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## The Getes

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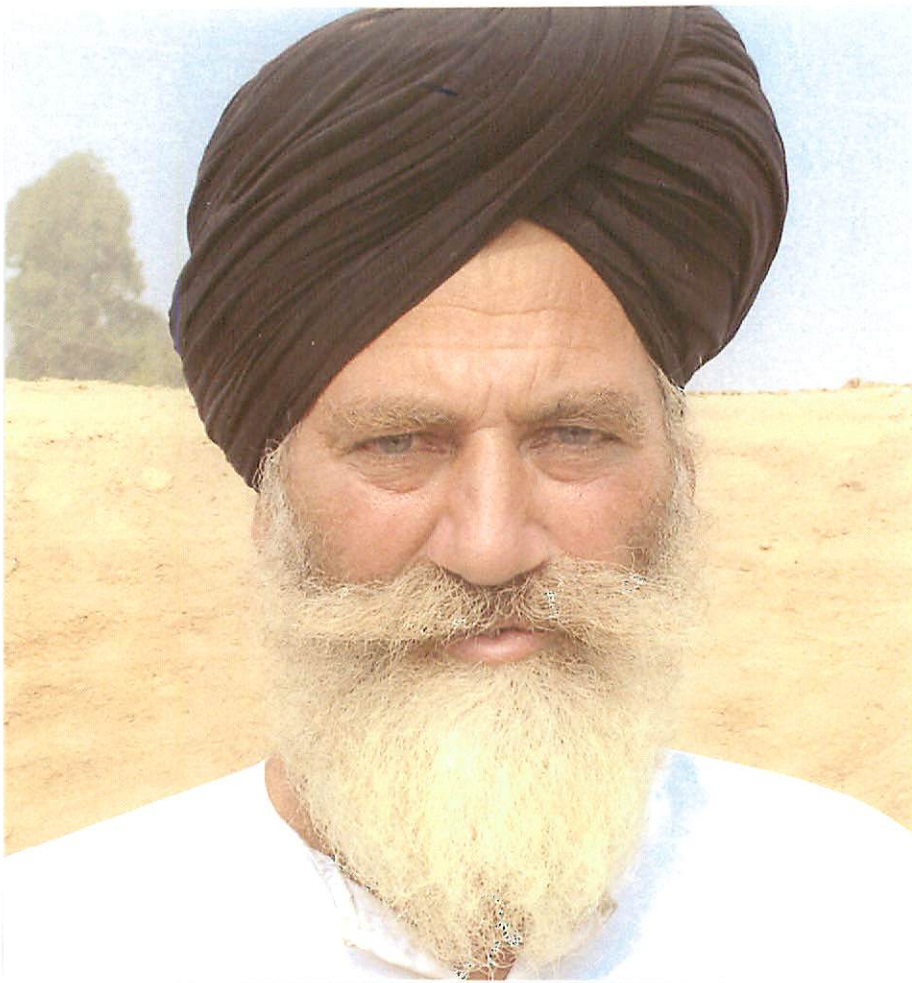
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## THE GETES

Sundeep S. Jhutti

## A Jat Portfolio





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## The Getes

Sundeep S. Jhutti

### Introduction

Iranian-speaking nomads have caught the attention of many societies, from early Greco-Roman, Persian, Indian, and Chinese writers to modern scholars intrigued by their unique, somewhat romantic lifestyle as horse-mounted warriors constantly searching for greener pastures, military challenges, and riches. Spread throughout the vast Central Asian steppes, they were known to the Greeks, the Persians, the Indians, and the Chinese. In most early writings, be they Chinese, Persian, etc., these nomads were generally shown in a negative light—partly due to their uncouth ways, partly to their robbing and looting, but mostly due to fear and misunderstanding. As the nomads were typically the enemies of these settled societies, the negative view of them was augmented. It is, therefore, not rare to read in Indian scriptures about the Sakas, Kushans (Da Yuezhi), and even the Hunas (White Huns or Ephthalites) being considered as Mlecchas (foreigners, outcastes), Asuras (demons), etc. (Dhillon 1994, 15). Similar perspectives are alluded to in Persian or Chinese texts. Such is the fate of all unlettered societies whose history is told by outsiders. As such, they are frequently victims of bias.

Of these Iranian-speaking nomads, the best known were the Scythians, due to their contact with the West, particularly Greece. According to *Webster's Encyclopedia Dictionary*, the Scythians were “a nomadic Indo-European people who settled in Scythia before the seventh century B.C. and were displaced by the Sarmatians. They were specially noted in warfare for their mounted archers and in art for their rich gold ornaments. They spoke an Iranian language” (W.E.D. 1988, 900). Since these nomads had no written language their history has been gathered by settled societies, who as aforementioned often were enemies. Therefore, the accounts we have of them not only were scanty, but also tended to be very negative, as settled societies viewed their own civilizations as superior.

Fortunately for our understanding of these Iranian nomads, Herodotus, the father of history, was intrigued, even compelled, by the ways of the “barbarians,” so that he dedicated a

great portion of his *Histories* solely to the Scythians during the days when the Persian and Egyptian empires were thriving.

Beyond his mythical suggestions of the origin of the Scyths and similar nomads, he was keen in noting another important and more eastern Iranian tribe called the Massagetae, whom he considered to be like the Scythians (Rawlinson 1928, 79). Herodotus writes about the Massagetae:

Now the Massagetae are said to be a great and warlike nation.... By many they are regarded as a Scythian race.... In their dress and mode of living the Massagetae resemble the Scythians. (Rawlinson 1928, 75, 79)

Although they had very similar customs and shared a common language, this does not necessarily advocate that they were one entity.

The Massagetae of Herodotus were designated by the comprehensive name "Sakas" by the Persians, and it is believed by some scholars that the Saka Tigrakhauda or Peaked-capped Sakas were the Massagetae of Herodotus. In an article in *Nomads of the Eurasian Steppes in the Early Iron Age*, Leonid T. Yablonsky writes: "Some scholars are inclined to identify the Saka-Tigrakhauda of the ancient Persian inscriptions with the Massagetae of Herodotus and to place them east of the Caspian Sea" (Yablonsky 1995, 250).

In addition, the geographer Strabo applies the comprehensive name Scythian to the Sakas, Dahae, and Massagetae. He states:

Now the greater part of the Scythians, beginning at the Caspian Sea, are called Daae, but those who are situated more to the east are called Massagetae and Sacae, whereas all the rest are given the general name of Scythians, though each people is given a separate name. They are all for the most part nomads. (Jones 1928, 5: 261)

Thus, the term "Scythian" was used by later writers sometimes to specify the Scythians proper, but also comprehensively, to address the Sakas, Massagetae, Dahae, and so on. This is especially evident in the works of the Alexandrian age writers who repeatedly called these nomads at "various times, 'Scythian,' 'Massagetae,' or 'Dakhs'" (Yablonsky 1995, 251).



Interestingly, Alexander Cunningham, the former Director-General of the Archeological Survey of India, believed that the Dahae of the Greeks and the Dahyu of the Persians were the same word as the colloquial term *daku* used in India (Indo-English "dacoit"), which literally means "a robber or enemy" (Cunningham 1888, 32). The Scythians could have been perceived as dacoits by these sedentary societies, and these terms could have been those of reproach (Cunningham 1888, 32). The 1911 *Encyclopedia Britannica* also holds this view:

The predatory tribes of Turan [Turkistan] (e.g., Massagetae) seem to have belonged to the same stock [Iranian]. These tribes are distinguished by the Iranian peasants as Daha (Gr. Daai), "enemies," "robbers"; by the Persians as Sacae; and by the Greeks generally as Scythians. (E.B. 1911, 21: 202)

As mentioned previously, the Massagetae were likely a sub-tribe of the Sakas, or more specifically the Saka-Tigrakhauda. The Sakas, in particular, made their way to the Indian subcontinent. In his *Guide to Taxila*, Marshall, the former Director-General of Archaeology of India, says the following about the Sakian invaders of India:

Known to the western world under the comprehensive name of Scythians, to the Indians as Sakas, and to the Chinese as Sai or Sai-wang, these invaders came principally from the three great tribes of Massagetae, Sacaraucae, and Dahae, whose home at the beginning of the second century B.C. was in the country between the Caspian Sea and Jaxartes river. (Marshall 1960, 24)

In addition to the tribes mentioned by Marshall, there were many other lesser-known nomadic tribes not mentioned, for example, the Thyssagetae, Tyrigetae, etc., who probably were like the Sakas. Marshall, therefore, believes that the Scythian term was an all-inclusive name applied to all Iranian-speaking Central Asian nomads. Cunningham, on the other hand, referring to the Scythian invaders of India, included the non-Iranian-speaking Ephthalites or White Huns. He states:

The different races of Scythians, which have successively appeared on the border provinces of Persia and India, are the following...Sakas or Sacae, the Su or Sai of the Chinese...Kushans, or Tochari, the Great Yue-chi of the Chinese...Kidaritae, or Later Kushans, the Little Yue-chi of the Chinese...Ephthalites, or White Huns, the Ye-tha-i-lito of the Chinese. (Cunningham 1888, 27)

Tod also classifies the White Huns as a "Scythian" people (Tod 1829, 131). Consequently, the comprehensiveness of the term "Scythian" was caused no doubt by the lack of consistency in the use of the term by the classical writers. Some have argued that the term was used almost exclusively from a geographical perspective by the classical writers to denote invaders from Central Asia (Kephart 1960, 531). Yet another view is that the classical writers were not effectively able to tell the particular tribes apart, as aforementioned, given that the Alexandrian writers used different terminology for the same people (Yablonsky 1995, 251).

Now it is difficult to believe the Scythians were ever really one ethnic entity, since they were so greatly separated along the vast Central Asian steppes. This is further attested by the non-homogeneous ethnicity even amongst particular tribes themselves (Yablonsky 1995, 241-52). What seems more reasonable is that they were groups of many independent nations with a similar language and culture. Therefore, the comprehensive name "Scythian" probably signifies a people who shared a common culture, language, and extended geographical area. Names of tribes such as Massagetae, on the other hand, were more geographically specific, referring to, in this case, a tribe east of the Caspian Sea with almost unique customs.

Leaving tribal origins aside, the history of these Scythian tribes is impressive. They were known by the Greco-Romans to the west, by the Chinese to the east, and by the Indians and Persians to the south. One of the most interesting aspects of these tribes was their mobility as mounted nomads who left little of Eurasia unexplored. In his *In Search of the Indo-Europeans*, referring to a map of Eurasia, Mallory says:

Reading from west to east we can include as Iranian speakers the major Iron Age nomads of the Pontic-Caspian steppe such as the Kimmerians (?), Scythians, Sarmatians and Alans. The incredible mobility of these horse-mounted nomads becomes all the more impressive when we recall their westward expansions

through Europe. Sarmatian tribes not only settled in the Danube region, but during the second century AD, were conscripted to defend the borders of Roman Britain. The Alans traveled as far as France and forced their way south through Spain, ultimately to establish a state in North Africa. (Mallory 1989, 48-49)

Did the Scythians leave any place in Eurasia untouched? It cannot be overemphasized that the mobility of the Scythian tribes was often the result of their being driven on by other tribes, even kindred tribes, so that an event on one side of the steppes would cause a chain reaction of events reaching the other.

This was the case with the Hsuing-Nu (Huns), a nomadic Mongol people, who uprooted the nomadic Yuezhi near the Great Wall of China before the Christian era. The Chinese Emperor Zheng (Shi Huangdi, 246-210 B.C.) linked together the existing frontier walls into a continuous defense system, thereby creating the Great Wall of China (Haywood 2000, 26). As a result the restless Hsuing Nu tribe attacked their neighbors the Caucasian Wusun and Yuezhi, which led to a wholesale movement of these nomads (Dhillon 1994, 41). Not only were the fleeing Yuezhi uprooted, but so also were a perhaps kindred people, the Sakas, near the Aral Sea (Dhillon 1994, 41). Eventually this chain of events led to these nations appearing on the Indo-Iranian borderlands and settling in these regions (Dhillon 1994, 41). This same movement of tribes was the driving force that finally led the Alans to enter Roman territory (Dhillon 1994, Preface). Haywood provides a good summary of this large-scale movement:

The rise of the Xiongnu [Huns] had a destabilizing effect on the Iranian nomads to the west. In 170 the Xiongnu inflicted a crushing defeat on the Yue Qi [Yuezhi], who fled westward, unsettling the Sakas, before overrunning the Bactrian kingdom around 135. The Sakas headed south, first to invade the Parthian empire and, around 141, northern India, and were able to occupy much of the northwest without facing much serious opposition. On the western steppes, the Sarmatians defeated and absorbed the Scythians in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century and by 150 three distinct groups appeared: the Iazygians, the Roxolani, and the Alans. (Haywood 2000, 28)

It does not seem mere coincidence that the timeline for the "barbarian" invasions of Rome corresponds very closely to that of the similar invasions of northwest India and northeastern Iran, or that Huns were associated with these assaults. For example, the Alans reached Gaul in A.D. 408 (Dhillon 1994, 91), and the Ephthalites conquered Transoxiana and Bactria around 440 and reached India around 455-460 (Grousset 1970, 67-68).

McGovern provides a bird's-eye view of the movement of these tribes:

The Sakas, like their neighbors, the Alani, were destined to play an important part in later history. But whereas the Alani spread westward into Europe, the Sakas chose the lands south of them for the seat of their later actions; and at one time they were lords of much of Eastern Iran and Northern India. (McGovern 1939, 40)

And yet this does not appear to be the first such movement of Central Asian tribes. Earlier it was mentioned that the Scythians may have had similar customs and language, but it is doubtful that they were ever one ethnic entity. This statement, however, could be partially untrue. The dominance by one group in particular, the Massagetae, who in post-Alexandrian times were classified as Sarmatians, may have led to some homogeneity across most of the steppes. McGovern wrote, "The decay and eventual downfall of the Scythians was due almost entirely to invasion by their distant kinsmen, the Sarmatians" (McGovern 1939, 38). The Sarmatians were "a member of the nomadic Indo-European people who displaced the Scythians on the lower Don. First the enemies and then the allies of Rome, they were displaced by the Goths in the third century A.D." (W.E.D.1988, 887).

So the Scythians were gradually displaced and absorbed by their distant kinsmen, the Sarmatians. McGovern goes further, to list the Massagetae, Dahae, Alans, and Sacae as Sarmatian tribes (McGovern 1939, 462-64). The term "Sarmatian" gradually began to replace "Scythian" in classical accounts; this was also a Central Asian Iranian-speaking tribe (Littleton and Malcor 2000, 16). Littleton and Malcor call them "Eastern Scythians" (Littleton and Malcor 2000, 16). And for good reason, as the Sarmatians were not much different from Scythians—they spoke an Iranian language and wore trousers, soft leather boots, and round or peaked caps, although some also went bare-headed (Sulimirski 1970).



Regarding the Sarmatians, Jeannine Davis-Kimball wrote a rather interesting paragraph in her popular book *Warrior Women*:

Around 400 B.C., the Sauromatians began to be displaced by people known to the ancients as Simatians or Sarmatians. No one is certain of the origins of these people; although they were also Caucasoids and spoke an Indo-Iranian language, their skeletons revealed a variety of ethnic types, with some being tall and large boned...while others were shorter and delicate in stature. My theory, based on a number of notable comparisons between funeral offerings, is that some of these people might have been younger generations of Saka who were forced from their territories near the Tien Shan Mountains or the southern Aral Sea by the need for additional summer pasturelands. Around the third century A.D., they began migrating westward and eventually these expert horsemen equipped with sophisticated weapons and armor constituted a real threat to the Roman legions guarding the Danube frontier. The enterprising legionnaires, however, defused the situation by recruiting some of the Sarmatians to join their army. In A.D. 175, more than five thousand of the steppe tribesmen (most likely along with their families) were dispatched to the northern English border to guard Hadrian's Wall, which helped repel incursions into Roman Britain by the Picts and the Celtic Scots. Twenty years later, the Sarmatian regiment was redeployed to Gaul (the ancient designation for France and Belgium) to quell a rebellion. Later they were returned to Britain, and as they grew old, the battle-weary Sarmatians retired to a veteran's home in Lancashire. (It seems as if they had taken to the British climate, proving that almost anything is better than the weather of the steppes.) The Sarmatian presence in Gaul and Roman Britain never ceases to fascinate me—I always wonder how many unsuspecting modern-day Frenchmen and Britons, as well as Americans of those extractions, possess the genes of the ancient steppe warriors. (Davis-Kimball 2002, 32)

So what was the driving force behind the expansion of the Sarmatian tribes who gradually absorbed their kindred Scythian tribesmen? In his book *The Sarmatians*, T. Sulimirski offers an opinion:

The destruction by Alexander the Great of the Achaemenid (Persian) monarchy and his subsequent conquest of Bactria and Sogdiana in 330-328 BC also influenced the history and development of all the peoples of Central Asia. Neither the Chorasmians nor the Massagetae were subjugated by Alexander, but as a result of having to fight against the highly trained and organized Macedonian army, they developed new military tactics using armoured cavalry, the 'cataphracti'. Some authors think that the Massagetae owed their conquests solely to the use of this armoured cavalry against weaker adversaries. (Sulimirski 1970, 81)

Sulimirski continues, "In the fourth and third centuries BC, the Massagetae subdued nearly all the nomad tribes of Central Asian north of the Macedonian frontier, eastward to the Tien-Shan Mountains, and possibly many tribes of the Kazakhstan steppes; this led to a tremendous extension of their culture which to a great extent derived from that of Achaemenid Iran" (Sulimirski 1970, 81). Therefore, the battles against Alexander in Bactria and Sogdiana led to a great improvement in the military technology of the Massagetae, who were already essentially a cavalry nation. Moreover, this mechanism led to the expansion of their culture east to China, west to the German frontier, and perhaps even southward to India. So did the Massagetae provide at least some continuity between the vast steppes, before this nation was scattered by the Huns? Are there more precise ways to examine their legacy?

This leads us to the thesis of this article. In a rather bold paragraph in their recent book on *The Tarim Mummies*, James P. Mallory and Victor H. Mair suggest that there may have been more cohesion among these nomads than was previously believed. They wrote in the following paragraph regarding the Yuezhi nomads near the border of China:

Da (Greater) Yuezhi, or in the earlier pronunciation *d'ad-ngiwat-tieg*, has been seen to equate with the Massagetae who occupied the oases and steppelands of West Central Asia in the time of Herodotus; here Massa renders an Iranian

word for "Great," hence "Great Getae."... Others have seen in this word an attempt to capture in Chinese the name of a tribe that is rendered in Greek as the Iatioi who are recorded in Ptolemy's geography. The original pronunciation has been reconstructed as gwat-ti or got-ti or gut-si, which opens up distant lexical similarities with the Goths (the German tribes of northern and eastern Europe), the Getae (the Dacian, i.e., Balkan, tribes northwest of the Black Sea), the Guti (a people on the borderlands of Mesopotamia), the Kusha (our Kushans), the Gushi (a people mentioned in Han texts and regarded as brigands along with the peoples of Kroran), or a combination of some but not all of the above. (Mallory and Mair 2000, 98-99)

This comparison of like-sounding tribal names, although merely a paragraph in length, could potentially generate volumes of discussion and can help us understand more definitively the nature of the barbarian invasions in ancient Rome, the powerful Kushan Empire in India, the possible origins of the Guti people, the Guti kings of Mesopotamia, and the similarity between the Goths, Getae, and the Yuezhi. Moreover, this opens up the possibility that at least some of the people termed "Scythians" were a single tribe—the Getae. So could there have been a nation of nomads who knew themselves as Gets, Gats, Guts, or Yuts?

This is not the first time that the suggestion has been offered that the Yuezhi could be related to Goths. In his *Tableaux Historiques De L'Asie*, Julius Von Klaproth (1783-1835) wrote:

Le nom des Yue ti ou Yut rappelled celui des Yuts ou Goths, qui sont venus en Europe: il serait tres possible que les Yutes, arrives en Scandinavie avec Odin, aient ete le meme peuple qui, trois siecles avant notre ere, habitait encore... au nord et a l'ouest de la province chinoise de Kan sou. Ceci supposerait l'emigration des Goths de l'Asie centrale posterieure a celle des autres peuples germaniques. (Klaproth 1826, 289)

A rough translation:

The name of Yueti or Yut recalls that of Yuts or Goths, which came to Europe: it would be very possible that the Yutes who arrived in Scandinavia with Odin, are the same people who three centuries before our era, still inhabited the area...northwest of the Chinese Kansu province. This would suppose the emigration of the Goths of Central Asia after that of the other Germanic peoples.

This identification between the Yuezhi and the Goths by Klaproth suggests that the tribes involved in the movement of nomads into Roman territory may have been greater than modern scholarship holds. Could it be that the Goths, along with the Alans, were pushed into Europe under pressure from the Huns? Moreover, could these same tribes be found in the Indian and Persian frontiers? The South Asian Jats are one such group that may lead us in the proper direction, as their settlement corresponds geographically with the Indo-Scythian settlement on the Indian subcontinent. Perhaps by examining the customs and characteristics of this living population we can better understand the role the Getae played in history.

#### Jats, Getae, and Yuezhi

According to Williams, "The extent of the Scythian invasion [of India] has been variously estimated. Some scholars believe they virtually supplanted the previous population of [northwest] India, and there seems little doubt that by far the most numerous section of the Punjab population is of Scythian origin" (Williams 1905, 481). We also know that many, if not most, of the Massagetae went to India (Tarn 1966, 306-307). So it would not be outrageous to suppose that the inhabitants of northwest India may be descended from these ancient invaders.

The South Asian Jats are an Indo-European people who number roughly 35 million and follow the three religions of Hinduism, Islam, and Sikhism in roughly equal percentages, based on Dhillon's estimates in 1994 (Dhillon 1994, 1). They are found in Northwest India and Pakistan, mainly in the provinces of Punjab, Sindh, Kashmir, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan. Roughly speaking, Jats are Muslims in the West, Sikh in the center, and Hindus in the East (Rose 1883, 1: 361).

The origins of South Asian Jats became of interest to many who encountered them, but first from a Western perspective by Father Monserate (1536-1600), a Jesuit priest at the Moghal king Akbar's court. He considered the Jats to be the descendants of the Getae (Maclagan 1990,



154). By the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, Joseph De Guignes (1721-1800) would equate the Jats with the Scythians, as well, but this time also with the Chinese Yuezhi (De Guignes 1756, Dhillon 1994, Tod 1829, Elphinstone 1874).

De Guignes, a French Orientalist, believed the Jats of Punjab were descendants of Yuezhi who were known to the Indians under the Kushan Dynasty. James Tod, relying on De Guignes, presented quite an interesting history to the Jats and Rajputs, whom he thought were both descendants of Yuezhi and Getae, as he equated the Getae and Yuezhi. In his *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, written in 1829, he says (note Jit, Jat, and Jut are the same):

[A] translation of the Nehrwalla conqueror's inscription, which will prove beyond a doubt that these Jit princes of Salpoori in the Punjab, were the leaders of that very colony of the Yuti from Jaxartes, who in the fifth century, as recorded by De Guignes, crossed the Indus and possessed themselves of the Punjab....In short, whether as Yuti, Getae, Jats, Juts, or Jauts...their habits confirmed the tradition of their Scythic origin....They considered themselves, in short, a distinct class, and, as a Punia Jat informed me, 'their watan [homeland] was far beyond the Five Rivers'. (Tod 1829, 916, 1125)

M. Elphinstone, who revisited the Scythian origin of the Jat in 1874, bolstered De Guignes' comments along with James Tod, and, further, equated the Yuezhi with Getae. Elphinstone says:

De Guignes mentions, on Chinese authorities, the conquest of the country of the Indus by a body of Yuchi or Getae, and that there are still Jits on both sides of that river.... The account of De Guignes has every appearance of the truth.... My conclusion, therefore, is, that the Jats may be of Scythian descent.... (Elphinstone 1874, 12-17, 226-29; De Guignes 1756, 32)

In his *Tableaux Historiques De L'Asia*, Klaproth (1783-1835) also identified the Jats with the Yuezhi:

...Yue tchi...prononciation primitive a ete Yue ti...or Yue ti est le meme mot que Yut. Les Yue ti ayant conquis une grand partie de l'Hindoustan septentrional, et principalement les pays arroses par l'Indus.... Quoique l'histoire de l'Inde soit encore couverte d'un voile epais, nous savons pourtant, par des inscriptions sanskrites et d'autres monuments, que les Yut ou Jut ont fonde, a l'epoque indique par les auteurs chinois, de puissants empires dan l'Hindoustan; qu'au cinquieme siecle, des princes de leur race regnaient dans le Pendjab septentrional, et que, vers l'an 1000 de notre ere, ce peuple opposa sur l'Indus une resistance opiniatre a Mahmood le Gnaznevide; mais qu'il fut repousse au-dela du Setledj. Nous avons vu aussi que les Yue ti recurrent plus tard le nom de Ye ta. Ils sont sans doute le meme peuple que les Getes, vaincus par Tchinghis-khan et par Timour. Les descendants des anciens Yue ti existent encore de no jour dans l'Inde. (Klaproth 1826, 288)

A rough translation:

...Yuetchi... [was]... originally pronounced Yueti....Yueti is the same word as Yut. The Yueti having conquered a great portion of Northern India, and mainly the countries that are sprinkled near the Indus.... The history of India is still covered with a thick veil; we know, however, from Sanskrit inscriptions and other monuments, that Yut or Jut were found, at the time indicated by the Chinese authorities, to have powerful empires in India; that in the fifth century, the princes of their race reigned in Northern Panjab; and that, about the year 1000 of our era, these people offered resistance on the Indus against Mahmud of Ghaznavi, but were pushed back beyond the Sutlej. We also saw that the Yueti returned later to the name of Yeta. They are undoubtedly the same people as the Getae, who were overcome by Genghis Khan and Timur. The descendents of the old Yueti still exist today in India.

Now, the Jats offered resistance not only against the Arabs, but also against invaders such as Ghaznavi, Timur, Babar, Jahangir, and eventually the British at Bharatpur and under the Sikh

Empire (Dhillon 1994). This demonstrates the continuity of the existence of these people in India, and the preservation of their martial qualities.

Alexander Cunningham held that the Jats were descended from Strabo's Zanthi and Ptolemy's Iatioi. In his 1888 work, *Coins of the Indo-Scythians, Sakas, and Kushans*, he said:

The Xanthii are very probably the Zaths [Jats] of early Arab writers. As the Zaths were in Sindh to the west of the Indus, this location agrees very well with what we know of the settlement of Sakas on the Indian frontier. In fact the Chinese expressly say that all the dependencies of Hien-siun and Siun-tu (Sindh) were occupied by the ancient tribes of Sai, or Sakas. (Cunningham 1888, 33)

The Xanthii were a sub-branch of the Dahae, as per Strabo, who states, "And as for the Daae, some of them are called Aparni, some Xanthii, and some Pissuri" (Jones 1928, 5: 261). Therefore, Cunningham identified the Jats with the Dahae.

However, in Cunningham's later work, *Later Indo-Scythians from the Numismatic Chronicle 1893-1894*, he writes of the Jats, "Perhaps they may be the Iatii of Pliny" (Cunningham 1894, 96). B. Prakash, a well-known Indian writer, had the same view as Cunningham: "...Jartas, who are identical with the Iatioi, who together with the Takhoroï, lived near the northern section of the Jaxartes around Tashkend, according to Ptolemy, and whose modern descendents, called the Jats, are spread over the whole of the Panjab...(Prakash 1964, 114). Thus, in this case, Cunningham and Prakash identify the Jats with the Iatii.

Interestingly enough, H. M. Elliot and Dowson, in their work *The History of India as Told by Its Own Historians*, cited Alexander Cunningham regarding the Meds and their relationship to Jats:

The Meds or Mands are almost certainly the representatives of the Mandrueni, who lived on the Mandrus River, to the south of the Oxus River; and, as their name is found in the Panjab from the beginning of the Christian era...I conclude they must have accompanied their neighbors, the Iatii, or Jats, on their forced migrations to Ariana and India. In the classical writers, the name is found as Medi

and Mandrueni, and in the Muhammadan writers, as Med and Mand. (Elliot and Dowson 1867, 528)

Dhillon, in his *History and Study of the Jats*, adds to these comments, "Mand is a clan of the modern Jat Sikhs" (Dhillon 1994, 53). Hence, the Mands or Meds, along with the Jats, were considered descendants of the Indo-Scythians of the classical writers.

H. A. Rose, who wrote the extensive three-volume work entitled *A Glossary of Tribes and Castes of Punjab and the Northwest Frontier Province*, summarized the view on the Jats in 1883:

Many of the Jat tribes of the Punjab have customs, which apparently point to non-Aryan origin.... Suffice it to say that both Sir Alexander Cunningham and Col Tod agreed in considering the Jats to be of Indo-Scythian stock. The former identified them with the Zanthi of Strabo and the Jatii of Pliny and Ptolemy, and held that they probably entered the Punjab from their home on the Oxus very shortly after the Meds or Mands, who were also Indo-Scythians, and who moved into the Punjab about a century before Christ. (Rose 1883, 2: 363, 1: 58)

Thus Rose summarizes the opinions of the authorities by claiming that the Jats are Indo-Scythians, but leaves the identity of the particular tribes open to conjecture. He does; however, believe as does Cunningham, that the Xanthii of Strabo were the same as the Iatioi of Pliny and Ptolemy. However, in his *Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, George Rawlinson, when writing about the original homeland of the Scythian invaders of India, makes the identification between the Jats and the Massagetae:

Of these tribes the principal were the Massagetae ('great Jits, or Jats'), who occupied the country on both sides of the lower course of the Oxus; the Dahae, who bordered the Caspian above Hyrcania, and extended thence to the latitude of Herat; the Tochari, who settled in the mountains between the upper Jaxartes and the Upper Oxus, where they gave name to the tract known as Tokharistan; the Asii, or Asiani, who were closely connected with the Tochari; and the Sakarauli



(Sacarucæ?), who are found connected with both the Tochari and the Asiani.

(Rawlinson 1872, 118)

Tod's view was that the Jats were Getae and the Getae were the Yuezhi or Yuti (Tod 1829). Now this may appear to be a very bold conclusion, but that does not mean it is implausible. Cunningham was definitely more careful when he identified the Jats with Ptolemy's Iatioi. Can modern conjecture put to rest Tod's claim? Were the Yuezhi a branch of the Getae who appeared on the borders of China? Could the name Yuezhi be a poor Sinitic transcription of Getae?

Laszlo Torday, in *Mounted Archers*, citing Karlgren and Pulleyblank, believes the name Yuezhi can be reduced to ngwat-ti, then to gwat-ti, and finally to ywati (Torday 1997, 160-61). He strongly asserts that Ptolemy's Iatioi was the Chinese Yuezhi: "Ptolemy's Iatioi in the Jaxartes delta [was] the most likely Greek name for the Yueh-shih" (Torday 1997, 402). Further, Torday writes, "using non-linguistic arguments, the German Iranist Marquart, writing at the beginning of this century, had already identified the Iatioi with the Yueh-shih" (Torday 1997, 161). Edwin Pulleyblank came to the same conclusion; he wrote in *Why Tocharians?* "This led me to the conclusion that.... the name Yueh-chih was the same as that of the Iatioi, a people mentioned in association with the Tocharioi in Ptolemy. The original form of the name may well have been something like \*Ywati" (Pulleyblank 2002, 425). Thus modern scholarship has interpreted the Yuezhi as the phonetic Ywati, and has identified the tribe with Ptolemy's Iatioi or Jatioi—as in Latin, an "I" before another vowel is pronounced as the English or Anglo-Saxon "J."

Interestingly enough, much earlier, H. M. Elliot, in his *Encyclopedia of Caste, Customs, Rites and Superstitions of the Races of Northern India*, wrote about South Asian Jats and suggested the correct pronunciation of Yuezhi to be Yuti (Elliot 1870, 133-34). This he based on the work of Heinrich J. Klaproth (1783-1835), a German scholar on Chinese and Tartar languages. Elliot writes:

[T]hese ignorant tribes (Jats), pointing to the remote Ghazni (Afghanistan) as their original seat, the very spot we know to have been occupied by the Yuechi, or, as Klaproth says, more correctly, Yuti, in the first centuries of our era, after the Sakas were repelled back from the frontiers of India, and left the country

between India and Persia open for their occupation. The Jat tribes no doubt emigrated, not all at once, but at different times, and it is probable that those in the North West are among the latest importations. (Elliot 1870, 133-34)

Thus Klaproth believed that "Yuezhi" was pronounced "Yueti" or "Yut" (Klaproth 1826, 288). When discussing the development of the name Yuezhi, Laufer writes:

The question arises, however, as to how the character 𐰚 was articulated in early times. The opinions of Klaproth, who adopted the reading Yue-ti, that *t* may often be replaced by *c*...[but]...Klaproth did not express himself very clearly; he doubtless meant to say that palatal *c* or *ts* may develop from dental *t*; and this, in fact, is a common phenomenon in Indo-Chinese. Moreover, it is justly emphasized by Pelliot that the small dash differentiating at present the symbol 𐰚*ti* from 𐰚*i* is a comparatively recent affair, so that formerly the latter character might have been read *si* as well as *ti*...there is good reason to assume that also 𐰚 and likewise 𐰚 were at that period articulated *d'i*, *di*, or *ti*. (Laufer 1917, 10)

So then it is possible that the original word was Yuet, with a dental *t*. A. Cunningham also used Klaproth's form "Yueti" and took the Da Yuezhi to be the Massagetae; he wrote in *Later Indo-Scythians*, "By the Chinese the Kushans were called Ta-Yue-ti, or the 'Great Lunar Race'.... That is, if 'Yue' be taken for the 'Moon.' But I incline to take Yue-ti or Gueti, the general name given by the Chinese.... And further, I think that, as Ta means 'Great', the 'Ta-Gweti' must be the Massa-Getae" (Cunningham 1894, 112).

We further know that in Bactria, the Yuezhi had by now been confounded with the Iatioi and Tokhari. Ptolemy wrote:

The Sogdianoi are bounded on the west by that part of Skythia which extends from the section of the Oxos...in the south...as far as the Iaxartes...on the north...the most northern section of the Iaxartes is possessed by the Iatioi and the Tokharoi....(6.I2.1, 6.I2.4) (Torday 1997, 306)

Thus we have the Jatios and the Tokharos on the Jaxartes. Who were the Tokharos? Pulleyblank, as aforementioned, believed the Jatios and the Tokharos were closely associated with each other (Pulleyblank 2002, 425). M. Lin, in "Qilan and Kunlun—The Earliest Tokharian Loan-Words in Ancient Chinese," believes the Yuezhi to be the Tokharos. He writes, "The Yuezhi people who came from Dunhuang were called Tokharos in classical Greek works and Tukhara in the ancient Indian texts" (Lin 1998, 477). Further, Rosenfield in his *Dynastic Art of the Kushans*, says about the Kushans, "the Chinese continued to call these people the Ta (Great) Yueh-chih.... In India, strangely enough, the name Kushan as such never appears in the *Puranas*, *Mahabharata*, or other quasi-historical sources. These people must have been denoted by variations of the Tokhari, such as Tuskara, Tushara, Tukhara, Turushka" (Rosenfield 1967, 8).

This leads us to J. Legge who, in his translation of the memoirs of Faxian (a Chinese Buddhist pilgrim to India, A.D. 519), renders a passage: "Formerly, a King of Yue-she raised a large force and invaded this country [Tokharestan], wishing to carry the [Buddha Alms] bowl away" (Legge 1886, 34). Legge adds in a footnote, "Dr. Eitel suggests that a relic of the old name of the country may still exist in that of the Jats or Juts of the present day. A more common name for it is Tukhar and he observes that the people were the Indo-Scythians of the Greeks, and the Tartars of the Chinese writers, who were driven on by the Huns..." (Legge 1886, 34). It is important to add that Tukhar or Takhar is still a Jat and Rajput clan name (Pawar 1993, 325). Moreover, it is a regular title used by Jat and Rajputs in certain regions, and by a kindred tribe known as Thakurs (Ibbetson 1916, 161). Additionally, there still remains a province in Northern Afghanistan, near ancient Bactria, called Takhar, most probably the region of ancient Tokharestan (Rawlinson 6<sup>th</sup> 1872, 118).

To summarize, we have Alexander Cunningham, who identified the South Asian Jats with Ptolemy's Iatios and then equated the Da Yuezhi (Great Yuezhi) with the Massagetae (Great Getae). Adding Torday, Marquart, and Pulleyblank's identification of the Iatios with the Yuezhi, it is logical to conclude that the Getae were the Yuezhi and the Jats. This also explains the clan names of Takhar and Mand found amongst modern Jats. These branches and tribes must have been once part of the original Iranian Getae.

To add to the Takhars and Mandas, we have the modern Dahiya Jats, which Tod finds listed as one of the 36 royal races of Rajasthan. He says the following: "Dahia is an ancient tribe, whose residence was the banks of the Indus.... and from name as well as from locale, we may

infer that they were the Dahae of Alexander (Tod 1829, 141-42)." An interesting addition to this comment is made by Ibbetson (who performed the 1880 census of India) about the modern Dahiya Jats: "They are probably the Dahae of Alexander" (Ibbetson 1916, 130). McGovern believed the Dahae Sakas were a "branch of the Massagetae" (McGovern 1939, 68).

So it is not mere coincidence that the modern South Asian Jats have major clan names like Dahiya, which is said to be derived from the Dahae branch of Iranian Sakas, and that the Mands or Meds were a Saka tribe. The Yuezhi had one branch, the Tokharioi, who were called Tukharas in India, and their descendants probably still exist in the modern Takhar Jats and Rajputs. Were these not all branches of the original Getae east of the Caspian Sea—the Massagetae? C. Kephart simply states, "The Tokhari were identical with the Yuechi, who alternately were called Getes...." (Kephart 1960, 525)

It is no wonder that we have writers like Trevaskis who, in *The Land of the Five Rivers* in 1928, wrote, "But the great mass of the [Scythian] tribes who took more readily to agriculture were called Jats, a name which may possibly be identified with the Latin Getae or Goths" (Trevaskis 1928, 87). By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, most authorities accepted the Scythian origin of South Asian Jats, which is affirmed in the 1911 *Encyclopedia Britannica*, which states, "Some writers have identified the Jats with the ancient Getae, and there is strong reason to believe them a degraded tribe of Rajputs, whose Scythic origin has also been maintained" (E.B. 1911, 15: 280).

By the 1930s authors like MacMunn began to use the words "Jat" and "Scythian" interchangeably, although this terminology was incorrect. In the *Martial Races of India*, he wrote, "[The] later arrivals [to India], of Jat or Scythian origin, [were] outside the normal Aryan fold as later comers to India...." (MacMunn 1932, 22). What's more is that MacMunn believed the "Martial Races" of India were somehow all connected to the Scythian descendants: "the martial races, almost without exception, come from some branch or derivative of the great peoples of Northern India who we know as Rajputs and Jats" (MacMunn 1932, 223).

Leaving martial race theories aside, the Jats and Rajputs, as well as Gujars, have been identified as descendants of Scythian invaders, of which many became followers of the Sikh religion. Joseph Davey Cunningham wrote in his famous book, *A History of Sikhs*, in 1849:

The plains of Upper India, in which the Brahmans and Kshattriyas had developed a peculiar civilization, have been overrun by Persian or Scythic tribes, from the age of Darius and Alexander to that of Babar and Nadir Shah. Particular traces of successive conquerors may yet perhaps be found, but the main features are: 1) the introduction of the Muhammadan creed; and 2) the long antecedent emigration of hordes of Jats from the plains of Upper Asia. It is not necessary to enter into the antiquities of Grecian Getae and Chinese YueChi, to discuss the asserted identity of the peasant Jat.... or try to trace the blood of Kadphises in the veins of Ranjit Singh. (J.D. Cunningham 1849, 4)

Here it should be noted that J.D. Cunningham equates the Greek Getae with the Chinese Yuezhi. Further, in the same book, Cunningham discusses the etymology of the word "Jat." "[We may] derive Jat from the Sanskrit Jyest'ha, old, ancient, and so make the term equivalent to aborigines; but this etymology perhaps too hastily sets aside the sufficiently established facts of Getae and Yuechi emigrations, and the circumstance of Taimur's [Timur's] warfare with Jettahs in Central Asia" (J. D. Cunningham 1849, 299). An interesting addition to this statement was made by C. Twigg, who, in discussing Timur's *Zafarnama*, or *Memoirs*, says, "We know from the 'Zafarnama' of Sharfuddin that Timur, when he invaded India, believed the Jats of the Punjab to be the same race as Tartars whom he met in Central Asia" (Twigg 1870, 318-19). With the generic word "Tartars," I believe he means Sakas or eastern Scythians. This further implies that the Getae kept their tribal identification as Jatae or Jatahs intact as late as Timur's age. Further, Toynbee, in discussing the modern Turkish word "Jatah" or "cheteh," which means "guerilla," wonders, "Is it perhaps derived from the tribal name of the Getae (Massagetæ and Thyssagetæ) or Jats, who were the nearest Nomadic neighbors of the Oxus-Jaxartes oases in the Achaemenian Age, before they erupted out of the Steppe and poured over the Hindu Kush into the Panjab in the second century B.C.?" (Toynbee 1934, 2: 145). Interestingly, Gibbon, the author of *The Decline and Fall of Rome*, believes that the "Jatah" of Transoxiana mentioned by Timur were Getes (Gibbon 1850, 6: 249), suggesting the survival of the name of the ancient race in Central Asia.

J. Briggs had this to say as early as 1829, in his *History and Rise of Mahomedan Power in India*, about Jats: "We have no satisfactory account of these Juts; but there seems reason to

believe them to be a horde of Tartars of the same stock as the Getae so often mentioned in ancient history...." (Briggs 1829, 1: 81). One after another, British and other historians related the South Asian Jats to Scythian tribes, usually the Yuezhi or the Getae.

Syad Muhammad Latif, a Muslim author, wrote, "A portion of these settlers, the descendents of Massagetae, were called Getes, from whom sprung the modern Jats" (Latif 1891, 56). Even some Indian historians, who are not Jats themselves, claim the Jats are descendants of the Getae. Satya Shrivastava, in his 1981 work, *Sakas in India*, said, "The Jats are no other than the Massagetae (Great Getae) mentioned in Diodorus as an off-spring of the ancient Saka tribe.... a fact now well-known" (Shrivastava 1981, 2-3).

J.F. Hewitt related the Thracian Getae, a tribe mentioned by Herodotus, to the Massagetae and the Jats, stating:

These Thracian Getae must, as a Northern race of individual proprietors, have held their lands on the tenure existing in the Jat villages, and these Indian Jats, or Getae, have not degenerated from the military prowess of their forefathers, for those Jats who have become Sikhs in the Punjab, are known as some of the best and most reliable Indian soldiers.... Further evidence both of early history and origin of the race of Jats, or Getae, is given by the customs and geographical position of another tribe of the same stock, called the Massagetae, or Great Getae (Hewitt 1894, 482).

We will discuss later the relationship between the Thracian Getae, or Tyrigetae, with the other branches of the Getae.

#### Massagetae

When first hearing the word "Massagetae," a Sikh would quickly be reminded of Massa Ranghar or the Great Ranghar, a Muslim Rajput, who insulted the greatest Sikh Shrine, the Golden Temple or Harmandir (Darbar) Sahib, by seizing it and making it a dancing hall. Bhagat Singh writes about the Sikh hero Mehtab Singh in the 1740s:



The Sikhs are generally sensitive to the sanctity of their religious places. When Massa Ranghar of Mandiali converted the holy precincts of the Durbar Sahib, at Amritsar, into a stable and inner sanctuary into a dancing-hall where he used to smoke and drink to the utter desecration of the holy place, Mehtab Singh of Mirankot rushed to Amritsar from the deserts of Bikaner and cut off the head of the offending Ranghar. (B. Singh 1993, 37)

Mehtab Singh, a Jat Sikh of the Bhangu clan (Dhillon 1994, 73), fled Amritsar on his horse with the Great Ranghar's head on a spear.

It was relatively common for Jat Sikhs in those days to have Persian or Farsi personal names and "Massa" or "Massa Singh" was common. Even today some Sikhs are named Massa Singh, or the "Great" Singh. "Massa" was simply the Persian or Pehlavi equivalent of the Indian "Maha," meaning "great" (Pawar 1993, 364). This is also the view of Elliot, who says "Massa" means "Great" in the Pehlavi language (Elliot 1870, 133). The root word "Mas," in the Pehlavi glossary by Nyberb, is believed to mean "great" (Nyberb 1974, 127). Thus it follows that Massagetae means "Great Getae."

The ninth-century work *De Universo of Rabanus Maurus* clearly states, "The Massagetae are in origin from the tribe of the Scythians, and are called massagetae, as if heavy, that is, strong Getae" (Migne 1864, Col 439). Therefore, we can conclude that the Massagetae are the Great Getae.

#### Thyssagetae

Little is known about Herodotus's Thyssagetae, other than that they were found east of the river Don (Tanais) (Rawlinson 1928, 241). The land of the Thyssagetae is said to cover the following four rivers: the Lycus, the Oarus, the Tanais, and the Syrgis (Rawlinson 1928, 241). The 1911 *Encyclopedia Britannica* states:

Thyssagetae, an ancient tribe described by Herodotus (iv. 22. 123) as occupying a district to the north-east of Scythia separated from the Budini by a desert seven days' journey broad.... From their land four rivers flowed into the Maeotis, but as

one of them, the Oarus, is almost certainly the Volga... They seem to have held the southern end of the Urals... (E.B. 1911, 26: 908)

Regarding the Thyssagetae, John Jamieson believes that, like the Massagetae, this tribe's "primary denomination" was "Getae" (Jamieson 1814, 7). However, he fails to conjecture the meaning. He simply states, "The Massa-Getae.... by many is rendered the greater Getae.... Thyssa-Getae.... owes its origin to some local or characteristic circumstance...." (Jamieson 1814, 8-9). Pinkerton also considers the Massa-Getae and Thyssa-Getae as Scythians and Getae, but does not conjecture their meanings (Pinkerton 1804, 19).

Henry Rawlinson, on the other hand, firmly claims, "The Thyssagetae appear to be a branch of the Gothic family, 'the lesser Goths' as distinguished from the Massa-Getae, 'the greater Goths'" (H. Rawlinson 1880, 16). Therefore, the Thyssagetae were the Lesser Getae, as Rawlinson equated Goths with Getae. Crooke endorses Rawlinson's identification, claiming the Thyssagetae were "the lesser Getae" (Tod 1829, 72). The Getae and Goth connection will be discussed later.

#### Massagetae and Thyssagetae = Da Yuezhi and Xiao Yuezhi

We have already shown that the Iranian Massagetae can be equated with the obscure Yuezhi that appeared on the borders of China, but can we be more precise? Views equating the Massagetae with the Da Yuezhi are fairly common, such as the statement made by Edgar Knobloch in his *Monuments of Central Asia*, "This time the nomads were the Yue-Che (Yue-czi) who, according to one authority (Tolstov), could be the same as the Greater Getae or Massagetae" (Knobloch 2001, 15). Tod went further, to equate the Massagetae, the Yuezhi, and the Indian Jats, as he says: "We will merely add, that the kingdom of the Great Getae, whose capital was on the Jaxartes, preserved its integrity and name from the period of Cyrus to the fourteenth century, when it was converted from idolatry to the faith of Islam" (Tod 1829, 127). And, further, Tod says the Yuezhi were basically the Getae: "The Yuchi, established in Bactria and along the Jihun, eventually bore the name Jeta or Yetan, that is to say, Getae. Their empire subsisted a long time in this part of Asia, and extended even to India" (Tod 1829, 78).

But eventually what strengthens the supposition that the Massagetae are the Yuezhi is that the Yuezhi were divided into two groups, the Da Yuezhi and the Xiao Yuezhi, meaning the

"Great" and the "Lesser" Yuezhi, respectively. We have already shown that the Massagetae must mean the Great Getae and Thyssagetae probably means Lesser Getae, thereby suggesting a likelihood of both the Greek and Chinese both not only recognizing the characteristic denomination of this tribe, but also remaining consistent.

Repeating Alexander Cunningham's comments, "By the Chinese the Kushans were called Ta-Yue-ti, or the 'Great Lunar Race'.... That is, if 'Yue' be taken for the 'Moon'. But I incline to take Yue-ti or Gueti, the general name given by the Chinese.... And further, I think that as Ta means 'Great', the 'Ta-Gweti' must be the Massa-Getae" (Cunningham 1894, 112). It also seems possible that the Thyssagetae, who are known the Lesser Getae, as per Rawlinson and Crooke, must correspond with the Xiao Yuezhi, meaning Lesser Yuezhi. Therefore, the Greek and the Chinese must be identifying the same people.

The conclusion is well put by B.S. Dahiya, who wrote about the Massagetae and Thyssagetae, "[T]hese Guti people had two divisions, the Ta-Yue-Che and Siao-Yue-Che, exactly corresponding to the Massagetae and Thyssagetae of Herodotus..." (Dahiya 1980, 23). Therefore, the Iranian Getae were probably the Yuezhi who appeared strangely on the Chinese frontiers and the Chinese transcribed their name semi-vocally to Yuet with a dental t. This explains the development of the Yueti of Klaproth (Klaproth 1826, 288) or the \*Ywati of more recent scholarship.

Some may be apprehensive about reducing the Massagetae and Thyssagetae to branches of the Getae. But this supposition can be strengthened, as there are additional tribes with the denomination Getae, such as the Thracian Tyrigetiae, the Euergetae, and the "frozen" Getae, which will be discussed later.

For now, we can remark that it appears that the "Massa" term added to the Getae perhaps denoted their military prowess, as they became famous for their defeat of Cyrus the Great and later their hard-fought battles against Alexander the Great in Bactria and Sogdiana. This compound name may be analogous, therefore, to the naming of "Great Britain." Perhaps this term was known to both the Greeks and the Chinese as the original homeland of the Getae before they spread out in various directions and at various times. If this belief is prudent, then the term "Thyssa," which means "Lesser" Getae, corresponding to the Xiao Yuezhi, may have had a somewhat less spectacular, although no less important, history, hence Lesser Getae. The other

groups of Getae, whose names similarly must have characteristic or regional meanings, will be discussed later.

If our supposition that the Yuezhi and Getae were different names for the same people, then we can more precisely identify the Indo-Scythian invaders of India rather as Getic invaders. Moreover, this identification may further show that the Getes so often talked about by classical writers were originally from the Caspian region. However, before we can claim the Indo-Scythians to be "Getic," we must first examine yet another obscure tribe, known at the Ephthalites or White Huns, who entered India after the Xiao Yuezhi or Kiddara Kushans (Cunningham 1888, 59). This is a tribe whose name may strengthen our belief in the existence of a nation called Getes.

#### Yetha

The White Huns, or Ephthalites, were known to the Chinese as Ye-tha-i-li-to, a name curtailed to Yetha (Cunningham 1888, 28). Grousset claims the Yetai were known as such by the Chinese since they derive their name from the royal clan of "Yeta" (Grousset 1970, 67). In the Chinese work *Sui-Shu* the name of this tribe is "I-ta" (Enoki O.N.E. 1998, 135). The Chinese authority Wei Chieh wrote in his *His-fan-chi*, "I had a personal talk with some Ephthalites and knew that they also called themselves I-t'ei" (Enoki O.N.E. 1998, 135). I-t'ei renders the name phonetically close to the word Jatan, which is the Panjabi plural form of Jat. This etymology will be discussed in detail later, for we will examine some characteristics of the Ephthalites.

McGovern writes in detail about the Yetha:

The origin and exact ethnic affinities of the Ephthalites are shrouded in mystery. By the contemporary Greek and Roman histories they are frequently referred to merely as Huns. The Hindu legends and traditions regarding the dreaded 'Hunas' also go back to the period of Ephthalites invasions and show that the word Hun must have been intimately associated with the Ephthalites.... We know, however, from various sources that the Ephthalites were a very peculiar group and differed radically from most of the Hunnish groups. Thus, for example, the Byzantine writers are careful to distinguish between the ordinary Huns, such as those who invaded Europe, and the Ephthalites, who are more specifically referred to as

White Huns. 'The Ephthalites,' says Procopius, a contemporary, 'are of the Hunnish race and bear the Hunnish name, but they are completely different from the Huns we know. They alone among the Hunnish people have white skins and regular features.... The Chinese are always careful to distinguish between the Huns proper or the Hsuing-nu and the Ephthalites, whom they call the Ye-ti-i-li-do or Ye-da.... According to one Chinese chronicle the Ephthalites were ultimately of the same origin as the Yueji [Yuezhi].... (McGovern 1939, 405)

Some authorities claim the name "White Huns," as used by Procopius, is erroneous, but this does not seem to be the case because, in India, Varahamihira refers to a group called Sveta Hunas, and the Persians noted the Spet Hyon or White Huns (Biswas 1973, 27-28).

Kephart believes the Massagetae divided into the Tokhari (Ta Yuezhi) and the White Huns (Yetha) (Kephart 1960, 522-23). T. Watters claims, "[Northwest India] was conquered by the Yeta, i.e., the Yets or Gats, apparently near the end of our fifth century. The Yeta, who were a powerful people in Central Asia, in the fifth century, are also said to have been of the Yue-Chi stock..." (Watters 1903, 200-201). Klaproth also sees the Yeta or Yita as the descendants of the Yuezhi or Yueti (Klaproth 1826, XII, 135). And if we recall, Cunningham holds the Yetha to be the last wave of Indo-Scythians (Cunningham 1888).

The 1911 *Encyclopedia Britannica* states, "Our earliest information about the Ephthalites comes from the Chinese chronicles, in which it is stated that they were originally a tribe of the great Yue-Chi [Da Yuezhi or Massagetae], living to the north of the Great Wall...."(E.B. 1911, 9: 680)." The Chinese work *Pei-shih* states, "[The Ephthalites] are a branch of the Ta-Yueh-chih" (Enoki O.N.E. 1998, 139). Thakur writes, "The annals of three Chinese dynasties assert that the Yetha or Ephthalites were a branch of the great Yue-chi race" (Thakur 1967, 42). Thakur then refers to Ma-tuan-lin:

Ma-tuan-lin in his *Encyclopaedia* has given two comments on the origin of the Ephthalites: (i) Ye-ta belonged to the Ta-yue-chi stock but according to some they are a branch of the Kao-che; and (ii) I-tan belonged to the same race as the Ta-yue-chi. (Thakur 1967, 50)

In both cases it seems that the Ephthalites are descended from the Great Yuezhi, and the Ephthalites are also shown as coming from a different origin than the Huns. Enoki discussed the view that the Yetha are descended from the Yuezhi:

The Ta-yueh-chih=Ephthalites theory was justified by several authors of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Many of them not only based themselves upon the statements of the *Pei-shi*, *Chou-shu*, and *Sui-shu*, but also tried to establish the phonetic identity of the name Yueh-chih and Yenta. For instance, Toyohachi Fujita says that Yueh-chih is a transcription of Ghuttal, which changed into Yuttal, Yettal, Haythal, Ephthal.... On the other hand, S.P. Tolstov had advanced a theory that the name Ephthalite was derived from Gweta-ali which meant in Turkish 'people of Gweta or Yueh-chih.'...I myself follow the reconstruction of G. Haloun who reads Yueh-chih as \*Skudja which means Scythians.... (Enoki O.N.E. 1998, 140)

Enoki lists several authorities that support the Yuezhi and Yetha identification, and his own identification is with the Scythians (or Iranians) (Enoki O.N.E. 1998), endorsing Haloun. However, the weight of authority, the testimony of Chinese accounts, and the phonetic resemblance between Yuezhi or Yueti (Klaproth 1826, 288) with the Yetha or Ita (Enoki O.N.E. 1998, 141, 157) is too strong to ignore. The name Ita used by the Northern Dynasties (Enoki O.N.E. 1988, 157) renders it seemingly close to the Iatii of Pliny, and to the name of Jat or Jata, for that matter. By examining the customs of the Ephthalites, even more strength is added to this theory.

That the Ephthalites practiced sun worship has been suggested by Enoki, who says, "[That] the Ephthalites built their tents with their entrances facing to the east would also imply the practice of sun-worship among them (Enoki O.N.E. 1988, 175). He also adds, "We may also recall the practice of sun-worship among the Massagetae (Herodotus I, 212) and the Kushanians [Ta Yuezhi]" (Enoki O.N.E. 1998, 175). Now the implied practice of sun worship still exists today in the structure of the modern Panjabi villages. For example, the Jats who divide themselves up in pattis (lineages of village founders) almost universally occupy the suraj charda (sunrise) or eastern portion of the village, while the hereditary service tribes usually live on the suraj lenda (sunset) or western portion of the village. Further, Bingley writes about the sun god:



To the Jat peasant, however, the sun is a godling rather than a god. No shrines are built in his honour, but on Sunday the people abstain from salt...the first care of the devout villager as he steps out of doors in the morning is to salute the sun, who is, par excellence, the favorite divinity of the rustic. (Bingley 1985, 74-75)

This suggests some sort of reference to sun worship. Further, Enoki suggests that the Yetha worshipped the Fire-god (Mithra) and the God of Heaven (Daeva-Worship), thereby remaining consistent with his idea of the Iranian origin of the Yetha (Enoki O.N.E. 1998, 177).

Based on the coins of the Ephthalites, namely the coins of Khingila (father of Toramana Jauvla), Gobl suggests that the later Ephthalites may have followed the practice of skull deformation (Gobl 1967, 200-201). At this stage it is difficult to determine whether they originally practiced this custom or it was adopted (Gobl 1967, 200-206). Nonetheless, this practice was prevalent among many of the Sarmatian tribes, most especially, the Alans (Sulimirski 1970).

Another peculiar habit that was unique to the Yetha, as opposed to the other Hunnish groups, was their practice of polyandry. McGovern writes:

One feature of the Ephthalite social culture is worthy of especial mention, namely the fact that they went in for polyandry, or the custom whereby each woman was allowed to have several husbands.... the various husbands were for the most part brothers, the eldest brother marrying the girl, and the younger brothers being automatically admitted to conjugal rights.... The fact that the Ephthalites went in for polyandry is of especial interest inasmuch as this custom was entirely unknown to the other Hunnish tribes....(McGovern 1939, 406)

The Massagetae were known to have a similar practice, in which they kept all women in common, and any male had access to the females. Herodotus writes, "Each man has but one wife, yet all the wives are held in common; for this is a custom of the Massagetae..." (Rawlinson 1928, 80). Enoki notes this as well: "Massagetae, an Iranian tribe inhabiting the course of the Syr Darya

and the north bank of the Aral River, had this custom [polyandry]" (Enoki O.N.E. 1998, 181). Whether this is accurate or not, Pawar claims that certain Jat tribes followed a similar practice as that mentioned by Herodotus (Pawar 1993, 303). Minns writes about the Ephthalites:

They [Ephthalites] had supplanted the Yue-chih, and destroyed the kingdom of the Kushanas. We hear of their polyandry, a primitive Malthusianism which seems to have been endemic in their country, as it is ascribed to the Massagetae, to the Yue-chih and Tu-huo-lo or Tochari, and to the Yi-ta. (Minns 1971, 93)

This continuity of custom, even if it may have been circumstantial or economic, does suggest a continuity of race, as there is circumstantial evidence to suggest that some less well-to-do Jats, in certain regions of the Panjab, may have practiced a custom that approximates polyandry up to the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, though there is not sufficient evidence to permit us to draw solid conclusions (Peter 1963, Singh K.P 1987). An interesting finding by Singh shows that this custom may have been an institution allowed for only by Jat Sikhs because castes of lower affluence did not appear to practice the custom (Singh K.P 1987). But at the same time, the wealthier Jat Sikhs had more than one, or several, wives (Barstow 1928, 158). This was also the case for a Jat whose elder brother had died; he kept his sister-in-law in his house, while still maintaining his marital relationship with his own wife (Barstow 1928, 158)—that is, levirate marriage.

The Jats are well known in India for widow remarriage and allowing for levirate marriage, that is, the marriage of the widow with the younger brother of the deceased. Parmar writes, "Karewa appears to be an offshoot of levirate.... it is a custom which is prevalent practically throughout Punjab..." (Parmar 1975, 67). Even the word "levirate" may be derived from "devar" (in Latin "levir") meaning "husband's younger brother" in Sanskrit. In Panjabi, the word is "deur" (M. Singh 1895, 288).

The practice is generally shunned by orthodox Hindus (Barstow 1928, 157), and this is, generally, the main reason for the social difference between Jats and Rajputs. Ibbetson writes, "Jats and Rajputs...form a common stock, this distinction between Jat and Rajput being social rather than ethnic..." (Ibbetson 1916, 100). Rose also claims that Jats and Rajputs have "almost

identical physique and facial character" and "belong to one and the same ethnic stock" since they are "so intermingled and so blended into one people, that it is practically impossible to distinguish them as separate wholes" (Rose 1883, 2: 362). Bingley writes, "In the Punjab, Jat and Rajput tribes are often so closely connected, that it is sometimes extremely difficult to determine to which of these races a tribe really belongs" (Bingley 1985, 47).

The major difference is that the Jat practices widow-remarriage, and the Rajput does not (Ibbetson 1916, 100). The former seems to maintain tribal traditions, while the latter has abandoned this practice, partly perhaps due to their being successful clans at time of conversion, and partly in order to rank amongst the higher Kshatriyas by accepting some Vedic Aryan rites and rituals. Thus the name Raj-put or "son of a king" shows that this term is a title or status given to members of the princely families who accepted Vedic Aryan rites and were formally Hinduized (Dhillon 1994, 82). Baines summarizes the relationship between Jats and Rajputs:

...[T]he difference between the communities is social, not racial, the Rajput being a Jat leader who, after being successful in the field or on his estate, bound himself and his family to the strict observance of Brahmanic rules and thus attained the pinnacle of orthodox repute, whilst the rest of his tribe remained Jat in name and in their traditions and practice. (Baines 1912, 43)

The Gujars, who may represent the Gurjara tribe (Rose 1883, 2: 306), still practice their nomadic life, including vertical transhumance. Baines writes about the Gujars:

Next to the Jat in rank, and probably akin in origin, comes the Gujar...[which]...is now generally affiliated to the Gurjara, a tribe which was settled in the neighborhood of the Caspian, and entered India either in company with or at the same time as, the Yetha or White Huna, of whom they are said to have been a branch. (Baines 1912, 44)

Their social position is slightly inferior to that of Jats in that they are essentially nomadic (Rose 1883, 2: 308), but as Rose states, "The Gujar is a fine stalwart fellow, of precisely the same physical type as the Jat..." (Rose 1883, 2: 308). What's more, Dhillon shows that Jats,

Gujars, and Rajputs have many common clan names (Dhillon 1994, 4). In addition to Jats, Gujars, and agnikula (fireborn) Rajputs, Scythian ancestry has also been attributed to the Gakkhars. Cunningham believes they are descendants of the Great Yuezhi, who were from the Hyrkania region (Ibbetson 1916, 168). Trevaskis writes:

The Gakkhar tribe of Scythians, who occupied the hill plateau of the north-west Punjab, have retained their individuality till today. A brave and savage race... [which is]...much given to polyandry and infanticide.... (Trevaskis 1928, 41)

In any event, the Yetha appear to have significantly influenced the Jat and Rajput people of northwest India. Alexander Cunningham has shown that some of the Yetha clan names are Jauvla and Laelih (Cunningham 1894, 247, 252). Rose writes about Zabulistan in Afghanistan, "The name Zabulstan or Zawulstan would appear to mean the 'land of Zabul', and it was also so called, but strictly speaking Zabul was its capital...Cunningham's identification of Jaulistan with Jabulstan is incontrovertible" (Rose 1883, 1: 40).

Prakash calls the ruling family of the Ephthalites "Jaulas" (Prakash 1966, 58). Dhillon asserts that these two clans are the Jaula or Johl, and the Lalli clans of the Jat Sikhs (Dhillon 1994, 44). Further, there is a very common clan amongst Jat Sikhs called Hans (Dhillon 1994, 140), which could represent the White Huns. Grousset puts it well:

Yet from the second half of the seventh century the Huns [Ephthalites] of India vanish from history, no doubt either exterminated or absorbed by the Punjabis. Some of their clans most likely succeeded in gaining admission to the Hindu aristocracy, in the manner of the 'Rajput' clan of Gurjara, which may possibly have the same origin. (Grousset 1970, 72)

Amongst Rajputs, the Hun tribe represents one of the 36 royal races of Rajasthan (Tod 1829, 131). Tod recognizes this tribe as the descendants of the White Huns (Tod 1829, 132-33). V.A. Smith believes the White Huns to be the ancestors of the agnikula or fireborn tribes of the Rajputs. He says, "[T]here is no doubt that the Parihars and many other famous Rajput clans of

the north were developed out of the barbarian hordes [White Huns] which poured into India during the fifth and sixth centuries" (Smith 1914, 322).

Therefore, it appears that some of the successful clans of the Yetha or White Huns were absorbed into the Jat and Rajput fold, who were themselves simply earlier settlers from Central Asia. And as Biswas notes, on the Ephthalite coins, "The portraits have straight big noses, large eyes, protruding foreheads, thick beards and heavy moustaches and chins like those of the Rajputs and the Jats of the present day" (Biswas 1973, 169). Based probably on physical characteristics, as Biswas has pointed out, some modern scholars have claimed that the Jats, Rajputs, and Gujar were descendants of the White Huns; for example, McGovern writes:

[M]any scholars believe that the proud Rajput clans of Rajputana [Rajasthan] and stalwart Jats of the Punjab are likewise descended, in part at least, from these ancient invaders [White Huns], even though the Gurjaras [Gujars], the Rajputs and the Jats have long since adopted an Indian language and been absorbed in the vast bulk of Hinduism. (McGovern 1939, 419)

However, it should be noted that an Indian feudatory named Yasodharman of the Malwa repulsed the invading White Huns around 533 A.D., based on the Mandsor Inscription (Pawar 1993, 58). In the sixth century A.D., Indian writer Chandragomin made a famous statement commemorating the victory of Yasodharman: "Ajay Jarto Hunan," meaning "the Jats defeated the Huns" (Pawar 1993, 58, Grousset 1970, 71). There has been substantial debate over Yasodharman's origin, for example, Cunnighman and Carlleyle claim him to be a "Bains"; Majumdar, an "Aulikara" [Aulak?]; and Dahiya, a "Virk" or "Birk" (Pawar 1993, 58). What is clear is that he was probably a Jat, as "Jarta" has been claimed by many to represent the Sanskritized form of Jat (Pawar 1993, 40-58). This suggests that some Jat tribes pre-dated the occupation of India by White Huns or Yethas. And this has already been demonstrated by the existing Jat clan names of Dahiya, Takhar, and Mand, who had to come before the White Huns.

What's more, an inscription found by Tod in 1820 at a temple near the Chambal River south of Kota reveals the existence of a prince named Salindra (Tod 1829, 914-15). Tod claims that Salindra was a Jat prince and dated the inscription to A.D. 409, "the period of colonization of the Punjab by Getes, Yuti, or Jits, from the Jaxartes" (Tod 1829, 917). To this inscription

Pawar writes, "there is unassailable evidence of the existence of a Jat ruling dynasty over Kota-Bundi as early as 400 A.D. (Pawar 1993, 67). This should be ample testimony of the existence of Jats in India predating the Yetha, and this strengthens the case that "Jat" or "Get" or "Yut" tribes migrated at various times and those found in the Northwest are probably the latest incursions (Elliot 1870, 133-34).

As stated by Klaproth, the name Yetha is very close to the Chinese Yuezhi or Yuti (Klaproth 1826, 288), and more than likely, were a branch of this group. So when Cunningham states, "But the successive Scythian invasions of the Sakas, the Kushans and the White Huns, were followed by permanent settlements of large bodies of their countrymen, which lasted for many centuries..." (Cunningham 1894, 93), we can replace the word "Scythian" with "Gets" or "Guts". Having now satisfactorily established that the Jats are descendents of the "Indo-Scythians," Gets, Guts, Yuts, or Yets, let us examine the etymology.

#### Etymology of Jat

If we look up the word "Jat" in the well-respected *Panjabi Dictionary* by Maya Singh, who was designated to create this lexicon by Denzil Ibbetson (at that time Director of Public Instruction), we find, "The name of a great tribe, descendents of the Massagetae, which forms the backbone of the Punjab peasantry, they are usually farmers and may be of any religion..." (M. Singh 1895, 485).

It first should be mentioned that Getae is pronounced GUT-AY. Strabo pluralizes the Getae as "Getan" (Jones 1928 3, 221). Further, Russian authors, such as Sulimirski and Yablonsky, pluralize the Getae as Getan. For example, in his book *The Sarmatians*, Sulimirski wrote, "The evidence of both the ancient authors and the archeological remains point to a massive migration of Sacian/Massagetan tribes from the Syr Delta by the middle of the second century B.C. Some of the Syr Darian tribes...also invaded North India" (Sulimirski 1970, 113-14). Yablonsky wrote an article regarding the Massagetae, entitled "Burial Place of a Massagetan Warrior" (Yablonsky 1990), in which he refers to Massagetae individuals with the singular "Massaget" (Yablonsky 1990). So we may take the word "Getan", i.e., dropping "Massa" (Sanskrit Maha), which means "great," and we are left with the principal denomination, the "Getan." We can compare it to the pluralization of the word "Jat" in Panjabi, "Jatan" (Dhillon 1994, 110); for example, "Jatan De Putar" means "Sons of Jats." This "Jatan" is very close to



"Getan" and probably represents a palatalization of the latter. Palatalization is "the shifting of a sound so that it is made by the blade of the tongue against the hard palate (notice how your tongue moves when you say *keys* and then the palatalized *cheese*), and is a frequent enough sound change in many languages" (Mallory and Mair 2000, 120). In the singular case, then, "Get" (Gut) could be palatalized into "Jat" or "Jut." It should be further mentioned that in Hindi, Jat is pronounced Jaut, rhyming with "hot," which renders it perhaps with a palatalization of "Got".

Further, if we examine "Jat" or "Jut" from the "Yuezhi" or "Yuti" angle, we find that they are again very close. "Yuti," being possibly the semi-vocal Sinitic transcription of Getae, is rendered once again very close to the pronunciation of "Jat" or "Jut." The 1911 *Encyclopedia Britannica*, under the subject "Yue-Chi," summarizes this etymology:

Some authorities consider that the Yue-Chi are the same as the Getae and that the original form of the name was Yut or Get, which is also supposed to appear in the Indian Jat. (E.B. 1911, 28: 944)

Therefore, Jat < Jut < Yut(i) < Get(i). Moreover, the Jats could be the remnants of the invading Yuts or Guts. This is the view of Dhillon, who attributes it to the rigid Hindu caste system, which involved forced endogamy (Dhillon 1994, 16) and ritual purity. It seems the palatalized form of the tribal name "Getae" was retained intact as "Jettah" or "Jatta" in Transoxiana up until the time of Timur, as testified by his *Zafarnama* (Twigg 1870, 318-19). Further, even in Punjab today, a term of endearment used to address a Jat is "Jatta" (Pawar 1993, 339). However, those Getic tribes that were noted in the west remained Getae, as in the Thracian Getae, and were later known as Goths by the Roman writers, as will be demonstrated later. So if we believe that the name of the tribe of these ancient invaders remained intact, what about their physical characteristics—do they bear the impress of Central Asian origin?

### Physical Characteristics of Jats

Risley writes the following about the Jats and Rajputs of Panjab:

We are concerned merely with the fact that there exists in the Punjab and Rajputana at the present day, a definite physical type, represented by the Jats

and Rajputs, which is marked by a relatively long (dolicho-cephalic) head; a straight, finely cut (leptorrhine) nose; a long, symmetrically narrow face; a well-developed forehead, regular features, and high facial angle. The stature is high and the general build of the figure is well proportioned, being relatively massive in the Jats and relatively slender in the Rajputs. Throughout the group the predominant colour of the skin is a very light transparent brown, with a tendency towards darker shades in the lower social strata. (Risley 1915, 49)

Barstow writes about the physical characteristics of the Jat Sikhs, "The Sikh Jat is generally tall and muscular, with well shaped limbs, erect carriage, and strongly marked and handsome features.... In physique his is not surpassed by any race in India, if indeed he is not put at the top of the tree in this respect" (Barstow 1928, 166-67). Stephens writes, "[T]he Jat Sikhs of Central Punjab.... were not predominantly traders, but peasants and retired soldiers, landlords, scions of the princely families; men often of huge physique" (Stephens 1963, 171).

Now the Jats, after being in India for several centuries, obviously intermingled to some degree with the previously settled populations, but still maintained their identity. The main factor is probably the displacement of many of the original inhabitants of the Punjab and surrounding areas toward the interior of India and the forced endogamy of the rigid Hindu caste system, which allows for practically no intermarriage between castes (Dhillon 1994, 16). Although in reality, the situation with the Indo-Scythian populations in the Northwest is that they probably have undergone a process analogous to the American South with regard to the local Dravidian and interleaving Aryan populations once settled there. Moreover, the somewhat allowed institution of hyperagamy may have allowed for women of lower status to marry men of higher status (Barstow 1928, 159). Still the Jats may not be free from elements of subsequent invaders of India, such as the Arabs, Ghaznavids, and Mughals. Therefore, the physical characteristics of the Indo-Scythian descendants in northwest India are discussed by Coon and Hunt who write:

The second invasion [of India was by]...peoples who were related to the Scythians and Sarmatians. The tallest people are found in Rajasthan and the Punjab and beards are fullest among the warrior castes and the Sikhs. Most of

these people have glossy black hair, although brown hair is not uncommon. Reddish and blond hair is extremely rare. Almost all of them have brown eyes of various shades, but one sees light and mixed eyes in rare individuals, particularly among the Sikhs. (Coon and Hunt 1965, 204-206)

Dhillon claims that around seventy percent of Sikhs are of the Jat background (Dhillon 1994, 12). In his *Germanic People: Their Origin, Expansion and Culture*, Owen writes, "In the shape of face, stature and general physical build the Sikhs approximate the Nordic type" (Owen 1960, 50-51). Further, Rose says, "...[W]e find to this day in the Punjab a physical type predominating which in many respects resembles that of certain European races, and is radically different from the typical characteristics of the other Indian stocks..." (Rose 1883, 1:58, 2: 362-63). Although physical characteristics alone probably do not satisfy the more skeptical reader, perhaps a brief analysis of their customs, in addition to the aforementioned practice of levirate marriage, will be helpful.

#### Keeping Unshorn Hair

A popular myth among some Jat tribes is they are descended from Lord Shiva's hair (Barstow 1928, 70). This myth no doubt is due to unshorn locks of hair being called "Jut" or "Jutan" in the Panjabi language. Dhillon writes, "In the Punjabi language, the word 'Gut' or 'Gutan' means long hair. This could very well be derived from the fact that they or their forefathers...Scythians...used to keep long hair" (Dhillon 1994, 1). But probably the reverse is the case; the long hair style was perhaps named after the custom of unshorn hair kept by the Jats; as "[U]ncut hair was a Jat custom..." (Pettigrew 1975, 25). McLeod also says this in his study of the tenets of Sikh faith; the baptized Sikh was required to wear unshorn hair. He states: "Uncut hair was a Jat custom..." (McLeod 1976, 52, 93). This custom, therefore, the Jats must have brought with them upon inception into Sikhism, and later it was crystallized, rather integrated into a tenet of the Sikh faith. As Barstow writes, "Sikhism...which drew its adherents from all classes, each possessed distinctive manners and customs; the social and numerical preponderance of the Jats, however, carried such weight in the formation of national character, that the customs of the Sikh, whatever his origin, may now be considered as practically identical with those of the Punjab Jat" (A.E. Barstow 1928, 151). And numerical preponderance seems to

hold true as shown above, so that Dhillon claims around 70% of Sikhs are of the Jat background (Dhillon 1994, 12).

### Ancestor Worship

Ancestor worship is believed to have been introduced to India during the Kushan age. Worshippers venerated their ancestors by the religious cult practice of Devaputra or son of heaven (Thapliyal 1979, 139). The practice involved erecting small shrines on the grave of the deceased in honor of the forefathers, called Devakulas (Thapliyal 1979, 140). Said to be learned from the Chinese, this cult; as practiced by the Kushans, was shunned by the native Aryan priests (Thapliyal 1979, 140).

The Jats of the Panjab worship their ancestors in a practice known as Jathera. Bingley writes:

The worship of the sainted dead, though contrary to the injunctions of Govind Singh, is universal among Jats, whether Sikh, Sultanis, or Hindus. Small shrines to pitrs or ancestors will be found all over the fields, and there is generally a large one to the Jathera or common ancestor of the clan. (Bingley 1985, 75)

The village Jathera is the shrine of the village founder, who is usually revered by the Jats, especially after weddings, to get the "ancestors on your side" or "Jathera Manuana" (Dhillon 1994, 116).

Rose writes:

Among the Hindu and Sikh Jats, especially in the north-central and central districts, a form of ancestor worship, called jathera, is common. It is the custom of many clans, or a group of villages of one clan, for the bridegroom at his wedding (biah or shadi) to proceed to a spot set aside to commemorate some ancestor who was either a shahid (martyr) or a man [or woman] of some note. (Rose 1883, 2: 371)

Barstow writes, "Once a year a Zamindar [Landowner] will worship the 'Jathera', or common ancestor of the clan, to whom a large shrine is erected in the neighborhood of the village" (A.E. Barstow 1928, 89). Bingley writes, "The worship of the 'Jathera' ... is universal among Jats.... Small shrines to common clan ancestors' 'Jathera' will be found all over the field" (Bingley 1899, 60). Jathera worship is summarized by Dhillon, "Generally, Hindu and Sikh Jats tend to continue to follow their ancient custom of worshipping their common ancestors... it is called "Jathera" worship" (Dhillon 1994, 116).

Venerating one's ancestor is not simply limited to Jats and the Chinese, but exists throughout Central Asia. Talbot-Rice mentions this practice among Slavs: "Among the various practices which the Slavs inherited from the Scythians, the most important consisted in the worship of their ancestors" (Talbot-Rice 1957, 181). This practice was also noted among the Alans; Bachrach writes: "[T]he Alans worshipped or, perhaps more exactly, venerated their ancestors" (Bachrach 1973, 22). Bachrach too believes the Alans learned this practice from the Chinese (Bachrach 1973, 23). We also know that the Goths worshipped their ancestors or heroes (Wolfram 1988, 106). Does this cultural similarity suggest an intimate relationship between these tribes?

But Jathera worship is not limited to village founders or ancestors, but also martyrs or heroes. Fenech in his *Martyrdom in the Sikh Tradition*, alludes to the variety of martyrs in Panjab, in particular those of headless martyrs (Fenech 2000, 197). One such example of a headless martyr is that of a Sandhu Jat named Kala Mahar or Kala Pir, a notorious cattle thief near Lahore, who is rumored to have fought even after being decapitated (Rose 1883, 1: 283). Another example is that of Jogi Pir of Kuli Chahilan near the city of Moga (perhaps named after Saka King Maues or Moga (Dhillon 1994, 107), which has now a regional fair dedicated to his honor (Walia 2002, 43). Jogi Pir was a Chahil Jat (Rose 1883, 1: 281) who was digging a well, when enemies attacked and decapitated him (Walia 2002, 43). Rumor has it, that the body stayed alive and continued carrying a basket of mud (Walia 2002, 43). So in this case, Jogi Pir was not necessarily a martyr, but a victim who died a violent death, which would be a *bir* (Fenech 2000, 165). Other martyrs who suffered such fates would sometimes manifest into malevolent spirits that Punjabis called *birs*, *bhuts*, *baitals*, *prets*, and *churels* (Fenech 2000, 165).

There are still other peculiar beliefs amongst Jats that appear Indo-Iranian, such as the existence of *bhuts*, *churels*, and *Nuris*, which are spirits of men and women that died a violent

death and haunt victims, or more benevolent spirits such as *paris* that are analogous to fairies (Bingley 1985, 78-79). Still further, there exist witches called Daans, who attack only men, who can be identified by their feet and sometimes their faces, which are said to be inverse or pointing backwards. More specific mythology will be discussed later, for now we will turn to sword veneration.

### Veneration of the Sword

Tod writes about the modern Rajput, "The Rajput slays buffaloes, hunts and eats boar and deer.... [H]e worships his horse, his sword, and the sun, and attends more to the martial song of the bard than to the litany of the Brahman...." (Tod 1829, 82).

The modern Sikh prayer called *Ardas* makes reference to some form of sword worship or veneration, even before mentioning any of the Sikh gurus, which suggests that showing respect to the sword was very important to the Sikhs at that time. The *Ardas* says:

Ik onkar waheguru ji ki fateh. Sri bhaguati ji sahae. Var Sri Bhagauti ji ki patshahi  
10. Pritham bhagauti simir kai, Guru Nanak lain dhiaie...Vaheguri ji ka Khalsa!  
Vaheguru ji ki Fateh! (Doabia 1976, 252, 258)

This translates to:

God is one; All victory is of the wondrous Guru. May the respected sword [Bhagauti ji](God in the form of the destroyer of evil-doers) help us! Var [Ode] of the respected sword, recited by the tenth guru. First remember the sword; then remember and meditate upon Guru Nanak.... The Khalsa belongs to god!; all victory is the victory of god! (Doabia 1976, 253, 259)

Ammianus Marcellinus shows how sword veneration was practiced by the Alans:

There the man is judged happy who has sacrificed his life in battle... as glorious spoils of the slain there tear off their [enemies'] heads [and]...a naked sword is

fixed in the ground and they reverently worship it as their god of war. (Rolfe 1939, 393-95)

It probably all goes back to the sword worship of the Scythians; as Wolfram puts it: "That Ares–Mars, in the form of the sword, was the divine father of the Scythians, Getaes, Goths, and Gauts was known to ancient ethnography, which they never tired of mentioning" (Wolfram 1988, 109).

It should be noted that the reference to sword worship by Marcellinus also shows that the Alans decapitated their opponents. This was also practiced by Jats, as appears in the case of Mehtab Singh beheading Massa Ranghar (B. Singh 1993, 37), but also much earlier. Lane-Poole writes:

To restore order Mas'ud [invaded India 1033 A.D.] appointed Tilak, the Hindu, to take command in the Punjab. The Hindu paragon set out to chastise Niyaltagin [Mahmud Ghaznavi's treasurer]. At last the news came that the barber's son [Tilak] had routed Niyaltagin, and that the Jats had caught the fugitive viceroy [Niyaltagin] and cut off his head, which they sold to Tilak for a hundred thousand pieces of silver. (Lane-Poole 1970, 40-43)

Could it be that the Alans were descendants of or closely related to the same people that invaded north India—the Getes? Beyond the similarity in customs, physical characteristics, and tribal name continuity, clan name is perhaps another way to trace the movement of the Getic tribes in various parts of the world.

#### Clan Names

Peoples' clan or surnames are very dear to them, because they help to keep alive the historical record of one's father, grandfather, and so on. Though the usefulness of the clan name is limited in that it can be changed and it is usually only reflects patrimony, it can be a useful tool in determining ancestry. Many clan names can be traced back to one common ancestor.



The Jats of Panjab have several clan names that overlap virtually identically with those of certain European tribes; for example, Gill, Mann, Birk, Bains, Dhillon, Maur or Moore, Lally, Hans, Herr, Johl, Chiller, Sandher, etc., overlap with German, French, and English names. These examples are by no means insignificant but in fact are very well known Jat clan names. Dhillon provides an extended list of these names, and he strongly suggests that the Jat clan names are neither corrupted nor borrowed (Dhillon 1994).

It is often claimed that these clan names were borrowed by the Jats during British Imperial days. But the second Anglo Sikh war, in which the Sikhs lost and were annexed into British India, occurred in 1849, and within 35 years Rose published his *A Glossary of Tribes and Castes of Punjab and the Northwest Frontier Province*, in which he recorded these very clan names (Rose 1883), which had been collected by Ibbetson for census data for the 1880 Census (Ibbetson 1916). It is difficult to believe that the Jats would merely adopt British names on such a large scale and so quickly; for example, the number of Gills, as reported by Ibbetson, was around 125,000 in 1880 (Ibbetson 1916, 121). Furthermore, this supposed adoption of clan names from the British should have been prevalent throughout India, including areas that had been under British rule for longer periods, and one would expect them to have been recorded by the British themselves (Dhillon 1994, 87). There does not appear to be any significant documentation of intermarriage between Jats and the British (Dhillon 1994, 87). Therefore, the overlapping clan names are significant, because they do not appear to be coincidental, and they seem to be widespread.

Beyond the overlapping clan names, linguists tell us that tribes are never really exterminated and that the name of a tribe continues to live on. Let us see if we can systematically map the movement of the Getae people in time and space by looking at the aforementioned cultural attributes and the survival of the name Getae. First, we shall discuss a peculiar group of the Getae, known as the Euergetae, that was known at a very early date to be living near Seistan or Sakasthan, a circumstance that suggests that an eruption of Getae may have taken place towards Afghanistan, prior to the general movement of Getae into India under pressure from the Yuezhi, who in turn came under pressure from the Huns.

Euergetae – The "Good" Getae

The Euergetae, also known as the Ariaspian, dwelt in the Seistan area at the time of Alexander's invasion of Afghanistan, roughly 328 B.C. Earlier, around 529 B.C., when Cyrus the Great of Persia was waging war against the Massagetae he had "received substantial help from the Ariaspian people... [who dwelled].... in a region that corresponds to the modern Seistan" (Rapson 1921, 297). McCrindle says about the Euergetae, "Their name was the Ariaspoi. Cyrus gave them the honorific title of 'Benefactors' in consideration of the services that they had rendered to him in his Skythian expedition. They must have occupied a district lying along the course of the Etymender or Helmund River. Alexander spent two months in their territory and treated them with great consideration" (McCrindle 1901, 89).

Alexander, probably well aware of the history of the Ariaspian, continued using the descriptive title of "Euergetae" and called them that (Rapson 1921, 297). Classical writers, therefore, mention these people as "Euergetae." As cited by McCrindle, Strabo writes, "Alexander came to the Euergetai, who Cyrus so named..." (McCrindle 1901, 89). Further, classical writers Arrian, Curtius, and Diodorus also mention the Euergetae (Kephart 1960, 529).

Kephart describes their location more precisely: "A tribe named Ariaspae, living on the Etymandros River, in Seistan, where the Helmund empties into Hamun Lake, at the Iranian-Afghanistan boundary, supported Alexander against the Scythians. Its members were called Euergetae, meaning 'Anti-Getae,' which further identifies the Getae as then dominant in Bactria" (Kephart 1960, 529). Here the name "Euergetae" has been translated to "benefactors" and "anti-Getae," but perhaps a better translation is the compound name Euer-Getae or "Good Getae," applied conceivably in respect for assisting Cyrus and the Macedonians against their warlike "bad" brethren, the Central Asian Massagetae. Moreover, the other name of the tribe, Ariaspian, indicates that they were probably horse-mounted nobles, as "Aria" means "noble" and "aspa" is Persian for "horse."

#### The Thracian Getae

The Thracian Getae, like the Euergetae, must have experienced an early migration from Scythia into Thrace, since by Herodotus's times they were confounded with other Thracians, but still were not extinguished by name or habits. The Getae, as known to the Greco-Romans, were an ancient tribe from Thrace, of uncertain origin. Frequently, they appeared in ancient literature as Scythians or Dacians (Leake 1967, 13). The first to document the Getae was Herodotus who,

as he writes in his history, believed the Getae were more brave and honest than the average Thracian. Herodotus writes, "The Getae are the noblest as well as the most just of the Thracian tribes" (Rawlinson 1928, 232). Herodotus further mentions the Getic worship of the god of immortality, Zalmoxis, who is said to be a student of Pythagoras (Rawlinson 1928, 233). Further, it is mentioned by the 1911 *Encyclopedia Britannica* that, "They were experts in the use of the bow and arrows while on horseback" (E.B. 1911, 11: 911). This leads us to recall the Scythians, more specifically the Dahae, who were well known as horse-mounted archers (Dhillon 1994, 39). Rostovtzeff, although not believing in the Scythian origin of the Getae, offers an interesting comment:

It is a curious coincidence that the features of armament and costume—bow, spear, and battle-axe—which distinguish the warriors whom we have supposed to be Cimmerians, are reported as characteristic of the Massagetians, whose name recalls that of the Getians, a Thracian people. (Rostovtzeff 1922, 41)

The characteristic weapons used by the Getae were also noted by Tod, who writes:

Again when we find the 'homage to the sword' performed by all the Getic races of antiquity in Dacia, on the Baltic, as well as by the modern Rajput, shall we draw not the conclusion from this testimony of the father of history, who declares that such rites were practiced on the Jaxartes in the very dawn of knowledge? (Tod 1829, 653-54)

An interesting description of their dress is provided by Dio Chrysostom, a mid-first-century writer from Prusa (Turkey), who suggests that the Getae were Scythians:

Here in your city [Rome] from time to time are to be seen persons, some of whom are wearing felt caps on their heads—as today certain of the Thracians who are called Getae do, and as Spartans and Macedonians used to do in days gone by—and others wearing a turban and trousers, as I understand Persians and Bactrians and Parthians and many other barbarians do... (Crosby 1951, 5: 179)

Crosby adds an interesting footnote attached to the name "Getae": "A tribe in southern Russia which seems to have piqued the curiosity of Dio. He wrote a special treatise on them, but it is no longer extant" (Crosby 1951, 5: 178). It seems that Dio probably knew or believed that the Getae were the Massagetae.

The Getae, about a century before Christ, had expanded from the Danube to the Dniester and indefinitely to the north (Leake 1967, 15). Leake adds, "Thrace, itself the first-attested home of the Getae, is called 'Little Scythia'" (Leake 1967, 15). So it appears the classical writers were probably aware of the origins of the Getae at one time. Iorga, who believed the Getae to be a Thracian people, does however admit the following: "It is, in fact, these agricultural Thracians [Getae] who were described by the Greeks of the coast as their 'Scythian' corn-growers. The Greek documents connect the Massagetae, the Tiregetae, and the Thyssagetae also with these Scythians..." (Iorga 1925, 20-21). Dvornik notes this as well: "If the tribe of the Neuroi and the 'Scythians practicing agriculture,' mentioned by Herodotus, were really Slavs, then they certainly came under strong Scythian influence" (Dvornik 1956, 53).

Leake then mentions a "large number of people who left Little Scythia and crossed both the Tyras and Ister and took up their abode in the land beyond..." (Leake 1967, 15). Here the Getae were on the Tyre (Tyras) or Dniester River (Jones 1928, 3: 216-17). From Bergmann (1859, 27), we can infer that the Thracian Getae were possibly the Tyregetae, an early splinter group of the Getae from the eastern Caspian regions; i.e., Massagetae, who were living near the Tyras river.

F. Bergmann in his book *Les Getes*, written in French back in 1859, specifically believed this to be the case, as he writes, "Tyra-Getes, Getes du Tyras...[Tyregetae, the Getae of the Tyre River] (Bergmann 1859, 27)." Bergmann is not alone in this belief; Rawlinson comments about the following paragraph mentioned by Herodotus:

This, then, is one of the great Scythian rivers; the next to it is the Tyras, which rises from a great lake separating Scythian from the land of the Neuri, and runs with a southerly course to the sea. Greeks dwell at the mouth of the river, who are called Tyritae. (H: Rawlinson 1880, 38)

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Rawlinson adds, "When the Goths (Getae) conquered the region about this river [Tyras], they received the name of Tyri-getae" (H. Rawlinson 1880, 38). But here it appears the Tyritae are called by Herodotus Greeks, probably because they had been absorbed to some degree by the sedentary Greeks.

Jamieson writes:

The Tyro-Getae, of Pliny, are the same with the Tyritae of Herodotus. For by both writers they are placed on the river Tyres, or Tyras, the Dniester of our modern times. Rennel conjectures, with considerable plausibility, that Herodotus may have written Tyrigetae. These, then, were the Getae situated on the river Tyres. (Jamieson 1814, 8)

The Tyregetae or the "Tyregetans" of Strabo (Jones 1928, 3: 221), therefore, must be the Getae near the Tyre River. The Tyre River would represent the modern Dniester River (Kephart 1960, 466), which is found in western Ukraine. Further, Mircea Eliade says the Tyregetae dwelled from the Balkans to the Dniester (Tyre) River (Eliade 1970, 12).

J.F. Hewitt's view was similar to that of Bergman. Back in Alexander's days, when he had defeated King Porus of Punjab, it is claimed that Alexander "received reinforcements of Thracian troops drafted by his governor in the Caspian Sea" (Warry 1991, 80). These Thracian troops, many of which were likely Getae, probably was the reason J.F. Hewitt said the following:

These Thracian Getae must, as a Northern race of individual proprietors, have held their lands on the tenure existing in the Jat villages, and these Indian Jats, or Getae, have not degenerated from the military prowess of their forefathers.... Further evidence both of early history and origin of the race of Jats, or Getae, is given by the customs and geographical position of another tribe of the same stock, called the Massagetæ, or great Getae. (Hewitt 1894, 482)

So Hewitt believed the Getae to be an offshoot Scythian tribe, who were related to the Great Getae or Massagetae living east of the Caspian Sea region. Another suggestion that the Getae were a Central Asian people is alluded to by the poet Ovid, who writes:

Would you like to know just how things are, In Tomis town and how we live?  
Through Greek and Getan mingle on this coast, It owes more to the Getan than to  
the Greek. Great hordes of them and the Sarmatians' cousins canter to and fro  
along the rough roads.... (Williams 1998, 46)

So it is possible that the Getae were part of the Massagetae, though the branching off must have been relatively early, as the Tyrigetae were already considered part of the Greek culture, meaning they had shed most of their "barbarism." They must have been very sympathetic to Greek military concerns to earn them the encomium bestowed by Herodotus, who described them as the "noblest and most just of the Thracians."

Another view is that the Thracian Getae were actually a branch of the Dahae Sakas, who were earlier proposed by McGovern to be a branch of the Massagetae (McGovern 1939, 68). Strabo writes, "The Daci, I think were called Dai in early times..." (Jones 1928, 3: 213). This is confirmed by Flaccus's *Argonautica*, in which he calls them Dahae:

They are proud people, the Dahae, but unlike us, untrammelled by civilization's restraints. Reared on the steppes of Asia and fed with the milk of untamed beasts, they are all bloodthirsty, capricious, headstrong people, and they will be living among us. (Slavitt 1999, 30)

Mircea Eliade, in his book *Zalmoxis*, equates the Dacians with the Dahae:

According to Strabo (304, 7. 3. 12), the original name of the Dacians was daoi...certain nomadic Scythians to the east of the Caspian Sea were also called daoi. In all probability their ethnic name was derived from Iranian (Saka) dahae, 'wolf'.... The Latin authors called them Dahae, and some Greek historians daai....

At first the name "Dacians" referred to one of the Thracian tribes in Northwestern Dacia (Strabo 304, 7. 3. 12). In general the name "Getae" occurs more commonly toward the Black Sea, from the Balkans to the Dniester [Tyregetae], whereas, the name "Dacians" is more frequent in the northwest, west, and the south.... (Eliade 1970, 1-2, 12)

However, it should be noted that Strabo was not fully convinced that the Daci could have come from so far away from the neighborhood of Hyrcania, which is the homeland of the Dahae, along the southwest shore of the Caspian Sea (Jones 1928, 3: 213). Additional mention of the Daci, or perhaps their forerunners, the Daae, is mentioned earlier by Thucydides, who wrote about them in conjunction with the Getae. Thucydides writes about the Getae and a tribe called Dii: "Now the Getae and their neighbors border on the Scythians, and are equipped like them, for they are all horse-archers...many of the highland Thracians, who are independent and carry dirks; they are called Dii..." (Jowett 1881, 162).

Strabo alludes to the fact that the Daci and the Getae were the same people, "The language of the Daci is the same as that of the Getae" (Jones 1928, 3: 215). He continues, "...some of the people are called Daci, whereas others are called Getae—Getae, those who incline toward the Pontus and the east, and Daci, those who incline in the opposite direction towards Germany and the sources of the Ister" (Jones 1928, 3: 213). Therefore, as Leake notes, "From Strabo's time on, the Getae and Daci were considered to be the same people and their names were used interchangeably" (Leake 1967, 22). Do the Getae and Daci (Dii) represent early migrants from the Caspian, the Getae and the Dahae? Parvan believed this was the case; as Eliade says, "Parvan believed that the name 'Dacian' (as well as the name 'Getae') was Scythian; in other words, it would have passed from their Iranian conquerors to the Thracian peoples of the Carpathians" (Eliade 1972, 13).

Arnold Toynbee in his *A Study of History* made the observation that the Dacians represented the Dahae branch of the Eastern Sakas (Toynbee 1934, 2: 435). He further wrote, "It is, however, perhaps more likely that the European Getae and Davi (Daci), like their homonyms east of the Volga, were a pair of the original Iranian-speaking hordes who gradually became assimilated to the sedentary Thracian-speaking populations whom they conquered" (Toynbee 1934, 2: 435). Pliny and Appian state that "Dacian" was the term for "Getae" (Leake 1967, 22).



It is, therefore, no wonder that we see Romanian books regarding the "Daco-Getic" peoples; it may be that these tribes are representatives of those very Dahae and Massagetae of the Caspian Sea.

Returning to Alexander Cunningham, his analysis of the name Dahae was the following:

The original word in the Sanskrit, *dasyu*, 'an enemy or robber,' which in Persian became *dahyu*, from which the Greeks formed Dahae, Daai, and also Dasai. The spoken form in Indian is *Daku*, which is found in the Latin Dacia. A similar term is still applied to the people on the east of the Caspian, which country is now called Daghistan or Dahistan, or 'Rebel-land'. (Cunningham 1888, 33)

Now this view seems to fit in well to support the movement of Dahae from the neighborhood of Hyrcania. But perhaps the meaning of Dai or Dahae is "wolf," and the term has a similar connotation to "robber" or "rebel."

#### Hyrcania—Land of the Wolves

The Dahae branch of the Sakas was noted by classical writers to be found at the southeast shore of the Caspian Sea, near the ancient land of Hyrcania (Jones 1928, 3: 213). That Daii means "wolf" in the Phrygian language is well attested (Eliade 1972, 1). The same is true of *dhaunos* in Illyrian (Eliade 1972, 1). Kershaw also claims that the root *\*dhau* means "wolf," and that it can be found in the Thracian *Daci* and the Illyrian *Daunii* (Kershaw 2000, 141). Could this indicate that the Thracian *Daci* were originally from the Land of Wolves or Hyrcania?

Prakash writes:

In the Avesta the word *Vrkana* occurs as *Vehrkana*, in Armenian its form is *Vrkan*, in Greek it becomes *Urkania* and its modern variant is *Hyrcania*, which is the name of the region, lying to the north of Parthia, on the eastern corner of the Caspian Sea. In Sanskrit the word *vrka* means a wolf and in modern Persian *gurg* signified this animal. Hence *Gurgan*, comprising the districts of Astarabad, watered by the river of that name, is an exact translation of the old Indo-Iranian name *Vrka-Vrkana*. (Prakash 1964, 101)

Thus Hyrcania was known as "Vehrkana" to the Persians, as Rawlinson writes: "The Old Persian Varkana and the Greek Hyrcania are variants of the same word" (Rawlinson 7<sup>th</sup> 1872, 317). The 1911 *Encyclopedia Britannica* states about Hyrcania: "An ancient district of Asia, south of the Caspian Sea, and bounded on the east by river Oxus, called Virkana, or 'Wolf's Land' in Old Persian" (E.B. 1911, 14: 210). Therefore, Hyrcania was actually known by the Persians as "Virkana." Kershaw writes:

Hyrkania is the Greek approximation of the east or northeast Iranian Vahrkana (west Iranian Varkana), as satrapie at the south-east corner of the Caspian (Hyrkanien) Sea in Alexander's time, but a much larger, and very important, area, at an earlier period. Vahrka is wolf, and so this was an area the early Persians called 'Wolfland,' its people were the Urkanoi/ Hyrcani to the Greek and Latin writers. (Kershaw 2000, 141)

Eliade says the same: "South of the Caspian Sea lay Hyrcania, that is, in Eastern Iranian 'Vehrkana' in Western Iranian 'Varkana,' literally the 'country of wolves' (from the Iranian root vehrka, 'wolf'). The nomadic tribes that inhabited it were called Hyrkanoi 'the wolves'" (Eliade 1972, 2). Sykes writes, "The Gurgan [Kurgan?] District was the classical Hyrcania, and the Vehrkanos of the Avesta, and was famous for its fertility" (Sykes 1915, 1: 2). But what other information do we have available to us? Elliot and Dowson quote Alexander Cunningham's 1864 *Archaeological Report*, in which he states:

[I]f I am right in my identification of the Jats with the Xanthii of Strabo, and the Iatii of Pliny and Ptolemy, their parent country must have been on the banks of the Oxus, between Bactria, Hyrkania, and Khorasmia. Now in this very position there was a fertile district, irrigated from the Margus River, which Pliny called Zotale or Zothale, and which I believe to be the original seat of the Iatii or Jats. (Elliot and Dowson 1867, 507)

Now at once we realize that the Jats bordered Hyrcania, and that, as aforementioned, the Dahae Sakas can be found in the Dahiya Jats (Ibbetson 1916, 130). Therefore, can the natives of Hyrcania or Virkana be found in a Jat clan, just like the Dahae, Mandrueni, and Tokharioi? Well, the Virk or Birk Panjabi Jat clan is a very powerful one, whose reputation as cattle and horse thieves was well known in all of Panjab, and which was also known as a powerful Sikh confederacy. The Singhpuria Misal (confederacy) during the Sikh Misal Age was led by Nawab (Governor) Kapur Singh Virk (B. Singh 1993, 134). The Virks are generally found around Gujranwala, where they hold 132 villages (Ibbetson 1916, 132). In his *Jattan Da Itihas* (History of the Jats), Duleh, a Panjabi writer, has incorporated the traditional genealogical bards of the Jats and believes the name Virk means "wolf" in Sanskrit (Duleh, chap. 23). And from Dahiya he says that the Caspian Sea region was once inhabited by Virks (Duleh, chap. 23). Prakash claims the Virks have a legend that they are descended from a union between a prince and a she-wolf (Prakash 1964, 102). Duleh also holds that the name is pronounced Virk and Birk (Duleh, chap. 23). Could these Virks be originally from Virkana? Virk is of course pluralized in Panjabi as "Virkan," i.e., Virkan Da Zameen (Land of the Virks).

Now, regarding the ancient Vrka tribe in India, Prakash writes:

A Saka official of Mathura, who was in charge of the repair and maintenance of the devakula of Wima Kadphises, uses the title Bakanapati or Barkanapati, which signifies that he was a chief of the Vrkas and hailed from Hyrcania, as shown by K.P. Jayaswal. (Prakash 1964, 101)

Here it is interesting to note that the Sakian official maintained the devakula or ancestor-worshipping shrine of the Great Kushan King Kadphises. Prakash summarizes the view of Vrkas and claims that they are the Jat tribe:

Though the correct import of the expression haumavarka is obscure and its equation with vrka is conjectural and implausible, it is well-nigh certain that the Vrkas were associated with the Sakas, as the epithet of the Kusana official Barkanpati [Varkanpati], referred to above, shows. As regards the name of these people, derived from the word for wolf vrka, it is significant to note that some

tribes of Central Asia traced their ancestry to a wolf or she-wolf... Some such traditions seem to underly the name of the Vrkas. This name shows that the people bearing it were of Central Asiatic affinity. In modern times the section of Jats of the Panjab, called Virks, represents the remnants of these ancient Vrkas of Central Asia. The name of the locality of Verka, which is the famous junction on the Amritsar Pathankot Railway, perhaps, bears a reminiscence of the settlement of the tribe. (Prakash 1964, 102)

Returning now to the Balkans, in addition to the Getae and Daci, whom we see as representative of the Scythian tribes from Hyrkania, we also find a tribe called "Orkoi" (Eliade 1972, 2). Kershaw writes: "In Phygia we find the tribe of the Orkoi (Kershaw 2000, 140). Could these "Orkoi" be from the same strain as the Virks? Kershaw believes that the "Dacians, [were] a 'martial brotherhood,' [and] bore the name of wolves" (Kershaw 2000, 120). Could it be that the Dahae and Hyrkanoi were groups of young warriors represented as "wolves" (Eliade 1972, 3), just as Herodotus described the Neuri? Otten writes, "In the fourth book of Herodotus, there is a passage touching on the Neurian, a people of Scythia, who transformed themselves into Wolves....Herodotus tells us that inhabitants of a district in Scythia used to turn into wolves; and this is also common among the peoples of the north [Goths and Scandinavians?]" (Otten 1986, 43, 79). Herodotus writes about the Nueri:

The Nuerian customs are like the Scythians'.... It seems that these people are conjurers: for both the Scythians and the Greeks who dwell in Scythia say, that every Nuerian once a year becomes a wolf for a few days, at the end of which time he is restored to his proper shape. (Rawlinson 1928, 236)

Eliade suggests that a similar belief was held by Germanic tribes, in which they called this transformation going "berserkr" (Eliade 1970, 17). This whole discussion of Virks opens up another potential etymology that is only tentative, that the Virks could represent one group of Saka, the Saka Haumavarka. Eliade believes the etymology of Saka Haumavarga is "those who change themselves into wolves (varka) in the ecstasy brought by soma (hauma)" (Eliade 1972, 9). Regarding the connection between Virks and Saka Haumavarga, this was already claimed by

Agrawala, "According to V.S. Agrawala, the plural form Vrkah is equivalent to varka in the name of Saka Haumavarka or Haumavarga, who were known as the Amrygians to the Greek writers" (Prakash 1964: 101).

Whether this etymology holds true or not is up for discussion, but it does suggest that some early Saka groups, perhaps Virks or Vrkas, could have entered India during the Rg Vedic age, as soma or haoma, an intoxicating drink, is supposed to have been consumed by Rg Vedic Aryans. Narain holds that the Earliest Sakas in India came during the Rg Vedic age and were the Saka Haumavarga (Narain 1998).

We now turn to the Ossetians, who are considered to be living descendants of the Alans (Littleton and Malcor 2000), who in turn are believed to be the descendants of the Massagetae (Rolfe 1939, 387-90). They have a clan that has a wolf connection, listed in their genealogy in the epic of the Narts (Kershaw 2000, 141). In an interesting and controversial book entitled *From Scythia to Camelot*, Littleton and Malcor argue that the core of the Arthurian tradition was brought to Europe by the Alans and Sarmatian cavalry (Littleton and Malcor 2000). Their study of the Ossetic epic of the Narts led them to draw parallels between this epic and Arthurian Legends (Littleton and Malcor 2000). Leaving that topic aside, Kershaw cites Ivancik, who discusses the Waerx clan of the Ossetians:

The Ossetian epic of the Narts has...conserved some survivals of notions, going back to the Scythian epoch, of warriors as dogs or wolves. The ancestor of one family of the Narts, (AE)xsætaeggatae (<Ir. \*xsæqraka-) incarnating the warrior function...and corresponding to the Indian Ksatriya bears the name Waerxaerg, which is derived from the ancient Ossete word \*waerx (<Ir. \*vrka-). One of the greatest Nart heroes, Soslan, became invulnerable after being immersed in wolf's milk. (Kershaw 2000, 141)

So could the Ossetic Waerx be from the same region in Hyrcania as the South Asian Jat Virks, and the Balkan Orkoi, just as the Daci in Thrace and the Dahiya Jats in North India? What may bolster this belief is that nearly adjacent to Hyrcania to the west is a province called Gilan, which is situated to the southwest of the Caspian Sea.

Gilan is said to be "the land of Gil,' an ancient tribe which classical writers mentioned as Gelae (E.B. 1911, 12: 6)." So "Gilan...[is]...the country of the Gelae" (E.B. 1911, 13: 20). The reference to mud is quite interesting because this story appears in the Gill Jat clan bard—an ancestor of the Gills was a child found by a Raja (King) lying in a wet muddy spot, thus he was named Gill (Duleh, chp. 4). Rose also discusses this story, he says the ancestor of the Gills was found by a king "with a lion and abandoned in a forest. As he was found in a marshy (gili) place, he was named Sher [Lion] Gil" (Rose 1883, 2: 299)! Whether there is any historical value to this story is not the question, but it seems consistent with the name of Gilan Province in Northern Iran, suggesting that Gill is an Iranian word; this of course is bolstered by the existence of the Iranian-speaking Gil or Gilaki people who still inhabit that region today. Moreover, the Gills maintain a strange wedding custom, which involves digging soil out of a muddy pond (Duleh, chp. 4). Gill is probably the largest Jat Sikh clan, numbering probably around a half million individuals, based on the census data of 1880 (Ibbetson 1916, 121). Bingley writes about the Gill Jats:

The Gil is one of the largest and most important of the Jat tribes. Their headquarters are in Lahore and Ferozpure, but they are found along the Beas and Upper Satlej, and under the hills as far to the west as Sialkot. (Bingley 1985, 43)

Even the traditional story of the origin of the Virks seems to point to a relationship with Gills, which could suggest a symbolic relationship. The Virks claim descent from a Raja who married a Gill lady and had three sons, one of which was named Virk (Bingley 1985, 36). Whether this story is true or not, is immaterial, but it does suggest a relationship between Gills and Virks.

Could these Gils, along with the Virks, Dahae, and of course, the Jatii have made their way to Panjab, under those forced migrations alluded to by Cunningham? This certainly appears to be the case. This belief is further supported by the fact that the Caspian Sea was once known as the Sea of Gilan (Sykes 1915, 1: 26) and alternately the Hyrcanian Sea (Kershaw 2000, 141, Sykes 1915, 1: 26) probably after these very tribes—the Gils and the Virks. Of course, the Caspian Sea would receive its present name from the Caspii tribe that was associated with the Gelae (Jones 1928, 5: 269).

The Gelae are mentioned together with other tribes that are located not very far from present-day Gilan. The following tribes are mentioned by Strabo: "Gelae, Cadusii, Amardi, Vitii, and Anariacae" (Jones 1928, 5: 249. Strabo further places the Cadusii, Gelae, and Amardi not very far from the Hyrcanians (Jones 1928, 5: 259). He also mentions a tribe called Albani (Jones 1928, 5: 269).

Further, Strabo believes the Gelae were Scythians, and he writes, "...the Gelae and the Legae, Scythian people, live between the Amazons [Scythian Warrior Women] and the Albanians..." (Jones 1928, 5: 235-45).

Alexander Cunningham writes:

It must be remembered that Prince Hormazd (the uncle of Hormazd II), during the reign of his brother Narses, had sought refuge with the Scythians: 'Ipsos Persas ipsumque regem adscitis Saccis, et Russis, et Gellis, petit frates Ormies,' are the words of Panegyric quoted by Gibbon. The first people are certainly the Sacae or Sakas; the second may be the Euseni of Ammianus, and the last may be the Gelani [Gelae]. (Cunningham 1894, 172-73)

Gibbon writes, "The Sacae were a nation of wandering Scythians, who encamped towards the sources of the Oxus and Jaxartes. The Gelli were the inhabitants of Ghilan, along the Caspian Sea..." (Gibbon 1850, 1: 422). Interestingly, when Muhammad Bin Kassim, the Arab General, conquered Sindh early in the eighth century A.D., he remarked about the Jats, "What a disgusting people they are. They are just like the savages of Persia and the mountains" (Elliot and Dowson 1867, 187). And Pettigrew, in her *Robber Noblemen: A Study of the Political System of Sikh Jats*, writes about the origin of Jats: "Another view holds that the Jats came from Asia Minor and Armenia in the successive invasions during the period 600 B.C. to A.D. 600" (Pettigrew 1975, 238).

Another kindred tribe, the Agathyrsi, although believed to be Thracian in origin, may actually be Scythian or Getic if we believe Valerius Flaccus. Herodotus writes:

The Agathyrsi are a race of men very luxurious, and very fond of wearing gold on their persons. They have wives in common, so that they may be all brothers, and,

as members of one family, may neither envy nor hate one another. (Rawlinson 1928, 236)

The 1911 *Encyclopedia Britannica* states, "They are described by Herodotus (iv. 104) as of luxurious habits, wearing gold ornaments and having wives in common. They tattooed their bodies.... Valerius Flaccus (*Argonautica*, vi. 135) calls them Thyrsagetae..." (E.B. 1911, 1: 370). We know that the Massagetae kept women in common (Yablonsky 1995, 250) and used only gold and copper, and that the Scythians tattooed their bodies. Further, in his *Argonautica*, Valerius Flaccus states, "Whom have I failed to mention? The Thyrsagetae, who march to the beat of the drums they carry..." (Slavitt 1999, 113). Therefore, here Flaccus calls them Thyrsagetae.

If we examine Thyrsa-getae, it seems close to Thyssa-Getae, but this group was probably on the Volga at this time. But it is possible that the Thyssagetae made their way west. But perhaps a more reasonable identification is that the Thyrsa-getae were the Tyri-getae, since they practiced polyandry, tattooed their bodies, and wore extravagant gold, which opens up cultural similarities to the Massagetae. In summary, the westward expansion of the Massagetae seems to be fairly plausible, not only because we find the Dacians (Dahae), Getae, Tyrigetae (Getae of Tyras), Agathyrsi (Thyrsagetae), and the Orkoi (Virks), but also because classical writers referred to them as Scythians.

#### Alans

Ammianus Marcellinus (4<sup>th</sup> century A.D.), perhaps the best authority on the Alans, an Iranian nomadic people, wrote:

[T]he Halani mount to the eastward, divided into populous and extensive nations; these reach as far as Asia, and, as I have heard, stretch all the way to the river Ganges, which flows through the territories of India.... [T]he Halani, once [were] known as the Massagetae. (Rolfe 1939, 387-90)

Therefore, according to Marcellinus, the Alans were a large nation extending from at that time the Roman Empire all the way to North India. Now this statement is of great consequence;



therefore, logically one would question Marcellinus. Thompson believes that Marcellinus's statements regarding the Alans were solid, and he avers:

Two nations made their sinister appearance in Roman history in the years, which the additional books were to cover, the Huns and the Alans. Since they were new to the Romans there was little literature on them to be read up.... So, like Eunapis, who felt the same difficulty, he (Ammianus) simply set down what his own inquiries could discover, thus produced one of the most interesting and valuable of all his disquisitions. He wrote it with some literary care... (Thompson 1969, 119)

Ptolemy's *Geography* (90-168 A.D.) supports Ammianus's statement regarding the Alani: "After this is a bend of the Imaus [Himalaya] mountains toward the north. Those who inhabit Scythia toward the north along the Terra Incognita [unknown territory] are called Alani-Scythae..." (Stevensen 1932, 144-45). Rawlinson adds that Ptolemy places them "in Scythia within the Imaus, north and partly east of the Caspian" (Rawlinson 6<sup>th</sup> 1872, 291). He continues:

It must have been from...[Ptolemy]...and [according to] some [Marcellinus]...the descendents of the ancient Massagetae, that the Alani came who attacked Pacorus and Tiridates. Their alliance with the Hyrcanians shows that they rounded the south-east corner of the Caspian, and their passage through the Gates into Media and Armenia equally indicates that they invaded those countries from the East. (Rawlinson 6<sup>th</sup> 1872, 291)

So, therefore, we know the Alans came from east of the Caspian, in the general vicinity of the Massagetae, and further that they made an alliance with the Hyrcanians, thereby strongly suggesting that Marcellinus's statement is accurate. Klaproth agrees with Marcellinus's statement and believes the Alans are the descendants of the Massagetae (Klaproth 1826, 180).

Further, we know that the Alans practiced artificial skull deformation (Bachrach 1973, 68), a practice also believed to be performed by the Huns (Sulimirski 1970, 37-38), which once again strengthens the premise that the Alans were descendants of the Massagetae. Therefore, some simply take Marcellinus's statement at face value, as Christensen notes, "he [Ammianus] is

aware that the Alans are the ancient Massagetae..." (Christensen 2002, 42). Grousset observes, "Certain ancient authors such as Dio Cassius and Arrian see in the Massagetae the forebears of the Sarmatian race of Alans" (Grousset 1970, 547).

Those who are slightly more careful in their observations, like McGovern, say, "[B]oth Strabo and Ptolemy mention the Massagetae and the Alani separately, but the two people were undoubtedly closely connected" (McGovern 1939, 463). McGovern further believes that the Massagetae is a branch of the Sarmatians (McGovern 1939, 463-65). Coupling this view by McGovern with that of Littleton and Malcor, who write, "Yet Sulimirski refers to the Alans as simply a late Sarmatian people" (Littleton and Malcor 2000, 16), there is no doubt that the Massagetae, Alans, and Sarmatian are very closely related. Dhillon's solution makes sense: "According to Ammianus Marcellinus, Alans were once called Massagetae and they took their separate name after a mountain range called Alanus in Central Asia" (Dhillon 1994, 91). This satisfies McGovern's contention that the Alans were listed separately from the Massagetae by Strabo and Ptolemy, probably due to the new geographical name given to the Massagetae dwelling near the Alanos Mountains. So we can perhaps take it as true when Marcellinus writes, "[T]he Halani, so called from the mountain range of the name [Alanos], inhabit the measureless wastes of Scythia" (Rolfe 1939, 388-89).

Further, it was not only the Alans and Sarmatians that were confused (Littleton and Malcor 2000, 13), but also the Alans and the Scythians. Lucian is a good example of this; his view is commented on by Bachrach:

The Alans' fighting prowess as horsemen as well as their effective use of the spear and bow is treated as commonplace. The close relation of the Alans to the Scythians is emphasized by Lucian, who indicates that their dress and customs are very similar. In fact, according to Lucian, the only significant characteristic distinguishing the two is the way each wears his hair; the Scythians wear it longer than do the Alans. (Bachrach 1973, 12)

Ammianus Marcellinus provides a vivid description of their habits and characteristics, which help to show that they were somewhat like the Huns and but had quite different physical characteristics:

Moreover, almost all the Halani are tall, handsome, their hair inclined to blond, by the ferocity of their glance they inspire dread.... In all respects they are somewhat like the Huns, but in their manner of life and habits they are less savage...the Halani delight in danger and warfare. There the man is judged happy who has sacrificed his life in battle.... (Rolfe 1939, 393-95)

That being said, it is probably safe to conclude that the Alans are indeed descendants of the Massagetae, as the Massagetae kept their identity from the early Scythian age to the Sarmatian Age, and that their general location and customs point to an Eastern Scythian origin. Further, their physical characteristics appear clearly Indo-European. A point should be made that the Alans have traveled quite a distance from their origin seat east of the Caspian, which is evident in the physical characteristics as described by Marcellinus. This is discussed by Gibbon (note: he equates Tartars with Scythians):

The mixture of Samatic [Sarmatic?] and German blood had contributed to improve the features of the Alani, to whiten their swarthy complexions, and to tinge their hair with a yellowish cast, which is seldom found in the Tartar race. (Gibbon 1850, 23: 5)

The 1911 *Encyclopedia Britannica* claims the Alans are "the easternmost division of Sarmatians, Iranian nomads with some Altaic admixture. First met with north of the Caspian, and later (c. first century A.D.) spreading into the steppes of Russia" (E.B. 1911, 1: 469). With the origins of the Alans now better understood, let us examine the other major point stated by Marcellinus, that the Alans spread from Rome eastward as far as India. We know that the Alans must have spread to at least Central Asia, since we have identified them with the Massagetae. And we also know that in the Caucasus there exists a living population called Ossetians who are believed to be the descendants of the Alans (Littleton and Malcor 2000). It goes without saying that the Alans were one of the tribes allied with the Goths and responsible for the fall of Rome (Bachrach 1973). But how far eastward did they actually extend—did they reach the Ganges, as attested by Marcellinus?

The South Asian Jats, at that time, were in possession of Panjab and Sindh and were the Indo-Scythians of the Greek writers (Legge 1886, Cunningham 1888, 1894). And we further know that they are considered descendants of the Massagetae (Rawlinson 6<sup>th</sup>, 118; M. Singh 1895, 485; Shrava 1981, 2-3). But what about the name "Alani" or some variant of it—is it found in India?

Alexander Cunningham, referring to the Alans and their battle with Tiridates and Pacorus, mentioned above by Rawlinson, states:

In another place Ammianus describes the Alani as Massagetae, who extended far to the East, even, as he was told, to the Ganges, or, in other words, towards India. Clearly they seem to be the same as the Alani of Josephus, who in A.D. 75 passed through Hyrkania and ravaged Media.... [I]n A.D. 75 the Alani Scythians being allowed to go through Hyrkania, made a sudden raid through the Caspian Gates into Media. Pakorus, the Satrap of Media, fled before them, and Tiridates, the King of Kawan, was defeated. Flushed with their successful foray, the Alani returned with much plunder to their own country. From this account of their march through Hyrkania, I conclude that the Alani must have occupied the Western Paropamius, or the hilly districts lying between Herat on the west and Ghazni on the east, that is the whole of Western Afghanistan, including the little-known district of Feroz-khoh and Ghor. This position is in full accord with their subsequent history in the time of Sapor II. (Cunningham 1894, 110-11)

This event is also mentioned by Sykes:

In A.D. 75 the Parthian Empire was overrun by the Alani, a nomadic people, who, in alliance with the Hyrcanians poured through Media and Armenia. Volagases appealed to Rome for help, but Vespian refused it, and the Alani, after devastating far and wide, returned to their own country with immense booty. In A.D. 77 Volagases ended his eventful reign, which upon the whole had been successful, although the inroad of the Alani and the breaking away of Hyrcania brought failure at the close. His successor, Pacorus, had a most disturbed reign, and it appears

that the Parthian Empire was divided between three or four monarchs, all of whom claimed to be the 'King of Kings'. Pacorus, who is believed to have died about A.D. 105, was succeeded by Osroes, during whose troubled rule the long peace with Rome came to a close. (Sykes 1915, 1: 379)

Further evidence seems to be the place-name of "Albania," applied by Pliny to "the country between the Jhelum and the Indus; and as the salt mines are found also at Kalabagh, the name of Albania may have included the territory to west of the Indus" (Cunningham 1894, 101). Cunningham takes the "Albani" to be the "Alani" east of the Caspian (Cunningham 1894, 101). Further, Albania corresponds to the Caucasus near "the mountain valleys and the land to the north towards Sarmatia, the modern Daghestan (E.B. 1911, 1: 481). We know the Alans were a branch of the Sarmatians (McGovern 1939, 463-65). And Cunningham is not alone; Klaproth linked many tribes to the Alans. He first links the Alans to the Chinese Yentsai and the Persian Alanan, and then to the Aorsi, and to Ptolemy's Alanorses (Klaproth 1826, 174-77). He then links the Albani of Daghestan to the Alans, and both to the Massagetae (Klaproth 1826, 180). Finally he links the Alans to the modern Ossetes (Klaproth 1826, 180). Gibbon summarizes Klaproth's view:

He supposes them to have been the people, known by the Chinese, at the time of their first expeditions to the West, under the name of Yath-sai or A-lanna, the Alanan of Persian tradition, as preserved in Ferdusi; the same, according to Ammianus, with the Massagetae, and with the Albani. The remains of the nation still exist in the Ossetae of Mount Caucasus. (Gibbon 1850, 3: 25)

While McGovern differs slightly from Klaproth and discusses the matter in more detail, he inevitably comes to a similar conclusion:

The Yentsai of the Chinese traveler [Jang Kien] are undoubtedly the same as the Aorsi of the classical writers, the descendents of the Massagetae, or at least their successors as the masters of Northwestern Turkistan.... They [Chinese records] tell us that this people which had formerly been known as Yentsai, now became

known as Olan. It is not without significance that the Greek authors tell us that just about the same time (middle of the first century A.D.) Southern Russia was again overrun by a people coming from Central Asia and that this people was known as the Alani...[those] who had formerly been known as Yentsai (corresponding to Greek Aorsi) changed their name to Alani.... (McGovern 1939, 135, 247)

This connection between Alans and the Aorsi seems to hold true if we take Ptolemy's Alanorsi, a suggestion of the combination of the two tribes (McGovern 1939, 463). Therefore, based on the belief that Jats are descendants of the Massagetae and Da Yuezhi, perhaps a tentative etymology of Yentsai is nasalised Yut-sai or Xanth-saka; Jat Saka, as Sai in Chinese corresponds to Saka (Marshall 1960, 24).

Grousset alludes to an event, which also may explain the Albanians:

Towards the end of the second century B.C., the Alans were still leading a nomadic life in the Aralo-Caspian steppe. From there they moved toward the Don. At the time of Strabo, they camped between the Caspian and Don, whence they made plundering raids on Parthian Azerbaijan (Grousset 1970, 559).

This offers testimony that there was some truth to Marcellinus's statements that the Alans did incline towards India, and that the Jats, who may or may not be the direct descendants of the Alans, were indeed the descendants of the Massagetae. Moreover, that there was more continuity across the steppes than was previously believed appears certain, and that the statements of the classical writers can be taken more seriously.

### The Goths

The history of the Goths has grabbed a great deal of attention from many writers intrigued by their practical wholesale domination of Southern Europe in the Roman age. This is ironic since very little is known about their origin, until the name "Gothi" appeared in historical texts in middle of the third century A.D. (Christensen 2002, 40). Christensen writes:

Then, in the middle of the third century, a people called Gothi appeared in the historical literature—though not in north-eastern Europe near the Vistula, but in the area north of the lower reaches of the Danube. The Gothi began to attack the Roman Empire around this time, and during the turbulent third century, the emperors often had to campaign against them. Soon the Roman emperors who had conquered the Goths were assuming the honorary title Gothicus. (Christensen 2002, 40-41)

Prior to this the Goths were considered by the classical writers of the period to be equated with the Scythians or Getae; Scandinavians; and, based likely on religion, namely rabbinical tradition, the fabled Gog and Magog (Christensen 2002).

There is still no consensus on the origin of the Goths, but most modern scholarship is inclining toward a tribe called Gothones that was situated near the mouth of the Vistula River as it empties to the Baltic Sea. The basis for this identification is Jordanes's claim that Gothic oral tradition saw the birth of the Goths in an island called Scandza (Christensen 2002, 40-41). Jordanes writes:

The same mighty sea has also in its arctic region, that is, in the north, a great island named Scandza, from which my tale (by God's grace) shall take its beginning. For the race [Goths] whose origin you ask to know burst forth like a swarm of bees from midst of this island and came into the land of Europe. (Mierow 1915, 53)

This identification of the origin of Goths and possibly others in Scandza (which has been taken to be Scandinavia) has led the Scandinavians, especially the Swedes, but also some of the ablest authorities of the day, to fall back on this region as the "vagina nationum" or "womb of nations" (Wolfram 1988, 2). Authorities like Rudbeck, Montesquieu, and Chateaubriand thus saw Scandinavia as the homeland of much of the population of Europe (Wolfram 1988, 2).

Now it is very unlikely that a "womb of nations" would come from Scandinavia as the climate does not seem suitable for such a large population base; even today this region is comparatively sparsely populated. It is actually probably much more likely that people of

Scandinavia came from somewhere on the mainland at a time (Heather 1996, 27), or several times, that is now difficult to determine. On this notion Heather writes:

The Viking era makes us think instinctively of outflows of population from Scandinavia. Immigration, however, also occurred. The movement north of some Heruli in the sixth century, for instance, is well-documented (Procopius Wars 6.14-15), and all the Scandinavian people must have originally got there from somewhere. (Heather 1996, 27)

Nonetheless, Jordanes does allege this location as the origin of the Goths; in those days a connection to Scandinavia, although it may have shown the Goths to be a unique tribe, would hardly be a claim to something praiseworthy in the eyes of the Romans.

Therefore, based on the presumption that the Goths came from Scandinavia, and having some reasonable linguistic evidence for this identification (the Gothic language is a Germanic language, and the Gothic kings had Germanic names), archaeologists looked in that region and surrounding areas on the mainland for clues in this search. Based largely on the testimony of Pytheas, Ptolemy, Tacitus and Pliny, whose testimony it should be noted was very scanty, a tribe called Guttones, Gotones, Guthones, and Gythones, who traded in the amber that was gathered on the Baltic shores, is believed to be the forerunner of the Goths (Christensen 2002). However, as Heather writes:

Gothic existed as a literary language from the mid-fourth century, but there is no sign that it was ever used for anything other than ecclesiastical purposes. No history in Gothic has come down to us, and there is no indication that one was ever written. (Heather 1996, 9)

Thus all we know about Goths from a historical perspective comes to us from Greco-Roman accounts.

Pytheas was the first to discuss this tribe called "Gythones" who were situated in Eastern Prussia along the Baltic shores at over three hundred years B.C. (Bradley 1888, 2). Strabo (early first century A.D.) mentions a tribe called "Boutones," related to the Lugians,



which scholars have taken to be "Goutones." He writes, "The Lugii (a large tribe), the Zumi, the Boutones, the Mugilones, the Sibini, and also the Semnones, a large tribe of the Suevi themselves. However, while some of the tribes of the Suevi dwell inside the forest, as I was saying, others dwell outside of it, and have a common boundary with the Getae" (Jones 1928, 3: 157). So if we take Strabo's "Boutones" to be "Goutones," this shows the continuity of the tribe in that location; further, we see that they border the country of the Getae.

Pliny the Elder, in A.D. 79, is the next to discuss the "Gutones," and he places them not too far from Pytheas's "Gythones" (Bradley 1888, 2). Tacitus (late first century A.D.) specifically refers to these Gotones as a Germanic tribe. Tacitus writes about the Gotones, "Trans Lugios Gothones regnantur, Paulo iam adductius quam ceterae Germanorum gentes, nondum tamen supra libertatem" (Robinson 1935, 320). A rough translation of this is "Beyond the Lygians dwell the Gothones, under the rule of a King; and thereby held in subjection somewhat stricter than the other German nations, yet not as strict as to extinguish all their liberty." Tacitus is followed by Ptolemy (mid-second century) who locates his "Guthones" on the right bank of the Vistula River (Christensen 2002, 40). Further it should be noted that none of these authorities claim the Gotones to be Germanic, except for Tacitus.

Thus the Gutones of Pytheas, Strabo, Pliny, Tacitus, and Ptolemy are generally taken by modern scholarship to be our Goths, since scholars know that the Goths were a Germanic speaking tribe, and since "Gutones," a Germanic tribe, sounds similar to Goths. This identification is bolstered by the archaeological find at Wielbark, which has been attributed to the Gutones. However, to this Christensen adds in a footnote:

My omission of the discussion of the archaeological discoveries in what is now Poland is intentional. They are normally identified with the Goths (the Wielbark culture). However, the basis for this identification is Jordanes's *Getica* along with the texts mentioned here, written by Strabo, Pliny, Tacitus, and Ptolemy. If the archaeologists did not find the name-related material here, they would naturally not be able to attach any names of certain peoples to their finds since, to my knowledge, no inscriptions have been found that indicate any particular ethnicity. The archaeologists are therefore unable to prove that the antique texts deal with Goths. (Christensen 2002, 40)

So is this basis of identification sound? Christensen rightly points out that the basis for the idea that the Goths came from Scandinavia to the Vistula River region comes from Jordanes's account of Gothic oral tradition, but even Jordanes "has them leave this area almost 1500 years earlier" (Christensen 2002, 40). Christensen adds, with reference to the Gutones:

Were these the ancestors of 'the Goths'? Did they wander south-east towards Scythia and Dacia and the Black Sea? Not according to the surviving Graeco-Roman literature, which makes no mention at all of these 'Gothic' names after Ptolemy did so in the middle of the second century...Did they actually trek so far south, and did they become the Gothi during their wanderings? The Greco-Roman literature does not ponder these questions. (Christensen 2002, 40)

The classical writers did not ponder these questions, since they were either not aware of such a movement, or this movement possibly never occurred. Christensen writes, "It is only by studying Jordanes's *Getica* that one might readily conceive of such a connection between Goutones (Strabo), Gutones (Pliny), Gotones (Tacitus), Guthones (Ptolemy), and Gothi" (Christensen 2002, 41).

However, Ptolemy does not even call his "Guthones" Germanic. Christensen writes, "Ptolemy had positioned them near the Vistula, even localizing them precisely on the right bank. So might this mean that he did not see them as Germanic at all, but rather as Sarmatian?" (Christensen 2002, 40).

We must look at the facts and leave any conjecture aside for now. The cornerstone for any discussion of the Goths must be that the "Gothi" (our Goths) appeared in the middle of the third century A.D. not near the Vistula, but rather in the area north of the lower Danube River, and they began to attack Rome at this time (Christensen 2002, 40).

The introduction of this topic with the Gutones, a tribe that most of modern scholarship believes to be the forerunners of the Goths, was purposeful, since it familiarizes modern students with a brief background of today's view, but also since it demonstrates that this identification is a conjecture that is not supported by Graeco-Roman literature (Christensen 2002, 40). Pytheas, Strabo, Pliny, Tacitus, and Ptolemy all mention the Gutones, but this tribe predated the historical

form "Gothi" (our Goths) who were first noted in the heart of former Scythian territory and began to attack Rome in the middle of the third century (Christensen 2002, 40). As Wolfram puts it, "It was known that these peoples had originally lived on the lower Danube and at the Black Sea, exactly where traditional, Greek-oriented ethnography had located the Scythian" (Wolfram 1988, 19). Further, no classical writer who was concurrent or after the Goths ever suggested that these Gothones were the predecessors of Goths. These classical writers equated Goths with Getae or Scythians (Wolfram 1988, 28). Moreover, "whoever wanted to be more precise also distinguished in this area Getae and Daci, Sarmatians and Sauromates, 'Blackmantles' [Massagetae] and Amazons..." (Wolfram 1988, 19). So were the Gotones really the forerunners of the Goths?

Bradley, over a hundred years later, although supporting the premise that the Gotones were the forerunners of the Goths, makes an interesting statement:

These two brief notices are all that Tacitus, who has told us so much that is interesting about the peoples of ancient Germany, has to say of the Gotones. But if he could only have guessed what was the destiny in store for this obscure and distant tribe, we may be sure that they would have received a far larger share of his attention. For these Gotones were the same people who afterwards became so famous under the name of Goths, who, a few centuries later, crowned their kings in Rome itself, and imposed their laws on the whole of Southern Europe from the Adriatic to the Western Sea. (Bradley 1888, 2)

How could it be that an obscure and distant tribe that received little recorded attention from contemporary authorities (and, from what we can tell, were not completely free [Robinson 1935, 320]), actually began to challenge Roman rule a few centuries later—yet were never claimed to be the forerunners of the Goths by any classical writer concurrent with the Goths (Christensen 2002, 40)? Wolfram simply states, "No ancient ethnographer made a connection between Goths and the Gutones" (Wolfram 1988, 13). Christensen writes: "...[S]een with Graeco-Roman eyes, this people [Gutones] was certainly not particularly remarkable compared with other Germanic people" (Christensen 2002, 40).

So why such interest in the unknown Gotones? Could it be that the reason is the *Getica* of Jordanes? Or the Germanic names of the Gothic Kings? Or perhaps, and more reasonably, it is ignorance of the capacity and role of Scythians, and their lack of representation as a historical community of significance, because they were unlettered and left no written account of their own history. Similarly, the Goths left very little of their own literature behind, and most of what we know about them comes from other people's accounts of them and, of course, Jordanes. We are left with the summary made by most modern historians that the Gutones experienced a cultural fusion with the steppes; as Wolfram puts it:

...[T]he Scythization of the eastern Goths is completed; the armored lances, which covered incredible distances and fought on horseback; the practice of hunting with falcons; shamanism; the adoption by the Amali of the Sassanian royal vestments; in short, the life-style of the Iranian-Turkish people of the steppe became part of the Gothic world. (Wolfram 1988, 115)

But was there really a Scythization, or was it the other way around? As Wolfram mentions, no ancient writer ever connected the Goths and Gutones, but quite to the contrary, they thought of the Goths as Scythians. Athenian Dexippus was probably the first classical writer to record the Goths, and also the first to claim that they were "Scythians." He wrote around A.D. 270 about Gothic incursions that had started about 238 A.D. (Wolfram 1988, 28). When "dealing with the Gothic incursions into the Balkans up to at least 270... [he] refers to the Goths as Skuqai" (Christensen 2002, 233). Thus, Dexippus, a very early writer, called the Goths "Scythians" (Christensen 2002, 233). It was this location that agrees with Dio Chrysostum's (mid-first century A.D.) account of the Getae, in which he calls them the "accursed Getae" (Crosby 1951, 4: 279). Jones takes "the reference to 'cursed Getae'...[to be]...appropriate to a time when Rome was at war with them [Getae]" (Jones 1978, 139). Therefore, the Romans were at war with the Getae over a century before Dexippus calls them "Scythians." And Dio locates them on the "Danube...the land of the Getae" (Jones 1978, 53). Kephart also places the Getae, or Goths, on the lower Danube, and he claims they were there around the time of the reign of Roman Emperor Domitian (A.D. 81-96) (Kephart 1938, 11). We may also recall that around the

mid-first century, Dio Crysostum showed how the Getae were already in Roman lands (Crosby 1951, 5: 179).

By 268 the Goths were located at the mouth of Dniester, and the Heruli were located at the Sea of Azov (Wolfram 1988, 52). These "Scythians" fought Roman Emperor Claudius II; Claudius was the victor and assumed the title "Gothicus" around 269 (Wolfram 1988, 55).

A little over a century after Dexippus, in 417 A.D., Orosius Paulus calls the Goths "Getae." He states, "Modo autem Getae illi qui et nunc Gothi, quos Alexander euitandos pronuntiauit, Pyrrhus exhorruit, Caesar etiam declinauit, relictis uacuefactisque sedibus suis ac totis uiribus toti Romanas ingressi provincias..." (Orosius Adv.Pag. I. XVI). The translation is:

On the contrary, recently these Getae, who are at the present also called Goths (Alexander publicly said that they must be shunned, Pyrrhus dreaded them, and Caesar avoided them), after stripping their homes bare and abandoning them, united their forces in one body and invaded the Roman provinces. (Christensen 2002, 232)

Therefore, these early authors believed that "Goth" was a new term for Getae or Scythians. Incidentally, modern scholars often believe these two entities, Getae and Scythians, were different and generally took the Getae to be a Thracian tribe. However, as mentioned much earlier, the Thracian Getae may have been an earlier offshoot of the Massagetae east of the Caspian Sea, which was probably the homeland of the Getic nations. Or as G. Ekholm and A. Alföldi, ironically of the University of Upsala (Sweden) and the University of Budapest, respectively, wrote, "This has been demonstrated by linguistic evidence: even the name of the Getae is the abbreviated form of a Scythian title, which appears to have originally designated an upper class among the Scythians" (Ekholm and Alföldi 1954, 86-87). Thus, the comprehensive term Scythian also referred to a people called Getae, which apparently were also a very large nation. We have already shown that the Getae were mentioned by Ptolemy as adjacent to Gutones near the Vistula, and, further, according to Gibbon, they were a very extensive nation:

We shall occasionally mention the Scythian or Sarmatian tribes, which, with their arms and horses, their flocks and herds, their wives and families, wandered over

the immense plains which spread themselves from the Caspian Sea to the Vistula, from the confines of Persia to those of Germany. (Gibbon 1850, 1: 249)

Wolfram adds to our knowledge of Orosius: "Still Orosius listed the three wildest Scythian peoples of his day: the Alans, Huns, and Goths" (Wolfram 1988, 28). The use of the term "Scythian" by Orosius seems to be used comprehensively, perhaps geographically. Thus Orosius classified the Scythians as people from the east, inhabitants (Alans, Huns, and Goths) of Scythia, but still precisely defines them as Getae. A century or so later, Procopius (550 A.D.) discusses the Goths:

There were many Gothic nations in earlier times, just as also at the present, but the greatest and most important of all are the Goths, Vandals, Visigoths, and Gepaedes. In ancient times, however, they were named Sauromatae and Melanchlaeni; and there were some too who called these nations Getic. (Dewing 1916, 2: 9-10)

Here Procopius claims that the Goths were called Sauromatians, taking them back to Herodotus's day. And he also calls them Melanchlaeni or "black mantles," which would put them akin to Sarmatians, more specifically Massagetae (Yablonsky 1990). But then he also says these nations are Getic, which probably means they are the original Iranian Getae, whose homeland was east of the Caspian Sea. Referring to Procopius, Patrick Geary states, "Procopius, after distinguishing the variety of Goths, Sauromatae and Melanchlaeni, two people from Herodotus, then went on to say that they were known as the Getic ethne. Actually, he said, they differed only in their names; in appearance, laws, and religion, they were exactly the same" (Geary 2002, 57). Wolfram also notes that by Procopius, "the Goths are identified as the 'Scythian' Sauromates and the Melanchlainoi—the 'Black Mantles'" (Wolfram 1988, 28).

But Procopius also tells us something of great importance: he believed that the "Alani, [were] a Gothic people" (Dewing 1916, 2: 23). Perhaps this is why Orosius referred to the Goths and Alans as Scythian peoples? The close association between Alans and Goths will be discussed a bit later; for now let's examine Isidore of Seville's (a Hispano-Roman writer and religious historian) view of the Goths.

Isidore of Seville (560-636), in his *History of Goths, Vandals, and Suevi*, wrote:

It is certain that the Goths are a very old nation.... The Goths are descended from Magog, the son of Japheth, and are shown to have sprung from the same origin as the Scythians, from whom they do not differ greatly in name.... Formerly, however, the learned were accustomed to call [them] Getae rather than Gog and Magog. (Donini and Ford 1966, 3, 30)

Isidore continues about the Goths, who he believes are the Getae:

They are a people quick by nature, active in character, relying on the strength of conscience, powerful in bodily strength, tall in stature, striking in gesture and deportment, ready with either of their hands, and insensible to wounds, just as the poet says of them: 'The Getae praise the wound and death despise.'... Rome itself, the conqueror of all nations, submitted to the yoke of captivity to Getic triumphs.... All the peoples of Europe feared them...in the skills of fighting they are quite distinguished, and they fight on horseback not only with spears but also with javelins, and in battle they attack not only on horseback but also on foot; nevertheless, they rely more on the swift running of their horse, when the poet also says, 'Where the Getan proceeds on his horse.' (Donini and Ford 1966, 31-32)

Thus Isidore of Seville is convinced that the Goths were the Getae; moreover, while he wrote his work nearly concurrent with Jordanes, he never mentions any connection to Scandza, and this is one of the reasons Christensen tends to reject the association of Scandinavia with the Goths (Christensen 2002). However, some mention should be made of the fable "Gog and Magog," as mentioned by Isidore. This testimony is apparently taken from rabbinical tradition and was probably first mentioned by the Jewish commentator Josephus in his *Antiquitates* (93-94 A.D.), who ties his history in with the Old Testament (Christensen 2002, 47). Josephus wrote, "Now Iaphtha [Japheth], the son of Nochos [Noah], had seven sons.... Gomaros founded those who are called by the Greeks Galatians but who were called Gomarites. Magoges founded

those who were called Magogians by himself but who are called Scythians by them" (Mason 2000, 42-43). Christensen writes, "Magog is a man, namely a son of Japheth, who is in turn a son of Noah...Magog, descendent of Noah, thereby becomes the ancestor of the people referred to as Scythians by the Greeks" (Christensen 2002, 46).

Rawlinson writes in detail about the descriptions of Gog and Magog that appeared in early Jewish writings, which became commonly known to most classical writers:

Of Magog, or Gog (for the names seem to designate the same people), nothing can be concluded by the word itself.... It appears, however, from Ezekiel, that the race which these terms, as used by Jews, designated, was one of remarkable powers towards the close of the seventh century B.C.—that it led the expeditions in which Gomer participated, and pushed them as far as Palestine—that it dwelt, like Gomer, in the 'north country'—that its weapon was the bow—and that its warriors were all horsemen. These notes of character probably identify the Scythians, who were the dominant race in the tract between the Caucasus and Mesopotamia for the space of nearly thirty years, from about B.C. 630 to B.C. 600; who invaded Palestine and besieged Ascalon in the reign of the Egyptian king, Psammetichus, who fought almost wholly on horseback, and were famous for their skill with the bow. Probably, therefore, that author of Genesis meant to include the Scyths of Europe, the conqueror of the Kimmerians, among the races whose descent he traced to the youngest of the sons of Noah. (Rawlinson O.N. 1883, 171-72)

Sykes provides an alternate view of Gog and Magog when discussing the Greek Oxus and Jaxartes Rivers in former Transoxiana, and this too would suggest that Gog and Magog referred to Scythians, more specifically, Massagetae:

Oxus, the name used by the Greeks... At this period the sister river was termed the Jaxartes. The medieval Arab conquerors called the two rivers Jayhun and Sayhun respectively... in both cases the second name was brought into a jingling rhyme with the first, just as in Yajuj and Majuj, or Gog and Magog. About the



time of the Mongol irruption the Oxus received its present name, Amu Daria, and the Jaxartes became the Sir Daria. (Sykes 1915, 1: 23)

So it appears that Gog and Magog referred to the Scythians, and that, somehow, this rabbinical and Bible tradition found its way into the testimony of Isidore (probably from Jerome 392 A.D. [Wolfram 1988, 28]), as he was a religious historian. But there must have been other, much stronger reasons for him to equate the Goths with the "Getae."

Now we turn to the *Getica* (A.D. 550) by Jordanes, which is the most frequently used classical authority on the Goths. In his work *The Goths*, Peter Heather, after discussing the asserted Gothic identity of Jordanes, states, "The *Getica* is thus the closest we will ever come to Gothic History as told by Goths" (Heather 1996, 13). Therefore, many have argued that Jordanes's *Getica* (AD 550) is probably the best authority on the history of the Goths, not only because he wrote such a seemingly complicated but practically seamless history, but also because he was himself a Goth (Mierow 1915, 3-4). However, others also suggest that he may have had a mixed Gothic and Alanic ancestry (Mierow 1915, 3-4).

Some of Jordanes's early work was taken from Cassidorus's *Gothic History* (AD 520), which is now lost, and from Orosius Paulus, but also from what is supposedly the Gothic oral tradition. Patrick Geary comments about the *Getica*: "In the early sections of Jordanes's *Getica*—drawn in part at least, from Cassidorus's lost work—the Goths (were) identified with the Getae of classic historiography..." (Geary 2002, 57). Jordanes's citation of Orosius Paulus is quite evident in his *Getica*, as he states, "the Getae we have proved in a previous passage to be Goths, on the testimony of Orosius Paulus" (Mierow 1915, 66). Thus Jordanes and—we can infer—Cassidorus believed the Goths were Getae. Moreover, Jordanes named his work *Getica*, not *Gothica*, thereby suggesting the continuity of the history of the Getic peoples.

Now it is amply clear that all classical writers who observed the Goth called them the Getae or Scythians, yet modern scholarship is still apt to reject the united opinion of all these classical scholars—Dexippus, Orosius, Procopius, Isidore of Seville Cassidorus, and Jordanes—as erroneous. Rather, modern scholars turn to the Gutones, a Germanic tribe, for answers. But if we read Jordanes, the author who laid the foundation for the identification between Goths and Gutones, he certainly implies that the Goths were not Germanic. After claiming the Goths were Scythian, he describes the boundaries of Scythia:

Now Scythia borders on the land of Germany as far as the source of the river Ister and the expanse of the Morsian Swamp.... This land, I say—namely, Scythia, stretching far and spreading wide—has on the east the Seres, a race that dwelt at the very beginning of their history on the shore of the Caspian. On the west are the Germans and the river Vistula; on the arctic side, namely the north, it is surrounded by Ocean; on the south by Persis, Albania, Hiberia, Pontus and the farthest channel of the Ister, which is called the Danube all the way from mouth to source.... It extends as far [east] as the Huns, Albani [Alani?] and Seres. (Mierow 1915, 58-59)

Here it can be inferred that Jordanes believed Germans and Germany to be an entity entirely distinct from Goths, whom he considered to be Scythians. This conviction is strengthened by Jordanes's writing:

Let no one say that this name [King Telephus] is quite foreign to the Gothic tongue, and let no one who is ignorant cavil at the fact that the tribes of men make use of many names, even as the Romans borrow from the Macedonians, the Greeks from the Romans, the Sarmatians from the Germans, and the Goths frequently from the Huns. (Mierow 1915, 67)

Scholars have interpreted Jordanes's statement variously. But here it is clear that Germans and Goths are considered independent of each other. Wolfram claims the Goths bore Hunnic names and vice-versa (Wolfram 1988, 257). Christensen believes that in this quotation he is trying to remedy the fact that Telephus is a Greek name by claiming names are borrowed (Christensen 2002, 242). Christensen points out that Telephus is also not a Hunnish name (Christensen 2002, 242). Could it be that Jordanes was being honest with his statement, and in those days personal names were not held in such uniqueness as they are today, especially in a period that experienced such a great deal of movement of tribes and political oscillation? Also, it is peculiar how he couples certain tribes together, like the Greeks and Romans, and the Goth and Huns; does this suggest they were associated geographically?

This then leads us to Rackus, who, in 1929, believed the Goths were not Germanic at all, but belonged to the Aestian race (Rackus 1929). Though his thesis is debatable and not widely acknowledged, he does make an interesting point regarding the Goths and Germans; he states:

[Many] are skeptical concerning the 'Teutonic' origin of the Goths. And why should there be no doubts, if nobody called Germans 'Gothi', and even lately nobody calls them so? The Poles, the Russians, the Czechs and all other Slavonic people call Germans 'niemcy'; the Lithuanian call Germans 'vakeiciai'; the Frenchmen call them 'l'Allemands'; the English people call them 'Germans,' even the Germans call themselves 'Deutsche.' (Rackus 1929, 20)

But then what was the origin of the "Goths"? Jordanes, after discussing the oral tradition of the Goths and their origination from the "vagina nationum" or "womb of nations" in Scandza at some date in 1490-1324 B.C., discusses the three abodes of the Goths. Now Isidore of Seville, who wrote approximately concurrent with Jordanes, never mentions Scandza, nor does any other classical writer whose work survives to the present (Christensen 2002). Even if we accept this tradition at face value, the date of exodus from Scandza must be viewed skeptically, since the first of the three abodes of the Goths as discussed by Jordanes matches that of Dexippus, who probably was the first to write of the Goths around the middle of the third century A.D., probably approximately 270 A.D., about an event in 238 A.D. (Christensen 2002, 233; Wolfram 1988, 28). Jordanes writes about the three abodes:

We read that in their first abode the Goths dwelt in the land of Scythia near Lake Maeotis; in their second, Moesia, Thrace and Dacia, and in their third they dwelt again in Scythia, above the sea of Pontus.... Of course if anyone in our city says that the Goths had an origin different from that I have related, let him object. For myself, I prefer to believe in what I have read, rather than put trust in old wives' tales. (Mierow 1915, 60)

So the Goths were residing in what Jordanes called "Oium" in the "Scythian" tongue (Mierow 1915, 57), which Wolfram located on his Map 2, "The Goths in the Third Century," to

be exactly where the former European Scythians were located, north of the Black Sea, between the Dniester (Tyras) and Dniepr Rivers (Wolfram 1988: Map 2). Also in the third century, the Heruli, an allied Gothic tribe, was found to be likewise north of the Black Sea, near Lake Maeotis, adjacent to the Alans on the mouth of the Don River (Wolfram 1988: Map 2). This region is several thousand miles from the mouth of the Vistula.

Further, Jordanes not only believed that the Goths were Getae, he discusses the exploits of the Massagetae and Queen Tomyris in 529 B.C. Jordanes writes:

Then Cyrus, King of Persians.... waged an unsuccessful war against Tomyris, queen of the Getae.... [T]he Getae and their queen defeated, conquered and overwhelmed the Parthians [Persians] and took rich plunder from them. There for the first time the race of the Goths saw silken tents." (Mierow 1915, 67-68)

Here it should be noted that Jordanes believed the Persians were Parthians, which conclusion he possibly based on Pompeius Trogus, who in turn probably cited Justin (Christensen 2002, 239). Ammianus Marcellinus also believed the Persians were descendants of the Scythians, based on their martial skills (Christensen 2002, 239-40). Whether this identification regarding the Persians is correct or not is immaterial; what is important is that Jordanes is discussing Cyrus the Great, King of Persia, and his battle with Tomyris, the Queen of the Massagetae.

In addition to the above-mentioned authorities, Eunapis and Zozimus believed that the early incursion of barbarians into Rome were not Goths but "Scythians" (Heather 1991, 101, 135). Zosimos, who wrote in the fifth and early sixth century, claims "the Sauromatian [Sarmatians] ... dwelt by the Maeotis and attacked the Empire in 322" (Vasiliev 1936, 22). Vasiliev adds, "In spite of considerable ethnographic confusion in Zosimos...who in other places calls the Goths Scythians, nevertheless in the references given the general sense indicates that the Sauromatians (Sarmatians) are the Goths" (Vasiliev 1936, 23). He adds, in an important footnote, "Schmidt thinks it is possible that these Sarmatians (Sauromatians) were the Heruli or the Crimean Goths" (Vasiliev 1936, 23). Konow also believes the Heruli are the Crimean Goths (Konow 1912). This observation makes sense as the Heruli were first found not very far from the Sarmatian Alans (Wolfram 1988, 52), and this could very well mean that they were a branch of

the Sarmatians. And, as will be shown later, according to Konow, the Heruli found their way to India (Konow 1912), which strengthens this observation.

Moreover, Eunapis (fourth-fifth century) believed the Huns defeated them:

The Scythians (=Goths) had been defeated and destroyed by the Huns and were being utterly extirpated. Those who were captured were massacred with their wives and children. There was no limit to the savagery employed in their killing. (Heather 1991, 135)

Vasiliev notes that Eunapis calls the Goths Scythians, but also holds that they were not "exterminated" as Eunapis suggests, but were "driven out" (Vasiliev 1936, 24). And this makes sense, as after the Hunnic raids in southern Russia, which started around 370 (Vasiliev 1936, 24), the Goths began pushing against Rome. For example, within six years after the Hunnic incursion (approximately 370) into the steppes, the Goths defeated the Eastern Roman army at Adrianople (Kennedy 2002, 10).

Even Jordanes claims the Goths and Huns were archenemies. After discussing the origins of the Huns, which he believed to be from the mixed parentage of Goths and Scythian witches named "Haliurunnae," he claims that the "race of Huns, fiercer than ferocity itself, flamed forth against the Goths" (Mierow 1915, 85). Jordanes also says, "Now in my opinion the evil spirits, from whom the Huns are descended, did this from envy of the Scythians" (Mierow 1915, 86). And we should also remember Jordanes's claim that the Goths frequently borrowed names from the Huns (Mierow 1915, 67). So does the early Gothic raid into Rome indicate that possibly the Goths were being uprooted in Central Asia by these Huns? Did a chain reaction of events occur, probably in Central Asia, whose ripple effect started to be noticed in the third century, before the Huns, and the Alans before them, appeared in the later fourth century?

Christensen keenly notes:

The Romans did not find the Goths particularly interesting until major conflicts arose between the Goths and the Roman Empire in connection with the events following the Hunnic assaults in 375. Only then did the Goths become an actual threat to the Romans, and only then did the Romans become seriously concerned

with finding out more about this people they were fighting, and more about their origins. (Christensen 2002, 42)

Could this indicate that the Goths were "pushed" into Roman territory from the steppes? Heather writes:

In the summer of 376, a large force of Goths came to the river Danube, the north-eastern boundary of the Roman Empire, and asked for asylum. Two Gothic kings had just died, and another been deposed, as they tried—and failed—to hold in check the expansion of Hunnic tribes into their territories on the northern shores of the Black Sea. Within two years, the Goths had precipitated, in turn, a crisis of Hadrianople (modern Edirne in European Turkey), and they defeated and killed the Emperor Valens, ruler of the eastern half of the Roman Empire, along with two-thirds of his army. The victory unleashed a chain of events, which changed the course of European history. (Heather 1996, 1)

The Alans appear to have been "pushed" into Europe under pressure from Huns, so why couldn't the Alans have pushed the Goths from their position in European Scythia, north of the Black Sea? Further, could this not explain why the Alans and Goths were so often confused?

Alans—a Branch of the Goths?

Recalling Procopius, who believed that the Alans were a branch of the Goths (Dewing 1916, 2: 23), there may be some weight to this claim. This is probably why Klaproth called the Alans and the Massagetae "Sarmato-Goths" (Klaproth 1826, Maps vol. 7). We know from Marcellinus, the foremost authority on the Alans, that the Alans were once known as the Massagetae (Rolfe 1939, 387-90; Christensen 2002, 42), or at least were very closely related to them (McGovern 1939, 463). However, Marcellinus does not appear to equate the Goth and Alans, as does Procopius; neither will we ever know if he did, as part of his work is lost (Christensen 2002, 42). However, Pinkerton claims that Ammianus Marcellinus, upon "...telling about the death of emperor Decius [A.D. 251], who succumbed in battle against the Goths, he calls them Scythicae gentes" (Pinkerton 1804, 17).

But from Jordanes we do know that they were closely associated (Littleton and Malcor 2000, 27). For example Jordanes writes about Emperor Maximinus, "Maximin was made Emperor by the army; a man born in Thrace of most humble parentage, his father being a Goth named Micca, and his mother of the Alani called Ababa" (Mierow 1915, 74). The belief that Emperor Maximinus had a Gothic father and Alan mother is also attested by Littleton and Malcor (Littleton and Malcor 2000, 39). So it is apparent that the Goths willingly married the Central Asian nomadic warriors, and there was a close union between the Alans and the Goths (Littleton and Malcor 2000, 39). Does this not suggest the Goths were steppes people themselves?

Jordanes, a Goth himself (though some have argued that he may have a part-Alan ancestry [Mierow 1966, 3-4]) named his work *Getica* instead of *Gothica*, so he must have believed strongly that his ancestors were Getae or Getes. Even those who, like Bradley, believe the alleged relationship between the Goths and the Getae is erroneous, must admit something similar in writing the following, "Even the historian Jordanes, himself a Goth, actually calls his book a Getic history, and mixes up the traditions of his own people with the tales he had read in books about the Getes" (Bradley 1888, 19). In all actuality, it may be possible that Jordanes knew what he was talking about, and perhaps scholarship closed the door on the Scythians from the late 1800s or so onwards because little was known about them, and at the time a great deal of emphasis was placed on language. In recent years much more has been learned about the Scythians, who in earlier times were often confused with Huns, Mongol, Turks, etc., whom we now know to be Indo-European and Iranian language speakers (Davis-Kimball, Bashilov, & Yablonsky 1995). Further, the Goths also did not leave much of a written record, only a few inscriptions and a portion of the Greek Gothic Bible (Konow 1912). Yet modern scholarship still thinks that the identification between Goths and Scythians was erroneous.

This problem was noted by Littleton and Malcor in their rather interesting book on Arthurian Legends, entitled *From Scythia to Camelot*, in which they argue that the core of the Arthurian legends came from the Iranian Sarmatians and Alans; they respond to a claim by the author Goffart who believed the classical writers' identification of the Goths with the Scythian was erroneous:

According to Goffart, the Romans thought of the Goths as 'Scythians' because they inhabited and used 'Goth' as a new term for the same people instead of thinking of a new people on the old land. In actuality the Romans may have known what they were talking about, given the number of Sarmatian and Alan tribes that were allied with the various tribes of Goths. (Littleton and Malcor 2000, 27)

Perhaps archaeological evidence can demonstrate how close these tribes really were? We know that both the Goths and the Alans practiced artificial skull deformation, a finding made in the comparatively recent (1978) archaeological discoveries in Hungary, which suggests that the Goths and Alans may have been more closely related than previously believed (Crubezy 1990). Sulimirski has pinpointed this practice as Central Asian and ascribes it to the Alans and Huns. He writes, "A practice, often wrongly regarded as characteristic of all the Sarmatians, was the artificial deformation of skulls, effected by binding the child's head in a special manner in order to make it grow to a particular shape....It was widely practiced in Central Asia during the early Christian centuries, especially among the Huns, and was evidently adopted by the Eastern Alans" (Sulimirski 1970, 37-38). Bachrach also claims that the Alans performed this practice of deforming skulls (Bachrach 1973, 68).

Crubezy writes about the practice of skull deformation:

One problem is to identify the origin of the practice of skull deformation. If a possible source is believed to be some external ethnic population, this could well be the Visigoths, who settled in 418 in this region. The Goths had been in contact very early on with peoples who practiced this custom, especially during their migration—to the shores of the Black Sea in 257-8. Some deformed skulls have been attributed to them, those from Feszthely-Fenekpuskza, Hungary, those from Vienna, Austria, two from the Kvanj cemetery, Yugoslavia, those from Padua and Florence, Italy. (Crubezy 1990, 192-93)

Now the Goths were certainly in contact with the Alans, and they could have picked up this practice from them, but this would require substantial interaction. Or maybe they originally



also practiced this custom. Wolfram believes the Goths picked up this custom from Huns: "The Goths had become familiar with the practice of artificially deforming the skull..." (Wolfram 1988, 257). However, the Huns, whom many regard as the originators of skull deformation, may not have practiced it; Crubezy writes: "[N]one of the best-known Hun cemeteries have shown, according to Kiszely, any skull deformation at all" (Crubezy 1990, 196). It may be that the interaction between the Goths and the Alans (Massagetae) was very significant, such as to lead them to follow a practice such as skull deformation. So if indeed there was close interaction between these two communities, can we perhaps examine the relationship between the name "Goth" and "Getae" for further clues?

"Goth"—the Roman name for the Former Greek "Getae"

Referring back to the statement of Orosius Paulus, we note that he believed that Goth was a new name for Getae (Orosius Adv. Pag. I. XVI). Christensen writes:

Furthermore we have seen that the reasoning demonstrated by Orosius was not new, as Jerome had previously asserted that the Getae and the Goths were identical people, and that he had found this claim in the writings of the learned men of the past. (Christensen 2002, 233)

Jakob Grimm, who notes this and additionally points out that "Getae" disappears in classical works and seems to be replaced by the word "Goth," emphasized this view. Christensen writes:

J. Grimm was the last to defend an opposing view, based on the argument that the Getae are mentioned during early Antiquity. They later disappear completely, while the Goths appear in the sources at approximately the same time. Was it conceivable that the Getae just suddenly disappeared? His point is, of course, that a certain people were initially referred to as Getae and later came to be called Goths. (Christensen 2002, 247)

It should be noted that Pinkerton also claimed that the Goths were descended from Scythians or Getae in 1804, in his *Origins and Progress of Scythians or Goths*: "It is advisable to show that the words Scythae, Getae and Gothi were only different names of the same people" (Pinkerton 1804, 4). He then tried to prove, "1. that the Getes and Goths are the same people; and 2. that the Getes and Goths are the same people as Scythes" (Pinkerton 1804, 6).

Returning to Grimm, whose view is directly attested by Orosius Paulus, the term "Goth" was used by the Romans to replace the former Grecian name "Getae," and "Getae" disappears around this same time in the classical accounts. Further, according to Rawlinson, "Grimm has shown that the change from Getae to Goth is according to the analogy of the Teutonic and Greco-Roman forms of speech" (Rawlinson 1880, 181). Pinkerton, on the other hand, perhaps crudely suggests that the phonetic change from Getae to Gothi is analogous to the change from "get" to "got" in modern English (Pinkerton 1804: 7-8). Pinkerton then lists Claudian, Sidoine Appollinarus, Eusone, Orosius, Jerome, Ennodius, Procopius, Jordanes, and Isidore of Seville to support his connection between Getae and Goths (Pinkerton 1804: 8-9). Further, Philostorgius writes, according to Pinkerton, "The Scythians, the old ones were called Getae, and the modern ones Goths" (Pinkerton 1804, 16).

Rawlinson also believes that there is a relationship between the Thracian towns that end with "bria," which he suggests may be analogous to Anglo-Saxon "borough" and German "burg" (Rawlinson 1880, 181). Further, Eliade makes a very interesting point: "Jordanes uses the term 'Getae' when he discusses ancient history and, with a few exceptions (60, 308, 315, 316), used 'Gothi' when he refers to more recent events" (Eliade 1970, 72). This indicates that Jordanes stays fairly consistent in his terminology, and suggests that the people discussed may continue the same while their name changes slightly from the Greek usage to that of the Romans.

Kephart bolsters Grimm's view and suggests a possible analogous tribal name structure; he writes: "The Goths originally were known to the Greeks as the Getae, but often were referred to as Scythians, a geographical term. Thus, such compound tribal names as Massagetae, Thyssagetae, Tyrigetae, etc., show a striking analogy to the later names of Ostrogoths and Visigoths used by the same people. The later Roman name was Gothi..." (Kephart 1960, 263). Waddell also makes the claim that the term "Goth" was first coined by Romans and that Goths themselves never used it. Waddell writes, "[T]he aspirated form 'Goth' having been coined by the Romans and never used by the Goths themselves" (Waddell 1929, 545, 584). Therefore, the

term "Goth" was applied by the Romans to the Grecian Getae. This view is summarized by Rawlinson, who says, "Now it is almost certain that the Getae—one of the principle Thracian tribes, according to Herodotus—are the Gothi or Gothones of the Romans, who are the old German Guthai or Guthans, and our Goths.... The one name superseded the other in the same country" (Rawlinson 1880, 181). Rawlinson continues:

The identity of the Getae, with the Goths of later times is more than a plausible conjecture. It may be regarded as historically certain. Moreover, the compounds Massa-Getae, Thyssa-Getae, Tyri-Getae, have a striking analogy to the later names Visi-goths and Ostro-goths. (Rawlinson 1880, 69)

To this should be added, as noted above, that the identity of Getae and the Goths is not a modern conjecture at all; it is based on the testimony of all classical writers concurrent with Goths. So what did the Goths call themselves? According to Bradley, it was "Gut" or "Guta"; he writes based on a fragment of the Gothic calendar and the word "Gut-thiuda": "[I]t may be inferred that the name which, following the Romans, we spell as 'Goths' was properly Gutan—in the singular Guta.... It seems now to be generally thought that the meaning of Gutans is 'the (nobly) born'" (Bradley 1888, 5). Wolfram writes, "[T]he stem Gut-, which is also attested by the vernacular tradition in the words Gutthiuda (land of the Gothic people) and \*Gutans (Goth). From around 300 we find in the ancient language almost exclusively the spelling Got(th)-" (Wolfram 1988, 20).

We know therefore that Getae, pronounced "Gut-ay," can be reduced to the root "Gut-" or "Guti" and that the Getae can linguistically and geographically be our Goths (Mallory and Mair 2000, 98-99; Rawlinson 1880, 16; Dahiya 1980, 23; E. B. 1911, 28: 944; Tod 1829, I: 72-73, 129). This "Gut-" or "Guti" is called the "strong" linguistic form of name of the Goths by Wolfram (Wolfram 1988, 20).

Therefore, with complete support from classical accounts, geographic proof, and linguistic proof, it certainly appears that the Getae were the forerunners of the Goths. And, further, the compound names of Ostrogoths and Visigoths are analogous to names given to the former Getes—Getae, Massagetae, Thyssagetae, Thyrsagetae, Tyrigetae, Euergetae, and frozen

Getae. These names are all either regional or attributive names, which strikes an analogy with those of the modern Panjabi Jats. It is probably for this reason Hewitt writes:

Their [the Jats'] very name connects them with the Getae of Thrace and thence with the Guttons said by Pytheas to live on the southern shores of the Baltic, the Guttons placed by Ptolemy and Tacitus on the Vistula in the country of the Lithuanians and the Goths of Gothland in Sweden. (Hewitt 1894, 481)

### Goths in India

Interestingly enough, the Panjabi Jats also are classified on a regional basis. Nowadays, as Punjab has been divided between India and Pakistan, three principal divisions exist on the Indian side—the Majha Jats, the Malwa Jats, and the Doaba Jats (Barstow 1928, 114). These classifications correspond to the fertile valleys, which lie between two rivers: the Majha between the Ravi and Beas rivers, the Doaba between the Beas and Sutlej Rivers, and the Malwa south and east of the Sutlej River.

This leads us to an interesting article written by Sten Konow, entitled "Goths in Ancient India," in which he makes reference to some inscriptions found in a Buddhist Temple near Junnar in Western India dated around the second century A.D. (Konow 1912, 380). These inscriptions make reference to a people characterized as "Gatana" and "Gatas," who Konow takes to be Goths, based on the personal names attached to them—Irila and Cita (Konow 1912). The inscriptions, Indraj No. 5 and No. 33, read, respectively, "Gift of two cisterns by the yavana [foreigner] Irila of the gatas" and "Gift of a refectory of the community by the yavana Cita of the gatas" (Konow 1912, 380). Konow continues, "[T]his word leads me to think that the gata-yavanas were in reality Goths" (Konow 1912, 380).

We already have shown that it is possible, even plausible, that the Alans were in Afghanistan and Northwest India at this time (Cunningham 1894, 101). Does that mean that the Goths could have been in India as well, because, they were, after all, closely allied? Further, the word "Gatas" can easily be palatalized to "Jat," and since the modern form of the word "Jat" first reliably occurs in the Arab writings in the early eighth century A.D. (Cunningham 1894, 96), it is quite possible that there was enough time for a palatalization of Gatas or Getae to have occurred. This hypothesis, of course, is strengthened by the circumstance that Timur, in the

fourteenth century, encountered the Jattah, or perhaps one might say Getae, in Central Asia (J.D. Cunningham 1849, 299; Toynbee 1934, 2: 145). Perhaps, as Tod wrote, "the Indu-Getae may be accounted the Gothic races of India" (Tod 1829, 651).

Returning to the inscriptions, we see that Konow takes the name *Irila* to be a regular Gothic form for Swedish *Erila*, Anglo-Saxon *eorl*, English *earl*, Old Norse *jarl*, Old Saxon *erl*, and connects it with the ethnic name *erula* or *heruli* (Konow 1912, 380-81). This etymology seems reasonable and has some weight, as the Heruli who were closely allied with the Goths are mentioned around A.D. 268 north of the Black Sea, near the Sea of Azov (Wolfram 1988, 52), perhaps indicating they had come from someplace farther east. Further, Konow writes:

According to Richard Lowe, the Goths of the Crimea were properly Herules, and their dialect in later times presents some peculiar features. One of these is of interest in the present connexion, viz. the substitution of *o* for *u* before an *a* or *o*; compare *boga*, *bow*. There is no reason for doubting that this change is old in the dialect, and we would then have a Gothic language of the kind needed in order to explain the form of Latin *Goti*, Greek *Gothoi*, Indian *Gata*. To sum up, it will be seen that the word *gata*, which has hitherto remained unexplained, exactly corresponds to Latin *goti*, and that we know of a Gothic dialect in which the name of the Goths must have contained an *o* in the base...it seems impossible to explain the words *gata*, *Irila* and *Cita* in any other way. (Konow 1912, 384)

That Konow mentions that the Heruli were the Crimean or Tetraxite Goths is interesting, as Vasiliev also holds this view (Vasiliev 1936). This could further suggest that these Goths were Sarmatians, as Schmidt believes is possible (Vasiliev 1936, 23). Pinkerton also identifies the Heruli with Sarmatians (Pinkerton 1804: 28-29). Jordanes writes about the Heruli, "Now the aforesaid race [Heruli], as the historian Ablabius tells us, dwelt near Lake Maeotis in swampy places which the Greeks call *hele*; hence they were named Heruli" (Mierow 1915, 84). Procopius mentions about the Tetraxites:

[At] the point where the outlet of the lake commences dwell the Goths who are called Tetraxites, a people who are not very numerous, but they reverence and

observe the rights of Christians as carefully as any people do.... (Vasiliev 1936, 58)

This reference to Christianity among the Tetraxite Goths may suggest that they predated the other Goths who followed their traditional pagan Arian beliefs. Perhaps being exposed to the Christian faith longer than the other groups of Goths made them susceptible to it and may have led to the shedding of some of their barbarism. They dwelt at the head of Lake Maeotis, until they were forced by the Huns to flee (Vasiliev 1936, 59). These Crimean Goths continued to live on the peninsula and survived until the Middle Ages (Vasiliev 1936, 60). Were the Crimean Goths analogous to the modern Ossetes who still live in the Caucasus today?

We find it interesting that a tenth-century writer named Genesis wrote about the Crimean Goths, who were believed to have been involved in the rebellion of Thomas the Slavonian in Asia Minor "at the outset of the reign of Michael II the Stammerer, in 820-823" (Vasiliev 1936, 107). What is interesting is that the list of tribes that were mentioned included the "...Slavs, Huns, Vandals, Getae, Manichaens, Lazi, Alan..." (Vasiliev 1936, 107). According to Kunik, "As the Getae are put between the Vandals and Manichaens, no one else may be meant but the Goths of Asia Minor" (Vasiliev 1936, 107). Bury also holds that the "Getae" mentioned here are the Crimean Goths (Vasiliev 1936, 107). So it appears that if the Heruli were the Crimean Goths, some could also have been found in India, as Konow believes.

The other name in the Junnar Inscriptions is Cita, which Konow translates to Helda (Konow 1912, 381). He summarizes: "Both Irila and Cita are characterized as gatas, and this latter word is the regular Indian form corresponding to Latin goti, the Goths" (Konow 1912, 381). He continues:

The oldest indigenous forms of the name of the Goths, which occur in the inscription on the gold ring from Pietroassa, gutaniowihailag, and in the word guthiudai, in the Gothic people, in the fragment of a Gothic calendar preserved in the Codex Ambrosianus A of Wulfila.... The Goths must accordingly have called themselves gutans or gutos and not gotans or gotos. (Konow 1912, 382)

He is further convinced that the Indian "Gata" must have been inscribed correctly, as "Indians have always been keen observers of sounds...and those who wrote the word gata in the Junnar inscriptions can only have heard the original denomination from the mouth of these gatas themselves" (Konow 1912, 383).

Now it is unlikely that the Goths proper would have migrated, even as Gutonic traders, to India by pushing their way through Central Asia, as Konow suggests (Konow 1912, 385). However, according to Shore, the Goths had trading networks as far as Samarkhand (Shore 1906, 55), so it is possible, though not likely, that the Goths could have ventured into India. It is even less conceivable that the Goths made any sea-faring contact, which in those days would have been quite a feat. Moreover, one would expect to find European coinage of some sort near Junnar, and this does not appear to be the case.

What is more reasonable is that the "gatas" of Konow are actually the Getae, or rather the Massagetae, of Central Asia, who probably existed in the form of Saka Satraps of India or, even more likely, members of Da Yuezhi/Yuti (Massagetae [Knobloch 2001]) and, therefore, generically speaking, the "gatas" must have been a tribe of the Indo-Scythians described by the Greek writers. We have already shown that it is possible that the Alans were in India, and that the Alans were the Massagetae, so it seems more plausible that the Massagetae were responsible for those inscriptions found at Junnar and that these "Gata" could be represented by the Indian Jats who live north of that region today. We have also demonstrated that the Jats are descendants of the Massagetae (Shrava 1981, 2-3), and we know that the Kushans were Buddhist at those times. So the fact that the inscriptions were found in a Buddhist Temple (Wolfram 1988, 396) perhaps sheds more light on this issue. We also know that Saka inscriptions, found at Junnar around the middle of the first century A.D. by a Saka minister, refer to a Saka Mahakshatrapa (Great Governor) and that another mentions a Saka named Aduthama. This suggests the presence of Sakas in Junnar (Shrava 1981, 36, 64, 68) around a century before the gatas of Konow. Further, as the inscriptions are dated to the second century A.D. (Konow 1912, 380), this is before the historical form "Gothi" appears in classical literature, which was around the middle of the third century A.D. at the Black Sea region (Wolfram 1988, 19-20).

So instead of the "gatas" of Konow representing an easterly migration of the Goths from the Vistula area, could this, since the inscription predates the historical form "Gothi," represent the same wave of Goths, whose original homeland was Central Asia? Could this explain why the

Heruli were noted along with the Goths at the Black Sea during their raid in the mid- to late third century, while the Gatas, being geographically closer to India (if we believe they came from Central Asia) made it to Junnar in the second century? This is not the view of Konow: he believes that "gatas" must have spread out from their location on the Vistula eastwards towards India, thus connecting with the Gutones, who were situated on the Vistula, and made their way to India (Konow 1912). But is this a reasonable hypothesis?

Konow writes, "If I am right in identifying the gatas of the Junnar inscriptions with the Goths, the only theory which will suit the facts is, I think, that the various forms goti, Gotou, gatas, have all been taken from some Gothic dialect which agreed with most Germanic tongues in changing an old u to o when an a or o occurred in the following syllable" (Konow 1912, 383). This appears to make linguistic sense, but it still seems much more logical and in line with classical accounts to believe that the Goths were originally an Asiatic nation; that Alans probably also were found in India seems to strengthen this belief.

Earlier we noted that the Goths practiced artificial skull deformation, like the Alans (Crubezy 1990, 192-93). But what else do we know about the Goths? What about their dress? In his *The Germanic Invasions*, Lucian Mussett expressed the belief that the Goths originated in Scandinavia but borrowed Iranian cultural features once they settled in the Black Sea area. These features included such components "as mounted combat, items of dress (the fur robes of the Gothic kings seem to be of an Iranian type), and most notably the famous 'art of the steppes', whose origins were Sarmatian and Sassanian" (Mussett 1975, 17). He stated elsewhere that "The Goths became semi-nomadic horsemen, took to wearing coats of mail and, in the case of kings at least, Iranian costume, to such an extent that the Greco-Roman authors frequently confused them with the Scythians, or took Alans to be a branch of the Goths" (Mussett 1975, 36). And, "[I]n the fourth century there is evidence of intermarriage between the Alans and Goths" (Mussett 1975, 17). Sulimirski also suggests a cultural fusion (Sulimirski 1970, 163). The fact that there was a "cultural fusion" begs the question. We must ask whether the Alans and Goths both were originally Central Asian people? Thus, when Procopius mentioned the Melanchlaeni or Black-Mantles (a term used for the Massagetae [Yablonsky 1990]) as a name for the Goths (Dewing 1916, 2: 9-10), did this not imply that they had been confused with Eastern Scythes, or that the Eastern Scythes and/or Sarmatians made up a great portion of the Gothic people?



That Jordanes mentions Gothic or Scythian witches, or Haliurunnae, and their relationship with the Huns is not only peculiar, but may further suggest a possible connection with Goths to Scythia and a relationship to Huns. Jordanes write about the origins of the Huns:

[T]he Getae...[in] the land of Scythia...found...certain witches...called... Haliurunnae. Suspecting these women, he [Filimer] compelled them to wander in solitary exile afar from his army. There the unclean spirits, who beheld them as they wandered through the wilderness, bestowed their embraces upon them and begat this savage race, which dwelt at first in the swamps, a stunted, foul and puny tribe, scarcely human and having not language save one which bore slight resemblance to human speech. Such was the descent of the Huns who came to the country of the Goths. (Mierow 1915, 85)

Many modern authorities, unable to assign an etymology to Haliurunnae, have dismissed this story as a myth. For example, Christensen cites Goffart who states cynically:

I like to imagine Cassidorus dictating his history and pausing to question his saio ajudant: 'By the way, Giberich, how does one say 'witch' in your language?' 'That's 'haliurunna', sir.' 'Thank you, Giberich, I don't suppose you know whether it takes two n's or one?' 'No, sir'. (Christensen 2002, 242)

Wolfram, however, takes "Haliurunnae" to be "the women who engaged in magic with the world of the dead" (Wolfram 1988, 107). Now, whether this story is true or not, it does suggest that the Goths are "somehow" related to Huns (Wolfram 1988, 257), and also shows the demonic or negative view that the Goths had towards the Huns (Wolfram 1988, 257), suggesting that they were arch-enemies. Still the Romans saw both the Goth and the Huns as barbarians, so as to call them "wild Getae [Goths]", "dirty Huns," and "savage Alans" (Wolfram 1988, 137).

Klaproth sees the Haliurunnae as "Alrunna" (Klaproth 1826, 236), which leads me to believe that this may be an Iranian word that is perhaps related to Alans. An Iranian etymology for Haliurunnae could further suggest that the name is "Scythian," as Jordanes suggests (Mierow 1915, 85), and this would bolster the premise of a steppes origin for the Goths. One such

tentative Iranian etymology for Klaproth's "Alrunna," which seems similar to that given by Wolfram, is "Al" being curtailed for "Alan" and "Runnan," which means "women" (M. Singh 1895, 955), thereby suggesting Alanic women. It is no surprise that, since the Goths were subjected to the Huns in the late fifth century, we find the term "Hunnic Goths," which meant something analogous to the relationship between Slavs and Avars (Wolfram 1988, 266). Further, Jordanes mentions the Amazons and other such Scythic tales or concepts (Wolfram 1988).

What's more is that the Goths appear to have venerated their ancestor or heroes, as discussed by Wolfram:

During the persecution of the Christians Athanaric ordered a wooden idol to be led through his land so that it could be worshipped. This idol perhaps represented the—or, better, an—original ancestor of the Tervingi. Every Gothic subtribe had its own special sacred objects, which were looked after by priest and priestesses...the Tervingi too opened battle with songs in praise of their forefathers. The 'Getic gods' and the 'spirits of (Alaric II's) forefathers'.... (Wolfram 1988, 106)

This too is a custom assigned to Alans, Slavs, and even the modern Jats (Bachrach 1973, 22; Talbot-Rice 1957, 181; Dhillon 1994, 116). Wolfram writes, "In Gaul of around 450 primitive ancestor worship was considered Alanic" (Wolfram 1988, 420). More on the Alanic, Slavic, and Jat practice of ancestor worship will be discussed later. For now it is clear that the Gothic customs do not deviate from those that are Scythic.

And what about other peculiar habits of the Goths, which do not deviate from the world of the Scythians. These include some peculiar customs that appear to be Eastern, for example, greasing ones hair with butter, which while it may have given off a distasteful smell (Wolfram 1988, 6), does appear analogous to the Jat Sikh custom of applying to or washing their hair with yogurt (dhain) or buttermilk (lassi). Or even the unshorn hair and keeping of wooden combs by the Sikhs (McLeod 1976, 51-52)? What about the tattoos of the Scythians? And of course, is there anything further that needs to be said about the Jats', Scythians', or Goths' love of drink (Wolfram 1988, 6, Dhillon 1994, 33)? Does not the striking similarity between the phrases to

"drink like the Goths," said by the Romans (Wolfram 1988, 220) and the Greek phrase, "drinking the Scythian way" (Dhillon 1994, 33) offer some weight to the continuity of Scythian traditions?

Falconry is yet another custom that was practiced by Goths, but whether the custom was original to them or a process of Scythization (Wolfram 1988, 115) is open to question. Oswald claims that falconry probably started in Scythia (Oswald 1982, 3). Even the modern Jats practice falconry (Burton 1852), so much so in fact that the Jat clan with the name Bajwa is said to have been founded by a falconer (Ibbetson 1916, 115). But this seems to be a proof of little weight, as many countries in the world practice falconry today.

Kephart cites S.P. Scott, who wrote:

The Goths...seem to have wandered farther and to have changed more materially as regards their laws, customs, and religious beliefs than other tribes of migratory barbarians. Distinct from the Germans or Teutons, they have nevertheless often been confounded with them, a fact due to their nomadic tendencies, personal appearance, and general habits.... The coincidence of numerous terms of the Gothic language with those of Sanskrit and the identity of many roots of words in both languages have established the origin of the Goths to be Indian and not Scandinavian as was once generally supposed. (Kephart 1960, 502)

To this assertion Kephart adds an important footnote, "As already shown, they came from Gete, in Western Turkistan, and not directly from India" (Kephart 1960, 502). The Getae had probably obtained Prakrit through the Taxilian Kharosthi script of northwest India, which followed reverse migration as far as Khotan during Kanishka's reign with the Mahayana Buddhist movement. This would also help to explain the existence of the Buddhist Temple at Junnar.

Further, Bosworth, a well-respected linguist of his day, said, "The Goths were of Asiatic origin, and it is supposed that they formed a part of the second wave of European population.... the Gothic and Scandinavian languages and nations, have been traced to Iran or Persia...." (Bosworth 1848, 112, 205). Therefore, Bosworth's assertion is in line with the idea of a Scythian or Getic origin for the Goths, but it should be mentioned that the Thracian Getae, which most scholars mistakenly understood to be the "only" Getae, spoke a Thracian language, because their exodus from East of the Caspian was relatively early. Therefore, those who compared the tongue

of the Thracian Getae to those of the Goths were certainly going to find significant differences. The differences in language led many to discredit the link between the Getae and Goths (Bosworth 1848, 114), but, it cannot be overemphasized, language is not a proof of race.

### Gutones

But now, in all fairness and objectivity, let us see if the "gatas" of Konow could be related to the Gutones, and evaluate the modern stance that the Gutones are the forerunners of the Goths. Ptolemy, the last to speak of the Gutones, did not call them German, as did Tacitus—can this mean that even the Gutones were not Germanic? Christensen writes, "Ptolemy has positioned them near the Vistula, even localizing them precisely on the right bank. So might this mean that he did not see them as Germanic at all, but rather as Sarmatian?" (Christensen 2002, 40). Even Pinkerton held that the Gutones of Prussia were the Getae (Pinkerton 1804, 10, 282).

Rackus, who believed that Goths were an Aestian or Eastern Prussian race (Rackus 1929), notes that the Goths were not Teutonic at all, as no one ever called the Germans "Gothi," and they even called themselves "Deutsche" (Rackus 1929, 20). Kephart holds that the Guttones of Pliny were the Getae "bordering on the Germans and living around the gulf later known as Frishces Haff, which is situated on the East Prussian shore of the Baltic Sea at the mouth of the Vistula" (Kephart 1938, 10). He believes that the invasion of Getic territory by King Phillip II of Macedonia (342 B.C.) was the driving force behind the Getic migration further northward towards the Vistula (Kephart 1938, 10). The author contends that the displacement of the Scythians (Early Getes) by the Sarmatians (Later Getes) may have been a major contribution to that movement towards the Baltic. Perhaps this early movement was analogous to the displacement of Goths (Getae) into the Roman frontier under pressure from the Huns?

Wolfram also notes that the Gutones of Ptolemy lived on the "Sarmatian bank of the Vistula" (Wolfram 1988, 39). This appears to have some historical value; in *The Sarmatians*, Sulimirski summarizes the contributions of the Sarmatians:

At different points in time their [Sarmatian] peoples and tribes were driven into almost every western European country, and they were forced eastwards as far as China. The descendents of those who came to England in AD 175 probably still live somewhere in the country.... Little remains to remind the modern world of

their existence—the Ossetinians.... the names of a few Slavonic peoples...some European place-names.... a vague tradition of Sarmatian origin lingering among sections of Polish nobility....(Sulimirski 1970, 202-203)

So, indeed, the Sarmatians had a presence in Poland, and, further, we know that the Massagetae in later times were classified as Sarmatians (McGovern 1939). Sulimirski writes, "[A]ncient Sarmatian traditions survived in Poland for a long time. A belief in the Sarmatian origin of Poland was widespread for centuries among the Polish nobility" (Sulimirski 1970, 167). So it appears that the area that corresponds to modern Poland was part of ancient Sarmatia. There is also some archaeological evidence of Western Alans in modern Poland (Sulimirski 1970, 166).

Interestingly, Rackus discusses a people called Samogetian, who had a region in Lithuania named after them. He writes: "In old documents the Samogitian territory is called 'Samo-getia'. On ancient Lithuanian coins we note 'Samogitia'.... Now the word 'Samo-getia' means 'Low Getia' or the 'Lower Gothia'" (Rackus 1929, 32). Further he believes the Heruli are the forerunners of the Samogetians (Rackus 1929, 218-20). Could this mean that Konow was correct in identifying the "gatas" with the Gutones (Konow 1912)?

Well, it appears that the Vistula river area was the location of a lesser-known tribe of the Getae known as the "Frozen Getae" who were mentioned by the classical writer Horace (Kephart 1960, 477). Horace (65 – 8 B.C.) writes in his *Odes IV*:

Who now would fear Parthian or frozen Scythian, who the teeming brood of rough German forests, while Caesar still is ours, or give a thought to fierce Hiberia's warriors? (Wickham 1903, 122)

Another translation of Horace's *Odes* appears more reasonable:

Who fears the swarms that Germany brings forth from her rough loins? Let the Scythians in the north, or Parthians rearm, or the wild tribes of Spain rally to war again, we sleep as long as Caesar's safe from harm. (Michie 1964, 237)

Around 63 B.C., Mithradates VI, the King of Pontus (121-63 B.C) waged a war in Scythia near the Black Sea against the Sarmatian Roxolani tribe (Kephart 1960, 477). Although Mithradates soon died, his son's army was successful in subduing the Roxolani and by B.C. 50 the army left the area around the Greek city of Olbia. At around this time, from the north, the now defeated Roxolani were raided by a people referred to by Horace as the "Frozen Getae" (Kephart 1960, 477). As we know, the historical form "Goth" did not appear until around the third century A.D. (Christensen 2002, 40); were these "frozen" Getae our Gutones? This conclusion seems to be in line with geographic evidence, and with the settlement of Sarmatians, or Scythian pushed into the regions by Sarmatians. Further, as the name implies, they were living in a cold climate, and Kephart believes the region corresponds to modern Latvia, Lithuania, Eastern Prussia, the isle of Gotland, southern Sweden, and certain Danish islands, with the bulk of the population clustered around the river Vistula (Kephart 1960, 476-77). But it is difficult to believe that the Gutones as described by Tacitus (Robinson 1935, 320) were capable of defeating the Roxolani.

However, it seems that it is possible for the Gutones (frozen Getae?) to be the forerunners of the Goths. But what is more important is that the Goths are still either a Scythian or Sarmatian people who could have divided into a number of very populous and comprehensive peoples spreading all the way to India. In either case the Getae or Massagetae seem to be the forerunners of the Goths. Thus, whether one desires to keep in line with the classical testimony and seeks the origin of the Goths with the Getae, which was the general belief in olden times, or whether one believes the modern position that the forerunners of the Goths were the Gutones (frozen Getae?), whose migration may or may not be represented by the material "overlap" between Wielbark and Chernjachov archaeological complexes (Heather 1996) is still, in the opinion of the author, up in the air. However, in either case it appears that the Getae were somehow involved in the ethno-genesis of the Goths. But then what about Scandinavia?

#### Scandza

In the very recent work *Cassiodorus Jordanes and the History of the Goths: Studies in a Migration Myth*, A. S. Christensen of the University of Copenhagen argues that the Goth emigration from Scandinavia may be questionable and potentially disregarded (Christensen 2002). This stance is of course strengthened by the belief that the Wielbark Archaeological Complex

(thought to represent the Gutones) is autochthonous (Wolfram 1988, 39). Further, there is no strong Scandinavian archaeological evidence in the earliest Wielbark cemeteries (Heather 1996, 26-30). But then again, Jordanes sees the Goth leaving Scandinavia almost 1500 years before Wielbark (Christensen 2002, 40). Further, Isidore of Seville, who wrote around the same time as Jordanes, does not even mention Scandinavia (Donini and Ford 1966), which could suggest that the whole idea was created by Cassidorus (whose work *Origo Gothica* was available to Jordanes), which is said to have been commissioned by King Theodoric (Wolfram 1988, 3-30) to describe his family tradition. Wolfram asks, "So why not end the fruitless quarrels and 'believe' Theodoric the Great, who derives his origins and those of his Goths from Scandinavia?" (Wolfram 1988, 21).

Indeed, there must have been some reason for Theodoric to believe he came from a remote Scandinavia, but then again it is doubtful that the entire Gothic nation, as well as other nations, sprang from Scandinavia. So even though Grimm feels so against the Scandinavian origin of Goths, it should be examined. Christensen writes:

J. Grimm is fairly convinced that the Getae came to Europe from Asia, and he cannot imagine that they would subsequently have migrated into Scandinavia, only to journey once again back to the land of the Getae. J. Grimm therefore feels obliged to reject Jordanes's account of the Gothic emigration from Scandza. (Christensen 2002, 247-48)

And Grimm is not alone; another early writer, Bosworth, makes the same assertion as Grimm:

According to the opinion of many Scandinavian antiquaries, the Goths who overran the Roman Empire, came from Scandinavian or Sweden; but Tacitus speaks of no Goths in Scandinavia, and only of Suiones, which is the same name that the Swen-skar (Swedes) apply to themselves at the present day. It is therefore more probable, as some learned Swedes acknowledge, that when the Goths wandered towards the west and south of Europe, some of them, in early times, crossed the Baltic and established themselves in the south of Sweden and

the island of Gothland. We know from Tacitus, just cited, that the Goths were in Pomerania and Prussia, near the Vistula, about A.D. 80.... (Bosworth 1848, 113-14)

Kephart also suggests that there might have been a reverse migration into Scandinavia by the Goths. He says:

Few historians rely upon the vague tradition advanced by Jordanes of the origin of the whole Gothic race in the Scandinavian Peninsula. As stated by Beck: The credibility of the story of the migration from Sweden has been much discussed by modern authors.... It has been observed with truth that so many populous nations could hardly have sprung from the Scandinavian Peninsula.... In the case of the Goths, a connexion with Gotland is not unlikely, since it is clear from archaeological evidence that this island had an extensive trade with the coast about the mouth of the Vistula in early times. If, however, there was any migration at all, one would rather have expected it had taken place in the reverse direction.... (Kephart 1960, 482)

In either case, there appears to be a migration, if we believe Procopius and Ptolemy, as certain tribes mentioned by them that inhabit Scandinavia have names that resemble "Goth" and appear to have habits like the Scythians.

#### Gauts

A people known as Gauts were noted by the classical writers as one of the tribes inhabiting Scandinavia. Wolfram says the following about the Gauts in Scandinavia, citing Procopius:

Procopius, who is the first to speak of the Gauts in Thule, knows about their veneration of Ares. He writes about it as if he is speaking of the Scythians, Thracians, Getae, or even of the Goths themselves. A similarity between the



Goths and the Gauts is probably also expressed by the tribal name Gautigoths, which appears in Cassidorus's Scandinavian list of peoples. (Wolfram 1988, 21)

So it appears Procopius is aware of the Gauts and believes them to be Scythians or Getae. Is this not sufficient testimony of a reverse migration into Scandinavia? Further, Wolfram writes, "The Greek geographer [Ptolemy] mentions the Gutae, Goutai, as one of the seven peoples inhabiting the island of Scandi-Scandinavia" (Wolfram 1988, 37). Wolfram continues, "...Procopius knows the Gauts as Ares worshippers and a people who engage in human sacrifice, something that was also said of the 'older' Goths, the Getae" (Wolfram 1988, 327). This supports Bosworth's contention that perhaps some of the Goths on the Vistula crossed the Baltic and established themselves in Gotland (Bosworth 1848, 113-14.) Furthermore, even some Scandinavian chroniclers believed that these were Scythians. In *The Geats of Beowulf*, a Scandinavian chronicler in the Middle Ages wrote the following about the Scythian origin of Scandinavians:

Certain tribes...when they had migrated from Scythia into this region, called it Scythia, as if it were worthy of the name of their first country.... Moreover, those tribes...for some reason they were called 'Getae'—were also called 'Massagetae' after they entered this region. Then, as is usual, when the name had been changed, those who were formerly called 'Getae'... [were]...afterwards.... [called].... 'Gothi'.... (Leake 1967, 93-94)

In the 1687 work *Zalmoxis—First Legislator of the Getae*, by Lundius, written at the Upsala Academy of Sciences, the Scythian or Getic origin of the Goth is well attested:

[T]he Getae, who are the same with Goths and Scythians.... The ones in Thrace were called Getae, later in Procopius's time were called Goths and in older times they were called Scythians.... It is worthy retaining that unique truth, namely the Getae and the Goths were one and the same people and they were also called with the name of Scythians.... Therefore, they are called Getae, Gothones, Gothini, Getar, Gettar, Jettar, Jottar, Gautar, Gotar.... the Masagets are Scythian too....

Through the art of wielding the bow and arrows our ancestors have stood out from other peoples, as our national history confirms it to us.... Joannes Messenius recounts more amply the Scandinavian Goths: 'The ancient ones called those nations, the descendents of which have populated the most part of Europe and Asia, rather Getae than Goths.' (Lundius 1687, 8-28)

Now although this work is comparatively late, there does appear to be some reason for Lundius to claim a link to the Getae, and it appears he is aware that Massagetae are Scythians. Further, Lundius pluralizes Massagetae as Massagets, just like Yablonsky (Yablonsky 1990). And once again we read a similar statement by Lundius, "Those are the Getae which afterwards have been called Goths..." (Lundius 1687, 39). Kephart somewhat arbitrarily assigns the migration of mainland Getae into Scandinavia to around 1600 B.C. (Kephart 1938, 7). Whether this date is correct or not is probably not the issue; it seems evident from Procopius that "Scythian" people had occupied Scandinavia at an early stage.

So then when Wolfram writes, "Does this mean, after all, that the Goths originated in Scandinavia? Reinhard Wenskus had already given an answer, which ought to be slightly changed: not entire peoples but small successive clans, the bearers of prestigious traditions, emigrated and became founders of new gente" (Wolfram 1988, 39). So, in the case of Theodoric, could he represent one of the "small successive" clans that Wolfram mentions? It is possible, but as aforementioned, this exodus does present a problem to the modern Gutones hypothesis, which is generally believed today. So until we know better, why not "believe" that some Goths did come from Scandinavia, as Jordanes puts it. But then some of the Scandinavian tribes also appeared to come from Scythia, as testified by Procopius.

However, there appears to be some historical reason for the fracturing of the Goths. Kephart has provided a possible reason for this, which seems quite interesting and perhaps fitting. He believed that the Ostrogoths (Eastern Goths), who were allied under Amal, were representatives of the Royal Scythians (Kephart 1960, 473). However, Pinkerton, who cites Appollinarus who is apt to equate the Goths and Getae, called the Ostrogoths "Massagetae" (Pinkerton 1804, 9). The Visigoths (Western Goths), allied under their leader Balt, were from Scandinavia (Kephart 1960, 473). And although the basis for the division of these branches of the Goths appears to be geographical (as they took their names from a time when the Goths were

divided and named by the side of the river Dnieper they were on—those to the east were known as Greutungi [Ostrogoth], those to the west were known as the Thervingi [Visigoth] [Kephart 1960, 473]), it could be that the leadership of these branches had slightly different opinions. But their splintered immediate origins would persist in the persons of their asserted leaders Amal and Balt, when they fractured into Visigoth and Ostrogoth.

Nonetheless, although the ethno-genesis of the Goths must have been complex, it is clear that the Getae in the form of Scythians, Sarmatians, and even Alans must have contributed a great deal. Moreover, as we know, it is not proven that Wielbark definitely belongs to the Goths (Christensen 2002, 40). So why not maintain the belief of the classical writers and just accept that the Goths were originally the Getae? Thus the entire topic of Goths, Getae, Gauts, and Jats (and Gutones) can perhaps be summarized by the following statement by Toynbee in his *A Study of History*:

It may not be fantastic to conjecture that the...Goths and Gauts of Scandinavia may have been descended from a fragment of the same Indo-European-speaking [Indo-Iranian?] tribe as the homonymous Getae and Thyssagetae and Massagetae of the Eurasian Steppe who are represented today by the Jats of the Panjab. (Toynbee 1934, 435)

Perhaps, in the near future, we can further corroborate this statement and more precisely understand the movements of these tribes.

#### The Jutes and Geats

The Jutes of Jutland in Denmark, and the Jutes of Kent (a district in England), in old times were largely equated with Goths, Getae, and Geats. In one of the first Old English dictionaries, "Under 'Geatar' we find the simple definition: 'Jutae, Getae, Gothes'" (Kliger 1952, 15). Kliger then cites William Camden, who says, "These Iutae, who had that name (as many think) from the Gutes, Getes, or Gothes (for in a manuscript booke, we read Geatun) did for certaine inhabite the upper part of Cimbica Chersonesus, which still the Danes call Iuitland" (Kliger 1952, 16). Further, according to the 1670 work *De Anglorum Gentis Origine Disceptatio*:

Those people are called Gutae in the laws of Edward the Confessor, and Geatuni in the *Annales Petroburgenses*; by others they are called Jotuni and Jetae; by the Danish writers, Jutae and Juitae; for these are one and the same name: Getae and Giotae, and Gutae, and Geatuni, and Jotuni, and Jetae, and Jutae, and Juitae. (Kliger 1952, 17-18)

In his *Origin of the Anglo-Saxon Race*, Shore writes about the Jutes:

In early records relating to Germany and the North they appear to have been called by many names—Vitungi or Juthungi, Jutae, Gaetas, Gothi, Gothini, Gythones, Guthones, Gutae, Gautae, Vitae, and Gaeta. (Shore 1906, 49)

According to Asser, that "King Alfred's mother was descended from the Goths and Jutes, practically identifies them as being of one race" (Shore 1906, 60). Also, the Gotland trade route appeared to have extended "as far eastward as Bokhara, Samarcand, Baghdad, and Kufa" (Shore 1906, 55). This suggests that the Goths probably inhabited or had connectivity throughout Central Asia, almost as far as India.

It is said that the Jutes arrived in Kent around 450 A.D., under their leaders Hengist and Horsha, at the request of the Kentish ruler Vortigen, who needed help in defending against the Scots and Picts (Wilson 1972, 15). It appears that after serving Vortigen, the Jutes turned against him and took possession of Kent (Wilson 1972, 15). Tod believed that the Jutes had originally come from Central Asia and were originally Getes or Goths:

At this time (A.D. 449) the Jut brothers, Hengist and Horsha, led a colony from Jutland and founded Kent (Kantha, 'a coast' in Sanskrit, as in Gothic Konta?). The laws they there introduced, more especially the still prevailing one of a gavelkind, where all the sons share equally, except the youngest who has a double portion, are purely Scythian and brought by the Goth from Jaxartes.... Asi was the term applied to the Getes, Yuets, or Juts, when they invaded Scandinavia and founded Jutland.... Now the Su, Yuchi, or Yuti, are Getes according to De Guignes. Marco Polo calls Cashgar where he was.... the birthplace of the Swedes.

De La Croix adds, that in 1691 Sparvenfeldt, the Swedish ambassador at Paris, told him he has read in Swedish chronicles that Cashgar was their country. In Mawaru-I-Nahr (Transoxiana) they (Huns) mixed with the Su, Yuti or Getes, who were particularly powerful and extended into Europe. (Tod 1829, 1: 72-73, 129)

This view by Tod was followed up by many British writers regarding Jats, Goths, Jutes, etc., and may have led Sleeman to offer the following comment to Dalip Singh, the last King of the Sikh Empire, when he was moving to Kent District in England, as per MacMunn, "I see you are going to live in Kent. You will be among your own people there, for you are a Jat and the men of Kent are Jats from Jutland" (MacMunn 1932, 123-26). To this MacMunn added, "[A]nd no doubt he was speaking the ethnological truth." MacMunn further comments, "The Jat Sikhs [are] mighty and curled of beard, kin perhaps to the men of Kent, the Jutes from Jutland..." (MacMunn 1932, 123-26). So it is no wonder we have Keene writing about the Jats:

It is interesting to note further, that some ethnologists have regarded this fine people as of kin to the ancient Getae, and to the Goths of Europe, by whom not only Jutland, but parts of the south-east of England and Spain were overrun, and to some extent peopled. It is indeed possible that the yeomen of Kent and Hampshire have blood relations in the natives of Bharatpur and the Panjab. (Keene 1876, 82)

#### Gavelkind Laws

The Jutes had a peculiar rule of inheritance known as gavelkind, as mentioned by Tod. Shore writes, "While primogeniture is the common law of succession in other parts of England, gavelkind, or partible inheritance, is the law in Kent" (Shore 1906, 183). The practice described in this interesting paragraph in Whitney's *The Jutish Forest*, regarding the Jutish law of Gavelkind, is analogous to the legal customs of the Punjabi Jats:

The chief peculiarity of Kentish land law, expressed in the customs of Gavelkind, was that it provided for the equal partibility of inheritances between surviving sons, or daughters in default of sons. The operation of this principle, coupled with

the rapid growth of population which followed the Conquest, and modified (or mitigated) by the free market in land, meant that the compact arable "londs" which Joliffe believes once surrounded the homesteads of the Jutish freemen had, by the thirteenth century, been broken up into numerous fragments of greatly varying shape and size, of which the individual husbandman might own one or several, and that the homesteads themselves had expanded into small hamlets. There was nothing here of the orderliness of the system of open field strip cultivation prevalent over much of England, nor of its uniformity. While the crops grown—cereals, peas, beans, and vetches—were largely standard, each man was free to do as he chose with his own land, adopting whatever rotations pleased him, interchanging arable with pasture or interspersing small patches of orchards. It was an intensely individualistic society within which inequalities were growing. The more fortunate, enterprising or industrious of its members had the opportunity to amass holdings by purchase, and sometimes to consolidate or even to enclose them. A man whose landed inheritance was inadequate might supplement his livelihood by some craft such as smith's work or hurdle making, or sell his land and (with the agreement of the lord) open up an assart in the surrounding woodland, or take in hand a piece of half-drained marsh, or he might hire himself out to the lord as a labourer, or abandon the country altogether for one of the growing towns. In the free community of Kent all these choices were open; it was society in perpetual ferment. (Whitney 1976, 156-57)

This land custom is analogous to that of the Jats of the Punjab. Barstow, the author of the Sikh recruitment handbook, briefly discussed the land customs of the Jats, and summarizes them thus:

Out of every ten Punjabis, nine live in villages and six make their living by agriculture; it is from these in the plains, from the great tribe of Jats, that our recruits are obtained. A large proportion of these own the land they cultivate; thus we can think of the Punjab in general as a land of peasant proprietors....the estate is divided in equal shares among the sons... From the earliest times Jats have been

remarkable for their rejection of the monarchical principle, and their strong partiality for self-governing commonwealths.... (Barstow 1928, 3, 72, 178)

The Jat Sikhs would supplement their farming income with enlistment in the British Army. Do these habits not match those of the Kentish freemen? As Kliger writes, "The tradition of Kentish valor and love for freedom was so proverbial that it appear as a commonplace, apparently, in the literature of the period" (Kliger 1952, 21).

As discussed above, the Jutes under Hengist and Horsa settled in Kent roughly around 450 A.D., and their name, as its sound suggests, is derived from Getae or Gutae. Shore writes, "Of these Jutes, the Goths were probably the more numerous, seeing that the name adopted from the Kentish people generally was a modified form of Gutae, a name for their own race" (Shore 1906, 191). Further, he writes, "That Kent was largely settled by Goths is proved by the evidence of the runic inscriptions which have been found within it" (Shore 1906, 185-86).

Alans, the Forerunners of the Jutes?

But there then remains an alternative hypothesis that may be of greater weight, that the Alans could have been the forerunners of the Jutes, instead of the Goths. Many historians believe that the Jutes came from the lower Rhine area, as their agricultural system resembled that of Gaul (Wilson 1972, 15). We further know that the Alans were in Gaul, around the region of Loire, by A.D. 406 (Webster's E.D. 1988, 19). This would give sufficient time, perhaps two generations, before they could have entered England; moreover, we know the Alans were probably the Massagetae (Rolfe 1939, 387-90; Christensen 2002, 42), which helps to explain the name Jutae, from Getae or Gutae. Some have even argued that the original form of the name of "Jutes" was the Latin "Iutae" (Hodgkin 1935, 83), which is little different from the Iatii of Pliny, which Cunningham takes to be the South Asian Jats (Cunningham 1894, 96). Perhaps a similar linguistic development took place in the name of this tribe. Further, if we are correct about our identification of the Alans with the Jutes, it may well explain the general confusion between Jutes, Geats, and Goths in the 1500-1600's, and demonstrate how close the tribes actually were. So it appears the Alans were well settled in Gaul by 450 A.D., but so also potentially were the Sarmatian colonists, known as Laeti.

Bachrach writes:

After their defeat Alans and Vandals apparently moved northward and eastward into Germany beyond the Rhine frontier and outside the Roman Empire. The Rhine frontier was largely undefended; both [Romans and the Franks] who dwelt along the river, and the second-line defenders, the Sarmatian military colonists [Laeti], who had been settled further to the west during the fourth century.... (Bachrach 1973, 1-25)

So it appears that the Sarmatians, who were closely related to Alans, were also well-settled in that general area of Gaul. There appears to be an incursion of people known as "Laetas" into Kent around the sixth century A.D., who were noted during King Aethelbert's reign (Shore 1906, 189). These "Laetas" appear to correspond to the continental Laeti who served Rome's interest (Shore 1906, 189). Wolfram believes the Laeti to be "barbarian descendents," who included Sarmatians, who had been placed under Roman military administration (Wolfram 1988, 237). Moreover, during King Aethelbert's reign, the Laetas were protected, and thereby, their name could have been an early term to denote the "freeman" of this time (Shore 1906, 189-90). Therefore, the special laws of Aethelbert protecting the freemen may be of more historical value than the story of Hengist and Horsha (Shore 1906, 189). King Aethelbert was also well known to have been involved in falconry, and while he probably was not the first English King to practice this sport (Oswald 1982, 3), it does imply that he was in contact with people who were probably predisposed to falconry, such as the Laetas.

That there appears to be a strong Romano-Frankian influence in the Kentish archaeological material (Neumann 1981, 2) further suggests that the Laeti and Alans, who were part of the Roman empire and later settled in Gaul, may have contributed this aspect. Further, comparison between Kentish and Jutish pottery has been made with such results (Neumann 1981, 2) as to indicate that there is some truth to the migration of Jutes into Kent. Other archaeological finds, which may or may not have anything to do with Jutes, such as those that have been deemed "Frisian," like the "Frisian zoomorphic combs" found in Norfolk (Hills 1981, 1), indicate that there was a migration of steppes people (or people who were in contact with steppes people) into England. And this is no surprise: one group of Alans settled as far north in France as Brittany (Bachrach 1973), less than 20 miles from the British coast. We are also aware



of Sarmatians serving Roman interests at Hadrian's Wall in Britain around 175 A.D. (Davis-Kimball 2002, 32).

Therefore, why not believe the story of Hengist and Horsha, as well as King Aethelbert's treatment of the Laeti, along with the archaeological evidence, and the name of Jutes, and conclude that they were Getae? If we consider that the Alans were simply a late Sarmatian people (Littleton and Malcor 2000, 16), it appears reasonable that the Jutes were Alans (or Sarmatians) who had settled in Gaul, rather than the Goths, but, nonetheless, closely associated with them.

### Mesopotamian Guti

The view that the Mesopotamian Guti may be related to the Goth is a view that was examined by Waddell in the past. Very little work beyond Waddell has been performed as a follow-up. We are left simply to quote Waddell:

Most of the leading kings of early Sumerian dynasties, including 'Sargon-the-Great' and Menes the first Pharaoh of the First Dynasty of Egypt repeatedly called themselves in their official documents and seals Gut or Got. And one of the more progressive Early Sumerian Dynasties in Mesopotamia called themselves Guti or Goti; and 'Goti' was the regular title of the Goths of Europe.... the aspirated form 'Goth' having been coined.... by the Romans and never used by the Goths themselves. (Waddell 1929, xii-xiii, 545, 584)

In *The Indo-Sumerian Seals Deciphered*, another book by Waddell, he regularly interchanges the words "Guti", "Goths", "Scyths," and "Sacae" and believes them to be one entity (Waddell 1925). This view needs to be examined in the future.

### Comparative Mythology

The religion of the people in the path of the Getic migrations appears to be more closely related than could have been predicted from their common Indo-European heritage. For example: "A comparison of the Slavic religious vocabulary with that of other Indo-European peoples further discloses a rather striking similarity with the Indo-Iranian nomenclature" (Dvornik 1956,

47). Dvornik shows the striking parallels between Iranian deities and Slavic deities; for example, Iranian Daeva corresponds to Slavic Divu, both meaning "she-demon" (Dvornik 1956, 48). The name of God represented, as a giver of wealth in Iranian is Baga, and in Slavic, Bogu (Dvornik 1956, 48); interestingly this corresponds to Vedic Bhaga (Dvornik 1956, 49); in the Sikh faith, one of god's names is Bhaga, or bestower of wealth.

Further, the Eastern and Northwestern Slavs believe in a god called Svarogu (the warrior god of virility and strength, but he is also associated with fire and sun), which Dvornik connects with the Iranian Verethragna (Dvornik 1956, 49). Dvornik shows many other parallels between Slavic and Iranian deities (Dvornik 1956, 48-51), which suggest a closer relationship than the common Indo-European origin. In regards to the folklore of Panjab, no view is more authoritative than R.C. Temple in his monumental work *The Legends of the Panjab*. He makes the following observation about the people in Northwest India in which he generically labels them Aryans:

Those of my readers who are acquainted with the books about the Slavonic nations of Europe, will probably have been surprised to find how closely, allowing for difference of religion and climate, the manners and customs of the peasants resemble those to be seen every day in Aryan India, and how very similar the functions of the bards of the two people are. (R.C. Temple 1884, 1: LI)

An interesting point mentioned by Leake is that "the Getes are intimately connected to both Mars and to the Amazons" (Leake 1967, 18). Leake continues, "Mars might actually be of Thracian origin..." (Leake 1967, 18). Then Leake relates of the Scythian war god Ares: "Herodotus claimed that the Scythians 'make images and altars and shrines for Ares, but for no other god'" (Leake 1967, 18). We have already shown that, as per Marcellinus, the Alans "reverently worship...[the sword]...as their god of war" (Rolfe 1939, 393-95).

To this we add Jordanes, who writes, "Now Mars has always been worshipped by the Goths with cruel rites, and captives were slain as his victims" (Mierow 1915, 61). Based on these indications, we see that the Roman Mars might have been borrowed from the Thracian Getae and Goths who are probably of Scythian origin themselves. The legends of the Amazons, the warrior women, are usually the concern of Scythian and Sarmatian tribes and could further indicate a relationship. Could the Roman Mars, who is the Greek Areos, have been borrowed from

Scythian Ares? Was Scythian Ares the German Tyr, who was the Eddic Tiuw (from whom we get Tuesday) (Shore 1906, 20)? They were all indeed the Gods of War.

In 1829 James Tod, seemingly basing conclusions on the work of Sir William Jones, linked the Rajput god Budha (not Gautama Buddha), which means roughly "wise one," to Mercury and further to the Scandinavian god of wisdom Woden or Odin. He relates, "The Scythians worshiped Mercury (Budha), Woden or Odin, and believed them to be his progeny" (Tod 1829, 72). Odin was attached to the Goths as attested by William Temple in his essay, "Of Heroic Virtue":

It seems agreed by the curious inquirers into the antiquities of the Runic language and learning, that Odin or Woden or Goden (according to the different northern dialects) was the first and great hero of the western Scythians. That he led a mighty swarm of the Getes under the name of Goths, from the Asiatic Scythia unto the farthest north-west parts of Europe, that he seated and spread his kingdom round the whole Baltic sea, and over all the islands in it and extended it westward to the ocean, and southward to the Elbe (which was anciently esteemed the bound between the Scythians and the Germans). (Temple, 276-77)

Odin in mythology is usually associated with wolves, which suggests a connection to the Scythians, as Herodotus mentions the Nuerian, an association further suggested by the region of Hyrkania (Virkana= Wolves' Land). Otten cites the thirteenth-century Scandinavian writer Snorri Sturluson:

His (Odin's) men when without their mailcoats and were mad as hounds or wolves, bit their shields and were as strong as bears or bulls. They slew men, but neither fire nor iron had effect upon them. This is called 'going berserk' (berserkgangr)... those berserks who were called ulfheonar had wolf shirts (vargstakkar) [Vark or Virk – shirts?] for mailcoats. (Otten 1986, 148-49)

Interestingly, the name Wednesday is derived from the Scandinavian God Woden—Woden's Day. The Punjabi and Hindi equivalent of Wednesday is Budhwar or Budha's

Day, and in Latin we have Dies Mercurii or day of Mercury. Baden-Powell also suggests that Indian Budha was Mercury (Baden-Powell 1899, 297).

Francois Hartog, in his *The Mirror of Herodotus* claims the following regarding the Getan and Dacian god Zalmoxis: "He starts as a Getan, is then a Dacian, and becomes a great priest or king 'of much erudition in philosophy' as Jordanes tells us. With the arrival of the Romans, abetted by the advent of Christianity, he disappears from his own country but lived on in the traditions of the Goth (Getan = Goth)" (Hartog 1988, 84-85). Here Hartog suggests not only that the Goths followed a religion similar to that of the Getae, but that the Getae were also the Dacians, and the Goths were the Getae. Cunningham suggests that the Thracian god Zalmoxis may be equivalent to the Indian god Shiva and Greek god Herakles, all being gods of death (Cunningham 1888, 75).

Bergmann also believes that Zalmoxis may be related to the Greek god Herakles (Bergmann 1859, 191). Cunningham related Herakles or Sapaleizes to Zalmoxis (Cunningham 1888, 83). He continues, "I think also that the xis of Zamolxis and the xais of Skolaxais, may be simply the equivalent of geises.... Xis and xais might be connected with the title of Shahi, which was used by the Indo-Scythians both on coins and inscriptions" (Cunningham 1888, 83). Classical writer Lucian believes that worship of Zalmoxis, the God of Immortality, is a Scythian practice (Kilburn 1968, 6: 241). Further, Eliade claims that the suffix "xais," as in Zalmoxais, is "Scythian" for "king" or "lord," because Herodotus discusses the founders of Scythian: Lipoxais, Arpoxais, and Colaxais (Eliade 1970, 46). Thus the word could be Scythian (Eliade 1970, 46).

Shiva, the god of death and destruction (Maxwell 1997, 41), who also has a benevolent side, is a very important god to the Jats, in particular; and his worship is roughly confined to the northwest of India, although there appears to be some worship in South India. Even the image of Shiva seems destructive, as Kershaw writes, "Siva wears a wreath of human skulls and has a skull as a drinking cup" (Kershaw 2000, 228).

A Shivdiwala or Shiva temple could be found in almost every Jat village, but these largely have been replaced by Gurudwaras and Mosques in Sikh and Muslim tracts, respectively. Although there is certain evidence for the worship of Shiva in Panjab, the worship of lingum does not appear at all common amongst the Panjabi Jats (Rose 1883 1, 260), but seems to be an institution with more eastern Jats. The Hindu Jats, however, continue to practice the worship of Shiva, who is associated with serpents, a Central Asian totem (Barstow 1928, 68). Though in the

Panjab, the veneration of the snakegod in the form of Gugga Pir is more prominent (Fenech 2000, 169); typically most villages will have a shrine to Gugga. In fact, some of the principle reasons for identifying the Jats as a Scythian people are their snake worship, in addition to their practice of levirate marriage and other characteristics (Crooke 1890, 92).

Scythians were well-known spreaders of Cannabis and its use throughout Asia (Arnold 2000, 2-3). The use of Cannabis or Indian Bhang was once common amongst Jats (Rose 1883). In fact, the name of the Punjabi folk dance known as Bhangra, is quite possibly derived from the fact that a dancer used to consume some bhang or hemp prior to the dance. Moreover, Lord Shiva is called the "Lord of Bhang" for his use of the intoxicant (Arnold 2000, 2-3), while orthodox Aryan society shunned the drug.

Maxwell believes that Shiva came largely to replace Rudra, a god mentioned in the *Rg Vedic* texts (Maxwell 1997, 42). Shiva began to replace Rudra around the second century B.C. and was associated with the Linga or phallic symbol, which was a non-Vedic concept (Maxwell 1997, 43). There remains, however, a train of thought that Shiva may be an indigenous or perhaps a Dravidian god. Significantly, the name "Shiva" is not found in the Vedas (Elst 1999, 25), rather "Rudra" is found in the *Yajur Veda* and *Rg Veda* (Maxwell 1997, 41-42). As aforementioned, Shiva began largely to replace Rudra before the Christian era, so it could be that Shiva was a reintroduction of Rudra, under a new name, by the Sakas. Further, an examination of the coins of the Indo-Scythian kings reveals that many have inscriptions of Shiva (Cunningham 1888). This may well suggest that perhaps Shiva himself was of foreign origin. Elst writes, "[Bernard Sergent] suggests that the Shiva tradition, definitely part of the common Indo-European heritage, was passed on through a Vratya or non-Vedic Indo-Aryan circle" (Elst 1999, 25). The Sakas were classified as the Vratya Kshatriyas or fallen Kshatriyas for their failure to maintain the necessary religious acts associated with Vedic Kshatriya status (E.B. 1990, 21: 42-43). This further strengthens the Indo-Iranian origin of Shiva. Elst adds that Sergent believes the Linga or phallic symbol too is from the Indo-European heritage (Elst 1999, 25).

What's more is that Shiva is sometimes shown as a multigendered god with Bhavani as his female half. This may well suggest that the Slavonic goddess Siva or Ziva, who is worshipped in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany, may well be the same god, as these regions fit in well with the settlement of Scythian and Sarmatian. Further, Kershaw also draws parallels between

Odin and Shiva/Rudra (Kershaw 2000). The safe conclusion is that the Scythians reintroduced Shiva to the Indian subcontinent.

Another god, Surya, the God of the Sun, is curious in that he is the only Indian god who wears shoes, the leather boots of the Central Asian steppes. And he is often shown in Scythian dress. Rosenfield writes, "One indication of the importance of foreign, especially Indo-Scythian, influence on the solar cult is the very fact that some early images of Surya are so similar to Kushan royal portraits that it is possible to confuse one with the other" (Rosenfield 1967, 190). Therefore, it is not unlikely that he is the Scythian god Oitosyros (Kimball-Davis 2002, 69), corresponding to the Greek god Helios, the Roman god Apollo, and the Germanic Sol (Mallory 1989, 129). No wonder we have Sunday corresponding to Surajwar or Aditwar: the day of Surya (Sun). U. P. Thapliyal writes about Surya, "The popularity of the Iranian sun cult in India may also have helped in removing the general Indian apathy for shoes. Unlike the Indian gods, Surya and his devotees put on shoes" (Thapliyal 1979, 64). Further, Gimbutas writes about Slavs, "There is no doubt that the Slavs were sun-worshippers, as indeed the tenth-century Arab traveler Al-Masudi reported them to be" (Gimbutas 1971, 164). Perhaps Surya is the same god as the Slavic Zorya?

Thus it appears that the Indian gods Shiva (Herakles or Zalmoxis), Surya (Oitosyros or Apollo or Helios), and Budha (Mercury or Odin or Woden) find their roots with the Central Asian Scythians, which goes back to old Indo-Iranian beliefs.

In consideration of these factors, as well as others, James Tod was compelled to write the following:

If we can show the Germans to have been originally Scythae or Goths (Getes or Jits), a wide field of curiosity and inquiry is open to the origin of government, manners, etc.; all the antiquities of Europe will assume a new appearance, and, instead of being traced to the bands of Germany, as Montesquieu and the greatest writers have hitherto done, may be followed through long descriptions of the manners of the Scythians, etc., as given by Herodotus. (Tod 1829, 72)

## Return to Clan Names

Earlier it was shown how the modern Jat clans overlap with European clan names, and now it should be clear that this is no coincidence. Such overlapping clan names as Gill, Mann, Birk, Bains, Dhillon, Maur or Moore, Lally, Hans, Herr, Johl, Chiller, Sandher, etc. can perhaps be the very traces of the movement of these Getes to various countries in the Eurasian continent. Dhillon concludes: "Obviously, the most likely reason could be the migration of the Central Asian people (Scythians, Sarmatians, Alans, etc.) into Europe, centuries earlier, and their simultaneous movement into Punjab" (Dhillon 1994, 141).

Therefore, if we accept this method of tracing the historical movement of tribes, it could mean that these polar nations may be more intricately related than we previously believed. Further it could mean the Getic nation is not a hypothetical convention, but rather a real nation with fairly precise records. Dhillon put it very well: "Today, there are at least a half million Jat Sikhs (some of them fourth generation) who reside in Great Britain and the native British people find it quite strange to have similar or identical family names with some of them!" (Dhillon 1994, 101-102).

## Conclusion

The conclusion of Leake's *The Geats of Beowulf* strikes us as perhaps the final statement of the accomplishments of the western Getae, and suggests the reason Beowulf chose to discuss the Getae or Getes:

There is, I think, another reason besides an artistic one why the author chose to write about the Getes rather than the Jutes or Gauts or any specific and historical Germanic tribe. The Getes were looked upon as the founding nation of all Germanic people. (Leake 1967, 133)

This article in no way claims that the Getae were the founders of "all Germanic people" or "all Indo-European people." It simply argues that the Iranian-speaking people may have had considerable involvement in the history and population of Europe, the Indo-Iranian border lands, and China, and that we can still find descendants of these people, not only in the Caucasus, as in

the case for the Ossettes, but also in Northwest India in the modern Jats, who still carry the name of that very tribe.

Thus, the steppe origin of various groups of people East and West should be revisited by modern scholars to ascertain the role of the Getae (or Guts or Yuts or Jats or Juts) in the striking resemblances among these groups. Further study accompanied with a convincing array of archaeological, linguistic, and anthropological evidence could help bolster the accounts of various authorities on this subject. One such example of this is a study of genetic polymorphism of Jats Sikh performed at Guru Nanak Dev University in Amritsar. Though the sample size was not large (40 individuals), it tended to show that the Jat Sikhs were later "Aryan" immigrants to India. The writers cite both Tod's and Cunningham's views on the Jats' belonging to Indo-Scythian stock (Sidhu, Kaur, Sarhadi, Joshi, Mukhopadhaya, Mahajan and Bhanwar 2003). Their conclusion:

If at any stage the indication provided by the present study is confirmed, this may confirm the concept of General Cunningham who held that Jats belong to a wave of immigrants that is different from the wave for populations belonging to original Aryan stock. (Sidhu, Kaur, Sarhadi, Joshi, Mukhopadhaya, Mahajan and Bhanwar 2003, 49)

Until further studies can be performed, we are left with James Tod's fascination with Indian Jats and Rajputs:

In the *Edda* we are informed that the Getae or Jats, who entered Scandinavia, were termed Asi, and their first settlement As-gard.... The Rajput slays buffaloes, hunts and eats boar and deer.... [H]e worships his horse, his sword, and the sun, and attends more to the martial song of the bard than to the litany of the Brahman.... The Rajput delights in blood: his offerings to the god of battle are sanguinary, blood and wine. The cup (*kharpāra*) of libation is the human skull. He loves them because they are emblematic of the deity he worships; and he is taught to believe that Hara (Shiva) loves them, who in war is represented with the skull to drink the foeman's blood, and in peace is the patron of wine and women. With



Parbati (Shiva's wife) on his knee, his eyes rolling from the juice of the *phul* (ardent spirits) and opium, such is this Bacchanalian divinity of war. Is this Hinduism, acquired on the burning plains of India? Is it not rather a perfect picture of the manners of Scandinavian heroes? (Tod 1829, 77, 82)

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