

Prelims Master Program (2023-24) – Ancient, Medieval, Art and Culture
Handout 28: Sikh Gurus (additional handout)

(1) Guru Nanak (1469-1539)	Sangat and Pangat
(2) Angad Dev (1539-1552)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invented Gurmukhi script Took interested in education of children – both physical as well as spiritual. Popularized Guru ka Langar (started earlier by Guru Nanak)
(3) Amar Das (1452-1574)	Guru Amardas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduced Anand Karaj marriage ceremony of Sikhs. Abolished Sati and Parda system among Sikhs
(4) Ram Das (1574-1581)	Cordial Relations with Akbar: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> He was impressed by their teachings, spirit of reform and social service through langar. He visited Govindval twice to meet Sikh Gurus - once Amardas and then Arjan. He granted land in Amritsar to the Sikhs. <p>After Akbar's death the cordial relationship between the Sikh gurus and the Mughal rulers came to an end. Gradually, hostility rose with the beginning of Jahangir's reign.</p>
(5) Arjan Dev (1581-1606)	He re-organized Sikhism. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transformed voluntary offerings into regular systematic tax/tribute. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Started systematic network for converting the people into the cult under Masands. Masands appointed their own deputies and made the people Sikhs of the Guru. Composed Sukhmani Sahib (later included in Adi Granth) Compiled Adi Granth Built Harmandir Sahab in 1604 (invited Mia Mir) Propounded the concept of Halemi/Halimi Raj (benign and just state, ideal state) <p>He was tortured and executed by Jahangir.</p>
(6) Har Gobind (1606-1644)	<p>Four important changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miri-Piri swords: around Guru's gird – spiritual and temporal authority Organized a small army of his own for armed resistance.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transformed the Sikh cult into a Sikh corps with such Saint Soldiers (sant sipahi) ○ Explained that extreme non-violence and pacifism would only encourage evil. He taught that it was necessary to take up the sword in order to protect the weak and the oppressed. ● Akal Takht: to hold court and conduct temporal business. ● Build Lohagarh fort in Haryana <p>Relations with Mughals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jahangir arrested the Guru and sent him to the fort of Gwalior where he remained for 12 years. ● Shah Jahan initially maintained cordial relations but later, there were some armed conflicts.
(7) Har Rai (1644-1661)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● He avoided any conflict with the Mughals but continued to maintain the army of sant-sipahis. Focused rather on missionary work. ● He supported Dara Shukoh during his flight to Punjab. Aurangzeb called him to the court, but he sent his son Ram Rai instead who was detained as a hostage in Delhi.
(8) Har Krishan (1661-1664)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Youngest of all Gurus, installed at the age of 5. ● Symbol of service. Died due to smallpox, while serving epidemic and famine-stricken people of Delhi.
(9) Tegh Bahadur (1665-75)	<p>Maintained the political and militant character of Sikhism even more strongly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The aspiration of sovereignty is clear from the use of title Sachcha Padshah. ● In his efforts to consolidate Sikhism, he turned first towards Khatri and then towards Jats. ● Firm believer in the right to freedom of worship. For that reason, he was first asked to convert and then executed by Aurangzeb.
(10) Gobind Singh (1675-1708)	<p>Path of Tegh, Degh (religion) and Fatah</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● He evolved a theory of struggle to provide a moral justification for the use of force against enemies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Concept of God as the mightiest warrior and the investiture of weapons with divinity. ● He was himself portrayed as Badshah Darvesh (both saint and a king) ● Declared that the purpose of his life was to work towards dharma-yuddha, to raise the virtuous and uproot the wicked.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translation of Krishnavatar – Dasam skandha of Bhagavat Purana. • Khalsa formation (1699): Structural change in the body of Sikhism. His declaration had three dimensions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It redefined the concept of authority within the Sikh community • It introduced a new initiation ceremony and code of conduct. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amrit Sanskar initiation of Panj Pyare who became Singh/lions. He gave the Sikhs the name Singh (lion) or Kaur (princess). • Five K – kesh, kangha, kara, kirpn, kachha - closer community bond with separate identity. • Idea of equality – Khalsa followers not only were equal to each others, but were collectively as important as the Guru. • Baisakhi and Diwali congregations of armed Singhs at Anandpur. • It provided the community with a new religious and political vision – Raj Karega Khalsa He was assassinated by a Pathan in 1708 at Nanded. After that, Guruship came to end and vested on Khalsa and Guru Granth.
(11) Guru Granth Sahib (1708--)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition of ten Gurus • Jaidev of Bengal • Namdev, Trilochan and Parmanand of Maharashtra • Sadhna of Sindh • Dhanna from Rajasthan • Bene, Ramanand, Kabir, Surdas and Ravidas from Uttar Pradesh • Sufi saint Baba Farid from Pak Pattan (now in Pakistan) • Also some hymns of the Bhattas or bards.