

Religion 202. Question sheet 3: Sikhism.

NOTE: Please answer with schematic overviews, NOT in full sentences. Please do not type, but hand-write your answer

Fact Questions to study for the exam (required)

1. How would you define Sikhism in terms of geographic area, founder (give date), theology (view of God), sacred scripture, and praxis. Specify different types of Sikhs.
2. Outline briefly the historical process by which Sikhism became more and more defined as a separate religion (5 stages).
3. Determine authorship and place in Sikh sacred scripture of the Japjī and describe in what way it functions in Sikh ritual praxis.
4. To what extent could the message of Gurū Nānak be said to be a syncretic movement of Islam and Hinduism? Make an schematic overview of elements in Sikhism that can be compared to Islam (in particular Sufism) and to Hinduism (esp. Bhakti of the *nirguṇa* type). Relate to the text of the Japjī (see question 1 and 2 under text interpretation below)

Comparison questions to help you digest the material (optional)

1. Make a systematic comparison of Guru Nānak's religion with Sikhism of the 20th century. List both similarities and difference.
2. What parallels can you see between reform movements in Hinduism and Sikhism?
3. Make a systematic comparison between modern Sikh praxes and those of "White Sikhs". Which differences are felt to be offensive by Punjabi Sikhs? Why so, do you think?

Discussion questions (optional)

1. Outline briefly the discussion in Oxtoby 2002 (142-4) on Sikhism and women. Compare with the rhetoric on Sikh websites. How do you evaluate the author's argument?
2. Outline briefly the discussion of "White Sikhs" in Oxtoby 2002 (154-5). What parallels do you see with Hindu gurus successful in the West? Whence the appeal of such gurus?

Text interpretation questions to help you read the scriptures (optional)

1. What Hindu elements do you discern in the Japjī? Distinguish by strand of Hinduism, such as Upaniṣadic, Yoga, and in particular *nirguṇa bhakti*.
2. What elements could you characterize as Islam (in particular Sufism)?
3. How is this text structured content-wise?
4. Note how the text is structured form-wise (use of refrain, repetition, reference to author).