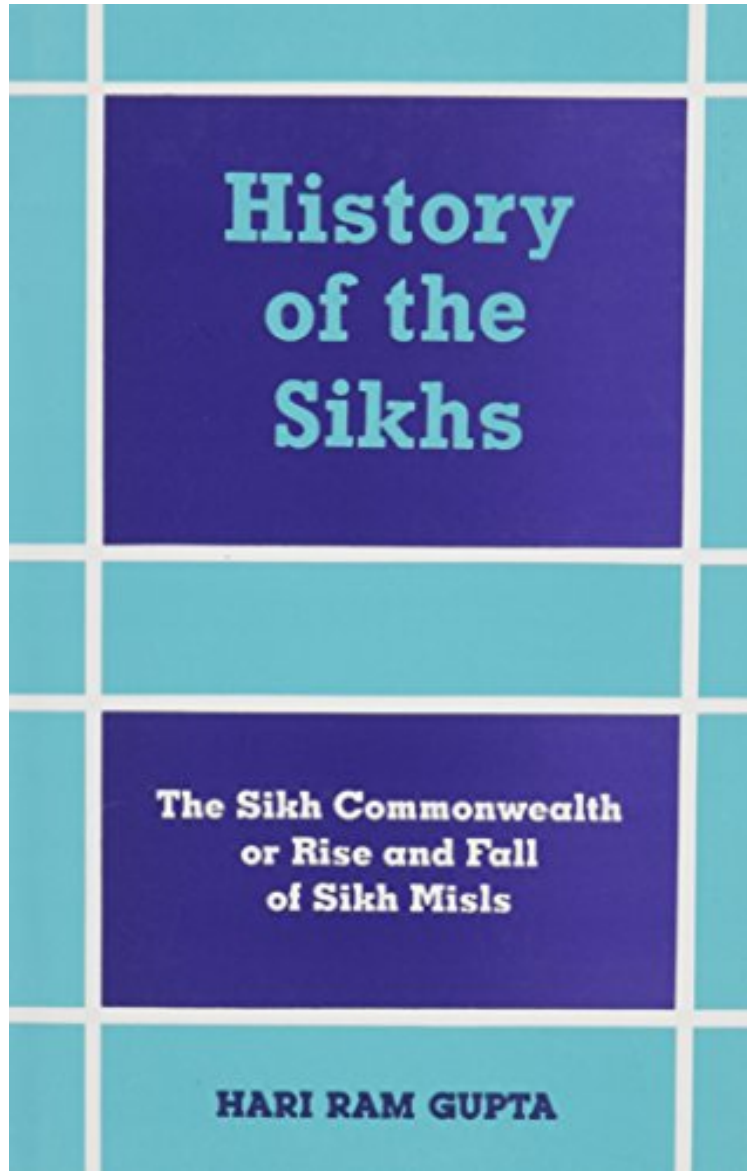


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History of the Sikhs: Sikh Commonwealth or Rise Fall of Sikh Misls

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History of the Sikhs is a five volume series which deals with all aspects-religious, philosophical, political, military, social, economic and cultural, and the contribution of Sikhism to world civilization, in particular to human rights, principles of liberty, equality and fraternity, and to the creed of democracy and secularism. The aim is to present a comprehensive view of the rise, growth and development of Sikh thought and action almost in every direction. The whole series is based on original contemporary sources in English, Gurmukhi, Marathi, Persian and Urdu known to exist in India and abroad. This fourth volume deals with the rise and fall of Sikh misls. In Sikh history this term was first used by Guru Gobind Singh in the battle Bhangani in 1688, when he organised his forces into eleven misls. Banda Bahadur adopted the same organisation of eleven divisions in the battle of Sarhind in May 1710. In 1734 Nawab Kapur Singh divided the Khalsa into Budha Dal and Taruna Dal, both comprising eleven groups. This division was permanently adopted at the formation of Dal Khalsa in 1748. The Phulkian states were not a Sikh misl. They developed as petty kingdoms from the beginning. They owed allegiance to the Mughals and Durrani, the enemies of their faith. They purchased titles from them. The Sikh misls never agreed to serve under Muslim masters. Lahna Singh Bhangi flatly rejected to become Ahmad Shah Durrani's viceroy of Panjab. Baghel Singh Karorasinghia controlled Delhi for nine months as an independent chief. He thrice turned down Emperor Shah Alam's firman appointing him governor of the Upper Ganga Doab. The Sikh misls dominated the whole country from river Indus to the Ganga, and from punch in Kashmir to the borders of Sind and Baluchistan. The Mughal Emperor, his prime ministers, Rohillas, Jats, Rajputs, Marathas, the British, hill rajas, and Durrani monarchs, all were terribly afraid of Sikh misls in spite of their complete disunity and mutual warfare. The misls in the western region were unceremoniously finished by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, and by the British Government in the eastern region.