

GS Foundation 2024: Modern India
Handout 9: Afghanistan, Sindh, Punjab
Nikhil Sheth

Industrial Capitalism (1813-58)

- **Objective:** To convert India as a market for British manufactured goods and the supplier of raw materials
- **Political Policy** – bring maximum number of states under direct control. (Paramountcy and Annexationism)
- **Administrative Policy** – Substantial changes in the administrative structure
- **Economic Policy** – Commercialization of Agri, Deindustrialization, Free Trade, Drain of Wealth
- **Social Policy** – Reforms through English Education and Law (civilizing mission)
- **Cultural Policy** – Liberals, Utilitarians, Evangelism spreading of Christian religion



There was a significant change in the nature of British imperialism in the early part of the 19th century. The British became more aggressive particularly after the Marathas were vanquished in 1818. At one level they became more interfering, at another level aggressive.

- One can trace the beginning from the time of **Wellesley**, but he was discouraged by the authorities in London.
- However, from 1820s onwards, we can also see a change in the policy of the British authorities in London. They were now becoming more supportive and in 1813 came governor-general **Hastings of Moira** (1813-23) who spelt it out with a certain notion of paramountcy.
 - It aimed to assert British supremacy over all Indian native states. The policy asserted the Governor General's right to intervene in the internal affairs of the Indian princely states, and to supersede their authority if necessary. This was in contrast to the previous policy of non-interference. The policy of paramountcy was justified because the Indian princely states were not capable of governing themselves effectively, and that British intervention was necessary to maintain order and stability.
- This trend climaxed in the 1840s. During 1848 when governor-general **Dalhousie** embarked on a systematic policy of annexation of the territories of many of the more prominent princely states including **Awadh** (annexed in 1856). So, the annexation of Punjab forms a very important chapter in this history of a new kind of imperialism that began to surface its head from the early part of the 19th century.

Afghan Wars, Annexation of Sindh and Punjab, Conquest of Burma, defeat of Nepal etc must be located has to be situated in this larger historical backdrop of a new kind of imperialism which was becoming more aggressive, more interfering, more conscious about the security of the empire.

Political Policy: Conquests and Annexations

- Lord Hastings (1813-23): Anglo-Nepal War, Third Anglo Maratha War
- Lord Amherst (1823-28): Assam, First Anglo-Burmese War
- Lord William Bentick (1828-35): Policy of annexation – regions of Mysore, Central/Northern Cachar and Jaintia etc
- Lord Auckland (1836-42): First Anglo-Afghan War
- Lord Ellenborough (1842-44): Annexation of Sindh
- Lord Hardinge (1844-48): First Anglo-Sikh War
- Lord Dalhousie (1848-56): Second Anglo-Sikh War, Doctrine of Lapse, Misgovernance

Great Game

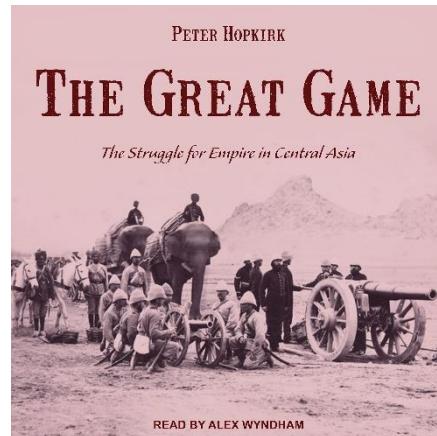
- The Great Game was a rivalry between the 19th century British and Russian Empires over influence in Asia, primarily in Afghanistan, Persia, and later Tibet.
- Britain feared Russia's southward expansion would threaten India, while Russia feared the expansion of British interests into Central Asia. As a result, Britain made it a high priority to protect all approaches to India, while Russia continued its military conquest of Central Asia.
- To protect India, Britain aimed to create a protectorate in Afghanistan, and support the Ottoman Empire, Persia, Khiva, and Bukhara as buffer states against Russian expansion. This would protect India and key British sea trade routes by blocking Russia from gaining a port on the Persian Gulf or the Indian Ocean.

North-western Policy:

As part of its long-term objective of bringing under imperial control the north-western Indian subcontinent, the East India Company tried to extend its empire to Afghanistan by launching a war against the kingdom in 1839. This **First Afghan War** was in fact a much larger affair; it encompassed **Punjab, Sind, and Baluchistan** as well, culminating in the subjugation of all these regions by the end of the 1840s.

Indian context:

- First Anglo-Afghan War of 1838
- Annexation of Sindh in 1843
- First Anglo-Sikh War of 1845
- Second Anglo-Sikh War of 1848
- Second Anglo-Afghan War of 1878



Afghanistan

The Graveyard of Imperial powers

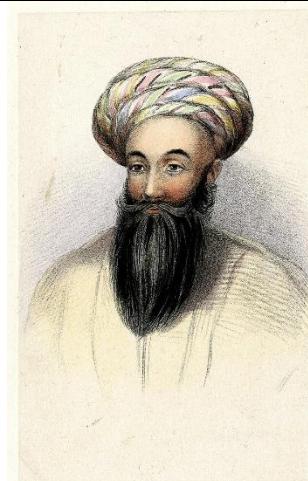
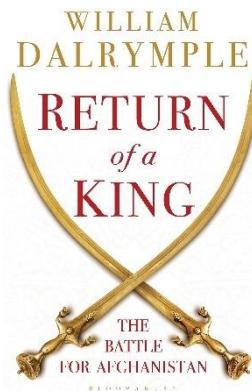
- Causes
 - To check Russian expansionist policy.
 - Trade route – economic importance.

- Dost Muhammad vs Shah Shuja:

- Dost Mohammad came to power in **1826**.
- Shah Shuja mobilized support for a campaign to dislodge Dost Mohammad and regain power. In **1833**, he launched an **invasion** of Afghanistan. He was supported by **Ranjit Singh** and had obtained the 'best wishes' of the **British**. However, in the middle of 1834 **Shuja was defeated** by Dost Mohammad at Kandahar.

- Auckland's Afghanistan Policy

- There was **sustained propaganda** in India and Britain suggesting that **Russia**, which was then penetrating Central Asia, might become a threat to the British Indian empire. This policy was vigorously pursued by **George Eden**, also known as the **Earl of Auckland** (governor general, 1836-42).
- A servant of the Company named **Alexander Burnes**, was **deputed to Kabul in 1837** on a so-called commercial mission. Burnes was unsuccessful in diplomatic negotiations with Dost Mohammad relating to Peshawar.
- It was now decided that **Shah Shuja be actively helped to overthrow Dost Mohammad**. Over the next few years, he committed themselves more seriously to the cause of Shah Shuja, making him an instrument of their policy of expansion in Afghanistan. As a prelude to the implementation of this scheme a treaty was signed between **Shah Shuja, Ranjit Singh, and the British (Tripartite Treaty of 1838)**.
- According to the original plan, Ranjit Singh was to render military support to Shah Shuja to enable him to acquire control over Afghanistan. In return, Shuja was to renounce claims over those territories of Afghanistan which had been acquired by the Punjab kingdom, particularly Peshawar.
- In December 1838, Ranjit Singh fell seriously ill, and never fully recovered. He passed away on 27 June 1839. The removal of Ranjit Singh from the scene, and the uncertainties of succession in the Punjab kingdom, made Shuja even more dependent on the British. Eventually, it was decided that British troops would accompany Shuja on his march to Kabul.



Shah Shuja Mulk



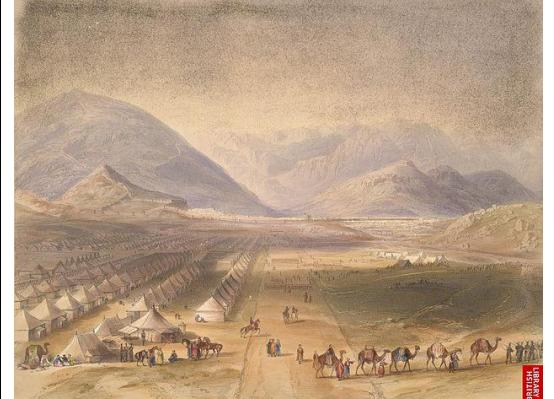
Dost Muhammad

The First Anglo-Afghan War (1839-42)

- The Punjab army was to march from Peshawar to Kabul via the Khyber Pass. But it couldn't move beyond Peshawar.
- The Company's contingents, which now constituted the main force – **Army of the Indus** – was to take a southerly route through Sind and Baluchistan and proceed to Kabul through the Bolan Pass in 1839.

- **Initial British Victory (1839)**

- The Army of the Indus was able to occupy Kandahar and Ghazni on its way to Kabul.
- Dost Mohammad retreated from Kabul as the British army approached Kabul; and Shah Shuja was proclaimed as the ruler.
- Soon, they became complacent without noticing Afghan discontent.



Kabul during the First Anglo-Afghan War

- **British stuck in Kabul**

- It soon became apparent that the new ruler could not maintain his position without continuing British presence. Thus, it was decided that the British force would stay on for some time.
- Two worries:
 - It was clear that a large armed force stationed at a considerable distance from the borders of the Indian empire was an **expensive proposition**.
 - Another cause of worry was that **Punjab was unwilling to allow the British army to march** through its territory.

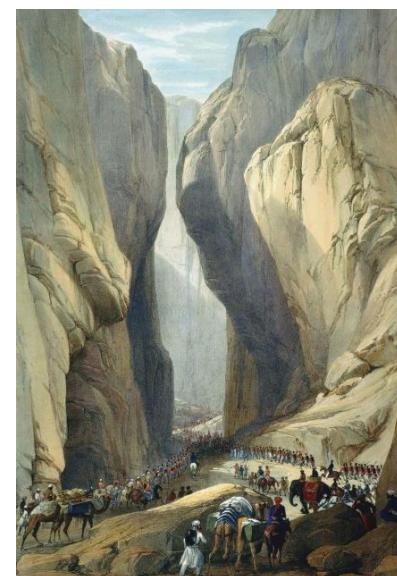
- **Dost Mohammad decided to negotiate with them since his forces were too small for a sustained offensive.**

- The British authorities agreed to his **voluntary exile in India**. He was placed under virtual house arrest in **Mussoorie**. He was to return a few years later as ruler of Afghanistan.

- The situation continued to deteriorate despite the exile of Dost Mohammad.

- **Retreat of the British Army (1842)**

- **The Army of the Indus commenced its retreat** in January 1842.
- It met with **stiff opposition from local tribal communities** on the route linking Kabul with Jalalabad.



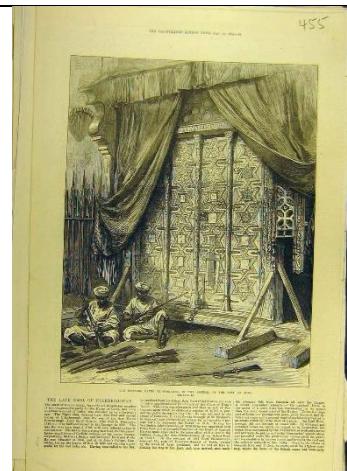
- Almost the entire British force (which consisted of a large number of Indian sipahis fighting a colonial war), of nearly 16,000 men, was wiped out much before Jalalabad.
- The First Afghan War was the **most comprehensive defeat the British faced** in their colonial wars during the nineteenth century, and one in which they suffered huge losses. British prestige was heavily damaged.
- **Auckland → Ellenborough**
 - In February 1842, Auckland had been succeeded by **Lord Ellenborough as governor general** (1842-44).
 - Shah Shuja → Dost Muhammad
 - The **final catastrophe** for the British cause was the **assassination of Shah Shuja** in April 1842, it was decided that Dost Mohammad be released so that he could return to power in Afghanistan. Upon his return to Kabul, Dost Mohammad once again became the ruler of Afghanistan and reigned till his death in 1863.
 - Army of Retribution
 - In order to salvage British prestige, and avenge the humiliation of the Afghan debacle, Ellenborough formed a so-called **Army of Retribution**, which indulged in senseless violence in Afghanistan and then returned to India. This allowed Ellenborough to claim that the British army was victorious and therefore invincible!



Lord Auckland
(1836-42)



Lord Ellenborough
(1842-44)



The supposed Gates of Somnath

Sindh

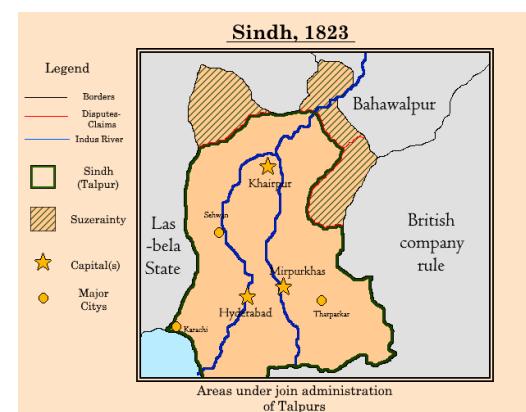
The Afghan War had created conditions for the conquest of Sind. The process which finally led to the annexation of the region was set in motion just as British forces retreated from Afghanistan.

Causes behind Sindh's annexation:

- Russophobia:
 - To counter Russian expansion in NW of India
 - Sind was passing through a phase of internal crisis it could have easily target for Russians.
- Tail of Afghan War:
 - After the defeat in the First Afghan War, the Company lost influence in Afghanistan. It was thus necessary for the company to strengthen its defence on Afghanistan-Sind border by annexing Sind.
 - Afghan expedition was a blow to British prestige. They wanted to restore it by annexing Sindh.

Evolution of Sindh Policy:

In the early nineteenth century Sind was ruled by **chiefs/amirs of the Talpur clan**.



The colonial penetration of Sind:

Sind was an independent state and the John Company had friendly relations with Sind. The Company repeatedly promised to protect unity and integrity of Sindh.

- For the 1st time the English company came into contact with Sind in 1775 when it set up 1st factory at Thatta. This factory was abandoned in 1792 due to commercial reasons.
- **French Menace and Early Treaties**
 - During the Napoleonic Wars, a **treaty (1809)** was signed with the amirs under which they agreed not to allow the French into the region.
 - This was followed up by another **treaty in 1820** intended to exclude all Europeans (and Americans) from Sind.
- **Commercial Explorations and Treaty of 1832**
 - Alexander Burnes's brother James visited Hyderabad in the late 1820s and published an account of his stay at the court of Hyderabad.
 - It was in the early 1830s that the British began to systematically gather information about Sind. **Alexander Burnes**'s espionage mission of 1831 was the first major attempt to explore the lower Indus.

- Treaty of 1832 – A more substantial treaty was concluded in 1832 which compelled the amirs to open their territories, the river Indus particularly, to commerce. This marked the beginning of regular British intervention in the affairs of the Sind.

- **Punjab politics and a Treaty of 1832**

- The southward expansion of the Ranjit Singh in the direction of Shikarpur in northern Sind lent urgency to British manoeuvres.
- At this point, the British intervened and offered their 'protection' to the amirs, forcing another treaty (1838) on them.
 - It was this treaty that led to the appointment of a resident at Hyderabad. Henry Pottinger played a prominent role in the 1830s in undermining the authority of the Sind amirs.



Alexander Burns

He traveled in 1831 up the Indus River from Sind, delivering gifts to the local rulers, exploring the regions he visited, and eventually reaching Lahore.

- **Afghan Expedition and Treaty of 1839**

- During Kabul expedition, Karachi was occupied in 1839, following which another treaty was signed with the amirs under which they were forced to accept a subsidiary force and pay Rs 3 lakhs per annum towards its expenses.

- **Ellenborough sends Charles Napier → another treaty and interference.**

- Shortly after Ellenborough took over as governor general, Charles Napier, a senior British military officer, was appointed the Company's supreme military commander and Resident in Sind and given wide-ranging political authority.
- Premeditated Plan
 - *"We have no right to seize Sindh, yet we shall do so and a very advantageous, useful and inhumane piece of rascality, it will be."* – Charles Napier.
- **False allegations**
 - He alleged that during the Afghan War the amirs had conspired against the British. This became the pretext for imposing a new treaty on them. The conditions were so unreasonable that the amirs were unwilling to comply. The terms included virtual surrender of sovereignty, demands for territory, resources, and money.
- **Interference in Khairpur Factionalism**
 - At the same time the British made use of a factional tussle at Khairpur, where they assisted Amir Rustam Ali's half-brother Ali Murad, in dislodging him. Then British promptly accorded recognition to Ali Murad.



- The course of war
 - As news of what had happened at Khairpur spread, there was a spontaneous mobilization for resistance against the British. A major objective of this mobilization was the reinstatement of Rustam Ali.
 - Troops loyal to the amirs gathered at Hyderabad. On 17 February 1843, a battle took place between the two armies at Miani, on the outskirts of Hyderabad, and the **Sind forces were defeated**. The chief of Mirpur still held out. He finally retreated to Afghanistan where he lived in voluntary exile until his death.
- Outcome
 - Ali Murad was rewarded for his support by being acknowledged ruler of the principality of Khairpur.
 - The rest of Sind was annexed by the British. Napier was made governor of the province, a position he held till 1847.

Foreign Affairs.

It is a common idea that the most laconic military despatch ever issued was that sent by CÆSAR to the Horse-Guards at Rome, containing the three memorable words "*Veni, vidi, vici*," and, perhaps, until our own day, no like instance of brevity has been found. The despatch of Sir CHARLES NAPIER, after the capture of Scinde, to LORD ELLENBOROUGH, both for brevity and truth, is, however, far beyond it. The despatch consisted of one emphatic word—" *Peccavi*," "I have Scinde," (*sinned*).

Aggressive policy of paramountcy, and Russophobia as security challenge to the British Empire came face to face with a situation in Punjab after the collapse of Ranjit Singh's Kingdom. British intervention in this region in 1840s, was provoked by the fear of a troubled frontier.

Punjab in the 18th century

- Sikh movement was basically a bhakti movement with agrarian base. It spread among the Jats and other castes of the Punjab. Originally, it was a peaceful religious sect, but it soon was militarized due to the prolonged wars with the Mughals. Sikhs soon emerged as a martial community and became well known for their fighting spirit by the reign of Aurangzeb.

- **Banda Singh Bahadur (r. 1708-16)**

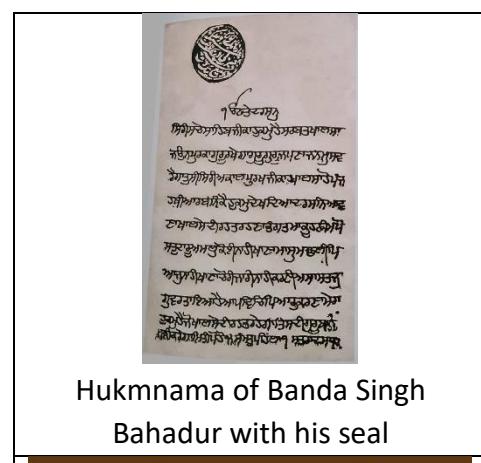
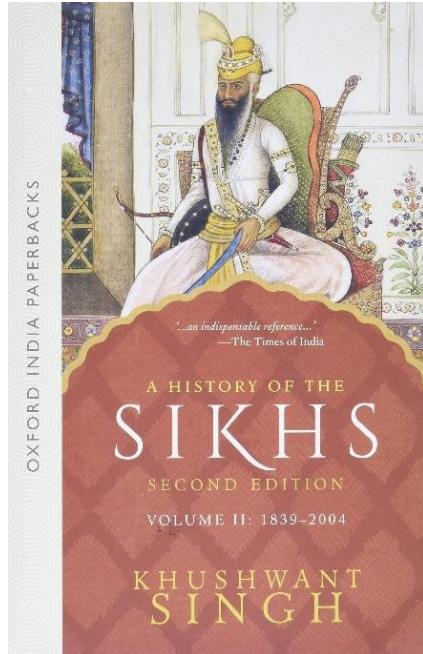
- Short lived Sikh rule in Punjab with social and economic reforms.
- He carried the Sikhs revolt against the Mughals, but a Mughal noble, Hussain Ali, defeated and killed Banda Bahadur at the fort of Lohagarh. Hence this rebellion subsided for some time.

- **Era of foreign invasions:**

- There were frequent invasions from the northwest. Nadir Shah came to India via that route. Later, Ahmad Shah Abdali, who was firmly anchored in Afghanistan in Kabul, made Punjab his target and certain regions of Punjab were occupied by Abdali.

- **Formation of Sikh Confederacy**

- In this situation, many of these Sikh leaders managed to establish their little kingdoms in the latter half of the 18th century to create a kind of a centrifugal Sikh polity. These kingdoms came up in the region of Doabs.
- Here various locally powerful sardars created certain institutions like Rakhi, whereby they promised protection for a certain amount of resource that the peasants were obliged to pay.

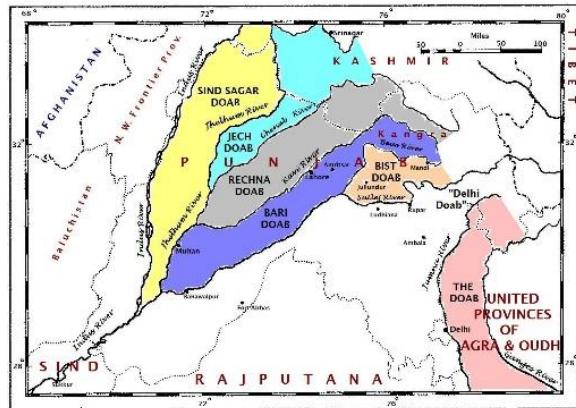


Hukmnama of Banda Singh Bahadur with his seal



First Sikh Coins – Banda Singh Bahadur (1712)

- Those who are capable of offering such protection were able to create **misl**, local military communities. (eg Bhangi, Sukerchakia, Ahluwalia etc)
- These misls together tried to create the kind of **Sikh polity** based on **Dal Khalsa** (military wing) on the one hand and **Gurmat** on the other.



Sikhism Mislas and Their Founders

S. No.	Sikhism Mislas	Founders
1.	Faizalpuria Misla (Singhpuria Misla)	Nawab Kapoor Singh
2.	Ahluvalia Misla	Jassa Singh Ahluvalia
3.	Bhangi Misla	Sardar Hari Singh
4.	Ramgarhia Misla	Jassa Singh Ichchhagilia
5.	Kanhiyan Misla	Jai Singh
6.	Sukar Chakia Misla	Charata Singh
7.	Fulkiya Misla	Chaudhary Phool
8.	Dallevasia Misla	Gulab Singh
9.	Nishanvalia Misla	Sangat Singh, Mahar Singh
10.	Karorsindhia or Panchagarhia Misla	Baghel Singh
11.	Saheed Misla or Nihang Misla	Baba Deep Singh
12.	Nakkai Misla	Sardar Hira Singh

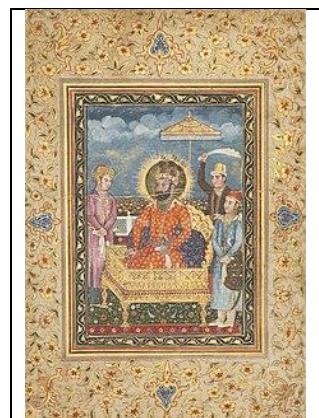
19th century: Rise of Ranjit Singh (Punjab Kesari)

This Sikh polity had the memory of anti-Mughal resistance as in ideology and faced the military compulsion of containing the Afghans. This demanded the emergence of a more organized and more powerful leadership.

It was Ranjit Singh of the **Sukarchakia** misl, who, by dint of his leadership, competency and muscle power, fused the various Sikh misls into a powerful state.

Born in 1780, assumed the leadership of the **sukarchakia** misl at the age of 12 after the premature death of his father.

- His main source of strength for was his **army**. He modelled it on European style, on East India Company's army. It became the second largest army in Asia.



Zaman Shah Durrani

- He also introduced the **system of vassalage** – all these great Sikh sardars in other places were enticed to be his vassals. But this vassalage was only a step towards final subjugation of these Sikh leaders by Ranjit Singh.

There was a period of **expansion**.

- Initially, Ranjit Singh was firmly established in **Lahore in 1799** then **Amritsar** came under his control in **1805**. The control over the holy city of Amritsar gave him a certain advantage. Thus, both the political and religious capital of Sikhism was under him.
- Shortly thereafter, he forced **all the Sikh chiefs west of the river Sutlej** to acknowledge him as the King of Punjab and thus **created a unified state**.
- With his control established in the doab, he began to move further **westwards and northwards**, bringing under his control the **hill chiefs in Jammu, Kashmir and Kangra (1819)**, and containing the **Afghans**. The Afghan strongholds at **Multan (1818)** and **Peshawar (1834)** fell one after another.



This powerful Kingdom was capable of generating a measure of **prosperity** as well.

- It was natural for Ranjit Singh to look after **irrigation** facilities for the peasants because ultimately rural peasantry (esp. Jat Sikhs) was the main support base.
- At the same time, Ranjit Singh brought **order and security** to the region which was beleaguered by invasions and instability for a long time. There began the **trade revival** which brought more prosperity, greater income and propelled the **artisanal industry**.

So, this is how the basis of a **powerful kingdom** was created. It was not just a kind of a **military state**. It could draw on **huge economic resources** (agriculture, trade revival, handicraft revival) which gave Ranjit Singh the kind of power that he was able to exert over the entire region.

Treaty of Amritsar (1809)

- When Ranjit Singh tried to capture **cis-Sutlej**, the states here appalled British for help.
- The English, who had been so far watching Ranjit Singh's expansionist policy with a deep sense of concern, **responded instantly**. They now found a pretext to poke their nose into the Punjab. The Punjab had become particularly important from the British point of view as at that time they **apprehended Napoleonic invasion** into India through Afghanistan.
 - British officer at Ludhiana, **David Ochterlony**, declared the states under British **patronage** and provided **protection**. It was an open warning to Ranjit Singh to control his ambition by threat with open conflict.
- Ranjit Singh finally entered into the **Treaty of Amritsar with EIC not to invade the cis-Sutlej region**. By this treaty:
 - Ranjit Singh was forced to give up all his claims on the Cis-Sutlej states which were to be henceforth under the protection of the British. (British sphere of influence)

- In return, the British too, acknowledged Ranjit Singh's sovereign authority on the western side of Sutlej.

Causes of the Anglo-Sikh war: Both Strategic and Economic

Though Ranjit Singh could not permanently eradicate the possibility of foreign aggression, he could give a stable and strong administration to the people of the Punjab. So far as Ranjit Singh was alive, he checked the ambitions of local nobles and controlled the army. Once he was dead, **internal turmoil and conspiracies** started in the Court. Thus, Ranjit Singh's death in 1839 was followed by a **period of political uncertainty, family rivalry and factionalism**.

- A series of **weak rulers** sat on throne one after another.
- Sikh court was divided into **two factions** – who wanted to be kingmakers.
- Maharaja Ranjit Singh had created 2nd biggest **army** in entire Asia but after his death in 1839, a situation of internal **disorder** developed. There was also a division between **civil authority and military authority**.

The internal political turmoil was watched by the British. In fact, they had been throwing their greedy glances on the western bank of Sutlej since the days of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The time was now ripe for them. This situation of relative instability made for an important change in British policy. This was a departure from the position that the British had taken in 1809 in the Treaty of Amritsar.

- British were still **apprehensive of a Russian invasion**.
- First half of the 19th c **neo-Victorian Imperialism under the influence of Industrial Revolution**: Objective to exploit the resources of the colonies.

After 1839, it was very troublesome time for Punjab.

Sikh Emperors		
Till1839	Maharaja Ranjit Singh	
1839	Kharak Singh (eldest son)	He one of Ranajit Singh's sons and became the ruler as per the desire of Ranajit Singh himself. However, Kharak Singh didn't have a long life.
1839–1840	Nau Nihal Singh	Kharak Singh died on 5 November 1840; Nau Nihal Singh (his own son) died on the same day when a gateway, likely accidentally, fell on him.
1841–1843	Sher Singh	Sher Singh became the new ruler in 1841 with the support of Dhyan Singh. He in turn was assassinated in 1843, and Dhyan Singh too was killed.
1843–1849	Duleep Singh (youngest son)	The army now supported the claim of Dalip Singh the youngest son of Ranjit Singh, to be the maharaja. Dalip Singh was a minor, barely five years old at this time. Rani Jindan became regent for the minor maharaja. The strong support of the army ensured the ascendancy

		of Rani Jindan in the years between the accession of Dalip Singh and the First Punjab War.
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The First Anglo-Sikh War (1845-1846) – Lord Hardinge (1844-1848)

Certain factors made the military friction between the English and the Sikhs inevitable.

- Major Broadfoot, was appointed as the British agent in 1844. He provoked the Khalsa army by repeatedly insulting and alienating the Sikh sardars and army officials.
- This was a premeditated war. The British mobilized their army on the other side of Sutlej. Sikhs too started preparations to counter a possible British attack. By this time, the Khalsa/Sikh army became somewhat independent of the control of the palace or of the control of the rulers.
- Rani Jindan, under the influence of a section of the Sikh chiefs ordered the army to strike at the British. The governor general, Henry Hardinge, who had succeeded Ellenborough in 1844, declared war on 13 December 1845. Sikh Army crossed the river, and the wars were fought. The First Punjab War dragged on for nearly two months. Eventually the Sikh Army lost out.
- Then in **1846**, the Sikh court had to sign the Treaty of Lahore.
 - Subsidiary Alliance Treaty
 - The size of the Khalsa army was reduced to 20,000 infantry and 12,000 cavalry
 - The British Army was stationed at Lahore for some time.
 - A British resident was appointed in the Sikh court.
 - British were to be indemnified with Rs 1.5 crores for the expenses of the war
 - British took possession of the fertile Jullundhar Doab (between Sutlej and Beas)
 - Sikhs had to lose a large area including Kashmir. Kashmir was sold to a Dogra Sardar Gulab Singh for 50 Lakh rupees.

Tensions soon surfaced between the resident at Lahore, Henry Lawrence, and the regent, Rani Jindan. A new treaty was signed in December 1846 to strengthen the position of the resident and simultaneously marginalize Rani Jindan.

- A council of regency was constituted, comprising eight Punjab chiefs. The council was to function under the supervision of the resident.
- British troops were to remain in Punjab, for whose maintenance Rs 22 lakhs had to be paid annually.
- This arrangement would continue till 1854 when Dalip Singh came of age.

Rani Jindan, as might have been expected, continued to be very hostile to the Company's officials. In August 1847, Rani Jindan was compelled to leave Lahore so as to curtail her influence.

Thus, the British control over domestic policy and foreign policy was established in a Sikh state. Sikhs lost their autonomy. Virtually, the British control was established by 1847. **British resident** was practically running the Sikh state after the first war. Duleep Singh was just a nominal ruler. Still, the Punjab was a kind of a princely state with a British resident. Between 1846 Treaty and annexation in 1849, it was a small step.

The Second Anglo-Sikh War (1849) – Lord Dalhousie (1848-56)

The Treaty of Lahore could not satisfy the British imperialist appetite. On the other hand, the freedom loving Sikhs were not happy with the Treaty of Lahore. What really worried the Sikhs was the presence of the British army in the Punjab. The British army which had penetrated the Punjab was never withdrawn by the British. The Punjab army had not yet reconciled to British presence in the kingdom. So, another conflict was inevitable.

Dalhousie came to India in 1848 and started his aggressive imperial policy. He undertook the annexation of Punjab in 1849.

Such a prominent presence of the British the resident trying to control the government, to undermine the Council of Regency, to pension of Rani Jindan; all this created a certain kind of grievance in the Punjab and there was resistance against it. It led to the Sikh revolt in 1848. There ensued a series of rebellions in Multan and Lahore led by Mulraj and Chattar Singh respectively. Once the preparations for the invasion were completed, British forces under Gough crossed into Punjab in November 1848. This marked the beginning of the war, even though no formal declaration of war was made.

The decisive war: battle of Gujarat (battle of guns). Sikhs were finally defeated and Dalhousie annexed Punjab in 1849. The Khalsa militia was disbanded. British forced Dileep Singh, the infant ruler, to sign the document of annexation. Dileep was sent out to England, and he lived the rest of his life in England as an exile. Thus, the last major autonomous Indian state became a part of the British Indian Empire.



Battle of Chillianwala

13th January, 1849

Remembering the historic day in the fight for Indian Independence.

Battle of Chillianwala was fought during the 2nd Anglo-Sikh war and the sikh army was led by Sher Singh while the British army was led by Commander in Chief, Hugh Gough.

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Both armies held their positions at the end of the battle and both sides claimed victory. The battle was a strategic check to immediate British ambitions in India and a shock to British military prestige. It dealt a blow to British morale and is testament to the tenacity and martial skill of the Sikh army.

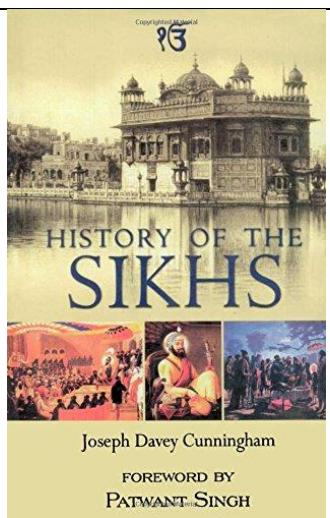
the roots of collapse of shikh state can been seen in reign of ranjeet singh

1) despite its big size and military strength shikh state was in medieval in nature it did not evolve its own modern institutions. even Thoe Ranjeet singh united shikh under the banner of national monarchy he actively aided the process of feudalities as he did not have enough resources to pay Hugh army, he started Distributing jagir in leave of salary it created class of feudal military aristocrats how are tight to land and not to the state.

2) so long as there existed powerful monarch like Ranjeet singh ,shikh against the common enemy British however the under the week successor of ranjeet singh there was mutual rivalry in the family and shikh court to factualism fail pray factionalism

3) the jagir system also weekend the army and contributed to undiscipline character ranjeets singh turn the khalsa army to heroic fighting force but British were superior in army and ammunition and resources.

4) ranjeet singh was powerless to Havert future brish dangerous he protected the panjab from british expansion temporally but effectively he pass the matter onto his successor



Joseph Cunningham, brother of Alexander Cunningham, was a soldier-scholar in the Company army. He wrote the History of the Sikhs in 1849.