

Queen Victoria and the young Maharajah

teachers' notes

1) The Sikh connection

The Sikh connection with this resource is the extraordinary story of Maharajah Duleep Singh, the first Sikh who is recorded to have settled in Britain. We can follow him at three stages of his upbringing: as a child ruler in the Punjab, dispossessed by the British but still living in India and as a young man at the court of Queen Victoria. Sikhs in the UK have a strong feeling for Duleep Singh: an equestrian statue of him has recently been set up at Thetford in Norfolk, where he spent much of his adult life.

2) Curriculum

KS2 History, Unit 11a: Victorian Britain: impact of significant individuals and events; women and children from different sections of society

This resource focuses on the impact of the meeting of Queen Victoria and the young Duleep Singh. Duleep Singh was eight when he fell into British hands. The resource covers such questions as whether his upbringing fitted him to deal with his complex heritage, and whether his presence at her court helped Queen Victoria to gain a deeper understanding of her Indian empire.

KS2 Citizenship, Unit 05: Living in a diverse world; Section 4: How are we all connected? This resource helps pupils investigate their historic links with India and Pakistan, using everyday language and memorable figures from history.

KS2 Art & Design, Unit 5B: Containers. The resource includes suggestions for making an object in paper-mâché, a traditional Sikh craft. This material is frequently used in the Punjab for making containers. (See notes for p.13).

3) Themes

The resource supports the following learning objectives:

- to identify Queen Victoria and place the Victorian period in relation to other periods of British history
- to find out about important figures in Victorian times
- to consider how attitudes to children and childhood changed over time

It consolidates this by suggestions for a craft activity associated with Duleep Singh.

4) Material

The resource uses contemporary paintings and engravings to reconstruct the life of Duleep Singh. It also references modern objects to enable pupils to engage more

directly with the importance of India in British culture, and with Duleep Singh's experience as a child in Victorian India.

5) Classroom use

The powerpoint presentation is a teacher-led activity, though it can be worked through individually by pupils with a confident reading level. It includes group exercises: for example, page 2 presents some everyday objects to introduce pupils to Britain's long relationship with India, and page 3 involves a brain-storming exercise, about the different circumstances in which people from India started to come to Britain.

6) Differentiation

This resource concentrates on one story, that of Duleep Singh. However there are others, which are almost as extraordinary. Pupils could find out more about Sake Dean Mahomet, who opened the first Indian restaurant in Britain. See notes for page 3.

On page 2, pupils could find out more about when these or other Hindu or Urdu words entered everyday English.

7) Weblinks and bibliography

A key source for more information about people moving to Britain from India is The National Archives' Moving Here project, which draws on records and documents from many of the national collections. Its webpages on South Asia include sections on: Origins, Journeys, Settling, Growing Up, Working Lives, Culture and Festivals and Politics. Though they mostly focus on immigration after the 1950s, they also include some earlier material.

<http://www.movinghere.org.uk/galleries/histories/asian/asian.htm>

Peter Bance, *Sovereign, Squire and Rebel, Maharajah Duleep Singh and the Heirs of a Lost Kingdom*, London: Coronet House, 2009

Peter Bance, *The Duleep Singhs, The Photograph Album of Queen Victoria's Maharajah*, Sutton Publishing, Stroud, Gloucestershire, 2004

8) Additional notes, page by page

1) Home page

See page 9 for more about this famous portrait of Duleep Singh.

Franz Xaver Winterhalter, *The Maharaja Dalip Singh*, 1854, oil on canvas,

© The Royal Collection, 204 x 110 cm, RCIN 403843

<http://www.royalcollection.org.uk/egallery/object.asp?object=403843&row=0&detail=about>

2) Naming everyday objects

These are all words of Hindi or Urdu origin. The images are all taken from the web and are in the public domain

avatar	- incarnation
bungalow	- from <i>bangla</i> , a house in the Bengal style
chutney	- from <i>chatni</i> , to crush
dinghy	- from <i>dingi</i> , small boat
pyjamas	- originally <i>paijamas</i> , loose, lightweight trousers
shampoo	- from <i>champna</i> , to press

Other everyday English words of Hindi or Urdu origin include:

bangle, bazaar, cashmere, cheetah, chintz, cot, cushy, guru, gymkhana, indigo, jodhpurs, juggernaut, jungle, khaki, loot, mugger, pariah, polo, pundit, sentry, thug, yoga
Plus of course lots of food words: curry, ginger, kebab, kedgeree, mango

Many of these words were well established in English long before the Victorian period. For example, the first recorded use of 'pariah' in English is 1613.

3) The first Indians in Britain

Charles Henry Seaforth, *East Indiaman Repulse in East India Dock Basin*, 1820, © National Maritime Museum

[http://www.portcities.org.uk/london/server/show/conMediaFile.650/The-East-IndiamanRepulse-\(1820\)-in-the-East-India-Dock-Basin.html](http://www.portcities.org.uk/london/server/show/conMediaFile.650/The-East-IndiamanRepulse-(1820)-in-the-East-India-Dock-Basin.html)

There were various ways in which people from the Indian sub-continent made their way to Britain from the seventeenth-century onwards.

lascars, sailors recruited by East India Company to replace vacancies in crews of east Indiamen. A Navigation Act of 1660 restricted the employment of non-English seamen to a quarter of the crew on returning East India Company ships.

Thirteen Lascars on board an East Indiaman were buried in the parish of St Nicholas at Deptford in 1796.

ayahs, nursemaids or lady's maids, who accompanied their wealthy British employers back to Britain at the end of their period of employment.

cooks, especially Indo-Portuguese cooks from Goa and from Sylhet in Bangladesh. British generals acquired a taste for Goan food and took many Goans as cooks and general servants.

One of the most famous early Bengali immigrants to Britain was **Sake Dean Mahomet**, a captain and trainee surgeon of the Bengal army of the British East India Company. In 1810, he founded London's first Indian restaurant, the Hindoostane Coffee House,