J.S. Grewal, "The Shaloks of Guru Angad," *Lectures in History, Society, and Culture of the Punjab* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 2007), pp. 130-139

Wednesday February 1 – Expansion and Consolidation from Guru Angad to Guru Arjan

J. S. Grewal, "Evolution of the Sikh Panth (1539-1606)," *The Sikhs of the Punjab* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 42-61

Shackle and Mandair, "Guru as Word," *Teachings of the Sikh Gurus*, pp. 103-113

Shackle and Mandair, "Anand Sahib," *Teachings of the Sikh Gurus*, pp. 89-101

Nirmal Dass, *Songs of the Saints from the Adi Granth* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2000), pp. [Namadeva] 26-36, [Ravidas] 84-97, [Sheikh Farid] 202-209

Week Four

Monday February 6 – Martyrdom and Legacy of Guru Arjan

Louis E. Fenech, *Martyrdom in the Sikh Tradition: Playing the 'Game of Love'* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 117-123

Indu Banga, "Recent Studies on the Martyrdom of Guru Arjan: A Critique," *Guru Arjan's Contribution, Martyrdom, and Legacy* ed. Prithipal Singh Kapur and Mohinder Singh (Amritsar: Singh Brothers, 2009), pp. 162-179

Wednesday February 8 – The 17th century: Guru Hargobind to Guru Tegh Bahadur

G.S. Mann, *Sikhism*, pp. 24-38

J.S. Grewal, "Transformation of the Sikh Panth (1606-1708)," *The Sikhs of the Punjab*, pp. 62-73

Week Five

Monday February 13 – Guru Gobind Singh and the Khalsa

G.S. Mann, *Sikhism*, pp. 38-45

J.S. Grewal, "Institution of the Khalsa," in *The Khalsa and the Punjab: Studies in Sikh History, to the Nineteenth Century* ed. Himadri Banerjee (New Delhi: Tulika, 2002), pp. 9-19

Shackle and Mandair, "Zafarnama," *Teachings of the Sikh Gurus*, pp. 137-144

Iqtidar Alam Khan, "The Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh," *The Khalsa and the Punjab*, pp. 21-30

B.N. Goswamy, "The Call to Arms," *Piety and Splendour: Sikh Heritage in Art* (New Delhi: National Museum, 2000), pp. 66-87

Wednesday February 15 – The End of the Guru Period and the Rise of Banda Bahadur

G.S. Mann, *Sikhism*, pp. 45-51

J.S. Grewal, "Rise to Political Power (1707-1799)," *The Sikhs of the Punjab*, pp. 82-98

Week Six

Monday February 20 – The *Misl* Period and the Ascendancy of Maharaja Ranjit Singh

J.S. Grewal, "The Sikh Empire (1799-1849)," *The Sikhs of the Punjab*, pp. 99-127

Indu Banga, "Khalsa Ideology and Politics: Banda Bahadur to Ranjit Singh," *The Khalsa and the Punjab*, pp. 101-120

Nadhra Shahbaz Naeem, "Life at the Lahore Darbar: 1799-1839," *South Asian Studies* (Vol. 25, No. 2, 2010): pp. 283-301

Wednesday February 22 – Scripture and Sacred Space: *Guru Granth*, *Guru Panth*, and Gurdwara

G.S. Mann, *Sikhism*, pp. 72-78 & 88-92

- W.H. McLeod, "The Literature of the Sikhs," *Textual Sources for Study of Sikhism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 1984, pp.1-13
- G.S. Mann, "Scriptures and the Nature of Authority," *Theorizing Scriptures: New Critical Orientations to a Cultural Phenomenon*, ed. Vincent Wimbush (New Brunswick: Rutgers University, 2008), pp. 41-53
- J.S. Grewal, "The Darbar Sahib and Akal Takht," *The Sikhs: Ideology, Institutions, and Identity* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 95-120

Week Seven

Monday February 27 – Demise of the *Khalsa Raj* and the Rise of the British

- Ganda Singh, *Maharaja Duleep Singh's Correspondence* (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1977), pp. 75-108
- J.S. Grewal, "Recession and Resurgence," *The Sikhs of the Punjab*, pp. 128-156

Wednesday February 29 – Colonial Rule and the *Singh Sabha* Response

- G.S. Mann, *Sikhism*, pp. 55-65
- J.S. Grewal, "Colonial Rule and Cultural Reorientation," *Western Enterprise and Indian Response: Historical Writings on the Sikhs (1784-2011)* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2012)

Week Eight

Monday March 5 – **IN CLASS MIDTERM**

Wednesday March 7 – Sikhs and the Nationalist Movement

- J.S. Grewal, "In the Struggle for Freedom (1920-1947)," *The Sikhs of the Punjab*, pp. 157-180

Week Nine

Monday March 19 – The Partition of the Punjab

- Partition Maps from Lucy P. Chester, *Borders and Conflict in South Asia: The Radcliffe Boundary Commission and the Partition of the Punjab* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009)
- Harnam Singh, "Punjab: The Holy Land of the Sikhs," *The Sikh Memorandum to the Sapru Commission*, 1945, pp. 25-33
- Tan Tai Yong and Gyanesh Kudaisya, "A Community in Crisis," and "Capital Landscapes [sections on Lahore, Chandigarh, and Delhi]," *The Aftermath of Partition in South Asia*, (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 101-124 & 175-179, 188-193, 193-200
- "The Chief Sufferers: Abduction of Women during the partition of the Punjab," *Partition and Post-Colonial South Asia*, ed. Tan Tai Yong and Gyanesh Kudaisya (London: Routledge, 2008), 32-44
- Saadat Hasan Manto, "Toba Tek Singh," in *Bitter Fruit*, trans., Khalid Hasan (Delhi: Penguin, 2009), pp. 9-15

Wednesday March 21 – Punjab in the Politics of Post Independent India

- Tan Tai Yong and Gyanesh Kudaisya, "From Displacement to Development," *The Aftermath of Partition in South Asia*, pp. 125-140
- J.S. Grewal, "Towards the Punjabi Province (1947-1966)," *The Sikhs of the Punjab*, pp. 181-204

Week Ten

Monday March 26 – Film: *Nanak Nam Jabaaz Hai*

ESSAY #1 DUE

Wednesday March 28 – Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, Operation Bluestar and 1984

- Mark Tully and Satish Jacob, "The Assassination of a Prime Minister," "The Grievances of the Sikhs," and "The Rise of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale," *Amritsar: Mrs. Gandhi's Last Battle* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1985), pp. 1-14, 36-51, 52-61
- Cynthia Kepley Mahmood, "Blue Star" in *Fighting for Faith and Nation: Dialogues with Sikh Militants* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), pp. 73-108
- Chaitanya Kalbag, "The Sant's Son," and Ramachandra Guha, "The Axis Year," *Outlook Magazine* (Oct. 2009)

Week Eleven

Monday April 2 – Film Selections: *Maachis*, *Amu*, BBC documentaries on 1984

Wednesday April 4 – Sikh Rituals, Festivals, and Celebrations

G.S. Mann, *Sikhism*, pp. 83-87

W.H. McLeod, "Worship, Ritual, and Distinctive Customs," *Sikhism* (London: Penguin, 1997), pp. 134-153

Week Twelve

Monday April 9 – Sikh Sectarian Traditions

W.H. McLeod, "Sikh Sects," *Sikhism*, pp. 183-204

Mark Juergensmeyer, "Patterns of Pluralism: Sikh Relations with Radhosaomi" in *Sikh History and Religion in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Joseph T. O'Connell *et al* (Toronto: South Asian Studies, 1988), pp. 52-69

Wednesday April 11 – The Sikh Diaspora and the Politics of Immigration

Ronald Takaki, "The Tide of Turbans" in *Strangers From a Distant Shore* (New York: Penguin, 89), pp. 294-314

Tony Ballantyne, "Maharaja Dalip Singh, Memory, and the Negotiation of Sikh Identity," in *Between Colonialism and Diaspora: Sikh Cultural Formations in an Imperial World* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), pp. 86-120

Week Thirteen

Monday April 16 – Gender in the Sikh Tradition

G.S. Mann, *Sikhism*, pp. 102-106

Nikky Guninder Kaur Singh, "The Guru in Labor and the Birth of the Khalsa," *The Birth of the Khalsa: A Feminist Re-Memory of Sikh Identity* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2006), pp. 35-68

Wednesday April 18 – Happy, Healthy, and Holy: Counter Culture and Sikh *Dharam* in the West

Constance Elsberg, "A Brief Biography of Yogi Bhajan" "Clearing a Path, Building Bridges," & "Final Thoughts," *Graceful Women: Gender and Identity in an American Sikh Community* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2003), pp. 344-345, 55-90, 337-343

Week Fourteen

Monday April 23 – 9/11 and Sikhs as a Racialized Minority

Vinay Lal, "Sikh Kirpans in California Schools: The Social Construction of Symbols, Legal Pluralism, and the Politics of Diversity," *Amerasia Journal* 22:1(1996), pp. 57-89

Wednesday April 25 – Guest Speaker, To Be Announced

Week Fifteen

Monday April 30 –Concluding Reflections and Future Directions

G.S. Mann, *Sikhism*, pp. 106-117

W.H. McLeod, "Defining a Sikh," *Sikhism*, pp. 207-227

ESSAY #2 DUE BY TUESDAY MAY 8