

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work which is being presented in the dissertation entitled SECULAR OUTLOOK OF MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH'S ADMINISTRATION in fulfillment of the requirement for the award of degree of Master of Philosophy in faculty of Arts, Authentic record of my own work carried out during the period from 2015 to 2017 under the supervision of Dr. Sukhjot Kaur Bhullar.

The matter embodied in this dissertation has not been submitted by me for the award of any other degree of this or any other University/Institute.

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**SECULAR OUTLOOK OF MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH'S  
ADMINISTRATION**

**A DISSERTATION**

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**Under the Supervision of**

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## **PREFACE**

It is my fruitful efforts to the subsequent chapters of dissertation to discuss about the uniqueness of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's administration that is "Secular Policy The Study of this trait of his administration proves an important and interesting subject research for a variety of reasons. As per the history is secular which concerned with temporal, Mundane matters and not with spiritual efforts it also gave us such personalities which adopted the secular policy in the past. Among those Punjab got the Sher-i-Punjab Maharaja Ranjit. He was the great warrior, political conqueror, able administration who adopted equality towards his all communities peoples. Maharaja Ranjit Singh endeavored to usher in an open, pluralistic society characterized by the values of Secularism, Justice, Liberty and equality Secular policy of Maharaja was the new revolutionary step otherwise medieval age was marked by religious bigotry communalism etc. That's why he did not declare Sikhism as the state religion.

## **INTRODUCTION AND JUSTIFICATION**

The particular subject is used to be enlightened by its definition which makes its boundaries and differentiated it from other discipline. As per the definition of History's pioneer, Greeks who defined it as the knowledge obtained as a result of research or inquiry. Actually History is very much concerned with the activities of human beings. It is the study of events in man's struggle for progress. History is that discipline which investigate and unfold the values which age after age have inspired the residents of a country to develop their collective will and to express it through the manifold activities of their life. As the History is Secular, which concerned with temporal, mundane Matters and not with spiritual efforts, it also gave us such personalities efforts, it also gave us such personalities which adopted the secular policy in the past]. Among

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those Punjab got the 'Sher-i-Punjab' Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He was the great warrior, political conqueror, able administrator who adopted equality towards his all communities peoples. Maharaja Ranjit Singh endeavoured to usher in an open, pluralistic society characterized by the values of Secularism, Justice, liberty and equality. Secular policy of Maharaja was the New revolutionary step otherwise, Medieval age was marked by religious bigotry. Communalism etc. that's why he did not declare Sikhism as the state religion.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

1. Khushwant Singh-Ranjit Singh, New Book Society of India, New Delhi-2000, In this book we got the information regarding the ancestors early life of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, while including his political career.
2. Narinderpal Singh- History of the Punjab, Punjabi University Patiala, 1969, In this book he mentioned about the expansionist policy of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.
3. Trilochan Singh Gill- Sikh History, Well Wisher Publishers, Delhi, 1998- Through this book we got the knowledge of relations between Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Britishers. The Britishers were the only powerful and contemporary authority of Maharaja.
4. Gopal Singh- A History of Sikh People World Wide University New Delhi,, 1979- In this book writer mentioned about the efficient administration machinery of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.
5. Harbans Singh- The Heritage of the Sikhs, Manohar Publishers, New Delhi, 1983- This book reveals the sufficient material regarding the Civil and Military affairs of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

6. K.S. Duggal- Ranjit Singh, Abhinav Publications New Delhi, In this book writer discussed about the remarkable Secular policy of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.
7. Kirpal Singh, The Historical Study of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Time, National Book Shop Delhi 1994- This book mentioned about the sympathetic behaviour of Maharaja Ranjit Singh towards his enemies.
8. Satbir Singh- Our History Vol.2, New Book Company Jalandhar 1983, In this book writer discussed about the liberal thinking in the matters of religion due to which he did not make Sikhism as his state religion.
9. Gulshan Lal Chopra, The Punjab as Sovereign State, Vishvesharnand Vedic Research Institute New Delhi, In this book he mentioned about the Capabilities of Maharaja Ranjit Singh that how he handled the hindrances in his life.
10. Surinder Singh Johar- The Life History of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Arsee Published New Delhi-2001. The Book mentioned about the merit based recruitments of Maharaja subjects instead of religion.

**SCOPE:**

Maharaja Ranjit Singh is an important personality of Sikh history. Ranjit Singh's reign period introduced many reforms, modernization and general prosperity. His Khalsa army and government included Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims, Europeans which gave birth to Secular policy. Maharaja Ranjit Singh is remembered as for uniting the all communities of society. He is also reminded for his conquest and building a well-trained, self-sufficient Khalsa army to protect a prosperous sikh Empire. While reading the foregoing facts about Ranjit Singh it would have become clear that this extraordinary person having begun his career as a child of a small

principality established a vast kingdom within in short period. Having remained he was the only ruler who established cordial and friendly relation with a powerful neighbour like britishers. As a ruler, he never tried to convert anyone to Sikhism by force.

### **NEED OF STUDY:**

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was such a personality which came into existence when anarchy was prevailed in this country, no facilities were provided common peoples. Punjab was grasp into different misls, it was Maharaja Ranjit Singh who protect and preserve the strength of the Khalsa, it was necessary at that time to provide cohesion to the power of Sikh Misls. Many of the times historians mentioned about the political field or conquest, expeditions of Maharaja but did not make a view of his unique Secular policy which was earlier not adopted by any ruler. Through such high thinking of Maharaja he announced equality for all religious people of his Society. Maharaja Ranjit Singh by virtue of his high courage, bravery and god-gifted intelligence succeeded in his high resolve and within forty years he established a stupendous state of the Khalsa. To assess the religious life of a person in those times that man's personal morals and his private life were not the only criteria but his moral standards were assessed from his daily routine and observances of social customs and religious rites.

### **Objectives:**

- To introduce the ancestors of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and about his early life and society.
- To tell about the political career of Maharaja Ranjit Singh that how he expanded his kingdom with his fruitful efforts.
- To tell about the remarkable administration and its efficient functioning.



- To tell about the unique secular policy of Maharaja that how he unite the all communities.
- The foremost objective of this research is to reveal the hidden facts of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.
- To provide the sufficient material about the Maharaja Ranjit Singh empire and its all - round development.
- To describe about the elegant personality of Maharaja that how he handled smoothly the both civil, military affairs.

#### **CHAPTERIZATION:**

1. The Rise of New Power- Maharaja Ranjit Singh- In this chapter, I will explain the handful information about the existence of Punjab and its historical background. The early life of Maharaja Ranjit Singh while explaining some important aspects of his forefathers. In this historical analysis I will enlighten the factors of that time's Social, Political condition. In political condition, I will explain that how Maharaja Ranjit Singh started his outstanding expeditions towards different territories and included them into his kingdom through expansionist policy.
2. Administrative Institution of Maharaja Ranjit Singh - In the second chapter I will explain about the administrative machinery of Maharaja Ranjit Singh that how he flourished his kingdom with the capabilities of administration whether it was civil, Military, Judicial, economical etc.

3. An Astute Administration- In the third chapter, discussed about the Zenith position of Maharaja and his empire. Not only the Sikh community rather. Hindu and Muslims both showered their blessings to Maharaja Ranjit Singh.
4. Secular Outlook- In the fourth chapter, I explained about the unique trait of Maharaja Ranjit Singh that was only and only secular outlook of Maharaja. He was the only personality who took efforts to unite the all communities of society to run it efficiently.
5. Conclusion - After the discussion of above chapters I would like to conclude that Maharaja Ranjit Singh was an elegant personality which gave the New concept to society so that a country should become liberal for all communities without any discrimination.

**CHAPTER-I**

**The Rise of New Power :  
Maharaja Ranjit Singh**



## CHAPTER -I

### THE RISE OF NEW POWER : MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH

The word 'Punjab' is combined with the two words '*Panj*' meaning five and '*Aab*' meaning water that used to refer the land of five rivers. In these five rivers, major were namely Sutlej, Bias, Ravi, Chenab, Jhelum<sup>1</sup>. Historically we learnt that around 1500 B.C. Aryans found seven rivers flowing through this land when they used to settle in North-Western part of the Indian Sub-continent and further they called it '*Sapt Sindh*'. After Aryans, when Persians made it their region they called it 'Panjab', because during that time Indus River was not considered to be flowed in the Punjab and another river '*Sarswati*' was dried up in the eastern border. From the cultural point of view Punjab was the land of Civilization, before the Aryans<sup>2</sup>.

A Handful information must be got from the archeological remains of ancient cities like Harappa and Mahanjodaro which flourished between 2500 B.C. and 1500 B.C. Even the History increased our knowledge while telling that over 2000 years Hinduisms and Budhism interchanged their dominance over this region, at that time Punjab was under the contemporary authority of Mauryas, Guptas, vardhanas etc. Later on around 1000 B.C. Islam religion also established its dominance when Turks, Persians and Afghans settled.<sup>3</sup>

As the Politically turmoil's, religious practices affected the common peoples of Punjab due to these circumstances many centuries ahead Hindu and Muslims made conflicts with each other. In the field of religion, the arrival of Guru Nanak Dev Ji heralded a new order and provided independent ideology to Punjab Society which challenged the ignorance and intolerance of the bigots, the main traits of humanity love, peace and neighborliness between two communities were formed. Guru Nanak Dev Ji's teaching were spreaded by his nine followers far and near places, who were called Sikhs and their religion was called Sikhism.<sup>4</sup> Khalsa Panth was created

by last Guru, Guru Gobind Singh sahib and thus Panjab was considered to be the holy place for Sikhs. The creation of Khalsa took a new turn in History of Punjab, because it created the great warriors who fought bravely against tyrannical authorities of that period. The foundation of Sikhism and the awareful preachings of Guru Sahiban created the encouragement among Sikhs, due to which many warriors took birth in the Punjab with the teachings and guidances of Guru Sahiban. Banda Bahadur had also a tough conflict with Mughals.<sup>5</sup> After that, one and only brave warrior and administrator which took birth on the holy land that was Sher-i-Punjab. It was Maharaja Ranjit Singh who made the State Punjab, a most powerful and prosperous state of the country. His rule was called '*Sarka-i-Khalsa*'. Maharaja Ranjit Singh is considered to be the great emperor who enjoys a special place in the history of Punjab. He was the exclusive ruler of Punjab during last centuries. It was proud to be recognized him as the most extending power who had no rival to make question on his greatness.<sup>6</sup> He was an administrator, soldier, astute Judge, due to which he was enable to got the title become the founding father of Secularism in the Punjab. He was very determined boy who managed his father's land at very small age. He was also used to unite the people of Punjab into nation, it is quite interesting story of his name, fame and power which shows that a man could do everything for his country with courage and wisdoms.<sup>7</sup>

During the contemporary period of Ranjit Singh, the area of Punjab was under the twelve misls. Among those misls the forefathers of Ranjit Singh belonged to the Sukerchakia Misl, who were also Soldiers and able administrators. Due to these abilities they became famous, the forefathers of Maharaja were able to occupy the widest part of Punjab.

In 1470A.D., Kalu named Jat of *Waraich Got* settled in village Sansi near Amritsar. In 1549A.D., a descendent of Kahi, Kiddon named moved to Sukerchak, a village near Gujranwala. In 1653A.D., Bara descendent of his family came to the contact of Sikhism, who spent his entire life in preaching Sikh philosophy nearby villages. Further his son Buddha received '*Amrit*' from the Guru Gobind Singh Ji and began to known as Budh Singh.<sup>8</sup> When the condition of Punjab began to become the critical at that time, the descendent of Budh Singh, Nodh Singh named raised a band of thirty horsemen and laid the foundation of Sukerchakia Misl. In 1752 A.D. due to the death of Nodh Singh, his successor was Charat Singh who was the grandfather of Ranjit Singh.<sup>9</sup>

Charat Singh was a Brave person who repeatedly made conflicts with Ahmed Shah Abdali in his early struggles. He raised 150 horsemen and plundered the camp of Abdali in 1762A.D. In 1774A.D. he died while having the large territory to his younger son, Mahan Singh.

Mahan Singh was also a military genius of his time who captured Rasool Nagar and occupied Alipur territories of Bhangi Misl. Mahan Singh died in 1792 A.D. at the young age of 27. He had son, named Ranjit Singh who bequeathed the qualities of courage and natural genius for command and enterprise.<sup>10</sup>

The Birth of Maharaja Ranjit Singh took on November 2,1780 A.D. he was 12 years old boy when his father died. The whole responsibility of kingdom fell into the hands of his mother and Diwan Lakhpat Rai. Ranjit Singh was not interested in acquiring of education. He only took the knowledge of sports and art of war. Mahan Singh left 20,000 rounds of Shot when he died. During his childhood, Ranjit Singh suffered from disease of small pox which left permanent marks on his body and deprived him of one eye forever. But due to his graceful personality this

shortcoming remain unseen to visitors. He looks very graceful when he mounted on his horse with black Shield at his back. He wanted to control the whole affairs of his kingdom into his hands, so at the age of 17 years old he assumed the powers of the state directly.<sup>11</sup> Initially, he was known by the name of Budh Singh. His father was a Chieftain and during the time of his birth his father was away for State affairs. Mahan Singh got the news of birth of his son through a messenger, he was fully overjoyed on hearing the news even he came out victorious from his campaign, thus Mahan Singh named the child Ranjit Singh, the victor of Battles. At the age of 15, Maharaja Ranjit Singh was married to Mehtab Kaur who was belonged to Kanhiya Misl. She was the daughter of Sada Kaur and grand daughter of Jai Singh, the mother-in-Law of Ranjit Singh was very brave, Courage lady who helped him in his administration.<sup>12</sup>

She gave a full support to Ranjit Singh in progressing his state. Mehtab Kaur gave birth to Ishar Singh, Sher Singh, Tara Singh. Maharaja Ranjit Singh got his second marriage to Raj Kaur who is also known as Datar Kaur, in 1798 A.D. In 1801 A.D. she gave birth to Kharak Singh. Now Ranjit Singh appeared new among other powers. In 1801 '*Maharaja*' title was given to him, going through Hindu equivalent of a coronation ceremony, he announced that he was now to be styled Sarkar with authority, then he recognised the importance of mint and issued in token of Sovereignty a Coin in the name of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Guru Gobind Singh Ji.<sup>13</sup>

In the life history of Maharaja Several stories have been found which indentify the courage, fortitude and presence of his mind. Once he fought with the tribe of people, named Chatthas, their chief was Hashmat Khan whose possession lay on the bank of river Chenab. Once Maharaja was returning from the hunting expedition thus, Chattha Chief attacked on the youthful sportsman. But fortunately it missed, in this moment Ranjit Singh became angry with him, and

gave a struck with his sword and cut his body into two pieces. On the death of Chattha Chief, the whole Chattha tribe Submitted themselves of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.<sup>14</sup>

In the 1797, Maharaja Ranjit Singh started his conquests when he was 17 years old the foremost achievement of Maharaja was his victory on Lahore. Lahore was one of the most popular city during the Mughals period. The main reason for this achievement was that it was on the way of Delhi and Afghanistan, this city was very fertile and the most important trading centre, In 1799 A.D. he annexed it. In order to make occupation over different regions he decided to make alliance with two powerful misls of that period. In 1801A.D. he met Fateh Singh Ahluwalia at Tarn Taran. They became friends in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib.<sup>15</sup> During that period Jassa Singh Ramgarhia was the bitter enemy of Ranjit Singh but after his death, his misl. was still present and the new leader of that misl. was Jodh Singh, who was quite sensible person Ranjit Singh made friendly relations with that misl. So now both misl were under him. In 1803, he created a huge Darbar and distributed Khilats to his army soldiers. He provided 800 cavalry to Hari Singh Nalua 400 Cavalry to Desa Singh Majithia. The whole responsibility of 'Topkhana' was handed over the 'Gous Khan'.<sup>16</sup>

During that time, Amritsar city was under the Gulab Singh who had not good terms with Ranjit Singh, while getting from the all side conquest now, Ranjit Singh decided to conquer over Amritsar. So he raised his army at Amritsar and easily captured it. He donated much wealth to Sarovar of Darbar Sahib. The city people were much impressed by the loyalty, generosity and broad heart of Ranjit Singh. Now every sikh wanted to see Ranjit Singh as their ruler. Due to the supportive behaviour of people it became easy for him to capture the rest of the places. Maharaja's victory of Lahore aroused many of his enemies as Misl. Sardars and Muslims rulers.



Nizam-ud-din, of Kasur Gulab Singh Bhangi of Amritsar, Sahib Singh of Gujrat started marching towards Lahore, while making Joint front against Maharaja on the other hand, Maharaja was fully prepared. His mother-in-Law gave full cooperation to him. Two months, both forces pitched against each other near Lahore placed 'Bhasin' Gulab Singh was died because of his habit drinking with heavy dose, which created confusion among his army and they fled from battlefield. Thus the army of Ranjit Singh came out of victorious even without Shedding the single drop of blood. In 1801A.D. with full courage he annexed the Akalgarh and Gujrat. Maharaja demanded Lohgarh fort and *Zamazama* gun from Mai Sukhan, but due to his refusal Maharaja attacked Lohgarh and occupied it.<sup>17</sup>

In 1807A.D., Dallewalia Misl, also came under the influence of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Ahmad Khan the ruler of Jhang made alliance with the Multan Nawab Muzafar Khan both started conspiracies against Ranjit Singh, when Ranjit Singh came to know about it he attacked on Jhang in 1807A.D. and captured it alongwith Chinot. Jiwan Singh the ruler of Sialkot had bitter enmity with Ranjit Singh he refused to come under the influence of Maharaja thus Hari Singh Nalwa was deputed for the conquest of Sialkot, after the 3 days of pitched battle, Hari Singh Nalwa was successful in occupying it on 1808 A.D. Maharaja had also bitter terms with hilly chiefs, Specially the Sansar Chand of Kangra, he always made conspiracies against Maharaja thus his son Anurodh Chand and in was imprisoned but in return Sansar Chand accepted the influence of Maharaja in 1809 A.D. In 1810 A.D. Maharaja defeated the Sardar Bhagat Singh of Karorsinghia Misl and annexed its further territories also. Maharaja Ranjit Singh send an army under Mohkam Chand for the occupation of Kahan Singh's Nakai Misl. In 1810 A.D. in a very

easy way he was able to occupy the Chunia, Sharakpur etc. areas of this Misl. Phillaur and Jalandhar areas were annexed by Mohkam Chand by defeating the Budh Singh in 1811 A.D.<sup>18</sup>

The ruler of Multan was Nawab Muzaffar Khan who was completely independent ruler. Maharaja Ranjit Singh wanted to occupy it because this Multan City was very special and important from military and commercial point of view. Maharaja attacked seven times on Multan and at Last in 1818A.D. he succeeded in capturing it. In 1819 A.D. he tried to annex Kashmir in which he was fully successful. Naushehra also became the part of his empire. Maharaja wanted to be the undisputed leader of the Sikhs on both sides of the Sutlej. Due to which he created many offensives on the Cis-Sutlej areas or on the eastern sides of the Sutlej, this area is known as Malwa region. Lahore, Multan, Kashmir, Peshawar were included to his kingdom, but he could not easily made his domination over the Malwa region, on the account of opposition of Britishers. His empire extended Ladakh in the North, Shikarpur in the South, Sutlej in the east to Afghanistan in the West.<sup>19</sup>

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was the very contemporary of Britishers, from the very beginning cold war was started between them from 1801A.D. which lasted upto the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The ability and generosity of Maharaja was fully known to British officers that's why British Governor General Warren Hastings mentioned about the popularity of Maharaja in his files that among the all misls of Punjab during that time only one Sardar and one misl was in chance to remain long lasting thus due to the fear of Maharaja Ranjit Singh Britishers decided to captured it before the Ranjit Singh came into his real power and authority. But all hopes of

Britishers were dashed to the ground because the Sikhs were already maintained themselves in one organisation, in 1809 A.D.

Britishers reached Punjab, they were deeply failed to depress the popularity of Ranjit Singh.<sup>20</sup> In 1806 A.D. and 1807A.D., Maharaja raised force second time on the Sutlej areas of Jind and Nabha, Patiala, while fearing from the powerful force of Maharaja, the rulers of these places took the guidance of British Resident Stin', on the other hand. British Government was afraid of Napoleon, so they did not make any cooperation with these rulers against Ranjit Singh. In December 1808 A.D. Ranjit Singh met 'Metcalf' and put his demand before him to occupy the Malwa region but 'Metcalf' refused to do so.<sup>21</sup>

In 1809, Maharaja met second time to 'Metcalf' and put his demands. It was time when both Maharaja and Britishers wanted to establish their political stability there. In 1809 April, when third time Maharaja met to 'Metcalf' and further recommended the friendly relation of British Government with Lahore Darbar. So the result came out that on 25 April, 1809 the treaty of Amritsar was signed between them. It is believed that Treaty of Amritsar was recognised as the milestone of the Anglo Sikh relation. The consequences of this treaty came out to be profitable to Britishers that they shattered the Dreams of Maharaja for establishing his supremacy over the Malwa Sikhs. The rulers of the Cis-Sutlej region came to under the protection of the Britishers. Directly, Britishers put Maharaja under their influence while signing the treaty of Amritsar, Even Maharaja felt Prick of this treaty because it created obstacles on the way of expansionist policy of Maharaja. He felt that he would not become the sole ruler of Punjab while following the orders of Britishers. Due to this critical situation the atmosphere of Punjab became distrust

and suspicion during 1808A.D. and 1812A.D. till the 1812 A.D. the both were on the friendly terms. Even the British officer David Ochterloney attended the marriage function of Prince Kharak Singh in 1812 A.D. The Bitterness which was created among them was related to the issue of Wadni village which was located in the South of Sutlej. Due to expansionist policy of Ranjit Singh Fateh Singh Ahluwalia took the protection of Britishers, for the help of Fateh Singh Maharaja became annoyed with Britishers.<sup>22</sup> The atmosphere became suspicion till 1826 A.D. From 1828A.D. to 1839A.D. the relations between them became so critical that it seems, they could collide any times. The Maharaja was fed up with the continue interference of Britishers in Trans-Sutlej territories, rather they wanted to check the growing power of Maharaja.<sup>23</sup>

For a long time Ranjit Singh had focussed his attention on Sindh state but due to the interference of Britishers they did not allowed him to extend his empire, because they had themselves tried to capture that place, related to this topic Governor-General William Bentick made a meeting with Ranjit Singh at Ropar. In 1831 A.D. while the Maharaja was Pre-occupied with the welcome and great pomp & show and in the Ropar meeting an English agent colonial Pettinger entered into a commercial treaty with the Amir's of Sindh Maharaja at that time did not utter a single word against this activity of Britishers.<sup>24</sup> In 1836-38 A.D. regarding the occupation of Ferozpur Britishers permitted to Maharaja that he should annexed but later on they realized the Strategic and Commercial importance of Ferozpur in 1838 A.D. clearly Britishers made this place their cantonment within three years. Consequently, the Anglo-Sikh relation get a Severe Jolt. Britishers were always Scared of Russian expansion in Central Asia, so now they wanted to strengthen their, power, So Machaughton was sent to Lahore with the Proposal of Tripartite alliance within including [English, Shah Shuja and Maharaja Ranjit Singh] but Ranjit Singh was

suspicion about this activity of their, power. He ignored the proposed treaty. The English officers were very clever they used all tricks to control the Ranjit Singh. Machavghton warned him so under the pressure Ranjit Singh had to sign it on 26 June, 1838A.D. So one should say that relation of Maharaja Ranjit Singh with Britishers was alike cold war.<sup>25</sup>

Maharaja Ranjit Singh not only a good political ruler but was also able administrator, even while remaining busy in the expansionist policy of his kingdom he maintain his society in such a manner that he became one of the best Indian administrator, who managed his society in a very efficient and smooth manner. The atmosphere of Punjab was full of anarchy, confusion and unrest when he ascended the throne. During that time due to the arising of various misls, the condition became very critical and there was no one king and ruler in the Punjab who would stable the unstable political condition and the in-fighting of Misls. Sardars of different misles were the independent rulers of their kingdom. But Ranjit Singh of Sukerchakia Misls did not possess this Calibre. Different Misls Sardars had not good terms with each other. So while taking the advantage of this situation Ranjit Singh established his vast and powerful empire. The only fear of Ranjit Singh during that time was Britishers because they became much powerful due to battle of Plessey in 1757 A.D. and battle of Buxer in 1764 A.D. and the endeavours Lord Wellesley had resulted into expansionist policy of British empire in India.<sup>26</sup> Rather they had sprang their feathers upto Delhi and now they put involvement in Punjab. But when Ranjit Singh accepted accession they did not dare to in value in the politics of Punjab. One should get information from the political study of that time period that not any capable ruler was present over there at that time who would complete with Maharaja. The Misl Sardars had weakened their power while busy fighting with each other. Even the brave and able leaders of misls were

either dead or grew old. Moreover they were constantly at war with the Muslim rulers. Marathas, Gorkhas, hilly Rajputs and the Britishers were not attached with the politics of Punjab. Thus the way was clear for the Ranjit Singh to establish his empire.<sup>27</sup>

If we discuss about the systems of administration of Ranjit Singh was that in the early years of his regime he along with his Sikh Chiefs had created not any official records, rather business and where state affairs were conducted verbally orders and continued until Diwan Bhiwani Das a clever Natured person of Peshawar was employed. When he came into his services he firstly divided the different offices departments, affairs of state, he keep the accounts of state, farming of districts and gave importance to each and every preserved record. In this way Twelve officers came into existence.<sup>28</sup>

Due to the establishment of offices, the Civil and Military administration of the Government was well arranged. Diwan Dinanath was at the head of them. Different Governors and Sardars used to be appointed in each district for the well conducting of the country's affairs. They managed the whole business connected with the administration of the territory entrusted to them and Seldom report any Case of the Court unless it be of high importance when his highness orders are communicated by issuing permanent. Each and every affair of the state whether it was settlement of revenue, audit of accounts and their adjustment both in civil and military departments had been done by himself but in last three years due to the sickness, the whole affairs were hand over to Raja Dhian Singh. He had news writer who used to provide records and different news in every quarter and the news related to foreign court used to read the Civil administration of Maharaja was very simple, he make the full control over the oppression of peasant regime Maharaja recognized that the system of Sikhs administration was not because he

was feared from the revolt or the abandonment of his land through discouragement and despair. In the very early period of his suitable and until he would not make hope to win solid victories over regular troops till it is not modified.<sup>29</sup> He studied the drill and tactics of English troops over Afghans, during Ahmed Shah Abdali's time period that how they were fairly disciplined and formidable opponents even in the hilly areas they were almost invincible, while realizing the reason of Superiority of British organization, Ranjit Singh decided to create the army on similar lines. Thus he changed the whole entire organization of army. Cavalry ceased to be most important army and infantry became the favourite service. The actual change occurred by providing the employment to European officers, who introduced a unique system of Military which had become general in Europe due to those efforts the value was provided to infantry instead of cavalry. These European officers were very able and quite competent to perform all what they had promised to Maharaja in increasing the efficiency of Lahore army. They provide formidable body of troops to the infantry alongwith their fruitful instruction due to which it became well disciplined and steady. Now the regiment would march 30 miles a day for many days together due to their great endurance. Maharaja recruited youth only in the infantry who were the strongest and handsomest one, were selected, while Cavalry were irregular troops the contingent of his different Sardars not appointed for any consideration of bravery and strength.<sup>30</sup> All the foreign and domestic affairs of the entire State was on the tongue of his highness, thus the Government of Lahore became despotism, Although some of the countries of men of wisdom and intelligence and the Maharaja has a share of that consideration and respect. Maharaja himself possessed as vigorous mind and having a great reliance generally he used to be guided by his own opinion though he may ask that of his countries. Most of the time Maharaja used to

be consulted by the religious book of Sikhs, 'Granth Sahib' and often acted as its oracle. The foreign states affairs and his own functionaries were solely dictated by himself, he had ability to make criticism on the wrong decision of his officers and he correct it within a minute, even though he was illiterate person. A striking feature of his character is that he was an habitual reserve in matters of business forms. In actions he had always shown himself personally brave and collected but his plans betray not boldness or adventurous hazard.<sup>31</sup>

There has been a sharp difference of Judgment between the Indian and European writers regarding the religious views of Maharaja. The former regard him as one who had a genuine respect for the Sikh Scriptures. Even the examples of his around professions and the performances of religious activities had been found, which proved this mark, correct<sup>32</sup>. Maharaja was very particular about the recites of Bani of Granth Sahib and he used to bow head at *Darbar Sahib*, Amritsar twice a year. He showed special favour to the priesthood of sikhs and spent an amount of money for the maintenance of sikh's religious institutions<sup>33</sup>.

The Justice and Law of Maharaja was well-suited and it was efficient as compared to the need of time. Besides it, the law of state was impartial and fast. All people whether it was rich and poor were treated alike before the court of Law. Legal Griffin pointed out the interesting incident regarding the Justice of Maharaja once the peasant planed to Sawan Mal that a man destroyed his field while losing the horse's to graze, even he pointed out the eldest son of Diwan Ram Das, from the Darbar for that mistake<sup>34</sup>. He was imprisoned for his fault. For this impartial Justice and Judicial decision Maharaja was much pleased and granted a Jagir to Sawan Mal. For the fertility and prosperity of country, Maharaja realized the importance of well arranged agrarian society so he divided it into 3 classes the superior owners and non- cultivating proprietors,



peasant-proprietors and tenants. Superior owners were the successors of the old chiefs, tenants were mere only peasants who were without the ownership right of that land which they used to be cultivate. During that time various contemporary tribes had changed their connection towards the land. Due to some reasons Rajputs also weakened their position thus the authority of Maharaja became strong Rajputs included in the Self-superior proprietors and Jats were Self-Cultivating the Jats were powerful mere because they used to served in large, to the Lahore Darbar's army, which changed the position of Jats, thus in 1849 the Jats came to constitute the most important section of the peasantry in the Punjab.<sup>35</sup>

From the administration point of view Maharaja had to efficient capacity to grasp minutiae of administration and initiate the talent. He made such type of proficient and effectual system for state that would proved beneficial for the peoples. But regrettably, it continued to hinge on his person, which tended to make his exercise of authority get the complexion of an absolute monarchy, As the good administrators the most important feature of Maharaja was, his down to earth knowledge regarding the state affairs and accessibility which was free from any hindrances.<sup>36</sup> He ensured that the ownership of land was granted to tiller and had to provide the title to dig a new well to that particular peasant.

Maharaja adopted the indiscrimination behaviour while selecting or appointing the officers to any particulars department of the state. He used to select them on the basis of merit instead of any religion, caste, creed. It was not compulsory during his period that he had to appoint only Sikhs on the higher rather, the main posts like Prime Minister and foreign minister were given to other communities. Even the close admirers of Maharaja Ranjit Singh were Muslims and it is

confirmation of the loyalty, that during Anglo-Sikh Wars, Muslims fought as gallantly as Sikhs.<sup>37</sup> It was happened very first time in the history of country the Mazhabis, the untouchable class of Hindu Society, became the members of Ranjit Singh's army. During the consolidation period of Maharaja he annexed many forts, towns, villages the most important Sikh territories included by Sikhs were Maryan, Jalalpur, Manowar, Islamgarh, Gujrat, Dipalpur, Jithpur etc. By the end of this phase Bhangis of Gujrat, Nakkais, Buddh Singh Faizallapuria, Kanhiyas, the Baggas then Purias etc. families were subverted. Indeed we imagine that the Sikh chiefs subordinate themselves before Ranjit Singh alongwith Sada Kaur and Fateh Singh Ahluwalia. Even Ranjit Singh became the well known administrator but he did not forgot his Sikh religion pioneer to Khalsa rule he was popularly known as '*Sher-i-Punjab*' He wanted the Coins on the names of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Guru Gobind Singh Ji. In order to consolidate his power or rule over annexed places he enforced a first State Civil and Military administration. The Condition of Society was much better than precious centuries. The most dominating society, the peasants were rather happy in every situation. Law was fully equally prevailed in the State. Thus Maharaja proved as great worrier, efficient administrator, who died in 1839. Thus the Sun of Political power was set with his death. Further his successors were not capable to continue his vast empire. After the two sikh wars with Britishirs in 1849 A.D. the empire of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was merged with British empire.<sup>38</sup>

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CHAPTER-II

# **Administrative Intuition of Maharaja Ranjit Singh**



## CHAPTER-II

### "Administrative Intuition"- Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

The lives of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Napoleon Bonaparte seems to be similar to some extent, because in the later part of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century East and Western parts were dominated by themselves. Even at that times Britishers were their arch rivals and both of them shown heroic stand during their own reign. The empire of Napoleon and Maharaja Ranjit Singh was as similar as their personal lives. Its true that both suffered from the short physical stature and short life spans but both had unmatched appetite for the territorial expansion, they were possessed of prodigious administrative acumen.<sup>1</sup>

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was popularly known as *Lion of Punjab* he was the greatest emperor of his times and counted among the leading personalities of his time period. He was often compared to Napoleon Bonaparte because of his extraordinary qualities as he was a fighter, conqueror and an empire builder. The accounts of European travellers and Indian chronicles showed Ranjit Singh as the most enduring character of Sikh history. Maharaja's rule was benevolent with all round development qualities as secular values and patriotic fervour. Ranjit Singh became the absolute monarch of his authoritative state while extending his territories from Tibet to Sindh and from Khyber pass to Sutlej. He used to sustain the Sovereign kingdom and domains on the basis of power of arms. It can conversely says that while fulfilling the ambitions Maharaja used less force.

Barron Charles Hugel records : Never perhaps was so large as empire founded by one Man with so little criminality. Due to the Daring and his unequalled originality of geniuses he provide four decades of peace, prosperity and progress to Punjab. Every Community of Punjab whether it was Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims fully enjoyed the benefits. It was not a mean achievement of

Maharaja to unite these three communities into a common venture and resolve their problems through moderation of political orders.<sup>2</sup> The most notable trait of Maharaja's polity was that he provide complete freedom to his subjects in the favour of worship of their concern Gods.

He used to demonstrate the amazing capacity, to grasp minutiae of administrative and intuitive urge to draw talent in his organisation of Government. The administrative system which run under his authority proved beneficial, efficient and geared towards the interest of the people. But regretablely it continued to hinge on his peoples, which tended to make his exercises of authority get the complexion of an absolute monarchy Maharaja had a down to earth knowledge about the state affairs and his best feature was trouble- free accessibility. He provide special facilities to owners of land, while ensuring them that ownership of land was vested with the tiller and that particular person could dig a new well. He ordered to his marching troops not to make any damage to the crops of peasants<sup>3</sup>.

Due to the Secular outlook of Maharaja he provided posts to his subjects on the basis of Merit instead of religion. It was not essential for him to recruit the officers on higher ranks as Prime Minister and foreign Minister would belonged to his religion rather during his period they were from other communities. Even the close adviser of Maharaja were Muslims and it is confirmation of loyalty due to which they fought gauntly as Sikhs in Anglo - Sikh wars. Maharaja created a landmark in the History of India while recruiting 'Mazhabis' in his army who were distinguished as old untouchables on Hindu Society. Maharaja's Exceptional norms of Public demeanor and Social, moral principles were the main characteristics of Maharaja's rule. Maharaja gave instructions to his khalsa army that they would not damage any mosque, not to insult any women and not to destroy anyone's crop while passing through Peshawar streets, they



had to keep restraint on themselves. He tried his best to follow the Guru's injunction, "Exercise forbearance in the midst of power be humble in the midst of honour"<sup>4</sup>.

Maharaja gave the credit of his each success to the favour of God. He was a ruler whose royal emblems as crown or throne were absent from his Darbar, thus he did not make show off his royalty. Even he did not issue the coins of his own name rather the name of Sikh Guru Sahiban was struck on his coins. The rupee and paise were called Nanakshahi. The Persian words on them, '*Kettle*' which means to feed the poor peoples. '*Sword*' means to protect the helpless and poor peoples, another meaning was victory and unhesitating patronage, that have been obtained from Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh Ji. He was a very sensible administrator that he refused to wear royal symbol of king in his turban and used cross-legged on his chair before the courtiers or other common peoples. He often received the visitors in the oriental fashion, reacting on cushions, on a carpet. He identified that government is not the personal affair of him rather it is for the benefits of peoples thus it came to be known as Darbar Khalsaji. Ranjit Singh did not want that he could lose the common touch thus he preferred for him to call as '*Singh Sahib*' instead of any 'Royal Touch'.

The Sikhs were born horsemen who would not think about infantry service rather they considered it understatement. While recognizing this condition of Sikh Sardar he recruited the *Purbias* from Gangetic plains who were called Punjabi Muslims, Afghans and *Gurkhas*, which were tested by Maharaja in the campaign against Ahmad Khan Sial of Jhang and Zamindaras of which in 1803-04 A.D. Further this infantry became the Supporting army of cavalry and Artillery. It was organized into battalions of about 900 men in each. A Battalion was commanded by Kumedan or commandant, which was assisted by a Major in the manoeuvring unit. The usual

camp followers, tradesman, a Munshior, Mustaddi, Granthi were also including in administrative staff. Mode of traction was used for the further classification of artillery which was determined by the size of guns. The main Army was sub-divided into Topkhana Kalan and Top Khana Khurd in 1804 A.D. which changed the *zamburaks* or Swivels into infantry units who earlier used to carry on Camels. In 1810 A.D. Horse drawn artillery was also introduced. '*Mian Ghausu*' guided special artillery corps *Topkhana-i- guided Special Topkhana-i- Mubarak*.<sup>5</sup>

For making the perfect army troops Maharaja began to attend regularly their training session, which made the infantry as amiable service for Sikhs who started to join it. Till Maharaja's period only *Zamburaks* and seminal mounted guns were used but now he began to increase his attention towards artillery. He not only increase the number of guns but also manufacture ammunition on a large scale. The reorganization of his Cavalry waited until the induction into Sikh service of European officers who as veterans of the Napoleonic wars were looking to the well known sikh ruler for their next chance to criticise the aims of Britishers in India.<sup>6</sup>

Ranjit Singh recruited Jean Baptiste Ventura and Jean Francois Allard, two veterans of Napoleonic wars, at Lahore in 1822A.D. after considerable initial hesitation and elaborate verification. The charge of *Fang-i-Khan* and *Fang-i-Aim*, the regular army was raised to them. The Battalions of infantry were under the training of General Ventura Cavalry and artillery were under general Allard, which training, command and ordnance were under Punjabi generals as Ilahi Baksh, Lahina Singh Majithia until the arrival of French officers General Claude Augusta court in 1827a.d. and American colonel Alexander Gardner in 1832 A.D. armament workshop was under the charge of Lahina Singh Majithia and the work of mixing gunpowder was entrusted to Dr. John Martin Honigberger a Hungarian Physician.<sup>7</sup>

The French traveller victor Jacquemont met Ranjit Singh in Lahore Darbar and recognized his conversation like a Nightmare. He wrote that Maharaja asked hundred questions to him about India, British, Europe, Napoleon Bonaparte etc. In 1812A.D. he came in contact with British commander David Ochterlony to enquire the English company's drill in the battle field and appreciate their performance. He wanted that his army should be modernized on western traits thus he employed French and Italian Generals to train his army. That's why his army was unrivalled for steadiness. Three wings of artillery were reorganized by General court in 1827 A.D. *Top khana* Jinsi the personal artillery was a mixed corps with batteries of *Gani*, *Aspi*, file guns and *Aobobi*.

For the attachment to division of irregular army *Topkhana Aspi* artillery was consisted. The organization of *Zamburaks*, Camel Swivels and *Ghubaras* camps were subdivided into Batteries, Further Batteries were subdivided guns sections, each gun was provided to sub unit for their functioning.

Ranjit Singh was such an able administrator who during the prevalent anarchy and chaos had created a stability in the society of Punjab. Glimmering of Punjab Nationalism was present over there. Even the reign period of Maharaja was short and he had enormous work to do, but he did his best to make the Punjab, powerful state of country.<sup>8</sup>

From the beginning of his political career Ranjit Singh realized that representatives of different section peoples had been invited him to rule over the different religious persuasions and practices due to which he had follow the cosmopolitans policy and to appoint his official from the different communities of the country. He adopted such a policy during his government that he placed all his subjects on the same political level regardless of their faith or religion. The ideas of

paternalism, liberalism and Benevolence were conducted towards non-sikhs subjects. It is not correct to say that the Maharaja's Solicitude for all people, irrespective of Caste, colour or creed was rooted in any conception of the Secular state. The Secular State's nation was alien to Maharaja. His approach was religious and not the non-religious one which regards not dispensable condition towards the modern theory of Secular State. Ranjit Singh's cosmopolitan policy was not matched to any ancient and medieval ruler who draw important posts, more than sixty person hailing from the foreign nationalities.<sup>9</sup>

The important traits of ruler fearless and intrepidity were full in Maharaja from the very beginning of his career Maharaja facing dangers and hazardous atmosphere even when he was not in fighting and just watching the activities of his soldiers, his men started losing confidence he immediately jumped into the fighting while remaining quite from danger to his life. Maharaja did not like the show off activities he was away from pomp and show but his court was the symbol of oriental Pageantry. A very high degree one particular quality possessed to Ranjit Singh that he always knew how far he could go. His large and far reaching designs must be related to his practicable measures. When he became sure about the secureness of first step then he took the next step. He challenged only that enemy with whom the consequences became in his own favour.<sup>10</sup>

The appointments of his subjects to different posts was the clear evident of Maharaja's non-Sectarian thinking no doubt that in ancient India, such policy was imposed but employment to aliens or foreigners was not matched to Maharaja's time period. Even the high posts were filled with Dogra brothers, in the Lahore Darbar. A Greek person was the viceroy of an important frontier province under Ashoka, Saka king Rudraman I as the given governorship of Postman,

Yashovarman gave important rank to Huna in his administration these were the earlier India's instances but no ruler of that period could match with Maharaja. The Descendent of Fakir family Fakir waheed-ud-din keeps the records of Ranjit Singh's administration that among the highest rank officers of muslim society one was the governor of State and other were district officers. Forty one high ranking Muslim officers were employed in the Darbar's army, Colonel, generals, other rank holdings were including. The posts of Senior officers in police, Judiciary, legal, stores departments were filled with the different 92 Muslim peoples. One should say that regime of Maharaja was run by the support of different communities even the ruler was a Sikh. Such trait gave a Secular outlook to Maharaja state.<sup>11</sup>

The Maharaj behaved in a generosity manner towards brave and staunch Mohammadans which proved the most creditable feature of any statesmen. He deals in a very sensible way within Muslim chiefs. He treated in a very sympathetic manner with Nizam-ud-din after his various defeats. His treatment to family of Nawab was another instance.

During the Maharaja's period all round progress was occurred special patronage was provided by Ranjit Singh to Centres of higher learning various Arabic and Persian institutes were opened Among them *Bazar-i-Hakimna's* Lahore institute received aid from Maharaja in the shape of donations and stipends for the poor people's children.<sup>12</sup>

Maharaja was not only concern to one religion rather every religion get the respectful place in his reign as Dogra brothers the Hindus enjoyed their Hindu forms of religion. Maharaja gave full liberty to worship Hindu Gods and Goddesses to his wives, even the erected temples for the use of their wives. He also went to Hindus religious places as -Haridwar Jawala Mukhi in the

Shivaliks and gave charity of thousands of money and many values articles to the religious priests of those similar places.

During Maharaja's period the fanaticism of sikhs became invisible and toleration of Maharaja became brighten that all were looked equal before the Sikh monarch. Non-Communal and Liberal policy was followed by Maharaja throughout his career. Various glories were achieved by non-sikhs during their expeditions. Colonel Sheikh Bassanwan's Carried Lahore Darbar's Colours, into foreign lands. Dogra Sardar Zoarwar Singh led his forces under the colours of Darbar across the Himalayas.<sup>13</sup>

Religious Bigotry was not adopted by Ranjit Singh. He was not a dreamer of Religion. He utilised the fullest extent the fervour of the Khalsa against Muslim in general towards the extent of the fervour of Khalsa and in Afghans in particular he was acute enough for the reorganization anowed policy of persecution, would proved detrimental to his own best interests. Maharaja was a very far-sighted statesman who realized that Britishers were safe friends and very dangerous foes, as long as he remained at the helm of affairs he did not want to expose his kingdom to the risks of war. He recognized the danger from Britishers after signing the Treaty of Amritsar, when they established their border line on other side to river sutlej. Such type of circumstances forced him for the realization of risk from Britishers that if they would not be controlled then one day they would occupy whole Punjab.<sup>14</sup>

Anarchy was prevailed during Maharaja's predecessor's times whether it was misaldari system, mughals, pathans etc. due to which he could inherit any elaborated type of administration. In order to make the peoples life safe he restore the government which was his foremost step. He introduced many new innovation, any sharp break with the past would have created difficulties

to readaptation for the officials and the public alike because habits cannot be changed over night. The Safest course was to regularize the status quo-Qazi-Nizam-ud-din Mufti Muhamand Shahpur assisted by Saadullah chishti were permitted to carry on their Jobs and Iman Din Sawar to act as Kotwal of Lahore. The other main departments like revenue, civil fiscal administration did not bring any change. The earlier steps of Maharaja whether it was designation of officials and maintain of Darbar helped him to win the support of people, due to these circumstances he was successful in liquidating the misls and decay of *Gurmatta*.<sup>15</sup>

The Benevolent reforms were introduced by dutiful officials like Nazim Amar Singh Majithia in Hazara, Ruplal in Jullundhur, Sawan Mai in Muttan Lehna Singh Amritsar by well-organization of Punjab on the other hand, Governors of Kashmir and Peshawar. Jamadar Khushal Singh, Hari Singh Nalwa, Avitabile groaned under their rough activities due to which Maharaja had to crush their power by imposing fines on them and deprived them from their ill-gotten wealth.<sup>16</sup> The roots of corruption in some cases were so deep and chronic that it was hard to remove even through exemplary punishments. Difficult means of communication, ample opportunities of gratification and a combination of many duties in officers, endangered the working activities or functioning of Government to employ the sweeping broom completely. Repeatedly, the Darbar was dined into the ears of the state officials what was expected to them.<sup>17</sup>

In a very efficient manner, Maharaja Ranjit Singh ruled complete forty years over the Punjab. The Punjab state, for the first time in India enjoyed peace and prosperity, freedom from religious bigotry fanaticism and persecution after the regime of Akbar the Great. As compared to Modern elaborated machinery of Government, that administration was rough and ready but it did not suffered in the comparison with non-European states of that time.<sup>18</sup> The facilities of police and

other protective forces were prevalent but naturally there were less capital crimes happened in the society. The Maharaja provide such a necessity facilities to farmers that while presenting the *Batai* system Burden taxation it because fair and did not felt to them, as the cash system was introduced by the Britishers.<sup>19</sup>

Administrative Institution of Maharaja Ranjit Singh gave full liberty to Punjab's people in their concern works, not any interference was recognized by officers as it was only for recovery of land revenue and government came in the touch with the people and even in with a limited section of the population.<sup>20</sup> The Punjabi's people were happy with the administration of Maharaja both Maharaja and Public loved each other very much. When he died in 1839A.D. there was universal mourning in the country and everyone felt as if he had host his own family member and guardian.<sup>21</sup>



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**CHAPTER-III**

**An Astute Administrator**



### CHAPTER-3

#### **An Astute Administrator**

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was known as the beau ideal of Sikh empire. During the life regime of Maharaja Sikh authority was at its zenith. Even not only the Sikhs had loyalty towards Maharaja but other religion like Hindus and their whole nation realized him as the Sun of Hindu nation who had once risen in the political Horizon of India. The whole community of Hindus showered their warm blessings to Maharaja. He was as the Liberator and protector of Hindus who after centuries of barbarous attacks from North hurled back the raiders to their mountain lairs. Hindu were filled with love and affectionate feelings towards Maharaja. The popularity of Maharaja Ranjit Singh with his people as well as with his army and Civil, Military Officers was immensed. The word uttered by him became law which was respected by all people. One of the best trait as usual Maharaja Ranjit Singh was the acumen with which he choose his officers. He always selected the right man for the right place and never felt hesitation to dismiss if anyone of them recognized as betrayal. This was one of the remarkable feature that none of his officers, ministers or generals of whatever caste or creed ever played false with him. Even though he was illiterate like Akbar, Maharaja was nicely master of natural Sagacity and was equally tolerant and ready to recognize merit in all religions and in every irrespective of caste, creed and colour.<sup>1</sup> The eye-catching feature of Maharaja's administration was total absence of cruelty and vindictiveness of his character. Even when he captured any fort he treated his enemy in a very leniency and kindness however bitter their resistance might have been. So many chiefs in his state were present whose estates had been annexed but were working honestly with Maharaja. He had given them suitable employments or Jagirs and had assured them had to remain loyal and

devotional towards him. The great Sardars who had been the leaders of the various estates but were overthrown by Maharaja, were all in this fashion reduced from equality and rivalry to honourable subjection actually there was a great group of Muhammad Khans, Nobles whom Ranjit Singh attached to his destination. The leaders of Musalman tribes like Sials, Ghebas, Tiwans and Kharrar were included in this group. Maharaja Ranjit Singh ruled over the Punjab State, the frontier, Kashmir about forty years. Through this life time Punjab enjoyed peace and freedom from bigotry in the religious field, fanaticism and persecution for the first time after the demise of Akbar. The administration was hardly rough and ready as compared to machinery of advance times but by no means suffered in comparison with non-European States of the time. There was much extent of abolishment of capital crime in spite of about a quarter Lakh of police and other protective force. The taxation burden on the people was being based on *batai* systems even if fairly high was not felt so actually as the cash system introduced by Britishers. In other subjects, the people of Punjab enjoyed full freedom from official interference as it was only the recovery of land revenue that Government came in touch with the people and even then with a limited section of the population. As according to the modern sense not much police facility and courts available in the state, not any special arms act was passed, people's had to protect themselves without the help of police many of their<sup>2</sup> mutual disputes were settled by Panchayats. Those Panchayats were not the creation of the state but were ad hoc committee of the elders of that concerned village who were known for their honesty and impartiality. There was not any technical procedure to decide the cases rather their personal knowledge or oral evidence was required on the statements of persons whose status and character were fully known to them. Much of Sanctity was attached to these Panchayats that nobody used to dare to tell a lie before

those Panchayats. The Military side of Maharaja Ranjit Singh is also not hidden because of its features. He was the born soldier one of the best politician comet that shot across the north - western skies and blazed a brilliant trail which faded away in the overtaking dazzling lite of a big red comet. He was one of outstanding military genius that Punjab was the greatest state which took the services of such a humble person. In his career of conquests he had nearly thirty expeditions leaving only about twelve to his generals to lead for him. As knowing the place of Maharaja in history has been likened to many historical personages as Sher Shah Suri, Napoleon Bonaparte, Bismarck, Abraham Shivaji, Haider Ali etc. As the fact, a person is not used to be compared till the circumstances of both are not similar. The circumstances under which Ranjit Singh carried his way to a kingdom were more unfavourable than those faced by most of the above mentioned great men of history. He was the only effortable person who provide efficient administration to Punjab State and scattered units of state were brought under by him under one empire. He was wonderful grasp of the political and military situation confronting him. Undoubtedly he was the last great constructive genius among the sikhs.<sup>3</sup>

Fauja Singh remarked that working policies and conduct of Maharaja Ranjit Singh towards non-sikhs subjects were guided by the ideas of paternalism, liberalism and benevolence. One should not say that it would be definitely correct about the solicitude for all people irrespective of caste, colour creed was rooted in any conception of the secular state his approach was religious and not the non-religious policy he just only followed the tradition of political liberalism which had been adopted by the sikh rulers in the 18th century under the teachings of Gurus. The non-sectarian nature of Ranjit Singh's government is the full evident of his appointments. The Dogra brothers were appointed on the good posts of Darbar. In ancient times India no disabilities were imposed

upon foreigners as aliens. During ancient time a Greek person was serving as viceroy of an important frontier province under Ashoka. A Parthian was working as a governor under the Saka king Rudraman I and a Huna Officer was serving on an important post in the administration of yashovarman which were solitary instances. But there was not any ancient and medieval Indian history could match Ranjit Singh who had appointed to important posts more than forty persons, hailing from more than a dozen foreign rationalities. Fakir Waheed-du-din a descendent of the Fakir family basing his information on his family records writes that among top ranking Muslim Officers of the Maharaja there were two Ministers one governor and several district Officers.<sup>4</sup> Forty one high ranking Muslim Officers in the Darbar army among them generals, severals of them were colonels and other were holders of important ranks. Ninety-two muslims were appointed on the posts of senior officers in police Judiciary legal departments, this while the ruler was a Sikh, the Government was run by an elite corps composed of members of all communities. The most creditable feature of the policy adopted by Maharaja was that which the brave and staunch Muslims had reconciled themselves to the survey of Ranjit Singh a Sikh points. Maharaja was very considerate in dealing with the Muslim Chiefs. The generosity in the character of Maharaja Ranjit Singh showed in the treatment of Nizam-ud-din whom he defeated more than once. Even the Maharaja's treatment towards the family of Nawab of Multan which was another example of his sympathetic behaviour. The Muslim women, Bibi Moran, Gulbahar Begum whom he get married which retained their faith Gulbahar begum built a Masque for the Muslim peoples at the state expenses and still that mosque is exist. Waheed-ud-din remarked that he gave his full patronised to learning centres irrespective of the people that were running the institutions or receiving instruction. The learning institutes of languages Arabic and Persian

studies were established in the Bazar-i-Hakiman, Lahore which got aid from the Maharaja in the shape of donations and stipends for the poor students. Jacquemont remarks that during Maharaja's time the fanaticism of Sikhs had become extinct and tolerance of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He was super master of equality and was a good grace of the Sikh Monarch throughout his career, he followed completely a non-communal and a liberal policy. Every community related people was so loyal towards Maharaja that during his expenditures even the non-sikhs performed their best glories for the sake of Maharaja. It was because of the policy of Maharaja Ranjit Singh that after his death when the Khalsa stood up against the double menace of Britishers and when it was compelled to take up arms against army of the British men of all the communities, Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims fought shoulder to Shoulder ungrudgingly mingled their blood in defence of their beloved state.

To call him as a despotic ruler or an absolute Monarch will be considered as a gross injustice in the side of Maharaja. Despotism is the symbol of high-handedness and here Ranjit Singh was never want only imbrued his hands in blood. He was not doubt a pivot who gave instructions but there was element of partnership of all and the government was seldom meddlesome vindictiveness was unknown to him. He tried to vanquish his rivals with unheard of clemency they were all provided for and not left to rot in a state of penury and desperation. It cannot be denied that no written constitution was their to restrict his powers and democratic institutions did not exist but even then he was the product of his country where royal kings and loyal subjects had always been the rule. Maharaja Ranjit Singh never tried ducks and drakes with his subjects and allowed ample scope for the realization of individual ambition. Rather he possessed wide powers and prerogatives and his word was law, yet in doing so he was only following the time-



honoured practices of the land. Maharaja had a compassionate feelings towards poor, handicapped and downcast people which is most of the time described in many of legend. But not a mercy shown to criminal disloyal peoples. Many of the times as the task of Jamadar Khushal Singh, Avitabile, Moti Ram, Wasakha Singh and he did not spare even Hari Singh Nalwa at one time or the other when charges of corruption extortion and high-handedness were proved against them. But the peoples in his good books get the word of praise to Amar Singh Majithia in Hazara Rup Lal in Jullundhar Sawan Mal in Multan and Lehna Singh Amritsar or evincing solicitude for their subjects.<sup>5</sup> The spirit of compromise and tolerance were conceived in the Secularism of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. This was the legacy which Ranjit Singh inherited. A Sizeable estate well managed, a good number of horsemen and matchlock to fight against bounders ambition. Maharaja Ranjit Singh's system of governance carried all the essential features of a typical autocracy that had been treated by his personal genius. The diversification of creed races and multifarious religious traditions. Four out of the six groups at the court were not even natives of the Punjab of the other three only a few of the Muslims, Hindus and Brahmins were the real inhabitants of the country. The sikh Sardars who constantly remained engaged in mutual recriminations represented the only group that was wholly composed of the native stock. N.K. Sinha remarked that all was cultured and refined had disappeared from the Punjab Long before he came into power therefore in his attempt to establish order out of chaos he had to look for administrators outside the Punjab because his own land was there all but bare of talent if one considered the study of various departments of state and study of different classes of society one find that careful and sagacious discrimination shown by him. In other words he selected the right man for the right Job and attached much importance to the hereditary instincts and

traditions of the various classes of the subjects with little consideration for religious affiliations. He realized that Majha Jats were pre-eminently a fighting class so he had seldom entrusted the representative of this martial community with the duties of Civil administration. In order to save its nation from internal and external dangers Maharaja felt it necessary to establish a strong centralised state with well-defined political frontiers. When he expanded his dominions he tried to improve the shape of its state's government also. The main target of Maharaja's government was to uplift the efficiency, order, Justice and Public Welfare.<sup>6</sup> The main body of his empire was a council of state and a Central secretariat. No legislature was there. He himself made laws and rules for the efficient administrative purposes but he maintained the old customary laws to regulate the administrative, social, economic affairs of state. The executive was in main function for the assistance of the council of state, the chief secretariat and the provincial local services. In the modern sense of the word Maharaja gave a constitution to the Punjab. In expanding and consolidating their principalities, the Sikh Chieftains apart from their earlier efforts for liberation of their land from the Mughal or Afghan overlordship had remained continually engaged for several decades either in resisting the foreign invader. When Maharaja Ranjit Singh ascended the throne the political condition of Punjab was not fully settled and peaceful. He took some time to build and consolidate his kingdom. To some extent he limited his efforts to maintaining of a workable system of administration rather than introducing innovations or legislating new and novel laws. Among his administrative machinery the Diwan was a highest functioning person who kept in his own hands the threads of whole of the revenue collection and expenditure. All the departments of the state submitted their documents or papers to Diwan for further inspection whether those papers were relating to transactions and payments. But all the

departments were under the Maharaja he was the supreme Civil authority. He enjoyed the pivotal position in the government. Every appointment in the department was made by him whether it was minister, civil officers at headquarters, nazims and Kardars, Maharaja was the highest court and the fountain of Justice. From the military point of view he was the supreme commander of forces. In the performance of different functions he was assisted by galaxy of ministers whose number was not fixed the ministers were not appointed for the life they were changed with the sweet will of Maharaja. Both high and law offices of Civil departments were free from hereditary character. The council of Ministers of Maharaja were always loyal towards Maharaja. The Ministers could not take final decisions in their respective departments. His minister were bound to carry out the ruler's instructions. The ministers functioned according to vigilant control. Punjab is recognized as the etymological land of five rivers which was generally believed to be the tract situated between the rivers Indus and Jamuna and bounded by the great Himalayas. The recent archaeological discovery revealed the existence of a highly developed prehistoric civilization dated back to over 3000B.C. the remains of which have been unearthed at Harappa situated on an old bed of river Ravi and Ropar near the Sutlej. Since from the early times the Punjab State have been became as the clash point between India and the ever changing and ever moving peoples of central Asia. Due to this gathering of peoples all the principal racial, religious and cultural elements have gone into the making of India. At the time of earliest historical period Punjab state was the resident of aryan which speedily spreaded towards east. Parts of it are known to have formed a part of the perisan empire some of 500 years before the beginning of the Christian Era. the Sikh territories system had to suffer the inherent weakness of the rival ambition of the various Chieftains and was not expected to endure long after the revival

of the common enemy and danger from outside.<sup>7</sup> Therefore was the presence of loose confederation, in its very nature liable to be overthrown by because some of the great ambitious chiefs were led by his generalness and success absorbing the power of his associates would display from the destruction of his associates would display from the runs of commonwealth standard of monarchial state. The system worked sufficiently for a generation. The sikhs got such a power that now they could extend their territories westerned upto Jhelum river in the east as for as the Jamuna when the youthful Shukarachakia Chief Ranjit Singh appeared on the stage.

In the Punjab another storm was happened when there was the rise of Sardar Saman Shah who succeeded to the throne at Kabul in 1793, was unbred with the plan of conquest of India like his forerunner Ahmed Shah before the new dominions, In 1798, at Punjab he descended and was succeed in overrun the country, since the sikhs gave way before the onrush of his compact away only to return their occupied territories after his withdrawal to his hereditary kingdom, The Nawab of Kasur was making plan to occupy Lahore and the habitants of Lahore were fully feared from the tyrannies of Nawab, So they invited Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1799 A.D. to protect their lines from Nawab. This was one of the greatest opportunity for Maharaja Ranjit Singh to extend his territory due to which Maharaja readily accepted the offer and occupied Lahore. Firmly he established his state affairs there he wanted to reduced the various chiefs situated between the Jhelum and Sutlej and tried to extend his power beyond to the west and the east. The year of 1805 A.D. made the witness of extinction of the confederacies since that year the last "Gurmatta" was held and the Khalsa was directed by the will of one man.<sup>8</sup> During this year from the first time the regime of Maharaja came in contact with British. Through this wake of politics Jaswant Rao Halkar who had reached Amritsar, Lord Lake had marched upto river

Beas. That time Sikhs could not help Marathas and a compact was signed between Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Britishers along with Fateh Singh, the British Government promised that they would respect the Sikh territories as long as the offence was not given to them by Sikhs.

The British government foiled the Ranjit Singh subsequent efforts to subdue Cis-Sutlej Chief who had despite initial reluctance assured protection of the rulers between the Jamuna and Sutlej. After the protracted negotiations it was agreed under the treaty of 1809 that Ranjit Singh would confine his conquest to the north of the river which would form the boundary between the two states. Ranjit Singh vigorously pursued his career of Conquest and war in west which was barred by the British. Due to this he occupied Kangra, Gujrat, Multan, Kashmir and Peshawar. By 1831 Maharaja Securely established in the dominions which extended from the Sutlej in the east to Peshawar in the West and from Kashmir in the North to Sindh in the South. The death following period of Maharaja was marked by bitter conflicts and intrigues which resulted in weakening the power of the Lahore Darbar. The army had been assiduously built up the great Maharaja which led by him seemed to have become all powerful and was wooed by rival factions. The atmosphere was Surcharged with distrust and suspicion a conflict with the British neighbours seemed inevitable because troops were being concentrated along with eastern frontier, apparently as a measure of self defence. The field of Ferozshah across the Sutlej was first place where clash was occurred. The British troops reached at the outskirts of the Capital after the bloody engagement at Mudki, Alival and Sabroon. The treaty of 1846 stipulated the Surrender of the territory lying between the Sutlej and Beas and payment of heavy indemnity in lieu of which the state of Jammu and Kashmir was added to the British and granted to Maharaja Gulab Singh.

The British president with a strong force stationed at Lahore rather the size of sikh army was limited. The revolt was raised by Deewan Mul Raj the Governor of Multan and the rising soon developed into a national war. The Sikh faced the defeat at Gujrat where their fate of the kingdom was sealed and it was formally annexed to British India on 29th March 1849 A.D. by the proclamation whereby Maharaja Dalip had to resign the sovereignty of the Punjab. The spirit of these new militant people was first displayed in the organization of the number of confederacies which succeeded in establishing their political control over certain areas. They were totally encouraged by success and the feebleness of the paramount power, they felt strong enough to defeat the governor of Lahore in 1765 A.D. and began to strike their own coins as the mark of their Sovereign status. From this period the modern history of Punjab was treated as the independent part of India which closed with the annexation of the province by the British in March 1849A.D.<sup>9</sup>

It was the fruitful efforts of Maharaja Ranjit Singh that he united the scattered misls of North and established single federation under himself as its political head he turned his attention towards the branches South of the Sutlej. Many of the territories were occupied by Maharaja and many of the submitted to him as paramount and the remainder would have been speedily disposed of had not the British government interposed at the entreaty of the Chief with the treaty of 1809A.D. The aim of Maharaja was confined to the countries north of the Sutlej with some few exceptions he was confirmed in the possession of those states, South of the river which he had already acquired and the remainder were taken under British protection.

Every province of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was governed in a same way there was not any type different in their working activities. The way of tackling with problem in its own way by the

every suba. Kashmir after its occupation by Lahore Darbar was divided into twenty two parganas and had twenty collectors. The problem of forced labour under this conditions labourer were forcefully involved by higher authority in working conditions that was also abolished during Maharaja Ranjit Singh's time. An order was passed by this period through which liberty was provided to those who had been forcibly converted to Islam to revert to Hinduism. It is believed that with this fruitful effort of emperor forty thousand peoples came back to their original faith. Hinduism. Not only religious field was discussed rather several steps were take to bring reforms in economic conditions. A variety of weights and measures prevailing in the country were brought to uniformity. But different coins were allowed to remain current in the province. Maharaja Ranjit Singh adopted judicious discrimination in the selection of his officials. He was totally known to Shrewdness of Majha Jats that were pre-eminently a fighting class and as such could nowhere be more profitable employed that national security. The Secretariat departments specially the revenue department was hand over to Hindus who had always occupied ministerial posts even in the Muslim courts of Delhi and Kabul. The diplomatic service was usually filled by landed aristocracy and gentry whose experience and nested interest induced them to discharge their duties with zeal and integrity, The administrative machinery of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was so effective that peace and prosperity was fully seen who was not available previous years of any other ruler's regime. In his state the officers of every department were government servants without possessing any hereditary rights because the condition of hereditary makes the officers as disloyal and they had the chances to make corrupt<sup>10</sup>. They were paid only salaries and time to time were changed their posts place and were transferred one place to another rather government officer was also dismissed for his fault. It is true that Maharaja Ranjit Singh able administrator

but on the other hand, he was also a military genius who laid in his firm grasp of the challenge of his times and in the success of his measures to meet it. Maharaja Ranjit Singh farsighted master of his empire who adopted the European methods of warfare in order to modernize his army but various reason he retained much of what he had inherited from his predecessors. The old and indigenous maneuvering ability, dash and gallantry had been found of great advantage. He provided facilities to Sikh army about the European discipline and new arms. Along with the old method of warfare Maharaja availed himself to the services of the Sikh chieftains who preferred old as well as new mode of warfare. Thus we can say that defense department of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was the compromise between new and old method. Maharaja was always been to know about the best method among both of them. He was not the totally imitator of western methods and other hand he was also not the orthodox follower of the cast. He was very genius in the selective manner of such complicated situation. He did not show readily manner while adopting the new methods of warfare because he was fully aware of the capability of his army officers and soldiers who were indulged in old methods. Other hand there was also the lack of instructors who would instruct his army on the guidelines of western methods so he desired to study thoroughly the European methods of warfare and defense organisation So in order to put them into new direction he paid special attention towards the all branches of army, infantry was not popular in India it was during Mughals and Marathas time and not much consideration to Sikhs. Bu Maharaja Ranjit Singh game a special place to Infantry. The Impact of western ideas in the army matters put a new light on the importance of infantry. The cavalry was developed with the covering of Allard in 1822 A.D. Before that there were only four trained regiments of cavalry and one thousand drilled horsemen as against ten thousand foot. Under the Allard the cavalry



made rapid progress. He used to introduce many reforms in cavalry in respect of training and discipline on European lines.

The classification of Maharaja army is one of important aspect of his military. The army was important aspect of his military. The army was divided into two divisions the main being that under the feudatory forces belonging to Gulab Singh, Sham Singh, Hari Singh, Dhian Singh etc. His army was divided into 'Fauj-i-Ain' and 'Fauj-i- Sawari means regular and irregular army. The classification of the army was based on the states payment or training that was based on European pattern. The recruitment of army was based on the basis of caste, creed or religion. The total strength of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's army was nearby 1,00,000. Before the time of Maharaja Jagirs were provided to them in return of their services but Maharaja introduces the system of making payment in cash form. Promotions were also granted to able and capable officers, while giving promotion Maharaja did not make any discrimination on the basis of religion. Even in order to encourage the power of soldier he gave the rewards and honours, those who acted bravely in the field of war or battles. But on the other hand he also gave punishments to those officers and soldiers for showing their disloyalty towards their master or nation. If any soldier of army committed blunder in the sense of starting revolt against state defying orders and violating laws, rules and regulations. But death penalty was rare. Maharaja has much disciplined ruler and same thing he expected from his army. Ghorcharas, Akalis were the main soldiers of his military. So all these traits of Civil and Military affairs of his regime period should that he was one of great able administrator alongwith political conqueror. Maharaja had a good relations even that times. Contemporary highest power with Britishers. He fully knew highest power with no way he wanted to seen abrupt end of Khalsa while conspiracing against them. Some of the

historians even also criticize this point of Maharaja because of his friendly relations with Britishers. Maharaja made many of treaties with Britishers for the benefit of Sikh Raj, it was another matter that some of the Sikh Leader betray Maharaja due to which corruption prevailed in the society.

Maharaja adopted the liberal attitude towards non-sikhs. Its true that Maharaja himself was a true Sikh but towards other religions he adopted the religion tolerance policy. He respected all religions, Religious fanaticisms was not present in the character of Maharaja. Maharaja was fully from this fact that first main motive of emperor is to with the support of people whether only that a powerful empire can be stand. And in this fact Maharaja was totally successful in winning the support of peoples belonging to different religions that was only and only of his religions tolerance policy. The farsightedness proof of Maharaja's religious tolerance policy can be estimated because of his gratitude to Badshahi mosque when he conquered Lahore at 1799A.D. He returned that mosque to Muslims from the Bhangi Sardars who had captured it. He get married to Muslim women as Moran and Gulbahar Begum. He was so lenient in religion matter that he gave full liberty to his wishes to worship Quran and Mosques and to perform other Muslims, Islamic rituals. Even he himself paid his visits there. He allowed the muslims to offer 'Azan' . Rather he honoured that person who recited the whole Quarn to Maharaja with special gifts. His queen Gulbahar begum built a huge mosque at Lahore on royal expenditure. He was not only concerned to Muslim religion but also sympathetic towards Hindu religion. Even he also married to several Hindu women and allowed them to perform their rituals. He himself went to temples to offer worships. He honoured the Brahmans and astrologers. Rather he took the advice of Hindu and Muslim subjects and got auspicious dates for work.<sup>12</sup> In order to give the

practicable place to his religious tolerance he gave important Jobs to other communities people in the empire which was based on the merit. There were 41 posts in police and Judicial departments. 91 in army belonged to Muslims. Maharaja Ranjit Singh also thought about the Welfare of his subjects. He realized that if he did the Welfare of his subjects even then he could be supportive by his peoples, because people wanted a desirable facilities for themselves. He gave the strict orders to his officers that they should work hard for the Welfare of his subjects. The officers who did not fulfill the demands of Maharaja were also punished. This fact was proved by the two decrees issued by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. This showed that how Maharaja was concerned to his subjects. The first order was issued to Faqir Nuruddin in September 1825 A.D. Maharaja Ranjit Singh remarked that it hereby decreed that his highness with the utmost emphasis that no person in the city should practise high-handedness and oppression in the Society. Financial administration of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was very correct in terms. He realized that every state need a certain amount of finance in order to carry on its administration and implementation of many projects.

These funds were raised by well devised financial system. Maharaja's financial administration was simplest in form rather than complicated like the modernism there was not any preparation of budgets. Maharaja would spend money keeping in view of income of the state. Earlier the finance administration of Maharaja was not regularised in 1808A.D. he decided to improve the existing finance minister. The sources of his state income which strengthened his nation were also reformed. Among them one was the Land Revenue system which was the important source of income. Maharaja regularised the Batai system, Kankut system, Zabat system, Bigha system, plough system, well system, Jiradari system, Custom duties were also prevailed during his

regime period included in Income sources. There was a network of Octroi posts all over the state. Professional taxes were also included Jagirdari system was also prevailed before his time period but Maharaja gave a new shape to it while reforming it. To acquaint himself with the problems of people he himself used to take disguise and travelled various parts of his kingdom. The administration of the villages was in the hands of Panchayats. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a generous person along with liberal views throughout his life he never committed cruelty Humanity is one of the most creditable trait of his personality. This was the reason that every community people showed warm blessing and faith towards his master.

As it is known to us that Holy Granth written in Gurumukhi script every Punjab prostrate it every morning, but Maharaja Ranjit Singh even was Secularism in this matter also he did not declare the Gurumukhi as the state language rather Persian language was used in the court. He even encourage his officers and Princes to learn other foreign languages as well as local languages. Even he translated some classics in Punjabi language which were written in other regional language. He established many learning institutes where Punjabi and its concerned poets and writers were patronized like Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. During the previous regime periods Justice, Politics, Social and economic ability was wiped out because of corrupt atmosphere but with the reforms and fruitful efforts of Maharaja Ranjit Singh made it new shape without any discrimination. The basic human rights which had been crushed in the previous regime as right of freedom of religion were restored. There is not any instance of any violation of such rights of individual in the Sikh state. Human dignity and honour had been fully restored which had been violated last regimes. During Mughals time period the head of each department was ferocious dogs and mad dogs who used to exploit common people through the way of collecting more and

more revenue but Maharaja gave a severe blow to such customs and abolished it totally from the society. Maharaja instructed the officers that they should be remained as the servants of common peoples and tried to provide every kind of Justice to them. Sikhs had ensured that they would as demanded by their religion.<sup>13</sup> Maharaja Ranjit Singh was very impressive and should inquisitiveness for all knowledge and even the foreigners praised him for his knowledge in every sphere. No doubt Maharaja Ranjit Singh is credited for setting up the unified Sikh sovereign state and deserved the title of the lion of Punjab: Sher-e-Punjab. It was because of the capability of Maharaja that the Sikh empire was expanded to whole of North India, he was so much authoritative that time no one could dared to challenge and no one tried to revolt against him easily. He was a brave soldier and wanted to ensure his lordship over the entire Sikh community. He was always alert about the negotiations of Britishers and intentions of Malwa Chiefs. He was a man of destiny and the time then of course favoured him. His wisdoms stood him the test of time.

During the life time of Maharaja most of the time remained busy in the battles, but it was not that he neglected the administration. Rather his administration uniqueness was the Secular policy. The empire of Maharaja but built on the ruins of Mughal empire which was extended to faraway places. It is said that 80 percent of the territory population was Muslims 10 percent was of Hindus and 10 percent was of Sikhs. He was a devout Sikh. He always paid a homage to Holy Granth. He never tried to do any work without the guidance of holy book. Maharaja was a very humble ruler who never styled himself as a Monarch, never sit on the throne. He considered himself as the servant of people. V.A. Smith remarked that Punjab state was neither a traditional monarchial state nor dictatorship of one community over another. Actually it was based on the

partnership with other communities. He never claimed as the despotic survey of traditional monarch over his own sikhs. Even he was without any educational qualification because of this lackage he was good statesman and a capable administrator. He ensured that the Sikh state administration was fair to all. Rather in order to listen the grievances of public he put the petition box outside the darbar so that people should shared their complaints with their ruler whether it was related to administration officers or any other. He would like to look at the petition to take immediate and essential action. Such types of steps of Maharaja encourage the confidence in the public.<sup>14</sup> He even issued an order that any wrong order on action should be brought to his notice for its cancellation or amendment by the officer concerned. Maharaja was the great lover of discipline that there was always found the discipline of restraint even in the places where battles took place. It was instructed that armed forces would not harass in any manner after then victory. There was not any single instance of violation regarding the ravaging of any city or town, destroying the place of worship, mis-behave with woman during battles or after the victory. Even Maharaja did not mal-treated with defeated territories rather compassionate feelings were shown to them, and tried to provide them every type of monetary or other help. So one should say, that civil administration during Maharaja's regime was well-organized. Because of his administrative machinery he was one of Best Conqueror of the Asia. The uniqueness trait of Maharaja made him population.

During that time the total population of the Kingdom has been estimated on the basis of rough was 53,50,000. Their cost of living was estimated on the fact of price of staple food, wheat etc. Network of custom barriers and posts was there for the realization of excise and customs duties. Duties were imposed on the articles irrespective of their origin or destination, no distinction, was

made between luxuries and necessities. The government behave in a very humble way that if they used to collect revenue from the farmers on the other hand they also provide monetary facilities during their hard time Government was so sympathetic towards that they remit the taxes and land revenues during natural calamities, measures for famine relief, on the other hand Taqavi Loans were provided to farmers, distribution of seeds, encouraged trade and industry, these measures were for the welfare of the community. He was much displaced with Jamadar Khushar Singh who collected large amount of money from Kashmir in 1833A.D. despite that area was under the famine. In order to recover his fault Maharaja send wheat for them. Apart from measures of relief, positively farmers were encouraged to work hard. Canals were dug in the south west plains where was the scanty rainfall. Wells were provided to various areas in order to improve the condition of livestock. Maharaja maintained a number of good draught stud bulls in different Thanas. Land revenue was collected and charged according to the condition of crop. Remissions were provided to poor peoples because of their low quality crops. Maharaja Ranjit Singh himself was fond of art, due to which he appreciate the art and craft. During those days education was imparted in religious places. Maharaja wanted to uplift it as possible as because he wanted that his public should be educated due to which he much promoted to education. Special hospitalized facilities were provided, no epidemic occurred during that time people were happy and mostly prosperous.

When Maharjaa ascended the throne the payment of Jazia which was paid personally at the rate of one dinar annually was abolished by him. He allowed a great amount of local independence on the North-Western frontier. No doubt the authority of the Lahore Government was always

admitted and often asserted but subject to that admission the people were left to wrangle among themselves and to settle their own disputes with sword and dagger. Maharaja was certainly trying to establish norms regarding the conduct of his government at all levels. He generally explained the reason for doing when the Maharaja himself deviated from an established practice. He instructed the orders that state should keep in mind while discharging the duties that the main policies of state economy, honest should not abolished. An officer would not be savaged by bribes and personal considerations. He wanted that every officers of his state would be as humble as he can and not accepted the bribes; used tactful methods while handling peoples avoid conflict as far as possible. It was considered a symbolic and corrective action against officers while making them discipline. Maharaja took a revolutionary step in the matter of Jagirdars that without his permission they would leave their Jobs. Disbursement of finance from treasury was unseen during his period because of frequent issue of demand drafts or pay orders the person who owed money to the state. It is true that Maharaja was one of the best ruler of state who also maintained his Civil and military affairs in a very tactful manner. The departmental organisation of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Secretariat and the institution of the various seals and the circumlocutory arrangement in particular will indicate the degree of perfection attained by Sikh Government. Maharaja Ranjit Singh styled himself as the humble representative of Sikhs or Khalsa<sup>15</sup>.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was not only a great warrior and conqueror but also a Superb consolidator of an empire and a firm though extremely compassionate administrator though he was considered without any formal qualification but even then he had find of knowledge on the matters of military, administrative and diplomatic. He was not orthodox in his state affairs rather



he was fully attached to the foreign countries and tried to bring new methods of administration so that he should also reformed his state while adopting the expansionist policy he extended largely his kingdoms which was beautifully handled by him whether it was the matter of Civil affairs and military affairs. He brought so many reforms in every department of his state and tried to help his public in every possible way. It was reason due to which his public had great affectionate feelings for their master. When Maharaja ascended the throne anarchy and chaos was prevailed in the country and it was not possible for any ruler to unified them but we can say that Ranjit Singh farsightedness and his humbleness make it true.<sup>16</sup>

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CHAPTER-IV

**Secular outlook of Maharaja's  
administration**



## CHAPTER-IV

### **Secular outlook of Maharaja's administration-**

'The Lion of Punjab'- Maharaja Ranjit Singh occupies a very prominent place in the history of the Punjab. Maharaja ruled for full forty years in the Punjab from 1799 A.D. to 1839 A.D. and throughout this time period he build up a vast and strong empire, including efficient civil and military administration based on Secular Tradition.

Literally meaning of word Secular is pertaining to the present world or to things not spiritual civil no ecclesiastical not concerned with any religion. American concept speaks that Secular is absolute segregation between religion and the states. But in India, it has a different meaning because country is religiously dominated so different connotations came out of this society which implies that there should be no state religion and that the state should treat all the religions equally, without any discrimination. So Maharaja adopted same concept in his society.<sup>1</sup>

It should be important to understand the 'Secular' word on the basis of Indian Setting and its implications before applying it to a particulars state affairs, condition of government or its attitude towards peoples. Secular means 'Temporal Profane' implying politics which is disassociated from religion and not bound by Monastic vows or rules. Its connotation is not of non-religious or irreligious as Maharaja Ranjit Singh was deeply religious. The religion of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was not associated with politics rather it deserves the epithet of Secular Sense of the word.<sup>2</sup>

It is not overused in modern times, rather Secularism was present in ancient and medieval period also. In modern time this idea was taken by Maharaja Ranjit Singh's short lived empire who could be called Akbar in miniature. The Hindu's famous ideal about religion was that in Ancient

time they considered whole universe as family. Buddhist ideal for the happiness of many for the meal of many and the medieval Indian ideal peace with all finds its counterparts in the words of the Maharaja Ranjit Singh, " God Intended me to look upon all religions with one eye, that is why he took away right eye'. His period shows that he remained true to his words.

If one try to know the real meaning of Secular Outlook, that seems to very difficult. It does not pertain the worldly things which are not regarded as religious, spiritual or sacred. Secularism is religious neutralism in which the considerations related to creed, caste, colour that decides issue on merit. Due to such terms, Secular regime was prevalent during Maharaja period.<sup>3</sup> The kingdom of Maharaja was set up on the decay of Mughal empire even them it was extended from Tibet to Sindh and from Kabul to Sutlej. It was recognized that majority was the population of Muslims which was nearby 80% and others like Hindus and Sikhs were only 20%. In order to understand deeply the policy of Maharaja it is necessary to know the historical background for proper knowledge. At the very outset it must be remind that the Maharaja's strong and glorious ruling period including his Secular policy was the result of noble teachings of Sikh Gurus. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was deeply influenced by the Punjabi Culture which showed its effect on the personality and policies of Maharaja. The commingling of Aryans, Greeks, sythians, Kushans, Huns, Turks gave birth to Punjabi culture because one another they settled on this very land. Due to which the Punjabi language and language was developed upto the end of 18th Century.<sup>4</sup> Besides Sikh Gurus, Sufi Saints, Hindu Saints, Muslim poets also gave their contribution for the development of Punjabi. The Punjabi language create commonness among people of different religions, due to which, came close to one another. They began to celebrate

festivals jointly due to their social intermingling. Ranjit Singh was an outstanding representative of Punjabi culture and under its dominant influence he adopted the Secular policy.

Before the ruling period of Maharaja Ranjit Singh Misaldars were the Chieftain of Punjab under whom Punjab was governed. They used to sought out their political issues while holding religious assemblies on the occasions of Diwali, Baisakhi at Golden Temple, Amritsar. The existence of Dal Khalsa named organisation came into, due to such assemblies which offered stubborn resistance to the Afgahans hordes under Ahmed Shah Abdali. The most important mode of deciding political matter gave birth to 'Gurmatta' which was considered to as unifying force or league.<sup>5</sup> The Sikh chieftains used to Sink their differences on these auspicious functions, perfectly acted upon the decisions made by gathering in the presence of holy Granth and at holiest place. It may be also remember that Grand-father of Maharaja, S. Charat Singh gave employment to only that person, in the army who firstly taken the 'Pahul' with the prescribed ceremony. But Maharaja used to disconnect the religion from politics after came into power. He entirely changed the mode of recruitment in the army and method of deciding political matters. When Holkar came to Maharaja in 1805A.D. for Maharaja's support at that time Gurmatta' was held which was last time. After 1805A.D. every political matter whether it was related to wars, foreign affairs, chieftains affairs were started to decide with the consultation of ministers who belonged to various religions. Not after this, any religions assembly was gathered to decide the political affairs as it was done previously.<sup>6</sup>

After assuming the charge of Sukerchakia Misal, Maharaja realized that he had to set up liberal and magnanimous policy towards non-sikhs, in order to establish powerful kingdom, because non-sikhs were in majority. So their support was necessary to Maharaja. In the extended policy

of Maharaja from Sutlej to Khyber, he adopted leniency towards his languished foes who were 2/3 part of total population. In 1799 A.D. an invitation was received by prominent citizens of Lahore for its occupation because they were totally fed up from the atrocities of Bhangi Sardars.<sup>7</sup> Maharaja was already in seek of such opportunity.

So with the cooperation of Lahore citizens he was succeeded in occupying it on July 7, 1799 A.D. without any problem. He gave full freedom to Muslims specially in religion and their request restored in possession of Sunehri Mosque to their hands which was earlier under Sikhs. The administration of Maharaja was completely under the Ranjit Singh's Secular policy. The appointment of any person was not on the basis of faith, caste or colour rather his suitability was checked and his loyalty was find out towards state. Thus Lahore Darbar provide services to meritorious people which became helpful to run efficient administration. The prominent officials of the Maharaja were belonged to different religions and some of them were from abroad, as - England, France, Italy and America.<sup>8</sup>

The most prominent muslim officers of Maharaja were three Faqir brothers as Aziz-ud-din, Nur-ud-din, Amam- ud-din, who were giving their valuable services to state. In the army also - various generals and colonels were from Muslim community including fortyone officers an high ranks. Several departments like police, Judiciary, legal supply, stores were filled with 92 various senior Muslim officers.<sup>9</sup>

Maharaja did not adopt cruelty even towards his enemies. The History is the witness of atrocities given by Muslim rulers and invaders to Sikhs. Commencing with the martyrdom of Guru Arjun Dev Ji, till the rise of misl. period the main perception of Muslim rulers was to convert whole society of Punjab into Islam religion but Maharaja did not adopt the same policy

towards Mohammadans rather he provide Jagirs to defeated rulers so that their loyalty should become maintain and stable, The cases of Nawab of Kasur and the Governor of Peshawar were conspicuous.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh did not get formal training in State Craft rather he was illiterate ruler but within his inquisite mind like Akbar he catch the fact that his desire to establish an empire could be fulfilled only when he employed only talented and able employees instead of religion basis appointments.<sup>10</sup> His pragmatism realized him that his co-religionists were only brave and individualistic in temperament would not be willing instrument to his despotic will and therefore for the execution of his ambition he should look into others. Moreover a bureaucratic temperament is needed for the efficient administration. Maharaja was aware from the confusion which was spreaded in the Punjab more than Century in the wake of the decline and disintegration of the Mughal empire had made the land and its people truculent thus he threw open services to latent.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a devout Sikh having full faith in the Guru Sahiban he always used to pay his homage at Harmandir Sahib before embarking on military campaigns and again visited with presents for giving success in his adventures in the form of thanks.<sup>11</sup> He gave mounds of gold to plate the walls and dome of the temple and yet the donor expressed a wish to remain in the background as a humble servant whom the Guru had given a chance to do his due services. Maharaja received a Nazrana from Nawab of Hyderabad in the form of Jeweled canopy which was sent by Maharaja to the Tophakhana of temple in 1826 A.D. He decided to provide a opportunity to a painter if latter could paint a picture of Maharaja in a pose of prostration before Guru Ravi Das. Maharaja got the services of astrologers also with their consultation he did his



works, main were maksudan and son pandit Radha Krishna, Maharaja was not free from the Superstitious behaviour.<sup>12</sup>

Maharaja was not a religious dreamer who used to interfere in the religious activities or rights of different Sections of Society, rather he gave full liberty of worshipping their concern Gods. Fakir Waheedi-ud-din added an incident related to the broad-minded thoughts of Maharaja as once deputation of Sikhs of Kashmiri Bazaar, Lahore complained about the loud cry of the Muazzan calling the faithful to Namaz five times a day used to disturb them.<sup>13</sup> But Maharaja wanted to teach them lesson so he said them if they gave him assurance that they would take upon themselves the responsibility to call each and every Muslim from his house for five times Namaz, they realized their mistake and Azans remained continued Maharaja was far in advance because of his Secular outlook. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was very much interested to visit holy places of every religion even of Muslim's also due to which he paid his homage to 'Badshahi Mosque' of Aurangzeb this was started by Maharaja after his fall on Lahore in 1799 A.D. Every religion's main festivals like Diwali, Dusherra, Holi, Id-ud-fiter, Moharram, Gurburabs were celebrated by Maharaja with full devotion. The Sarkar made expenses on the repairing of tombs of 'Hazrat Data Ganja' and Mauj-i-Darya and the Sunehri Mosque in Kashmiri Bazar which had been in the possession of Sikhs from musaldari period used to restore.<sup>14</sup> Once there was Calligraphist who transcribed the Quran in an exquisite hand but he did not find any buyer who could gave him perfect money in return, but when he came in contact of Maharaja, he got a good amount of money worth Rs.One Lakh of his long life labour, which showed the generosity of Maharaja towards the holy book of Islam religion. The Punjab Government kept the records of total expenditure of Maharaja in the form of charity to different religious places estimated as

Rupees 12 Lakhs every year. For the maintenance of holy places Jagirs were allotted to Mosques, temples and Gurudwaras. Once there was an old lady who heard from someone that Maharaja is like 'Paras' who ever touched him, carried a money or Gold. So the same lady touched her bread baking iron disc to feet of Maharaja, He was so much impressed by the innocence of that lady, so he ordered to pay gold equal to the weight of that iron disc.<sup>15</sup>

Even the selection of Ministers in Lahore Darbar by Maharaja Ranjit Singh also showed the reflection of his Secular approach. Cosmopolitan in completion was prevalent in Darbar, Courts and Camps as Dogra brothers, Syeds, Faqirs, Sandhwalias, Majithias, Brahmins, Khatri, Europeans worked for the common purpose. Every Office was opened for able persons. Communalism was not weighed by Maharaja during recruitment. During Maharaja's period anyone would aspire the highest rank of ladder of success and achieve a top echelon with his ability. The readers should not mislead the names struck by Maharaja on his coins was Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh Ji, even before his period Indian rulers were always in chance to advertise their names. In earlier years of Indian history. 'Ashoka' name ruler did not inscribe his own name even on the 'edicts' which showed his humility.<sup>16</sup> Maharaja gave the credit of his every success and victories to Guru Sahiban, considered himself as the sensible servant of God. Maharaja always compared himself to the *Ranjit Nagara* of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, a 'Drums of Victory' Such type of of humble attitude of his mind showed that he was against the discrimination towards other religious persons and showed his devotion to Sikh Gurus. The most important thing to Maharaja was his smooth running administration at this cost he was ready to hand over his important offices to different religious persons whether it was related to civil and military affairs. The most trusted officers of Maharaja were Fazir Aziz-ud-din, Faqir

Nuruddin, Diwan Mohkam Chand, Diwan Bhanani Dass and Bhai Ram Singh etc. His Patronage was always ready for reciters of Bani of Granth Sahib, he extended patronage to the Calligraphist of the Quran and gave rich alms to Brahmins.<sup>17</sup>

The nature of the Maharaja's administration was never be called Theocracy, which means a government's form is recognized as the God or deity, and law of that particular Kingdom would based on religious book, such laws being used and administered by Priestly order as his Ministers when Fazir Aziz-ud-din asked Maharaja that why he had purchased the copy of holy Quran even it was not in use to Maharaja then he replied that God wanted he should treat every religion with equality may be that's why God has taken his one eye. During his invasion at Peshawar in 1834 A.D. he instructed Hari Singh Nalwa that Library of Hazrat Omar Sahib would not be destroyed and provided special liberal grants to Shrines of all religions. The Buildings of Mughal emperors Jahangir and Shah Jahan were getting in destructive condition so Maharaja made expenditure on them for their repairing. Maharaja gave a different shape to Shalamar Garden which was in a very neglected state before the occupation of Maharaja at Lahore. He gave strict instructions to his officers that no harm would be given by them to the chastity of women and no disrespect would be shown to religious or holy books of other religions while invasion.<sup>18</sup>

The Judiciary system of Maharaja was without any discrimination. Impartial Justice was provided to them. He gave a very speedy justice without any delay. While passing through streets he used to listen the problems of peoples and decide their cases on the spot. He remained also aware about the Justice done by his ministers whether their functioning was going on

without any discrimination or not. A petition box was placed by him in the front of his palace so that people should share their problem to their king without any hesitation, and the keys of the box were in his own possession. That box was used to open in the front of Darbar assembly and everyday problems of people were read out and suitable solution was given them.<sup>19</sup> A High Sense of Justice applied by his officers while following the footsteps of their king. Maharaja once fined Rs. One Hundred to his personal friend S. Hukma Singh Chimni for killing Said Khan due to personal enmity. Special grants were given to Said Khan's family. There was a poor peasant who complained to Maharaja that his crops were destroyed by chief of his Darbar by letting loose his horses to graze on his fields. That peasant pointed out Ram Das the elder son of Dewan Sawan Mal order for the imprisonment of that criminal Ranjit Singh was so much impressed by impartial Justice of Sawan Mal that Jagir was allotted him and special honour was given to him in the Darbar. Similarly Ranjit Singh impressed upon his sons the desirability of doing Justice to the people. Ranjit Singh's rule was free from every kind of tyranny on people, even his son Kharak Singh left a tour of Multan to ensure that no danger was done to the crops of peasants by his army.<sup>20</sup>

Due to the ability and loyalty of Dogra Brothers, Maharaja provided them special posts and for their honour special title was conferred as '*Raja-i-Rajan*' was given to Prime Minister Dhian Singh Raja Gulab Singh was incharge of forces at Jammu. He was good administrator and commander. Cavalry office was under the charge of Raja Suchet Singh. Among them many Brahman officers were like-Jamadar Khushal Singh, Tej Singh, Missar Dhian Singh, Dewan Ganga Ram etc. The important conquest of Multan and Kashmir were conquered by Misar Diwan Chand, the victory was achieved by him in these conquest due to which he was honoured

by the titles of 'Jafar Jang' and 'Fateh Nursat'. From 1806 A.D. to 1814 A.D. the charge of commanding Sikh forces was in the hands of Diwan Mohkam Chand. From 1821 A.D. to 1844 A.D. Diwan Sawan Mal worked as governor of Multan. The prominent Sikh Sardars of Maharaja Ranjit Singh were-Fateh Singh Ahluwalia, Sham Singh Attarwalia, Hari Singh Nalwa, Desa Singh Majithia who were not only brave warriors but also hold higher ranks in the army and appointed as provincial governors. The Christian inhabitants of France, Italy, England were also rank-holders of Maharaja's administration.<sup>21</sup>

Maharaja Ranjit Singh tried to create harmony in his state by unifying the various communities even the interests of these sectional peoples were opposite to each other, but their interests were reconciled, safeguard by Maharaja. He make sure to society of his time that he would provide them peaceful society and took the responsibility of the protection of their legitimate interests of every sections.<sup>22</sup> Maharaja tried to establish National state of Punjab by strengthening political and economical interests of peoples. Due to these circumstances he abolished the *Gurmatta* in 1805 A.D. because he wanted to act on the advice of non-sikhs as well as Sikh counselors when he became the emperor he make sure to Hindus and Muslims that they were as much the people of the land as the Sikhs and same rights would be allotted of Hindu and Muslims as Sikhs were enjoying.<sup>23</sup>

The importance of Akal Takhat's decision was lessened, now the decision was taken on the recommendations of selected ministers of different communities. In the Secular rule of Maharaja no place was given to Gurmatta of the Akal Takhat. It would have put a great strain on the loyalty of his Hindu and Muslim peoples that if he had still tried to rule over them by the religious edicts issued from Macca of the Sikhs.<sup>24</sup>

Now each and every functioning of his administration was under the full attention of Maharaja, he took the special care of people's Welfare and put checking on the oppressions with high-handedness. Even if he himself issued an unfair orders, it could be brought to his notice for review to some extent it was instructed to make Justice while adopting the guidelines of '*Shastras*' and holy books. Nizam-ud-din gave services of becoming chief '*Qazi*'. Muhammad Shahpur and Saidullah were appointed as '*Muftis*'. Nur-ud-din was the Chief Medical Officer who gave his services in the Yunani dispensaries of the town. Imam Baksh' was appointed as Kotwal of Lahore. Several high positions in the army were entrusted to Hindus and Muslims by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Maharaja had full trust on the other community army officers that's why he sent Diwan Chand, Hindu general to attack on Multan while giving 20,000 soldiers after capturing small places around Lahore. Further Diwan Chand was assisted by Muslim General 'Ilahi Baksh'.<sup>25</sup> Nawab Muzaffar Khan of Multan fought very bravely but ultimately victory fell in to the hands of Maharaja's forces. With the help of his capable officer he captured the Dera Qazi Khan, Dera Ismail Khan and Mankera. After this victory Maharaja went to the Mausoleum of 'Shah Abdul Wali' who was killed in the battle, where he paid his homage to Abdul Wali's Shrine. Maharaja had even sympathetic behaviour with enemies he allotted services to them for permanent friendship.<sup>26</sup> He was considerate towards the Muslim rulers whom he defeated. In the very tactful manner he controlled the policies of Imperialists and kept them at bay. In order to modernize his army and administration he employed Frenchmen, Englishmen, Germans, Italian on well-defined terms.

Maharaja never considered himself a fanatic monarch rather he was always ready to fight for public who made him a leader Vincent Smith regards that Punjab state was neither traditional nor

dictatorship of one community over another, rather there was partnership concept seem between different communities. Even he did not claim as despotic survey of a traditional Monarch over his own Sikhs. He did not want to push his pretensions too far, rather created himself not more than general of Khalsa.<sup>27</sup>

Maharaja was not bound to only his own religion rather he wanted to give posts opportunities to other communities also that's why with his Sharp eye he selected capable and qualified officers for the smooth running of his civil and military system. Due to which, Revenue and Secretariat departments were conducted by Hindu Sectional peoples,

even in the Muslim courts of Delhi and Kabul. During that period, Jats were described as the great warriors so they were the Generals of various army troops. Maharaja gave preference to Brahmins, Khattris, Rajputs in the civil administration. In diplomatic mission the members of the landed aristocracy and gentry whose vested interest induced them to perform their duties honestly and zealously were always appointed. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was much encouraged by foreign mode of warfare and Government due to which he appointed them to provide training of the sons and relatives of his Sardars. This term showed that the administration of Maharaja was not only Secular but also cosmopolitan. It was an heterogeneous body composed mostly of adventures who controlled the administrative machinery of the state.<sup>28</sup>

Maharaja was a very far-sighted rule who had not any trust on the old sikh chiefs in administrative affairs because they became disloyal towards their emperor and were deprived from their territories.

They were reduced from equality and rival ship to honourable subjection. The main cause of their disregard was, insincerity to the Sovereign State. Hence he did not employ them in

functioning of State affairs or in operation against his enemies. The concern consideration was received by different religionist as Maharaja was a devout Sikh. His rivalry with enemy was started from battlefield and ends in the same battlefield, thus he did not continues it long-lasting. That's why no event was happened during his reign which caste blasphemy of bigotry on him. Rather he did not allow the Sikhs to damage the religious places of Muslims. In that age of religious bigotry to establish the Secular State was a command able work. Even Ranjit Singh remain wise towards those Muslims who committed atrocities on the Sikhs during Muslims rule.<sup>29</sup> The Broad mindedness and large heartedness behaviour of Maharaja not only became him popular in his own public but also create loyalty among the hither to enemies of other creed. The Dogra Sardar Dhian Singh was a specimen of intelligence due to which he get a chance to play role of Macchianwallian after the death of their master. The place Ladakh was conquered by Zorawar Singh for his master, further annexed Tibet, which increased his reputation before Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Faqir Aziz-ud-din excelled all courtiers of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the field of diplomacy. The behaviour of Faqir Aziz-ud-din towards his non-Muslim master was on the basis of tenets of Islam, though he was staunch believer in Islam, which joins its believers to be true to his salt, whose authority was certain. By reposing such type of faith in him, he was sent to Afghanistan in 1835 A.D., to the Amir Dost Mohammad. Faqir's diplomatic policy worked due to which Afghans were surrendered by Sikhs and then he retired to Kabul.<sup>30</sup> Faqir - Aziz-ud-din's pretensions were so powerful towards diplomatic missions of east India Company that he presented himself capable to emergency. He was not like his other two Brothers Nur-ud-din and Imain-ud-din or Dogra brothers rather he used fieldelity and integrity concepts for his master, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Maharaja's Secularism was in such condition that he brought his



two enemies into his kingdom named. Nawab Sarfroz Khan and his younger brother Zulfiqar Khan whose father was died while fighting the battle, when Ranjit Singh occupied Multan he brought those princes to Lahore and provide essential pension to them. Alongwith them many other faithful officers like Qazi Nazam-ud-din, Mufti Muhammad Shah, Chandhari Qadir Baksh were appointed on good posts.<sup>31</sup>

Maharaja wanted to provide a new shape to his brave army while providing them training of military science and disciplined which were the main short-comings of till then, because he realized that Sikh were born fighters and without reformation they would be like lion to a bullet. That's why he achieved the best services of foreign generals Ventura Allard Court and Avitabile. The Sikh army was trained in such a perfect manner that they gave great difficulty to British army during first Sikh war, It is another matter that some of them became traitor which became the cause of their failure. The concept of Secularism was very deep Breath to Maharaja that he maintained the Security of Library of Muslim Saint at Chankanni during their Peshawar camp, He was in famous of Sayyids regarding the assessment of land revenue. He paid liberally to those Muslims who would reproduce the entire Quran from memory were summoned to the court to recite the Holy Quarn. Maharaja Ranjit Singh gave a permission to Ulemas and Umaras of his court carry on their religious traditions without and hindrance. Maharaja himself did not misbehave with his non-sikh subjects and did not allow Sikhs to behave, badly with other religionists.<sup>32</sup> In 1825A.D. 'Tazias' permission was allowed to Muslim subjects on the other hand he makes commitment that he would immediately withdraw them if they proved apprised of the discontentment against any order of Maharaja.

Maharaja was always keep in check the staunch tendencies of Akalis. The Muslim of Punjab was disappointed from Sikhs who did not allowed them to perform Muslim tradition Azan but Maharaja did not allow any Sikh, to create obstacle in their activities due to which mostly Muslim appreciated Maharaja Muslims had deep feelings for Maharaja thus they prayed their religious places whenever Maharaja fell ill. They always wanted that their Master remain healthy and speedily recover from illness. In 1830A.D., he received Christian Missionaries with great eagerness he wanted to know the doctrines of Christianity and to be provided with a copy of the Bible.<sup>33</sup>

Though Punjabi language was used which prostrated before the Holy Granth even then for the convenience of each community he declared Persian as the court language. He did not create any discrimination regarding the education even he advice his princes to learn foreign languages. He was totally loyal towards the local language also. He was very fond of classics which were translated by Maharaja into Punjabi. He every effort for the development of education as institutes and its concerned matters. He patronized the scholars of Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims. '*Main Wada*' institute at Lahore got the patronage of Maharaja which taught Persian Language. For the advancement of Judicial system he presided many competent Judicial officers. Various courts were set up. Special courts were established for Muslims related to Shariat laws. The most prevalent officers of Mufti and Qazi were revived by Maharaja which were also present during Mughal period. While organizing the revenue system for the state he formed finance department in which Bhawani Das took the responsibility of that office<sup>34</sup>. According to one record the army of Maharaja was large and powerful that at the time of his death the total numbering of his army was 1,2,3 800 which was equal to the whole Indian army even including the irregular army. At

the time of world war II in 1939 A.D. the Punjab's army was much in country because of the efforts of Maharaja. there were 384 heavy guns and 400 light guns with the artillery.<sup>35</sup>

Maharaja not got the necessary, education due to lack of interest that's why he remained illiterate but when he realized the importance of education he gave liberal grants to the scholars in order to encourage the learned persons. Even in his matter he did not became partial he gave patronage to every religion's scholar of his kingdom. He made fruitful effort for translation of other religions holy books into local languages that's why he translated the '*Bhagwat Gita*' into persian and Punjabi language, he did not remain behind while translating the Muslim's religious books into local languages.<sup>36</sup> Due to his full devotion towards the religious places of other religion he visited there. The last wish of Maharaja was that he wanted to donate the '*Koh-i-Noor*'

Diamond to the temple of Jagannath Puri which wish was thwarted by the Dogra Sardars. Cow Slaughter was considered illegal during Maharaja's regime. He insisted on Shah Shuja's returning the gates of the temple of Somnath taken away by Mahmud of Ghazni. During his complete regime he ruled under the title of 'Singh Sahib and 'Sarkar-i-Khalsa and further under the protection of the timeless one 'Akal Sahai'. He got the realm through the blessing of the Guru Sahiban yet Ranjit Singh was neither a religious fanatic not a Zealot, his complete devotion towards Khalsa was all embracing.<sup>37</sup>

In the Indian History, there was time when Muslims considered themselves Superior than Hindu and called them downtrodden and treated them like non-entities on the basis of political matters Sikhs were one of the rising community which came out into new political power and were right in acclaiming that "Khalsa Shall Rule." But the regime period of Maharaja Realized that Hindus

and Muslims are equal to the Sikhs in numbering also on that very land and the right to be consulted as the people of his own community. He did not provide as much as rights to any particular community that it would dominate to another community. Maharaja came out to be the founder of Secular state where the advice of each minister used to give priority. It would be a great strain on the loyalty of his Hindu and Muslim subjects that he had tried to rule over them by the religious edict issued from the Mecca of the Sikhs. In Reality it was a practice which was departed from certain tradition that everyone had become accustomed to accept during the Sikh rule.<sup>38</sup>

Due to the impartial behaviour of Maharaja towards education was the result of great development of schools and like four thousand schools were set up, belonging to different sections of society were spreaded all over the kingdom including with one lakh and twenty thousand students in counting. During that time mostly educational institutions were formed and Maharaja remained always eager to help the custodians of these Centres of learning. Besides learning, calligraphy centres of Persian and Gurmukhi Scripts were also encouraged so that people should also be attached to their religious books' teachings.<sup>39</sup>

Maharaja Ranjit Singh became a symbol of pride for the Punjab's people because he was the very first person who pursued such a unique policy which was neither adopted by any emperor for such a deep way. Thus he could be able to achieve the status of respectable citizen of the State which remained excited for the Welfare of the each and every subject of his society and it did not matter to him that to which community that particular belonged. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was liberal in the sense and evaluated something like the Secular motion of the State. Eventually, liberal word was firstly used in England in the 19th Century when liberals were dubbed by their

political rivals, which was perhaps the fortune of Ranjit Singh. The liberalism of Maharaja had good effect on his administration whose footsteps regarding indiscrimination were adopted by other sikh states. In those days monarchial popularity was prevalent under some circumstances and to some extent Ranjit Singh's administration was no way away from this approach. He was so humble and broad minded that when he was alive he belonged to each and every one and after his death he belonged to ages, it means that due to his policy he became so popular among the every sectional people that every one used to remind him even after his death.<sup>40</sup>

The communal problem of Punjab was avoided by Maharaja while applying the inter-community partnership, toleration such policies. Maharaja Ranjit Singh tried to unite the people of Punjab under commonness who were indulged in mutual heartedness while symbolizing the courage, sagacity, foresight, magninity endurance etc. traits of society. Maharaja soon realized it that these traits were necessary for any Civilization which would helped any Country for its advancement because these were considered as most valuable treasures for the progress of state's society. These values were helpful for the cherished, sustained and diffused so as to serve beacon light for further generations.<sup>41</sup>

We can recognise it that without Secular policy of Maharaja he would not achieve such name and fame from his people which he got within forty years of his regime. Due to this policy he was able to establish such a strong and well protected state in which he got the trust and faith of his peoples. All the religious bounds of caste, creed were crossed by Maharaja that's why he became capable of Selecting different sectional peoples for the services of State. The sample of Maharaja's secular outlook can be seen in the civil and military administration which created the nationalism towards their concerned state or country.<sup>42</sup>

Maharaja Ranjit Singh had realized that every state desired a sufficient quantity of secularism because this was the only way through which every section of society could be unite into one thread. But before the rising power of Maharaja Ranjit Singh the situation was different every emperor established his kingdom on the basis of his own religious guidelines. Every state had different religion and faith which was dominating over other religions. But Sikhism was one of the religion which was always in favour of Secular outlook, right from the birth of Sikhism. But due to some circumstances Secularism among Sikh emperors remained upto the social field, not had any influenced in the political affairs. But Maharaja tried too followed this policy which remained fail of third Sikh State. During Mughal period Muslims appointed non-muslim subjects on such a lower ranks that they had not the authority to go against Muslim people if anytime wrong was happened with them. Rather they had to face tyrannies at the hands of Superior Muslim officers. On the other hand Britishers did not remained behind while mistreating with non- Britishers, they provide only petty jobs to them which more promoted upto clerical offices only. Thus, Such policy was carry on by rules for their own interests. But Maharaja tried to change the Such depressed and narrow minded policy of society, he gave a new shape to it,<sup>43</sup> In order to change his dreams he appointed the men of diverse faith on higher jobs, they had contradictory traditions which in that age placed them poles apart. Every officer worked under the magnetic influence of Maharaja.

On the basis political level, the pluralistic Sikh tradition means democratic republican polity. While adopting the Secular state Maharaja took the step towards realizing a non- theocratic polity envisaged in Sikhism. The description of Maharaja's kingdom as Sarkar Khalsa was not the mere representative of theocratic propensity rather he really used Secular in it<sup>44</sup>. He remained

partial while getting success in this term. When Maharaja ascended the throne on political power immediately he set up a monarchical authority on the basis of feudal lines which intrigue to find that contrary to the democratic republican polity envisioned in the Sikh doctrine and realized nebulously during Misls period. A new universalistic value pattern in world- historical mission was envisaged by influencing pluralistic pattern of state and society because the Maharaja adopted liberal, tolerant and secular policy. Sometimes contradistinguish circles were made on Sikh religious tradition from the Punjabi tradition, on the analysis of Maharaja's regime. The premises of such view- point is theocratic polity and liberal, Secular character further mutual exclusive was made due to these difference of two forces. This concept proved that those liberal policies of the tradition became the transcendent of Punjabi tradition Maharaja Ranjit Singh was so broad- minded person that the regime of Maharaja was made up of Socio- Political basis but his Substitution in this concept was encouragement of Punjabi nationalism as for the Sikh communitarian consciousness<sup>45</sup> But further some weak points of such argument was seen that after Maharaja death Punjabi national forces were not visible as assisting themselves and rallying behind the Raj against internal onslaught and internal sabotage.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was born to wind up theocracy and secular state was set up in the stead as he was a vouchsafed. Actually Secular policy was a singular expression of his separation the affairs of the spirit from mundane matters and put a period to Gurmatta. Principal Teja Singh Justified the reason of abolition of Gurmatta in different way that he found the Secular elements in the existence of Sikh religion. Due to this Secular outlook among Sikhs the Sikh religion introduced a kitchen which provide meals free to one and all Such idea made the Sikh religion different from others.<sup>46</sup> The Secularistic influence was widespread with the invitation to Hindus

and Muslims so that they should expand their business in the Guru-Ka-Bazaar. Thus Maharaja Ranjit Singh was inspired by Sikh Guru Sahiban because firstly they adopted the Secularistic elements, as Guru Hargobind Ji built many mosques and temples during the foundation of towns and cities even with their own Muslims prayed for Guru Hargobind for their release. When Misls came into power they did not pay any attention towards it rather Maharaja Ranjit Singh proved wrong the theocratic ideas in the spirit of goodwill and conciliation<sup>47</sup>. Maharaja Ranjit Singh considered himself the common ruler of both Hindus and Muslims alike Sikh. In Reality which made him a man of powers like monarch with a unmindful thoughts of caste, creed and colour. Maharaja adopted Secularism and applied in a very earlier part of his regime that after the occupation of Lahore, the responsibility of Kotwal was handed over to Muslim offices.

Maharaja gave the whole command of artillery to Muslim subjects Saint Nihal Singh Justified that all the offices and departments were bestowed to that person who caught the faith of Maharaja whether it was related to Civil Administration, household chaos and anything else. Non- Sikhs used to regulate the important affairs and ceremonial functions. Maharaja's choice was not limited to his own Co- religionists rather widely he choose his officers for the smooth running of his administration<sup>48</sup>.

Indeed the one criteria which he set while making appointment of his officers on high posts was the fitness of the incumbent for the duties of his office. Due to Secularistic outlook the court character of Maharaja was called cosmopolitan. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a true Indian ruler who discriminate talent from communalism and nepotism. Sardar Hukam Singh Chimni was one of the brave general and favourite Leader of Maharaja but a blunder was done by him that he assassinated the said Khan of Kot Hassan Ali because of their Personal enmity. Maharaja was



grieved by it and he ordered to dismiss the Sardar from his post alongwith the fine of Rs. 5000/- in the form Compensation to the deprived family<sup>49</sup>. Maharaja Ranjit Singh's kingdom was Secular State to that approach upto which seems true to the teachings and tradition of Sikh Sahiban that's why without any hesitation Maharaja gave the important departments of his governments to the hands of Muslims and Hindus rather he was a Sikh ruler. The officer of Delhi government Captain made invited Maharaja to attend the Kumbha fair at Haridwar. Maharaja thanked to captain wade but without Consultation of strong pillars of his kingdom he did not put another step. A Disconnecting news was received by the Maharaja on another occasion that nothing was good in Kashmir under the stewardship of Kanwar Sher Singh. After the Consultation of strong pillars of kingdom he sent Jamadar Khushal Singh to study the situation on the spot<sup>50</sup>. Pillars refers to the capability of his concerned officers he wanted to identify that whether his officers were capable or not. Dhian Singh Dogra and Fakir Aziz-Ud -din both were also included in pillars they were appointed as home Minister and Foreign Minister. The Regard of Maharaja Ranjit Singh for other religions was close to reverence.<sup>51</sup>

Due to the spirit of compromise and goodwill, Maharaja Ranjit Singh set up Secularism in the 18th century actually it was demonstrated by the citizen of Lahore, included three communities, because it was those who united Maharaja to occupy Lahore the Fanatic Outlook of Sikhs and toleration power of Maharaja was so great that all were equal to him as a monarch. That's why throughout his career, followed completely a non- communal and liberal policy. During the military Campaigns non-Sikhs fought bravely, they did their best and achieved many glories for the court. Colonel Sheikh Bassawan's troops into foreign lands were carried the colours of

Lahore Darbar, further troops of Dogra Zorawar Singh led under the colours of the Darbar, across the Himalyas.

The influence of Maharaja Ranjit's Secularism was seen even after the death of Maharaja when Britishers and chiefs of Lahore Darbar stood against Khalsa Darbar and the Situation became so critical and to take up arms against each other's armies became Compulsory then not only Sikhs rather men of all communities as-Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims fought Jointly and ungrudgingly mingled their blood for the security of their beloved state.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh gave his Services to Punjab, forty years and within these years he provide progress, prosperity and peace to society of Punjab, which was not seen since from the time of Mughals Maharaja Ranjit Singh's time period made the records that no communal riots were happened rather three communities live in harmony for the good of one another, without any disturbance.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh got love, affection and respect from all Sectional Peoples<sup>52</sup>. Secular policy of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was one of the unique trait of his administration due to which was loved by not only Sikhs rather Hindus and Muslims had proud at their master.

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CHAPTER-V

# Conclusion



## CHAPTER-V

### Conclusion

The determination of Maharaja Ranjit Singh role in History can be realized from the challenges which were faced by him throughout his life. The downfall of Mughal Kingdom had unbased centrifugal forces and the elements of disunity were prevalent in the country. The princes of, before the time period Maharaja were short sighted who were only interested in their passions of self aggrandizement thus they became the cause of downfall of country's empire because of their Shameless intrigues and Sordid Machination. After Maharaja Ranjit Singh the only fruitful consequence came into the hands of British East India company who followed the divide and rule policy in which one element became the enemy of other element and ultimately they became the masters of the sub-continent from the Carnatic to Gangetic plain. All the powerful personalities of that time were knocked out one after the other whether they were- Afghans, Rajputs, Jats, Rohillas, Mughals, Marathas etc.

Britishers had eye on the Punjab State since from power came out, they wanted annex it at every cost. But fortunately the British Steam roller towards northern side were actively controlled by mighty leader Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Maharaja Ranjit Singh desired Zealously to the task of welding diverse atoms into formidable kingdom in the Punjab after the conquest of Lahore in July 1799 A.D. The energies of Misaldari breathern and Harnessed by Maharaja rather Subjugate pockets of Pathan, Afghan and Rajput resistance while carving out a kingdom 1400sq. miles in area from the fringes of Tibet to the bank of the Sutlej.



As a Shrewd Master, he knew the sense of limits that's why he did not defy the Englishmen, who were at that time commanding overwhelming and better armies. Rather they were in advance in the form of Materialistic sources as Money, Men and arms than Maharaja.

A great Setback was given by Britishers to Maharaja in the form of treaty of Amritsar, henceforth he husbanded the abeyant strength of Punjabis and displaced the whole wealth to remodel on western lines all branches of his armed forces. Within twenty years, the kingdom of Maharaja Ranjit Singh became enough competent to the Britishers. In order to make Punjab invulnerable, it removed disqualities of empire as unemployment, ameliorated the lot of peasantry and improved all round economy of state. To fulfill the needs of army various industries and handicrafts were setup. Due to these facilities Maharaja Ranjit Singh earned respectability which he had been lost in 1809 A.D., even Britishers remained neutral towards Maharaja and stopped offending him, because he subdued the Sadozais, Daudputras in west and the Afghans in the north. Britishers wanted that Maharaja should be the arbiter in the fate of Afghans that's why in June 1838 A.D. they forced Maharaja to become part of Tripartite Treaty. But Maharaja Ranjit Singh was full of Indianness due to which he secretly made corresponding with Peshwa, Raja of Marwar and Bharatpur and sent emissaries to Nepal and Burma to form a united front to break the British bondages.

Besides the Master in political field Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a capable administrator who gave first time peace and prosperity to country after great Mughal emperor Akbar.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh established such type of government which was absolutely suitable to his state's people and equal to the times in which they lived in. Maharaja Ranjit Singh did not bother about the sharp break with past, Niceties of administrative theories, even old groves

were continuously running in life. Justice was supremely reigned, robberies, dacoities and armed encounter were seldom heard. A sharp eye was there on crimes and communal problems never happened. The duties of Nazims and Kardars were repeatedly reminded by Maharaja through his admonitory powers so that they should help peasants, because Maharaja could not see the tyrannies, high handedness and extortion towards them. On the surprise visit of Maharaja to his Public, he personally listened the grievances of Public and tried to solve them promptly. Maharaja was very far-sighted ruler nothing was remained invisible to his vigilant eye. Maharaja Ranjit Singh's rule was so common that he never desired divine rights or infallibility for himself. He urged Faqir Nur-ud-din to point out any fault committed ever inadvertently by himself or his princes.

The economy of the State rested on even knees. The money drain was not there rather resources were utilized within the state. Due to the Self-dependence concept of State unemployment and beggary evils were not seen in the society. Fraternal love and neighborliness traits existed in society of agriculturist and non-agriculturist class. Paternalism was preferred by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in his Solicitude behaviour towards activities of Public welfare. The concept of Kingship used by Maharaja was quite different from other rulers. High-sounded titles, coins on his own name, affixation of his effigy were avoided by Maharaja. He considered himself the 'Ranjit Nagara' of Guru Gobind Singh, Rajputia of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and a mere servant of Darbar. 'Akal Sahai' was inscribed one of his seal. The Title of '*Sarkar-i-Khalsa*' was given to his government and lovingly people called him 'Singh Sahib' or 'Sarkar'. He realized the authority of sword of Khalsa that it gave him validity, Stability and Strength. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a devout Sikh that's why ascribed all which he achieved to Guru Ram Dass and his only goal was

to maintain common wealth of Guru Gobind Singh so that he should earned fame for the glory of the Sikh Panth. He devotionally followed the teachings of Guru Sahiban and had equal be high to all religious, caste, creed persons. He recognized that whole humanity is one. The ideas of toleration broadmindedness and co-existence were deeply rooted in Sikh tradition which effected the personality of Maharaja and encouraged him to start a religious society. The outlook of Maharaja was secular but it was also for in advance of his times. He was not an intolerable master and stood for non-interference in the religion of others. But the Bounds of his Charity and endowments were not lay outside. It was the result of secular policy of Maharaja Ranjit that he donated expensive grants to Harimandir at Amritsar, the Jawalamukhi Mandir at Kangra, the Vishwanath Mandir at Benaras, in the form of rich gifts. Even the 1/10th part of state revenue was given in the form of charity. Maharaja fully realized the concept of religion that every person is bound to his/her own concerned religion that's why he gave equal importance to each and every religion and their activities. He wanted to develop emotional integration in the society due to which officially and jointly every festivals of community was celebrated with great enthusiasm, which became the foremost reason of removing all seeds of discord. The rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was founded on the willing co-operation of peoples. The reflection of his secular character was shown by the constitution of the court, the camp and recruitment of all officers of Lahore Darbar. The officers of Darbar were open for a talented person. The highest rung of the ladder could be achieved by person without any obstacle. The cosmopolitan type of court was adorned by Dogras, Syeds, Mians, Brahmins, Khattris, Baniyas, Sandhannialias, Majithias, Europeans etc. To call him as a despotic ruler or an absolute Monarch will be totally injustice to him. Despotism snacks of high-handedness and here was Ranjit Singh who never

want only imbrued his hands in blood. He was no doubt the pivot who gave directions but the elements of partnership for all were present, the government played role of seldom meddlesome. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was unknown to vindictiveness concept. He behaved in a very sympathetic manner towards his vanquished rivals, they were well provided for and left to rot in a state of Pnury and desperation. During Maharaja Ranjit Singh's time period leniency was adopted in the Justice matters, no written constitution was available to restrict the powers, no existence of democratic institution but due to efforts of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, he produced such type of country where royal kings had been also an exception in contemporary Europe. Kings like George III in Europe and Lovis XIV, Lovis XV in France indulged in clever devices to circumvent the will of their people. Nicholas I in Turkey and Manachi Emperors of China were the remorseless rulers of western who were also contemporary of Majaraja but they killed and exited their unruly subjects in thousands.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh gave a full scope to his subjects for the realization of individual ambition. Maharaja possessed with wide powers and he uttered words became law but even then while doing activities he followed the time-honoured practices of the land. Instinctly he was deeply obeyed by the peoples. He has been described as a legend for the compassionate feelings towards poor, handicapped and a downcast peoples. Maharaja was strictly against the corruption and dishonesty. Even he did not spare the Jamadar Khushal Singh, Anitabite, Moti Ram, Wasakha Singh, Hari Singh Nalwa at one or another time when charges of corruption, extortion and high - handedness proved against them. If he was strict, he was also humble towards his subjects he gave a word of praise to Amar Singh Majithia in Hazara, Rup Lal in Jalandhar. Sawan Mal in Multan and Lehna Singh in Amritsar for their favourable services.

The rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was of beautiful traits of efficiency, mildness and beneficency. Maharaja was not trapped in the royalty rather he was the symbol of modest, humans and humble without any fetish. The abolition of capital punishment was the greatest step of Maharaja which is still not acquired by present day democracies. The despotic rules of Maharaja's sword did not allowed him to compare with Ashoka and Akbar on the one side and Napoleon Bonaparte on the other side, because two rulers would not became alike. It was true that Maharaja Ranjit Singh was very kind-hearted ruler like Ashoka but he did try to lay foundation of his empire on the footsteps of Sikhisms he did not allowed himself to make Sikh religion as the state religion rather this terms was present in the role of Ashoka which gave patronage to Buddhism Liberalism and toleration in the case of religion is considered to be very essential which ever found in Maharaja but he issued not in fallibility Decree nor founded Din-i-Ilahi. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was unique in his efforts even his rise and fall was like meteroic way of Napoleon. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was man of extra ordinary capabilities. He was considered to be the first able administrator who changed the face of country due to his a religious policy. Ranjit Singh even likened to many historical personalities but actually the fact is that anyone cannot be compared reasonably to another person even the circumstances were same. It was not hidden from anybody that under which conditions Maharaja carved his way to kingdom because those circumstances were more unfavourable than other rulers of the country. Maharaja Ranjit Singh gave a very efficient administration to the country and united the scattered portions of the Punjab under well-welded kingdom Maharaja Ranjit Singh modernized his army on the western style and transformed it on invalherable force to reckon with. He was statesman par excellence.

Due to the a religious policy of Maharaja Ranjit Singh he was considered as the founder of Modern Punjab who transformed this land of five rivers into a historical identity and converted it from the position of a mere passage for invaders and marauders to a sovereign state which turned the tide of history Maharaja Ranjit Singh formed a movement which had to struggle against religious oppression. Even his ancestors were not much concerned to a religious policy that's why they had fought many bloodiest battles for their survival and were people with a distinct identity and religion. The emergence of such struggle started by Maharaja Ranjit Singh symbolized the beginning of a new era of peace and co-existence for the Punjab where people belonging to various religions would be able to enjoy liberty, equality without facing any religious bigotry of the ruler and co-religionists.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh ruled over the Punjab, the frontier Province and Kashmir for about forty years. And it was the result of Maharaja's Secular policy that Country enjoyed the peace and freedom from religious bigotry, fanaticism and Persecution for the first time after the demise of Akbar the Great. It may be truth that the administration was rough and ready as compared to elaborate Machinery of Modern times but by no means suffered in comparison with non-European states of that time. Even the Criminal cases were less in those days in spite of about quarter Lakh of police and other protective force. In other respects the Punjabis enjoyed full liberty from official interference as it was Government which directly came in contact with the peoples and even with the limited section of population. It was true that no Arms Act was introduced all the disputes of people were settled by Panchayats without any partiality. On the whole one should say that the people of Punjab were happy. They loved Maharaja and Maharaja had also died in 1839 A.D. there was a universal mourning in the Country.

No doubt Maharaja Ranjit Singh is credited for setting up the unified Sikh Sovereign State and deserved the title of "*Lion of Punjab*" "*Sher -e-Punjab*". It was the Capability of Maharaja and committed Sikh leadership that the Sikh kingdom expanded to whole of North India and no one could even dream of challenging him let alone revolting against him Any how Sikh history is not the history of the Kings and Queens rather it is the history great warriors who gave deep roots of Sikhism among them Maharaja Ranjit Singh earned the worth possession. He recognized himself as the servant of the Khalsa brotherhood because that was the need of time. His Successors were tried little bit but they failed. It was Maharaja which provide prosperity peace and progress to Punjab under his rule.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh would be considered as the founder of modern Punjab because of his Secular policy Punjab, as the land of five rivers got the historical identity otherwise it was mere a passage for invaders and marauders, due to fruitful efforts of Maharaja Ranjit Singh turned it into Sovereign State with the coming of Maharaja's secular perceptions justice in the in the political, social, economic, religious matters was provided to public which was wiped out in previous regimes, now it ensured for all citizens during medieval Punjab, the basic human rights were crushed, but in the reign period all of them were restored. No instance of regarding violation of rights had been found even to individual person. Even now the state officers were not behaved as ferocious tigers and mad dogs which were presented during Mughals regime period, not any harassment to the public was noticed for several generations the regime period of peace and prosperity like Maharajas Ranjit Singh had not found. Maharaja was quite alert about the functioning and activities of officers he never became the puppet in the hands of officers

even he paid them salaries according to their work and transferred them place to place even also.

Dismissed them if anyone found failure in his duty.

Secular policy enable one to live in some measure of civility. Secular policy means to remain loyal also towards other religions, and not to criticize them. Rather it also refers to a part of democracy which provides equal rights to all citizen. The power of the majority was limited by this policy and protected democracy. The most important trait of this policy is that it is totally desirable for India because due to the democratic country the rights and duties can be safeguard while adopting it because it enable the countrymen to live in civility.

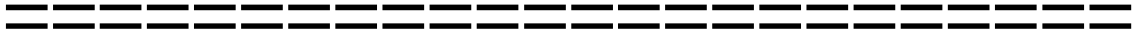
Maharaja Ranjit Singh was not a bigot or vain religious dreamer. He always tried to refrained from interfering with the religious rights of the different sections of his subjects not any way he approved of such activities on the part of the governing classes among the Sikhs. Maharaja was enough far-sighted that he used to retain the essential features of the Mughal administration including the territorial divisions of the Punjab, the names of various officials and agents of government and Persian, the court language of the Great Mughals. While swimming up the nature and character of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his Secular administration was that both his nature and court were fully Secular traits. He was endowed with rare political acumen as he was, he not only conciliated the Muslims but also inspired loyalty towards them. Maharaja Ranjit Singh employed Europeans in his administration so that his administration would be run on the guideline of Western methods of warfare. He wanted to introduced advancement in the mode of warfare. The presence of various Europeans in his court creates the atmosphere of cosmopolitan in his time period. The exceptional loyalty with which the Muslims served the Maharaja and his so called successors was due to the wise policy of Maharaja. It was Maharaja who did not easily



believed at his officers in case of welfare activities of his public and development of cities rather he paid his personal attention towards it. None could practised high-handedness or any oppression. This one should say that the Secular Policy of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was one of the unique trait of Maharaja which made his best master among the different classes of the community. He was one of the great personality of not in India but of the whole India. Maharaja was counted among those kings who had deep love for mankind rather than their selfish motives. No doubt, Maharaja had unlimited powers but he did not use it to fulfill his selfishness rather he had not any hat redness against his enemies, he used to spare their times and gave them employment after the occupation of their kingdoms. As the today's Governmental structure the trait of Maharaja Ranjit Singh should be used by, different countries it can be relevant in today's structure. No political crisis would be happened if the Secular policy would be adopted by Government. It should give equal rights to all religious peoples while ignoring it which caste, colour creed he belongs. And that can be possible only with the efforts of the state. Every post can be filled with the capability and ability of the officers or candidates instead of religious issues occurred.

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