

The Sikh Empire and the East India Company

- Following the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh his court (Durbar) fell into a period of infighting. This caught the attention of the East Indian Company who were expanding their hold over the Indian subcontinent.
 - During the reign of Ranjit Singh both he and The Company had found it mutually convenient to reign in their expansionism.
 - With the death of the Maharaja, The Company grew uneasy – they saw the Sikh Empire as a buffer against the expansion of another empire into Indian.



Indian, 1857. Samuel Rawson Gardiner D.C.L., L.L.D., School Atlas of English History (London, England: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1914) 61

- Who?

The First Anglo-Sikh War (1845-46)

- Relations with the British had already been strained by the refusal of the Sikhs to allow the passage of British troops through their territory during the First Anglo-Afghan War (1838–42).
- Sikh troops entered East India Company-controlled India with the idea of preventing a future British attack. The East India Company formed an alliance with Gulab Singh, a Dogra chieftain and powerful and respected former member of Ranjit Singh's court.
 - The Dogra are a linguistic group found primarily in the Jammu region.
- After four battles the Sikh forces were defeated (**although the Company realized that they did not have the resources to completely destroy the Sikh Empire, nor did they want their territory to have a frontier with volatile Afghanistan**).
 - The *Treaty of Lahore* (1846) and *Treaty of Amritsar* (1846) were concluded between the British and the Sikhs:
 - The Company annexed Sikh lands that bordered Company-controlled territory.
 - Ranjit Singh's son, Dalip Singh, would continue as Maharaja of Lahore under the protection of The Company, who stationed a representative and troops in the capital city.
 - Kashmir and Jammu were detached from the Lahore (the centre of the Sikh Empire).
Once he paid the British a fee, Gulab Singh was declared Maharaja of Kashmir.

Articles of the *Treaty of Amritsar* (1846):

Article 1 The British Government transfers and makes over for ever in independent possession to Maharajah Gulab Singh and the heirs male of his body all the hilly or mountainous country with its dependencies situated to the eastward of the River Indus and the westward of the River Ravi including Chamba and excluding Lahol, being part of the territories ceded to the British Government by the Lahore State according to the provisions of Article IV of the Treaty of Lahore, dated 9 March 1846.

Article 2 The eastern boundary of the tract transferred by the foregoing article to Maharajah Gulab Singh shall be laid down by the Commissioners appointed by the British Government and Maharajah Gulab Singh respectively for that purpose and shall be defined in a separate engagement after survey.

Article 3 In consideration of the transfer made to him and his heirs by the provisions of the foregoing article Maharajah Gulab Singh will pay to the British Government the sum of seventy-five lakhs of rupees (Nanukshahee), fifty lakhs to be paid on or before the 1st October of the current year, A.D., 1846.

Article 4 The limits of territories of Maharajah Gulab Singh shall not be at any time changed without concurrence of the British Government.

Article 5 Maharajah Gulab Singh will refer to the arbitration of the British Government any disputes or question that may arise between himself and the Government of Lahore or any other neighboring State, and will abide by the decision of the British Government.

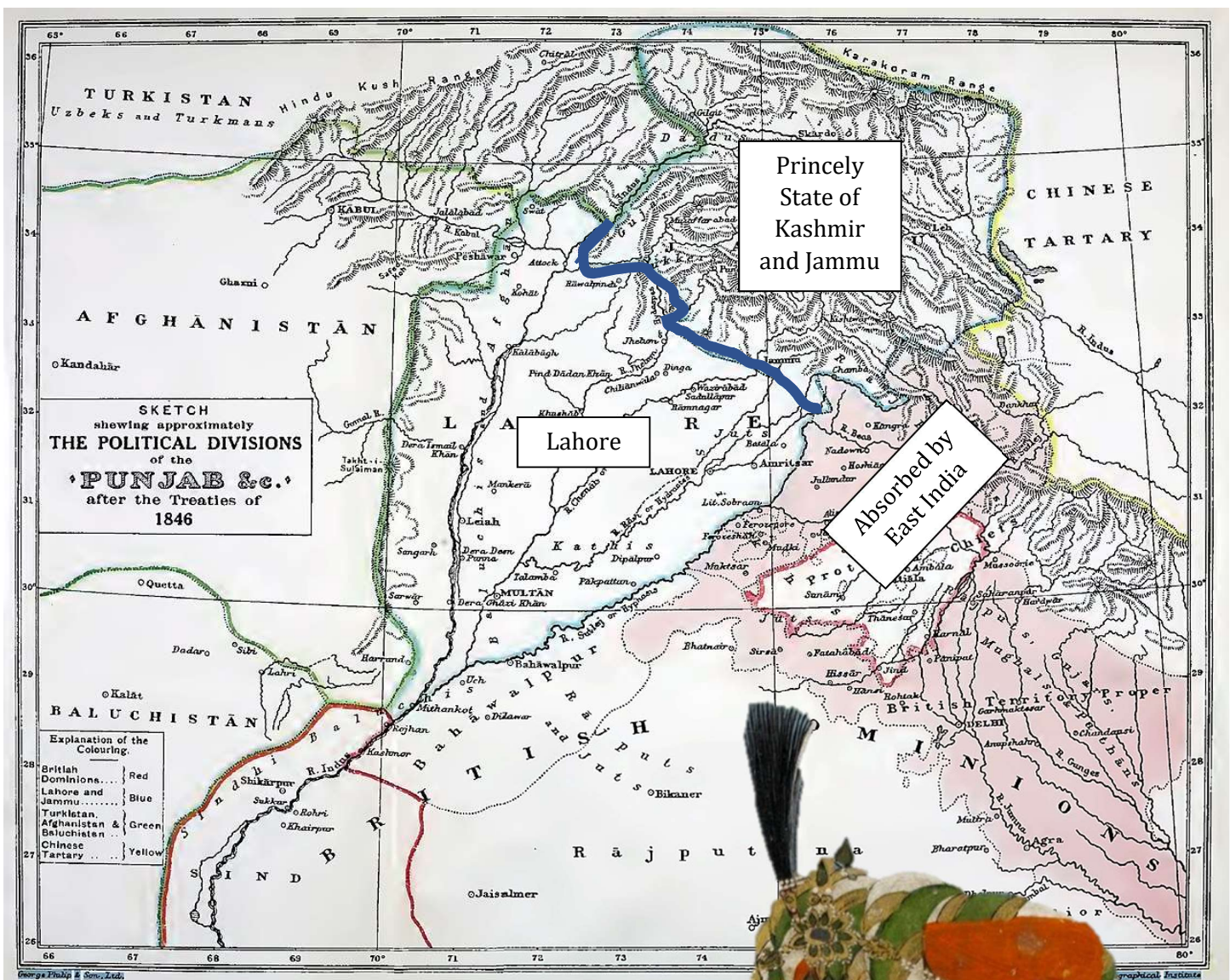
Article 6 Maharajah Gulab Singh engages for himself and heirs to join, with the whole of his Military Forces, the British troops when employed within the hills or in the territories adjoining his possessions.

Article 7 Maharajah Gulab Singh engages never to take to retain in his service any British subject nor the subject of any European or American State without the consent of the British Government.

Article 8 Maharajah Gulab Singh engages to respect in regard to the territory transferred to him, the provisions of Articles V, VI and VII of the separate Engagement between the British Government and the Lahore Durbar, dated 11 March 1846.

Article 9 The British Government will give its aid to Maharajah Gulab Singh in protecting his territories from external enemies.

Article 10 Maharajah Gulab Singh acknowledges the supremacy of the British Government and will in token of such supremacy present annually to the British Government one horse, twelve shawl goats of approved breed (six male and six female) and three pairs of Cashmere shawls.



1901 Census of Kashmir:¹

Total population: 2,905,578.

Muslim: 2,154,695

Hindu: 689,073 Hindus

Buddhist: 35,047

Sikh: 25,828 Sikhs

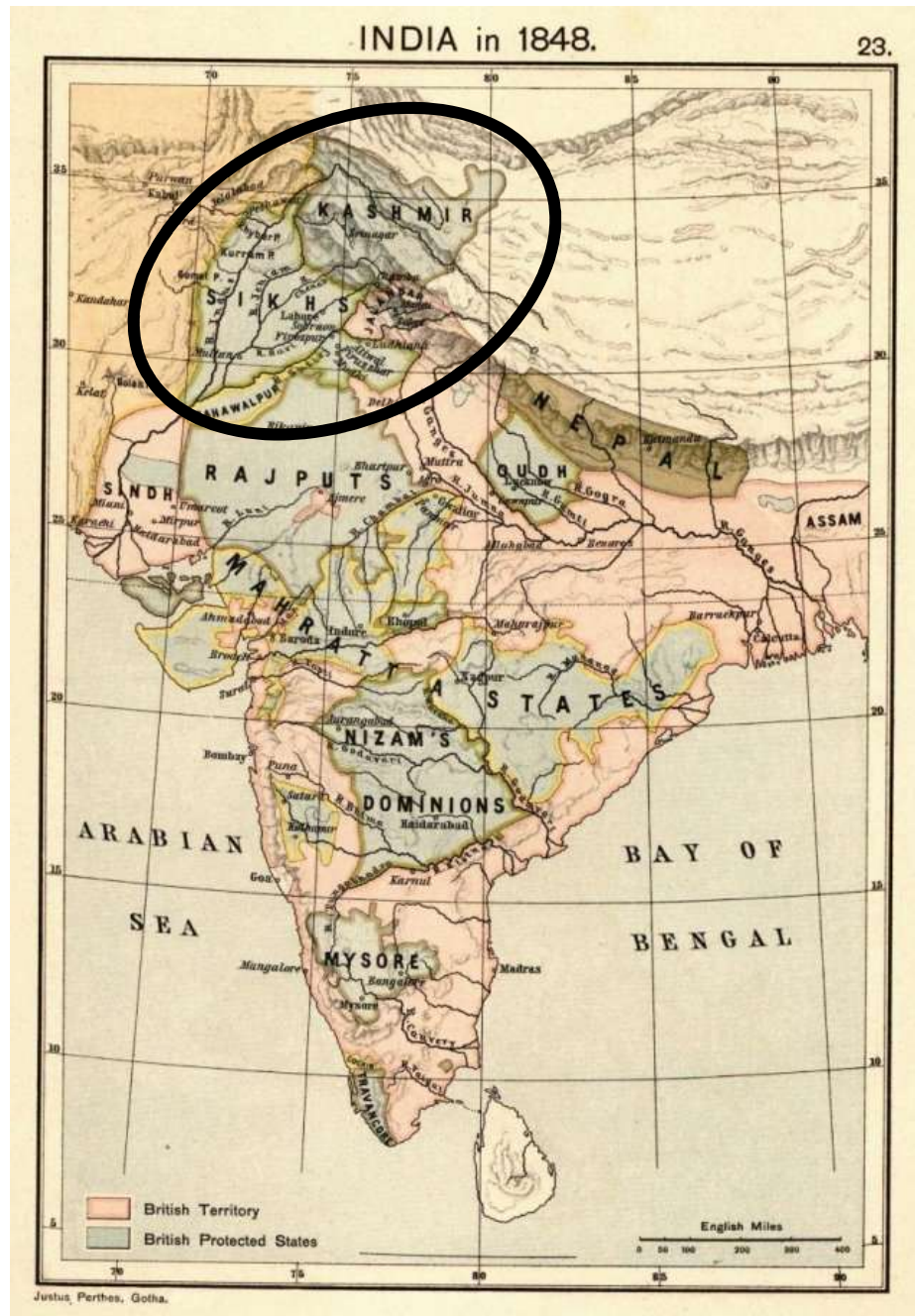
- In the same Census of 1901, in the Kashmir Valley, the total population was recorded to be 1,157,394, of which the Muslim population was 1,083,766, or 93.6% of the population.



¹ Census of India, 1901 Vol. XXIII: Kashmir Part I. <https://indianculture.gov.in/rarebooks/census-india-1901-vol-xxiii-kashmir-part-i>

The Second Anglo-Sikh War (1848)

- The Second Sikh War began with the revolt of Multan from the authority of the Maharaja of Lahore. The revolt escalated to a national revolt when the Sikh army joined the rebels. Indecisive battles characterized by great ferocity and bad generalship leading to a British victory at Gujrat (February 21). The Sikh army surrendered on March 12, and the Punjab was then annexed by The Company.



Source:

Rai, Mridu. *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects: Islam, Rights and the History of Kashmir*. Princeton University Press, 2004.