



History - What was the Sikh Empire?

culture*	A group of people's way of life, such as their traditions, languages, food and arts.	politics*	Actions or activities related to getting or using power.
cultural exchange*	People from different places share and learn from each other's ways of life, like their music, food, language or traditions.	remarked	A person or event that was reported on at the time and later.
historically significant	A person, event, place or idea that is considered important.	Sikh Empire	A powerful kingdom based in the Punjab, founded and led by Ranjit Singh from 1799 to 1849.
legacy*	Past events or actions which have had a lasting impact.	society*	A group of individuals living together in a community.
perspective*	How someone sees things based on what they know and how they feel.	tax*	A certain amount of money that is paid to the government.

The Sikh Empire

The Sikh Empire was founded in the early 19th century by Ranjit Singh who united the 12 Sikh Misls (independent states). The empire expanded to include regions that today are within India, Pakistan and parts of Afghanistan. With Lahore as its capital, the empire was a symbol of Sikh strength and religious inclusion.



Credit: World History Archive / Alamy Stock Photo



Maharaja Ranjit Singh

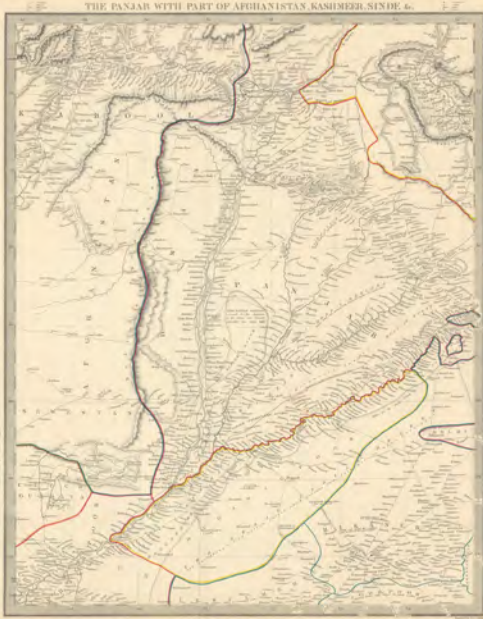
Ranjit Singh was a brave and clever leader who created the Sikh Empire in the early 1800s. He built a powerful army and ruled fairly, allowing people of all backgrounds and faiths to live peacefully. The Sikh Empire grew to be rich and successful because of his reforms including improving trade, roads and buildings, like coating the Harmandir Sahib gurdwara in gold.

Credit: World History Archive / Alamy Stock Photo

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Punjab

The Punjab is a region in South Asia, including today's India and Pakistan. It was named after the Persian words 'Punj' (five) and 'Aab' (waters) as it was the land of five rivers. It is the birthplace of the Sikh faith and where the powerful, unified Sikh Empire rose.

Credit: Rainer Lesniewski / Alamy Stock Vector

Lahore

Lahore was a significant city in the Sikh Empire. It had busy markets where traders bought and sold spices, clothes, jewellery and horses. Skilled workers made weapons, fine fabrics and gold jewellery, too. As it was on a major trade route, people came from faraway places like Persia (Iran) and Central Asia to do business.

Sophia Duleep Singh

Sophia Duleep Singh was the granddaughter of Ranjit Singh. She lived in Britain and became famous for fighting for women's rights. At that time, women in Britain were not allowed to vote. Sophia joined a group called the suffragettes, led protests and even refused to pay taxes to show that women should have the same rights as men. During World War I, she paused her work with the suffragettes and helped wounded Indian soldiers.

Credit: The National Archives



Princess Sophia Duleep Singh selling "The Suffragette" outside Hampton Court Palace, where she has a suite of apartments.

