

BOOK REVIEW

HISTORY AND STUDY OF THE JATS

With reference to Sikhs, Scythians, Alans, Sarmatians, Goths, and Jutes

By

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Dr Balbir S Dhillon's *History and Study of the Jats* is the first comprehensive overview of Jats of Punjab and Uttar Pradesh (India) who follow Hinduism and Islam in general and Sikhism in particular. Dr Dhillon provides sufficient information on the background of Sikh Jats for individuals with no prior knowledge of Jat ancestry. As such it is a groundbreaking attempt and timely book against which all future studies will be measured. The author traces the modern Sikh Jat ancestry to Scythians from Central Asia who used to keep long hairs and beards. The Jats constitute over seventy percent of the Sikh community. Many decedents of Jat Sikhs have lived and raised their young in the Western countries for over a century.

The author has obtained material from authentic and highly reliable sources and is well documented and available in several libraries such as Library of Congress, British Library, London England, National Library of Canada, and National Library of Australia. A wide variety of references are listed. The author records that the first documentation on the topic pertaining to the background of Sikh Jats was compiled by (Lt. Col.) J. Todd *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan* in 1829 during Maharaja Ranjit Singh's rule. He adds, J.D. Cunningham wrote *History of the Sikhs* in 1849. In the words of Cunningham "*vigorous Hindu civilization of the first ages of Christianity soon absorbed its barbarous invaders, and in the lapse of centuries the Jats became essentially Brahmanical in language and belief*". The British had well researched the Scythian origin of Jat Sikhs before they attacked the Sikh Raj. *History and study of the Jats* is thus rewarding for the Jats in general and particularly to Jats of the followers of

the Sikh faith since it makes them aware of their ancestry.

In India the Jats have ruled almost continuously over 500 years, i. e. around the 4th century BC to the 6th century CA. A Jat Sikh, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, ruled during the first half of the 19th century. Even in the middle of the twentieth century another Sikh ruler (a Sidhu Jat) was Maharaja of Patiala State. If you do not know where you are coming from, then you do not know where you are going.

Chapter 1 establishes the Scythian origin of the Jats with the works of various authors, historical records, and archaeological findings. Chapter 2 describes ancient history of Jats and the Scythians in Central Asia and India. Chapter 3 surveys the events concerning Jats during the Muslim rule in India. Chapter 4 presents a historical analysis of specific events concerning the Sikh Jats. Chapter 5 covers history of the Jats who are followers of Hinduism and Islam. Chapter 6 deals with ancient history of the Jats (Alans, Sarmatians, Scythians, Goths, and Jutes) in Western countries. Chapter 7 basically outlines names of Jat cities, towns, and villages. Chapter 8 studies the culture of Jats with reference to the Scythians. Chapter 9 is devoted to Sikh Jats who have migrated to Western countries for the last century. Chapter 10 provides information on Jat clan names and population distribution in Punjab.

Much more could be said about the *History and Study of the Jats* that cannot be covered in short book review. I strongly recommend the book to anyone seeking to understand the Sikh Jats.