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# Sikh-Muslim Relations in the Post-Ranjit Singh Period, 1839-1849: A Reappraisal

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Plethora of literature has been produced on the Sikh history of the Punjab and more importantly analyzing the era of Ranjit Singh. However, not a single academic and research study is done on the successors of the Ranjit Singh. Even those who have written on the successors of the Ranjit Singh have not properly addressed the Sikh-Muslim relations during the post-Ranjit Singh period and this article attempts to fill the research gap in the historical literature of the post-Ranjit period from 1839 to 1849. There are allegations against the Sikh rulers for the mistreatment of the Muslims during the post-Ranjit Singh. Therefore, it is of immense importance to explore, investigate and analyze the Sikh-Muslim relation in the post-Ranjit Singh period. This study will try to find answer to the following queries: What was religious policy of the Sikh rulers and what was response of the Muslims to these. The study argues that though there were few incidents which went against the Muslim population but the Sikh-Muslim relations did not deteriorate in the post Ranjit Singh period as well. Though there were opportunities for the rulers and the ruled to go against each other but neither the rulers' lunched anti-Muslim policies nor the Muslims reacted and revolted against them.

## Introduction

Sikh power in the Punjab underwent an unpredictable and rapid decline during the period under discussion. Within a decade four rulers, namely Kharak Singh, NauNihal Singh, Sher Singh and Dilip Singh, held power, but none of them could prevent the fall of the Sikh empire caused by both internal and external threats. After the demise of Ranjit Singh in 1839, a war of succession started among his heirs.<sup>1</sup> Internal disputes and political hostilities severely weakened the state. The British East India Company cunningly exploited this opportunity and waged wars against the Sikhs to realize their long-held dream of taking over the Punjab in 1849.

Unlike Ranjit Singh, his successors lacked political sagacity and leadership qualities. They were more interested in securing their rule than strengthening the state.<sup>2</sup> The Punjabis were divided and the court split into a number of groups. The Dogra Hindus stood up against the Sikhs and started challenging their power. However, Muslims mostly remained indifferent to all these developments during the early years of the decade.<sup>3</sup> In this crisis and struggle for the survival of Sikh rule, the Muslims remained loyal citizens and showed no sign of revolt; similarly, the state did not deprive the Muslims of their fundamental rights.

However, the British and their Hindu allies were successful in capitalizing on the situation and were able to capture and merge the Punjab into the British Raj. Therefore, an attempt has been made in this article to investigate how the Sikhs adopted their communal policy, particularly towards the Muslim community during this period, and how the Muslims reacted to the declining Sikh rule in the Punjab and their policies.

### **Sikh Rulers (1839-49)**

On his death in 1839, Maharaja Ranjit Singh passed on to his successors a prosperous, peaceful and tolerant Punjab. For 40 years he had ruled the Punjab with a balance of ambition and patience. His ambition expanded the *Khalsa* Empire from Dera Ghazi (DG) Khan to Peshawar and Kashmir and his patience won him the support of the *Akali* warriors. His foresight kept the British away from the Punjab and his fair conduct earned him the allegiance and loyalty of the Muslim majority in the Punjab. Despite the intricate socio-political history of the two communities, he skillfully handled the relationship between Sikhs and Muslims. He made mistakes, at times bad ones, but he corrected most and learned from them.

Yet within a few years of his death, all the hard-earned and cherished victories of the 'Lion of the Punjab' were wasted by his unscrupulous successors, and subsequently the Sikh kingdom fell to the British. In contrast to the reflections of many historians, the present author maintains that the Sikh monarchy founded by Ranjit Singh was 'Napoleonic in the suddenness of its rise, the brilliancy of its success and the completeness of its overthrow'.<sup>4</sup> However, it was, indeed, shattered into pieces within 10 years of his death.

Numerous factors were responsible for the decline of the Sikh rule in the Punjab. However, the present author identifies three key reasons. First is the disputed succession of Kharak Singh to the throne, which was not accepted or supported by many, including his own wife and son. In fact, Ranjit Singh himself seems to be mainly responsible for this uncertainty around the succession. Despite his being the eldest son, the obvious succession of Kunwar (Prince) Kharak Singh was not formally announced until the Maharaja was on his deathbed.<sup>5</sup> This ambiguity and uncertainty encouraged the ambitions of the Prince's rivals, and Kharak Singh faced serious opposition and intrigues on his accession. From the first day, the Dogra brothers and his own son NauNihal Singh were conspiring against him and weakening his rule. Moreover, Ranjit Singh had done little to train the Prince to run the *Khalsa* state after his death. Making no significant contribution to the strengthening of the Sikh kingdom, Kharak Singh was no match for the political and administrative wisdom and even physical strength of his father, his rival Sher Singh, his brother or NauNihal Singh, his son. In short, the selection of Kharak Singh as ruler of the Punjab was not a wise decision.

The second reason flowed from the first. The dispute around the succession weakened the Sikh hold on the state and resurrected a deeper political issue, the old antagonism between various courtiers, chieftains and families, mainly Sikhs and Hindus who were holding important positions in the kingdom: A detailed discussion of these rivalries and the resulting negative impact follows in the following sections.

The weakening of state authority also gave birth to the third key reason for the fall of the Sikh kingdom: the rise of the army as a major political player in the state. As the intrigues and disputes among various groups intensified, the significance of the army rapidly grew. Every group wished to have the army on its side against the rival group, and consequently the army assumed a pivotal role in deciding both the succession and the fate of the kingdom. This antagonism not only politicized the institution of the army but also badly weakened it. An army, which had been formidable, and a source of pride and strength became a saleable commodity as its members fought only for those who could pay them. This situation hastened the fall of the Sikh Empire.

### **Council of Ministers: Muslims' Role and Representation**

Maharaja Ranjit Singh had delegated power to Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs to discharge state functions; Dhian Singh Dogra led the Hindu group, and the Fakir Brothers the Muslim group. He did not enforce the *Khalsa* code of conduct on anyone. Dhian Singh Dogra, who was actually a Hindu, was made prime minister of the *Khalsa* state, and his whole family was eventually involved in state administration. The Fakir Brothers and other Muslims held portfolios of foreign and internal affairs, medicine, science and the army under the *Sarkar Khalsa*.

The Sikh group comprised nobles from all over the Punjab, such as Dhanna Singh Malwai, the Majithia brothers, the Sandhawalia brothers, Ahluwalias, Ramgarhias, the Virks of Sheikhpura, and the Bajwas of Narowal. This group was mostly involved in the defense of the state. Sikhs dominated the cavalry, but the artillery was under the command of the Muslims. Ranjit Singh had kept a fine balance among all three groups. His rewards, privileges and promotions were meant only for capable and loyal people; religion, communal or familial affiliations were hardly considered.

After the death of Ranjit Singh the Council of Ministers and the nobility of the *darbar* were also divided. The Dogra's group included Gulab Singh, Dhian Singh, Suchet Singh and Dhian Singh's son Hira Singh, who was a favorite of the Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The other group included the Sikh *sardars* Sandhanwalia, Attariwalias and Majithias.

There was another group, not allied to any other, who did not take any part in of the intrigues of the *darbar*. The Fakir Brothers were the most prominent among them. They continued their service to the Lahore *Darbar* as advisors on various matters, especially foreign affairs and medicine. The brothers' influence continued during the reigns of Kharak Singh and NauNihal Singh. Dhian Singh respected them and always consulted them on important state matters. Maharaja Sher Singh assigned Fakir Azizuddin to get help from the British in handling the Sikh army.<sup>6</sup>

Following the death of Sher Singh, Fakir Azizuddin stopped taking an active part in the politics of the Punjab, due largely to his poor health. His eldest son, Fakir Shahdin, worked as *wakil* (ambassador) in Ferozpur until his death in 1842. Fakir Chiraghudin, another son, replaced his brother in the post and continued even during the British period.<sup>7</sup>

Fakir Azizuddin's brother, Fakir Imamuddin, was governor of the fort of GovindGarh. He continued as such until his death in 1844. His son Tajuddin replaced him as governor of GovindGarh and continued until his death in 1846.<sup>8</sup>

Fakir Nuruddin, the third brother, was also a trusted courtier of the Lahore *Darbar*. Understanding the significance of the British power, he and Fakir Azizuddin always strove to maintain amiable relations between the British and the Sikh Empire. The Sikh army respected him greatly, and when Rani Jindan sent him with Diwan Dina Nath and Sardar Attar Singh to negotiate with the army, he was the only one who the army did not insult. He was also an important member of the council established to administer the Punjab under the regency of Maharaja Dilip Singh in 1846. He was a wise person and worked for the welfare of the state. His son, Fakir Zahoouddin, was the teacher of Dilip Singh.<sup>9</sup>

Similarly the *jagirdar* of Mamdot, Jamaluddin Khan, who hailed from the ruling family of Kasur, fought for the Sikhs against the British during the war of Mudki. The British approached him to help them against the Sikh army and also promised to reward him well, but he refused. His cousin Fatah-ud-Din also fought for the Sikhs and gave his life.<sup>10</sup>

The continuing service of the Fakir Brothers as ministers and governors confirms that, even after the death of Ranjit Singh, Sikh rule remained benevolent and fair to the Muslims and

minority groups. They always received due respect in the Lahore *Darbar*. Even the unruly army had great respect for these nobles; indeed, Dhian Singh undertook special measures to strengthen and protect the Muslim contingent. After the demise of Ranjit Singh, there is virtually no significant evidence to prove maltreatment of any Muslim contingent in the Sikh army.

### **Sikh Army: an Unruly Power**

Earlier, Maharaja Ranjit Singh had ensured that the army had no role in the state administration. During his lifetime, the British did not dare to confront the Sikhs, and he closely watched the British military developments and engaged European generals to train his army to take on the British. After his death, the civil and military administration deteriorated and the local governors became uncontrollable. They stopped paying revenue and taxes to the Lahore *Darbar* and hence the state ran short of resources. As a result, it failed to pay the soldiers for their services; some units were not paid for more than two years. Therefore, the military started looking for other avenues of livelihood to support their families, and the practice of plundering, looting and working for others gradually crept into the army.<sup>11</sup> This turned the army into a tool with which to mollify opponents, making it a powerful force and an important player in struggles for the throne.<sup>12</sup>

The non-payment of taxes by various states meant that even the *jagirdar* troops were not being paid on a regular basis.<sup>13</sup> During Sher Singh's rule the army set up *panchayats* on the pattern of traditional village councils.<sup>14</sup> These *panchayats* had direct access to the Maharaja for addressing their concerns. They were also used to penalize officers who were no longer favourites of the *darbar* who had lost influence with the army. During this time, recruitment to the army was also politicized. Troops were frequently recruited without the permission of the *darbar* during 1839-46. The Dogras, for instance, strengthened Rajput and Muslim contingents, and as a counter-move the anti-Dogra group bolstered contingents of Sikh Jats.<sup>15</sup> As a result, the kingdom turned into a military state, something totally unknown during the days of Ranjit Singh. The army had consumed roughly 41 % of the state revenue during the late 1830s when its total strength was around 80,000. However, with the increase in numbers, expenses also increased.<sup>16</sup> By 1844 the army was 123,800 strong, consuming two-thirds of the state revenues.<sup>17</sup> Ironically, the biggest threat to the state came from none other than its own army, which was supposed to defend it.

The rule of Sher Singh was marked by violence and chaos. With the Sandhanwalia clan as contenders to the throne, the army became uncontrollable.<sup>18</sup> In order to calm them down, Sher Singh raised the soldiers' pay and also allowed them to recruit their relatives to the army.<sup>19</sup> As described earlier, due to this unruly behaviour, Rani Jindan and others decided to bring the Sikh army to face the British forces.<sup>20</sup>

Ultimately, the intrigues of the Dogra brothers, vested interests and the inability of the Sikh rulers precipitated the fall of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's *Khalsa Sarkar*. The result of these devastating developments all across the Punjab was disintegration of the *Khalsa* state, and establishment of a Hindu state in Multan, a Dogra state in Jammu and an independent trans-Indus frontier with a very small Sikh state in the centre.<sup>21</sup> However, well before the final internal disintegration, war with the British changed the whole scenario in the Punjab.

### **British Interest**

Although completely contained during the rule of Ranjit Singh, the British began planning to take over the Punjab after his death. Incapable Sikh rulers, treacherous *sardars* and the weakened *Khalsa Sarkar* helped the British to accomplish this very easily. Wider geopolitical developments also played an important role in the downfall of the Sikh government in the Punjab, further helping the British takeover. Although the British failed to install Shah Shuja in Kabul,<sup>22</sup> the Afghans were too engrossed in their internal affairs

and were confined to the Khyber Pass.<sup>23</sup> With the takeover of Sindh in 1843,<sup>24</sup> the British found the perfect opportunity to take over the Sikh state and complete their conquest of the subcontinent.<sup>25</sup>

The instability of the Lahore *Darbar* and the anti-British viewpoint of the *Khalsa Sarkar* provided this opportunity. In 1844, a veteran of the Peninsular Wars against Napoleon, Henry Harding, was appointed Governor General of India. He was known to have a determined personality, although initially he showed some hesitation in taking on the Sikhs. However, after the assassination of Hira Singh, he decided to confront the Sikh state<sup>26</sup> as he believed that it now had no chance of revival.<sup>27</sup> He also connived with Gulab Singh, who promised not to support the *Khalsa Sarkar* and instead to help the British if needed.<sup>28</sup> Gulab Singh, once a trusted general and ally of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, now stood against the *Khalsa* state, using the wealth he had looted from Lahore during the anarchy of Sher Singh's rule. While he assured the Lahore *Darbar* of his full support, he secretly connived with the British for the fall of the Sikh government in the Punjab.<sup>29</sup> He had his own plans to expand his territory to Tibet.<sup>30</sup>

The first Anglo-Sikh War opened with the Battle of Mudki in December 1845. The battle revealed that despite the reputed degeneration of the *Khalsa*, once in battle, they were still formidable, and the British had to fight hard for victory.<sup>31</sup>

In subsequent battles at Aliwal (January) and Sobraon (February), the Sikhs lost their critical advantage in artillery, as successive defeats saw most of their cannons fall into British hands.<sup>32</sup>

Meanwhile, the British plotting at the *darbar* bore fruit. At Sobraon, Tej Singh, who was now secretly corresponding with Harding, was informed of a surprise British attack at dawn. Fleeing his camp, he destroyed the bridge over the Sutlej, leaving his men trapped between the British and the river. In the ensuing battle, 10,000 Sikhs were cut to pieces. Britain and the Company had won the war.<sup>33</sup>

### **Situation in the Punjab Countryside after 1839**

The decade from 1839 to 1849 was an eventful period. Many intrigues and conspiracies, alliances and confrontations were made and unmade. However, the picture of the socio-economic, cultural and religious landscape during all these years remains obscure, and information sparse, due largely to preoccupation with the political turmoil. The gazetteers, archives and reports focus on the political and military developments of the Punjab. However, a broad perspective can be taken from the available evidence. As might be expected, the tumultuous events in the capital had a profound impact on the stability and prosperity of the countryside. After 1839 the authority of the *darbar* in the countryside, and particularly at the periphery of the kingdom, underwent a sharp decline. In 1839 minor insurrections broke out in the tributary Rajput states of the lower Himalayas and in the vicinity of Tank on the far side of the Indus.<sup>34</sup>

The *kardar* took advantage of the political instability throughout the kingdom to extend their own power and wealth. They did this in a number of ways. First, and most obviously, many of them simply fell behind in their revenue remittances and waited until the *darbar* threatened them with punishment before sending any instalments to Lahore. As early as August 1843, during the reign of Sher Singh, the annual loss to the state from districts under *darbar*-appointed *kardars* was reported to be in the vicinity of Rs.20 lakh.<sup>35</sup> In some cases the *kardar* bribed members of the *panchayat*, the village council, to support his illegal demands from the *zamindars*.<sup>36</sup> In other cases he enlisted the support of local notables, religious leaders in particular, by alienating in their favour the greater portion of *inams* (gifts) that were normally reserved for *zamindars*.<sup>37</sup> Generally, the *kardar* got away with these illegitimate demands because the central administration's auditing of district

accounts had become defective. Most *kardars* maintained false records, or no records at all, and *patwari* (revenue official) establishments were often permitted to run down.<sup>38</sup>

In the early 1840s, Diwan Swan Mal, for example, had strengthened his fort and built up his own troops at Multan with a view to declaring his independence from Lahore should a suitable opportunity present itself. With this in mind he had placed a number of his own relatives into administrative offices in and adjacent to Multan. In September 1844, however, a soldier assassinated him. His son, Diwan Mul Raj, took over as *nazim*. The *darbar* demanded of Mul Raj a *nazrana* of Rs.10 million for the acknowledgement of his succession. At this time the two Sikh battalions stationed at Multan by the *darbar* were mutinying, demanding higher pay. Mul Raj's followers attacked the mutineers and totally dispersed them. This victory so baffled the *darbar* and strengthened Mul Raj's position that the new *nazim* was actually able to negotiate the payment of a much smaller *nazrana*: after a period of intense bargaining the *darbar* accepted Mul Raj's offer of Rs.18 *lakh*, less than one-fifth of its original demand.<sup>39</sup>

### Conclusion

The rise of the Sikh Empire was so quick and dramatic that historians often likened Ranjit Singh to Napoleon due to his extraordinary military astuteness and enigmatic leadership. However, this comparison does not fully portray his personality. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a vigilant warrior with a deep insight into martial matters. He would never antagonize an enemy who he thought would be difficult to defeat.<sup>40</sup> He built a great army out of a crowd of undisciplined and unruly Sikh groups. Although he was brutal in battle, he was very peaceful and fair in dealing with and governing his heterogeneous and multi-religious subjects. His successors lacked his prudence and foresight and hence lost everything.<sup>41</sup> They ruined the *Khalsa* state, which Ranjit Singh had built with great care and hard work. After his death, Sikh rulers were more occupied in conspiring and killing each other than strengthening or consolidating the Sikh Empire. Their energies were drained by their internal disputes and fighting for the throne. Consequently the Sikh state came to an unfortunate and abrupt end at the hands of the British.

Nevertheless, Maharaja Ranjit Singh can also be held responsible for this downfall, in not leaving a succession plan and not training potential successors in the art of running the state and army. His failure to do so resulted in incapable rulers and hence the end of *Khalsa* rule in the Punjab. However, despite all the chaos and anarchy, his successors did maintain the path of fair and benevolent treatment of the non-Sikh communities, including Muslims. Religion and ethnic origin had never set the course of state policies during the days of Ranjit Singh and this continued after his death, throughout the period 1839-49. All the Muslim nobles continued to enjoy their positions and privileges in the Lahore *Darbar* during this time, and even the unruly army had great regard for most of the Muslim notables, especially the Fakir Brothers.

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## Notes and References

<sup>1</sup>Encyclopedia Britannica Eleventh Edition , vol. 22, (1910–1911), 892.

<sup>2</sup> Grewal, *The Sikhs of the Punjab the New Cambridge history of India*,107. ; Also K.S. Duggal, *Ranjit Singh a Secular Sikh Sovereign* (Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1989),27.

<sup>3</sup>Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, vol.2, 1.

<sup>4</sup> Griffin, *Ranjit Singh*, 32.

<sup>5</sup> Ganda Singh, ed. *Private Correspondence Relating to the Anglo-Sikh Wars. Being Private Letters of Lords Ellenborough, Hardinge, Dalhousie and Gough and of Political Assistants Addressed to Sir Frederick Currie as British Resident at Lahore, etc.* (Amritsar: Sikh History Society, 1955),49-50.

<sup>6</sup> Griffin, *Tazkara e Raosay Punjab*,vol.1,487.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 496.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 497.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 498-499.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.,532.

<sup>11</sup>Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, 6.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.,6.

<sup>13</sup>Ganda Singh (ed), *The Panjab in 1839-40*, 102, 106.

<sup>14</sup> The village *panchayat* was a small council, made up of the representatives of the different sections of the village, which met to regulate social behavior and settle small disputes.

<sup>15</sup>Fauja Singh Bajwa, *Military System of the Sikhs*,102.

<sup>16</sup> Suri, *Umdat- ut -Tawarikh*, vol.5, 239.

<sup>17</sup> Hasrat, *Anglo-Sikh Relations*,229. ; Bajwa, *Military System*, 83, 96-7. The regular, trained army accounted for about one-third of the total strength, the remaining two-thirds representing the *jagirdari*

levies.

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<sup>18</sup>Amarinder Singh, *The Last Sunset - The Rise & Fall of the Lahore Darbar* (New Delhi: Roli Books, 2010),55-57.

<sup>19</sup>Pearse, *Soldier and Traveller*, 230. They did this to exploit the increased pay, but were nothing more than brigands, according to Gardner.

<sup>20</sup>Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, 7.

<sup>21</sup> Hasrat (ed), *The Punjab Papers*, 67, 69, 78.

<sup>22</sup> British efforts to support Shah Shuja as ruler in Afghanistan against his rival Dost Mohammad Khan were partly due to Dost Mohammad's unwillingness to commit fully to the British and his continued dabbling with the Russians. Ellenborough thus sanctioned an invasion of Afghanistan. Though Shah Shuja was reinstalled, opposition to the British presence saw the expulsion and massacre of the British troops and their families. Shah Shuja was overthrown and killed in 1842, and Dost Mohammad, who had been exiled to India was permitted to return. Hugh Cook, *The Sikh Wars - The British Army in the Punjab 1845-1849* (London: Leo Cooper, 1975), 23.

<sup>23</sup>Patwant Singh and Jyoti M. Rai, *Empire of the Sikhs*,228.

<sup>24</sup> Lawrence James, *Raj - The Making and Unmaking of British India* (New York: St Martin's Griffin, 1997),103.

<sup>25</sup>Penderel Moon, *The British Conquest and Dominion of India*, 2nd ed. (London: Duckworth Press, 1990),576-579.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.,594.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.,595.

<sup>28</sup> Major Hugh Pearse, ed., *Soldier and Traveller*, 268-269.

<sup>29</sup> K.M. Panikkar, *The Founding of the Kashmir State - A Biography of Maharaja Gulab Singh (1792-1958)*, 2nd ed. (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1953),76-77.

<sup>30</sup> K.M. Panikkar, *The Founding of the Kashmir State - A Biography of Maharaja Gulab Singh (1792-1958)*, 2nd ed. (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1953),76-77.

<sup>31</sup>Amarpal S. Sidhu, *The First Anglo-Sikh War* (London: Amberley, 2010),82-84.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.,125.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.,162.

<sup>34</sup>Ganda Singh (ed), *The Panjab in 1839-40*, 97-8, 100-4,125.

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<sup>35</sup> **Ibid.**

<sup>36</sup> *Political Diaries of Lieutenant Reynall G. Taylor, P. Sandys Melvill, PanditKunahya Lai, Mr P.A. Vans Agnew, Lieutenant J. Nicholson, L. Bowring and A.H. Cocks 1847-1849*,368.

<sup>37</sup> **Ibid.,431.**

<sup>38</sup> **Ibid., 394.**

<sup>39</sup> **Griffin, *Chiefs and Families*, vol. 2, 97-100.**

<sup>40</sup> **S.P. Singh and J.S. Sabar, eds.,*Rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh; Nature and Relevance*,75-76.**

<sup>41</sup> **Patwant Singh and Jyoti M. Rai, *Empire of the Sikhs*,225.**

(period 1839 to 1849 a.D.) Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1780 - 1839 A.D.) established a great Sikh State in the Punjab, the land of five rivers, a territory which stretched from river Sutlej in the East to Khaiber Pass in the North West and Kashmir in the North to Sind in the South. He ruled over his kingdom for forty years from 1799 to 1839 A.D. Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Punjab's benevolent ruler, passed away at Lahore on June 27, 1839. There was universal mourning in the country. According to Fakir Syed Waheeduddin, there was a gentle shower after sometime. A pair of Pigeons came out of the sky and f The Maharaja's Personal Life Ranjit Singh died in June 1839 at the age of fifty-eight. Though a Sikh, he had created a state that was unique for its time in its secular nature. 50 Bikrama Jit Hasrat, Anglo-Sikh Relations, 1799-1849: A Reappraisal of the Rise and Fall of the Sikhs, (Hoshiarpur, India: V.V. Research Institute Book Agency, 1968), [Page 364]. 51 S.P. Singh and Harish Sharma, eds., Europeans and Maharaja Ranjit Singh (Amritsar: Guru Nanak Dev University, 2001), [Page 43-49]. 56 Honigberger was a Romanian physician who served Ranjit Singh in the period before the Maharaja's death. 56 Charles von Hügel (1795-1870) was an Austrian nobleman, army officer, diplomat and explorer who visited northern India in the 1830s.