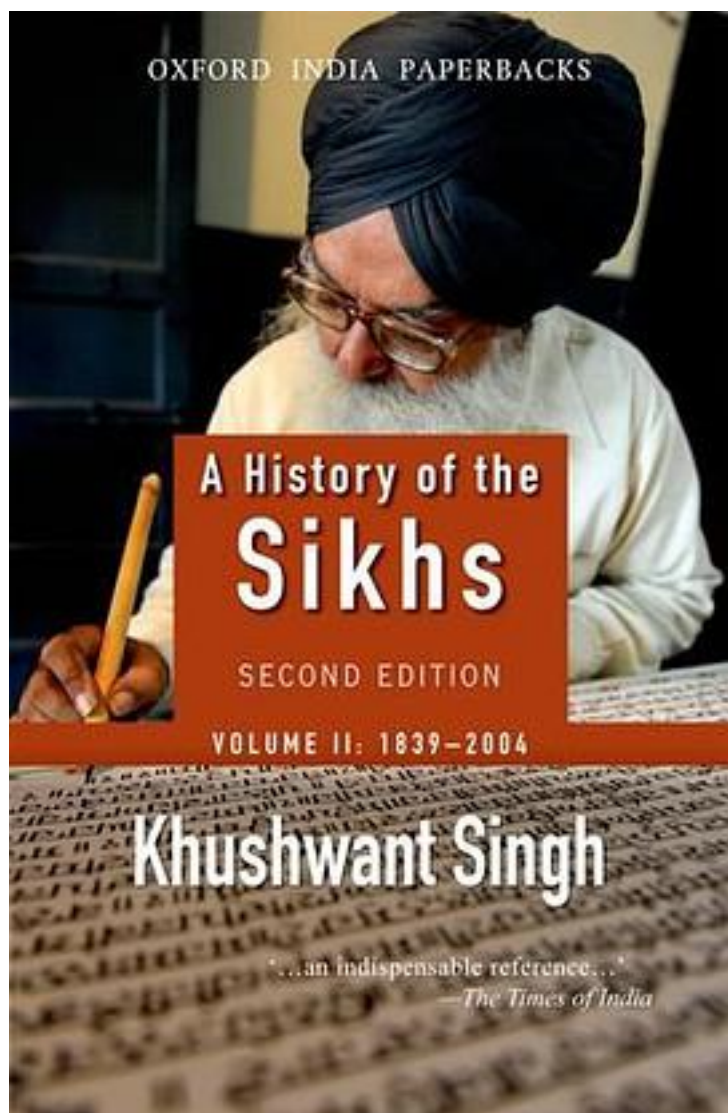


History of the Sikhs



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出版者: Munshirm Manoharlal Pub Pvt Ltd

出版时间: 2000-12-10

装帧: Hardcover

isbn: 9788121502139

History of the Sikhs is planned as a six volume survey aiming to present a comprehensive view of the rise, growth and development of Sikh thought and action in every direction. This volume Sikh Domination of the Mughal Empire 1764-1803 is third in the series. The whole series is based on original contemporary sources in Persian, Marathi, Gurumukhi, Urdu, Hindi and English known to exist in India and abroad. The dominating theme of the third volume is how and why the Sikhs missed numerous opportunities of establishing a Sikh State over the whole of Northern India. Najib-ud-daulah Rohilla, the first dictator of Delhi, and the vanquisher of Marathas and the Jats, publicly confessed having failed to subdue the Sikhs. Once he paid them a blackmail of eleven lakhs of rupees. His son and successor saved himself by embracing Sikhism. His widow and son lived in the Panjab on a Jagir granted by Jassa Singh Ramgarhia in his safe custody for seventeen years. The Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II (1759-1806) was prepared to place himself and his empire under Sikh protection. Najaf Khan, his prime minister, granted sovereign rights to the Sikhs. Mahadji Sindhia, the second dictator of the Mughal Empire, always maintained peace with them inspite of their frequent provocations. Lord Cornwallis, the British Governor-General in vain cajoled and coaxed them in order to secure the liberty from Sikh captivity of Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Stuart who was set free after ten months on receiving a ransom. The Jat rajas of Bharatpur, Rajput princes, Nawabs of Oudh, and the hill rajas, all troubled before them. As the Sikhs had risen to power and predominance from extreme poverty and penury, their imagination could not go outside their homeland acquisition of gold from the rich, rakhi from Zamindars and Kambh from artisans.

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