



E-ISSN: 2706-9117

P-ISSN: 2706-9109

www.historyjournal.net

IJH 2024; 6(1): 159-164

Received: 05-01-2024

Accepted: 12-02-2024

Gagandeep Kaur

Assistant Professor,
Department of Punjabi,
Government College
Karamsar, Rara Sahib,
Ludhiana, Punjab, India

Maharaja Ranjit Singh: The Real Maharaja

Gagandeep Kaur

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22271/27069109.2024.v6.i1c.275>

Abstract

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a legendary figure in Indian history, his Sikh Empire and Northwest region of the country, known as his bravery, wisdom and leadership skill. Despite his military skills along with religious toleration and conquests, he was also known for his compassion, great administration fair treatment of all his subjects, his willingness to embrace different cultures and religious. He had prized possessions including the Mountain of Light, the Kohinoor Diamond. His Golden Throne built in the shape of a lotus is considered to be one of the most beautiful thrones in the World. Defeating great leaders like *Winston Churchill and Abraham Lincoln*, Maharaja Ranjit Singh was declared the worlds greatest among the twenty leaders nominated by modern Maharaja Ranjit Singh founded the world's most prosperous empire on the principles of toleration and openness, regardless of caste or religion. His period is often marked as the golden age for Punjab and North West India.

Keywords: Sikh, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Punjab, Sikh empire, Sikh history, culture

1. Introduction

Maharaja Ranjit Singh also called "*Sher-e-Punjab*" (*The Lion of the Punjab*) 1780-1839 was a Sikh emperor of the sovereign country of Punjab and the Sikh Empire. The "Lion of Punjab" is considered one of the three lions of modern India, the most famous and several heroes. In Indian subcontinent's history. The title of "*Sher-e-Punjab*" is still widely used as a term of respect for a powerful man. His Samadhi is located in Lahore, Pakistan. For almost 40 years, Ranjit ruled over one of the largest territories in India not at that time under British control. He extended his territory from the cities of Lahore and Amritsar to include all of the Punjab between the Sutlej and India rivers. Ranjit Singh's trans-regional empire (Spread over several states) included the former Mughal provinces of Lahore and Multan besides part of Kabul and the entire Peshawar. He avoided conflict with the British over a disputed border by entering a peace treaty with them, which he subsequently honored. He promoted trade and commerce, and running an efficient and safe state, gained the respect of his powerful neighbors. The Maharaja was known for his just and secular rule. Both Hindus and Muslims were given powerful positions in his *Darbar*. He turned *Harimandir Sahib* at Amritsar into the Golden Temple by covering it with gold. He used European generals and craftsman to improve his army and artillery. *Madra and Singh* (2004) describe him as having a "genius for command". He was "the only man in the nineteenth century the Sikhs ever produced strong enough to bind them together".

1.1 Ancestors of Maharaja Ranjit Singh

Ranjit Singh's Ancestors were humble peasant folk earning a meagre living as farmers and raisers of cattle in village Around Gujranwala.

1.1.1 Sardar Budh Singh (1670-1718), owned 25 acres of land, where he founded the village of Sukarchak, in Amritsar District.

1.1.2 Sardar Naudh Singh (d. 1752) married, Sardarni Lali Kaur, daughter of Sardar GulaAb Singh of Majitha.

1.1.3 Sardar Charat Singh (d. 1770) married, Sardarni Desan Kaur, daughter of Sardar Amir Singh Waraich, of Guranwala District.

Corresponding Author:

Gagandeep Kaur

Assistant Professor,
Department of Punjabi,
Government College
Karamsar, Rara Sahib,
Ludhiana, Punjab, India

1.1.4 Sardar Maha Singh (d. 1792) married, Sardarni Raj Kaur, of Jind state and Sardarni Mai Kaur daughter of Sardar Jal Singh Maan.

1.1.5 Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1780-1839) married, 20 wives, consort: Maharani Mehtab kaur, Maharani Datar kaur (born Bibi Raj Kaur Nakai, lovingly called Mai Nakkain by Maharaja Ranjit Singh) and Maharani Jind Kaur.

1.2 Place of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in History of Punjab

Maharaja Ranjit Singh is counted among the great rulers not only of India but also of the world. Various historians compare Maharaja Ranjit Singh with Mughal emperor Akbar, Maratha ruler Shivaji, Egyptian ruler Mehmet Ali and French ruler Napoleon etc. On a close study of history, it becomes clear that the achievements of Maharaja Ranjit Singh are comparable to these rulers. At the time when Maharaja Ranjit Singh sat on the throne, he had only a nominal kingdom. But Ranjit Singh established a vast empire with his ability and efficiency. By doing so, he realized the dream of the Sikh Empire. Maharaja Ranjit Singh is remembered for uniting the Punjab as a strong nation and his possession of the Koh-e-Noor diamond, which was given to him by Shuja shah Durrani of Afghanistan. Ranjit Singh willed the Koh-e-Noor to Jagannath Temple in Puri, Odisha while on his deathbed in 1839. His most lasting legacy was the golden beautification of the *Harmandir sahib*, most revered Gurudwara of the Sikhs, with marble and gold, from which the popular name of the "Golden temple" is derived.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh's administration was of a very high standard. The main objective of his administration was to improve the welfare of the subjects. In order to alleviate the sufferings of the subjects, during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, jobs were given on the basis of merit. In his court, Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims, Europeans etc. of all religions were employed. People were appointed to high positions. Maharaja Ranjit Singh adopted a policy of tolerance towards all religions and bound them in a sutra. He was also a great philanthropist. He also built a powerful army for the protection and expansion of his empire. He proved his political acumen by establishing friendship with the British. Because of all these qualities people still remember Maharaja Ranjit Singh as *Sher-e-Punjab*. Undoubtedly, Maharaja Ranjit Singh has a glorious place in the history of Punjab.

1.3 Facts about Maharaja Ranjit Singh – Founder of Sikh Empire

Maharaja Ranjit Singh has been truly described as *Sher-e-Punjab*, the Lion of Punjab, and as a symbol of Punjabi culture, he occupies a unique place. In the history of Punjab for his outstanding personal qualities and extraordinary achievements. Historians and Chroniclers have called him the Napoleon of Asia and compared him with Bismarck and Cromwell. Here are fifteen facts about him.

- Ranjit Singh lost sight in his left eye after as an infant, he contracted smallpox.
- Loss of eyesight and a lack of education, however, didn't stop him from becoming one of the greatest strategies of his times.
- He was adept in martial arts and was well groomed in the Sikh tradition of fighting.
- He fought his first battle at the age of ten, alongside his

father and went on to fight many battles against the Afghans.

- On 12 April 1801-Which was Baisakhi day-Ranjit Singh won the title of 'Maharaja' after uniting many fringe Sikh groups into one state.
- Ranjit Singh was a secular leader. His army included talented Hindus, Muslim and European warriors and generals.
- He hired European mercenaries to train his army. His first modern Indian Army was called the Sikh Khalsa Army, which helped prevent the British from colonizing Punjab during his lifetime.
- Ranjit Singh never wore a crown when he sat on his throne since everyone is considered equal before God in Sikhism.
- Ranjit Singh had many wives of Sikh, Muslim, and Hindu faith. Maharani Jind Kaur was his favorite wife who played an important role after his passing.
- He sat up historic gurudawars-Takht Sri Patna Sahib, where the 10th Sikh guru was born, and Takht Sri Hazur Sahib, the place where he died.
- The gold and marble work of the iconic Golden Temple in Amritsar was also done under his patronage.
- The Kohinoor diamond, which is currently in the possession of the Queen of England, was once a part of Ranjit Singh's treasure.
- Till date, he is known as "Sher-e-Punjab" (Lion of Punjab) for his liberal patronage.
- Ranjit Singh also built 'Pul Moran'-Punjab's own 'Taj Mahal'- a memorial that he dedicated to his favorite dancer Moran.
- It was only after his death that the British were able to invade Punjab. Ranjit Singh was a 'thorn' that they couldn't pluck while he was alive.

1.4 Personal Life of Maharaja Ranjit Singh

The personal life of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a colorful as his political career. Although an ugly man himself, he loved to surrounded himself with handsome men and beautiful women. He was small of stature and slight of build, but he was full of daring. In my campaigns, he led his troops himself and fought sword in hand. He lived in the life of a soldier and like a soldier drank hard, but after the bacchanalian feasts were over, he sat up till the early hours dictating letters and political moves, and he was known to provoke hostilities just to acquire a horse that had caught his fancy: for horses he loved even more than human beings. The most authentic source about the personal life of Maharaja Ranjit Singh is the book written by *Fakir Syed Wahid-ud-Din of Lahore*, a doyen and descendant of the famous fakir family which served with dedication and devotion to the Maharaja. The book is based on the archival material in the possession of the Fakir family. It resolves some of the mysteries about Maharaja's personal life and state policy. The author writes that Maharaja Ranjit Singh entered Lahore Fort as a conqueror on July 7, 1799. He was admonished by a holy 'voice' to obey four commandments as a ruler, if he wants to prosper.

- To say his prayers every morning without fail.
- Never to hold court sitting on the Thorne of the Mughal Emperors.
- To treat his subjects equally, without distinction of caste or creed.
- To respect and befriend Fakir Family, which would

serve him truly and well as a spiritual guardian of the new state.

1.5 Coronation as the Maharaja

In the year 1801, the Generals of the army, as well as many notables and prominent citizens representing Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs persuaded Ranjit Singh to hold a coronation ceremony at Lahore. It had been a custom among the Sikhs to have a Sarbat Khalsa (conclave) every year on the Baisakhi day, to which delegates came from all the misls and where Gurmatas (resolutions) were passed. Hence, the day of Baisakhi was chosen as the most auspicious day for the coronation ceremony. The ceremony marked the end of years of disorder and foreign rule and the beginning of a period of peace and plenty. A Royal Darbar was held inside the Fort of Lahore. People came from far and wide to offer their greetings to their new king. Prayers were held in mosques and temples for his long life. At the Tilak to Ranjit Singh's forehead. On this day, *Ranjit Singh's Sanjha Raj* (Commonwealth) was inaugurated and from this day he was known as the Maharaja. He never intended it as the Sikh rule or his personal rule. In his view, the Lahore Darbar symbolized individual freedom and national unity. Though monarchical in form, it was democratic in content. It was a commonwealth in the true sense of the term.

1.6 Character and Great personality of Maharaja Ranjit Singh

Captain William Murray's memoirs of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's character: "Ranjit Singh has been likened to Mehmet Ali and to Napoleon. There are some points in which he resembles both: but estimating his character with reference to his circumstances and positions, he is perhaps a more remarkable man than either. There was no ferocity in his disposition and never punished a criminal with death even under circumstances of aggravated offence. Humanity indeed, or rather tenderness for life, was a trait in the character of Ranjit Singh. There is no instance of his having wantonly infused his hand in blood."

Maharaja Ranjit Singh is the shining star of the history of Punjab, he is counted among the great personalities not only of India but also of the world. The personality of the Maharaja was so impressive that everyone who met him could not remain impressed. Foreign travelers and high officials of the East India Company considered it a privilege to meet the Maharaja.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was the lord of a multi-faceted personality, he had all the qualities of a brave general, a great conqueror, a wise politician and an able ruler. Due to these qualities, he succeeded in establishing a vast and powerful Sikh empire in Punjab. Prosperity was seen everywhere in his empire. That is why Punjab, the land of five rivers, which gave birth to its unlucky offspring two hundred years ago, is still very proud.

1.6.1 In the words of Wahid-Ud-Din a historian from Pakistan

His name is still a household word in the province. His portrait is still preserved in castle and cottage. It is a favorite subject with the ivory painters of Amritsar and Delhi. Ranjit Singh still lives, large as life, in the imagination of the people. He does so, not only where the Sikhs now live, but also where they lived before, for the Muslim village-folks

shared him as a legendary figure with the Sikhs and they have not let him depart with the letter. Ranjit Singh's popular image is that of a kindly patriarch rather than that of a conquering hero or a mighty monarch. He was all there, but his humanity has outlived his splendor and power.

1.6.2 To quote Dr. Saravapalli Radhakrishnan, the Second President of India

Maharaja Ranjit Singh succeeded by personal valour and fair treatment in welding desperate elements into a well-knit kingdom which maintained its integrity and independence against difficult odds... we should remind ourselves of the policies and principles which this great leader followed in instilling a sense of unity among his people irrespective of their difference in religion, custom and tradition. His example should inspire the present generation.

1.6.3 To quote Dr. Zakir Hussain, the Third President of India

Great personalities are the most potent agencies of national education. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was such a personality for India one of the most outstanding ones during the 19th century. His force of character, his shrewdness, his statesmanship, his heroic courage, his large-hearted tolerance, his secular impartiality and benevolence, stand out....They stand out to sustain us in the formative years of our young national state.

1.6.4 To quote Smt. Indira Gandhi, the late Prime Minister of India

Maharaja Ranjit Singh is one of the outstanding man that our land has produced. Every school child knows him as the Lion of Punjab. His brilliance as a general and his statesmanship as a ruler have become household words....I hope that the people of Punjab and the country at large will imbibe his message of unity and tolerance, courage and steadfastness.

1.7 As a Man, as a Human being

1.7.1 Appearance: Maharaja Ranjit Singh's appearance was not very attractive. His height was medium and his body was thin. His face was disfigured due to smallpox in his childhood and one eye was also struck. Despite this, Maharaja Ranjit Singh's personality was so attractive that no one who met him could remain without being impressed by him. There was a special kind of speed and glory dripping on his face. Once, when a British officer asked the Maharaja's foreign minister, Faqir Azizuddin, which eye was wrong with the Maharaja, he replied that the light of the Maharaja's face was so bright that he never dared to look closely.

1.7.2 Dress: Ranjit Singh wore simple clothes, of Dhaka muslin in summer, and of yellow or green pashmina in winter. His turban was rather long inclined over his forehead with the front end concealed and the back end hanging down. In daily life the Maharaja wore no ornaments. But on state occasions he adorned his person with various jewels. He wore necklaces of gold, pearls, diamonds and emeralds, some of which were very large, and armlets, bracelets and anklets. Sometimes Koh-e-Noor was also worn on his left arm.

1.7.3 Food and Drink: Ranjit Singh's breakfast consisted of rice, curry, curd, fat quails stuffed with spices, milk and

mango jam. The Maharaja loved mangoes of Darband and Multan and he used the world famous rice of Bara near Peshawar. At tea time in the afternoon he did not take tea. In summer he ate sattū, flour of perched barley with iced sharbat of sugar. Milk was used with his meals every day.

1.7.4 Sportsman: Ranjit Singh was a great sportsman and perfect swordsman. In 1831, at Ropar, he successfully competed with his soldiers and those of Skinner's Horse in tent-pegging and in various acts of swordsmanship.

1.7.5 Mind: His mind was sharp. He was so intelligent as easily to understand reports from his governors and generals on from foreign powers. His conversation was lively, full of imagination and frankness. Newspaper in Persian and Urdu were read out to him. He asked for the views of listeners and made his own comments. Steinbach who served under him wrote that Maharaja possessed "The spirit and originality of a man of genius".

1.7.6 Memory: His memory was excellent. He remembered even the minutest details on all aspects of administration, names of persons, and amounts paid and to be realized, distances from the capital to various places. He remembered the names of all important places in his dominion and of officers appointed there, their ranks, grades, salary and tribute fixed upon them. He checked all the revenue accounts and no deception could go unnoticed by him. The honest officers were highly rewarded and corrupt ones were heavily fined and imprisoned.

1.7.7 Superstitions: Maharaja Ranjit Singh believed in omens, lucky and unlucky hours, charms, spells, witchcraft and predictions. He always consulted astrologers before entering upon an important undertaking. Generally he took two slips of papers. On one slip was written the object of his wish and on the other the reverse. He placed both the slips in the Holy Granth. A little boy or Granthi took one of the slips without looking at it. If it predicted in his favour, he took action with full confidence of success. If it told the reverse, the idea of doing it was given up altogether or postponed. In 1805 Jaswant Rao Holker arrived at Amritsar, and requested the Maharaja for help. The Maharaja consulted the Holy Granth whether he should espouse the cause of Holker or he should cooperate with the British. He put two slips in the sacred Granth. The slip suggesting friendship with the company came out. Treating it as a voice from heaven, the Maharaja supported the British.

1.7.8 Hardworking and Active: Maharaja Ranjit Singh was hard working and very agile. He believed in the fact that big men should always be hardworking and nimble. He had similar expectations from his employees. The Maharaja used to be busy in the affairs of the state from morning till late at night. He felt happy in doing all kinds of work. He used to pay personal attention to the smallest tasks from the biggest tasks of the state. They never seemed to work. Even in his old age, he had the zeal of youth. This habit of the Maharaja was a major reason for his success. From his childhood, he was very fond of going to wars, playing hunting, wielding swords and shooting.

1.7.9 Illiterate but Intelligent: Maharaja Ranjit Singh was not interested in studies. As a result, he remained illiterate,

despite being illiterate, he possessed a very sharp intellect and amazing memory. He memorized thousands of names of his villages and their geographical location. To the extent that he had knowledge of the forts of his kingdom, the number of officers and soldiers appointed in them. Travelers from foreign countries were also surprised. He used to ask questions regarding every issue from outsiders. These questions were related to armies, weapons, methods of warfare, hell, heaven, soul, God, hunting, alcohol and hundreds of other such things.

1.7.10 An Excellent Horseman and Swordsman: Ranjit Singh was an excellent horseman and swordsman. He was very fond of horse riding and swordsmanship since his childhood. His face showed no signs of fatigue even after riding horses all day. He was very fond of keeping thoroughbred horses. A horse named Lely was the best. Maharaja Ranjit Singh had to spend 60 lakh rupees and 12 thousand soldiers had to lose their lives to get this horse from Peshawar Governor Yaar Muhammad Khan and Sultan Muhammad Khan. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was also proficient in swordsmanship. He died in 1831 AD. During his meeting with Lord William Bentinck at Ropar, he displayed such gallantry and swordsmanship that even the British were astonished.

1.7.11 Kind Hearted: Maharaja Ranjit Singh was very popular among his subjects due to his kindness. During his reign, Maharaja Ranjit Singh conquered Sikh Misaldars, Rajput kings, Pathan rulers and Afghan emperors one by one. The remarkable thing is that Maharaja never treated his enemies cruelly. Maharaja Ranjit Singh not only embraced the rulers whom he defeated in the battlefield but also gave jagirs to their descendants. He was always ready to help the poor, distressed and farmers. Many stories of his kindness are famous.

1.7.12 A devoted follower of Sikhism: Maharaja Ranjit Singh had unwavering faith in Sikhism. Before starting his daily work, he used to listen to Guru Granth Sahib and pray. He kept a bouquet of Guru Gobind Singh Ji in his closet, the touch of which he considered very lucky for him. They considered their victories to be the grace of that true King Akal Purakh. To thank them for these victories, they used to go to Darbar Sahib Amritsar and offer huge offerings. They considered themselves as the 'cooker' of the Guru's house and the Sikh Panth. He used to call his government 'Sarkar-e-Khalsa and Darbar as Darbar Khalsaji'. Instead of calling himself Maharaja Ranjit Singh, he used to call himself 'Singh Sahib'.

1.7.13 Tolerant: Even though Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a staunch devotee of the Sikh Panth, he still had great respect for other religions. He was far away from religious prejudice and communalism. He was well aware that to establish a powerful and lasting empire it was necessary to get the support of people of all religions. He succeeded in winning the hearts of people of different religions with his policy of tolerance. Jobs in his kingdom were given on the basis of merit. Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims, Dogras and Europeans occupied the high positions of his court.

1.7.14 Patron of Learning: Maharaja Ranjit Singh himself, although he gave his special attention to the spread of

education. He took up the spread of basic education in the state. Ray opened many schools. He gave grants and jagirs to institutions teaching Persian, Arabic, Hindi and Gurmukhi. He emphasized on making the students learn foreign languages like English and French. Many students used to get this knowledge from the European servants employed in the Maharaja's court. Maharaja was very happy to meet scholars. He had given patronage to many 3 scholars. Sohanlal Suri and Diwan Amarnath were the most learned scholars in his court.

1.8 As a General and Conqueror

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a great general of his time. He is counted in the great journey of the world. In all the battles he fought in his lifetime, he did not face defeat in any of them. He considered it a matter of pride to take part in fierce campaigns. He never panicked even when faced with great difficulties. For example, in 1823 AD, when Akali Phula Singh was martyred in the ongoing battle with Afghans at Nashaw, the Khalsa army gave up its courage. Their defeat seemed certain.

At such a time, Maharaja Ranjit Singh ran and reached the front of the battlefield. He instilled a new zeal in his soldiers. As a result, these soldiers chanted 'Sat Sri Akal' and rescued so many Afghans that they died only after leaving the battlefield. The Maharaja was very concerned about the welfare of his soldiers always ready.

Apart from being a great general, Maharaja Ranjit Singh was also a great conqueror. 1797 AD When Ranjit Singh sat on the throne of Shukrachakkia Misal, there was very little territory under him. Due to his ability and bravery, he transformed his kingdom into an empire. He included important territories like Lahore, Amritsar, Kasur, Sialkot, Kangra, Gujarat, Jammu, Attock, Multan, Kashmir and Peshawar in his empire. Maharaja Ranjit Singh had to fight many fierce battles to include them in his empire. He became the Afghans and stopped the foreign attacks from the north-west border for centuries. This was a great achievement of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

1.9 As an Administrator

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was not only a great conqueror but also a top class administrator. The main objective of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's rule was to promote the welfare of the people. The Maharaja had appointed many able and honest ministers to help him in the administration. With the aim of running the governance in a good manner, the Maharaja divided his kingdom into four big states. The smallest unit of administration was Mauja or Village, the management of villages was in the hands of Panchayats. The Maharaja never interfered in the affairs of the Panchayats. The Maharaja never lost sight of the interests of the subjects. He also ordered the state officials to make special efforts for the welfare of the people. The Maharaja often visited the state in disguise to know the condition of the subjects. Officers who violated the orders of the Maharaja were punished. Farmers and the poor were given special facilities by the state. As a result, the people were very happy during the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh paid special attention to his civil administration as well as his military administration. He was well aware that for the security and expansion of the empire, having a powerful gold was essential. He was the first Indian ruler who started training his army in European style.

He gave special importance to infantry and artillery. Special attention was paid to maintaining discipline in the army.

The Maharaja used to personally inspect the army himself. He started the custom of keeping soldiers' hulia and donating horses. Special rewards were given to the soldiers who showed bravery in the war. Soldiers and their families were taken care of by the state. Due to these efforts of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Sikh army became quite strong and efficient. It was a great success of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

2. As a Diplomat As a politician

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a successful politician. At the beginning of his political career, he had established friendship with powerful Misal Sardars. With the help of these Misal Sardars, AAP captured the weak Misals. Later, when the Maharaja's power increased, he subjugated these powerful Misals one by one. It was a feature of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's diplomacy that he used to give jagirs to those who defeated the Sasaks for their sustenance. That is why they did not oppose the Maharaja later. Thanks to his diplomacy, the Maharaja got the fort of Attock from Jahadad Khan without a fight. 1835 AD When Dost Muhammad Khan, the ruler of Afghanistan, came to attack the Sikhs with a huge army, the Maharaja made such a move that he ran away from the battlefield without fighting. The Maharaja with his intelligence also kept the fanatic sect like the Akalis under him.

2.1 Maharaja Ranjit Singh in popular Culture

- Maharaja Ranjit Singh, a documentary film directed by Prem Parkash covers his rise to power and his reign. It was produced by the Government of India's films Division.
- In 2010, a TV series titled Maharaja Ranjit Singh aired on DD National based on his life which was produced by Raj Babbar's Babbar films Private Limited. He was portrayed by Ejla Ali Khan.
- Maharaja: The story of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (2010) is an India Punjabi- language animated film directed by Amarjit Viridi.
- A teenage Ranjit was portrayed by Damanpreet Singh in the 2017 TV series titled Sher-e-Punjab: Maharaja Ranjit Singh. It aired on Life Ok produced by Contiloe Entertainment.

2.2 International Recognition of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (Memorials and Museums)

2.2.1. In 2020, Maharaja Ranjit Singh was recently named as the "Greatest Leader of All Time" in a British poll conducted by 'BBC World Histories Magazine'.

2.2.2. In 2016, the town of St. Tropez in France unveiled the Maharaja's bronze statue as a mark of respect.

2.2.3. His throne is displayed prominently at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

2.2.4. In 2018 London hosted an exhibition that focused on the history of the Sikh Empire and the International relations forged by the Maharaja.

2.2.5. Recently, the nine-foot bronze statue of Maharaja Ranjit Singh which was installed in 27 June 2019,

vandalized by a member of radical outfit Tehrik-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), a religious organization at the Haveli Maharani Jindan, Lahore Fort in Pakistan's Punjab Province.

2.2.6. On 20 August 2003, a 22-foot-tall bronze statue of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was installed in the Parliament of India.

2.2.7. Samadhi of Ranjit Singh in Lahore, Pakistan, marks the place where Singh was cremated, and four of his queens and seven concubines committed sati.

2.2.8. A museum at Ram Bagh Palace in Amritsar contains objects related to Singh, including arms and armour, paintings, coins, manuscripts, and jewelry, Maharaja had spent much time at the palace in which it is situated, where a garden was laid out in 1818.

3. Conclusion

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was one of the outstanding figures in Indian history. The great Warrior, fearless soldier, able administrator, clement ruler, statesman and liberator of Punjab died on June 27, 1839. Popularly known as the Lion of Punjab, Sher-e-Punjab, centuries after his death, he continues to live in the hearts of the people as a source of inspiration and pride for generations of Indians. As consistent with many Punjabi's of that time, Ranjit Singh was a Secular King and followed the Sikh Path. His policies were based on respect for all communities, Hindu, Sikh and Muslim. A *warrior par excellence*, he was also a valiant leader, an astute diplomat, an able administrator and above all a benevolent king. At a time when Punjab was undergoing a period of turmoil, he brought the scattered people of Punjab under a uniform and structured system of government by the sheer force of his personality. With his military prowess and fighting skills, he carved out a mighty Kingdom and rested it on firm grounds. He raised the oppressed on their feet and breathed self-confidence into them.

4. References

1. Stonage S, editor. The Arts of Sikh Kingdom. London: V& S Publications; c1999. p. 11.
2. Howarth S. The Koh-I-Noor Diamond: The History and the Legend. London: Quarter Books; c1980. p. 109-110.
3. Singh P, Rai MJ. Empire of the Sikh: The Life of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. New Delhi: Hey House Publication; c2008.
4. Griffin L. Maharaja Ranjit Singh. New Delhi: National Book Trust; c2002.
5. Singh K, Singh R. Maharaja of Punjab. Mumbai: George Allen and Unwin; c1973.
6. Sinha NK. Singh R. Calcutta: University of Calcutta; c1983. p. 9.
7. Singh K. The Encyclopedia of Sikhism. Vol. 3. Patiala: Punjabi University Patiala; c2011. p. 479-487.
8. Duggal KS. Maharaja Ranjit Singh: The Last Ley of Arms. New Delhi: Abhinav Publications; c2001.
9. Singh T, Kohli SR. Maharaja Ranjit Singh. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers; c1986. p. 56.
10. Waheeduddin FS. The Real Ranjit Singh. Patiala: Punjabi University Patiala; c2001.

11. Singh P. Empire of the Sikhs: Life and Times of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. London: Peter Owen Publishers; c2008.
12. Lafont JM. Maharaja Ranjit Singh: Lord of the Five Rivers. New Delhi: Oxford University Press; c2002. p. 95-96.
13. Encyclopedia Britannica. Ranjit Singh Sikh Maharaja. Available from:
<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ranjit-Singh-Sikh-maharaja>.