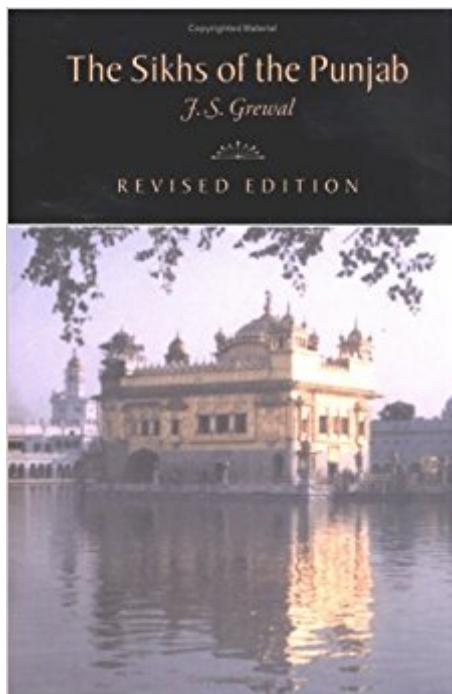


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The Sikhs Of The Punjab (The New Cambridge History Of India)



Synopsis

This important new contribution to the New Cambridge History of India examines chronologically the entire span of Sikh history from prehistoric times to the present day. In an introductory chapter, Professor Grewal surveys the changing pattern of human settlements in the Punjab until the fifteenth century and the emergence of the Punjabi language as the basis of regional articulation. Subsequent chapters explore the life and beliefs of Guru Nanak--the founder of Sikhism; the extension and modification of his ideas by his successors; the increasing number and composition of their followers and the development of Sikh self identity. Professor Grewal also analyzes the emergence of Sikhism in relation to the changing historical situation of Turko-Afghan rule, the Mughal empire and its disintegration, British rule and independence.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The task of writing any religious group's history is like walking on a mine field. Grewal has come out of this walk unscathed, nothing less than a miracle. Many historians have burnt their fingers doing what Grewal has done so well. This book starts with the evolution of Sikh philosophy and traces the Sikh history as it went through many twists and turns. The noticeable difference is that author doesn't treat Sikhs in isolation from their surroundings. It puts the Sikhs and their history in full social context of those times. In fact, the book also offers the best history of Mughal period as it coincides with Sikh Gurus very well. It dwells upon the political, cultural and religious unfolding of this period. The internal conflict among various Sikh sects and communities is represented very well. The

language is very crisp, concise and without any repetition or unwanted opinion pieces. Anyone trying to understand the modern political upheaval in the region must start with this book. It covers the period from well before Guru Nanak to 1980s. One can easily see why it took author 10 years to write it. A must for anyone having anything to do with Sikhs or Punjab. Worth every cent of its price. A caution. The recent events brought out many "pop" books on Sikh history. Most, if not all, are just long op-ed articles, sprinkled with catchy photos, glossy papers and hot political buttons. Just a waste of your money. J.S. Grewal's is truly the first professional history of Sikhs. It sets bar quite high for future historians.

This is a dense, fact-packed book. It is not lightly written, but a rigorous and serious academic study of the Sikh people from their inception with the Guru Nanak up to the period of political turmoil that both preceded and followed the Operation Bluestar raid in Amritsar. Academics will no doubt find this a valuable treasure to have on their shelves, but the reader who is not anointed in the history or religion of the Sikhs will find this a difficult, arduous read. So, for the initiated I would give it five stars, but for the novice more like three - so I have compromised on four. If you want to know about the Sikhs and their history, you should read this book, but if you don't know anything about them, you should start elsewhere and work your way towards this book.

A good review of the history of Sikhism. From the origins of the religion all the way to issues facing Sikhs in the modern world.

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