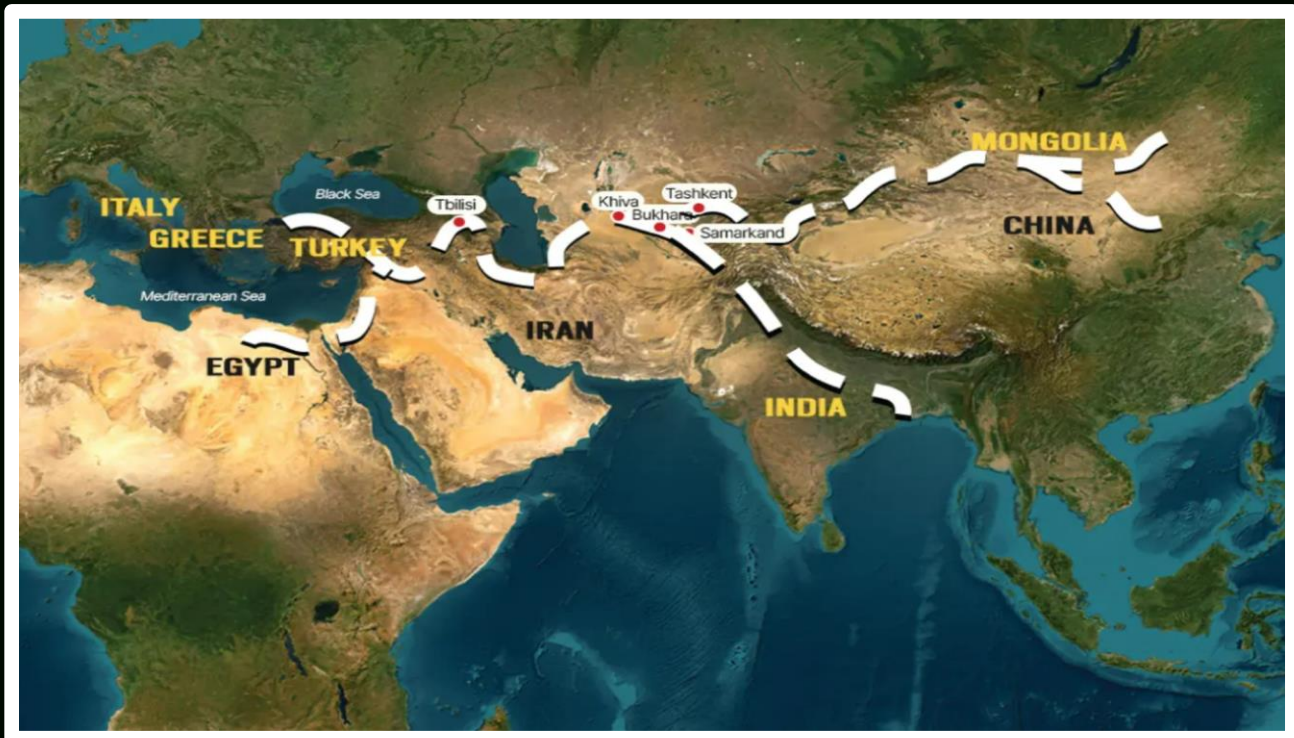


ROOTSHUNT



LORS, KASSITES AND KHATRI



Dr. Gaurav A. Vyas (Proprietor)

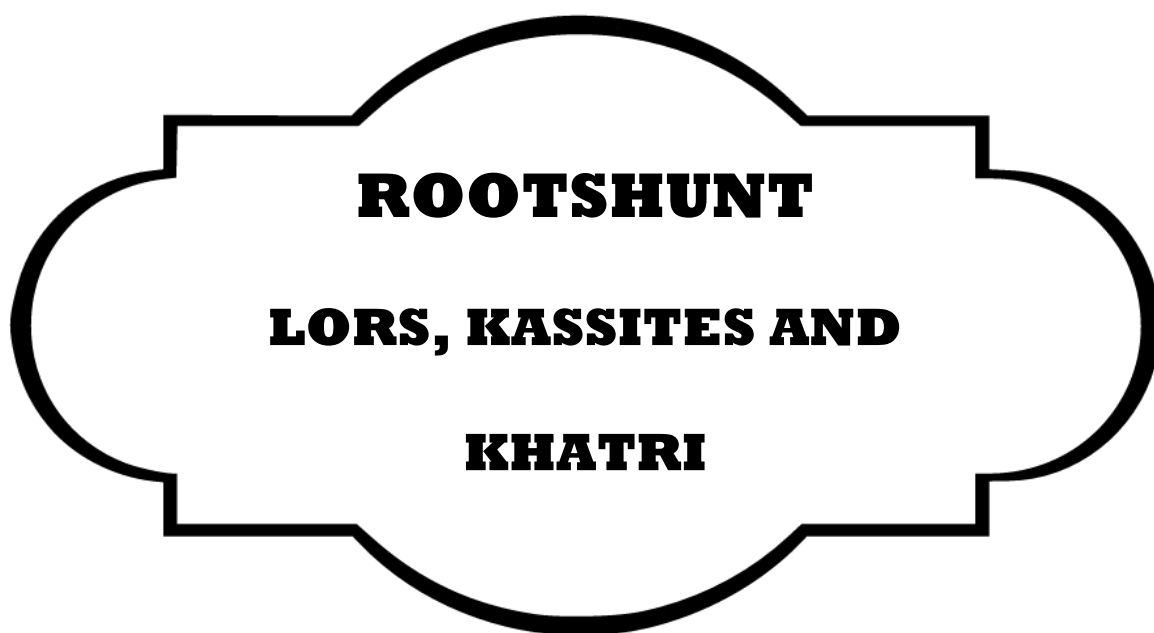
This book contains information about Kassites, Khatri, Lors and their connection with Aryan Brahmins.

This book is written by collecting information from various people and sources available on internet.

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ROOTSHUNT LORS, KASSITES AND KHATRI

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Every effort has been made to make this book as complete and as accurate as possible. However, there may be mistakes, both typographical and in content. Therefore, this text should be used only as a general guide and not as the ultimate source of information.

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PRICE : Free

Indebtedness :

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the most humble, honest, and caring people of Iran who have helped me in my search to find my family roots in Iran.

On 20 June 2023, when I first time went to Iran, I didn't know the Farsi language, culture, and traditions of Iran, but the people of Iran helped me a lot. I was always interested in finding the history of Kassites because I am from the Gautam (Gaudumu, Pu-Annum) lineage, and his wife Ahilya was a Kassite. In the past, our family had a matrimonial alliance with the Lurs of Iran, which made me travel to Lorestan in search of the history of my ancestors.

A lot of portions of history is lost, hided and purposely destroyed.

This book connects the missing dots and gives us an idea of the ancient history of Kassites, Lurs, and Khattris and the trade routes used by them. We can also get an idea of which routes were used for trade between Egypt, Iraq, Iran, India, and other nations.

Author

Date : 5 March 2024

Dr. Gaurav A. Vyas

Contents at a glance :

1. Introduction	1
2. Overview	1
3. Sikh Khattris	4
4. Silk Trade Route Part – 1	6
5. Silk Trade Route Part – 2	14
6. Nisaia Horse	17
7. Nisaeen Plain	20
8. Silk Trade Route of Iran	21
9. Origin of Khattris	25
10. Khatri Part – 1	30
11. Khatri Part – 2	45
12. Khatri Part – 3	52
13. Sikhs on the Silk Road	54

1. Introduction :

Here, I am assuming that readers have already read the books written by Lieutenant Colonel Laurence Austine Waddell. Much of the Khatti, i.e., Kassites, Hittite and Khatri, details can be found in his books.

Below is the link to my webpage, where you can download books in pdf format written by Lieutenant Colonel Laurence Austine Waddell:

<https://rootshunt.com/gautam.htm>

You can also download the family tree in JPEG format, which was made according to the information given by Lieutenant Colonel Laurence Austine Waddell.

Reading his books gives us an understanding of Kassites, also known as Khatri.

The Khatri, also known as Kassites, are the decedents of Sunutu, also known as Suhotra, Sumanta, and Puru. In this dynasty, many great people took birth, like Priyavrat, Kush, Gadhi, also known as Gudea and Nammakhni, Vishvamitra, also known as Ur Ningrisu, Jamadagni, Parshuram, Mudgal, Divodas, Badhryashwa, also known as Ennatum, etc.

When these Khatri known as Kassites had matrimonial alliance with Aryan Brahmins they were known as Brahmksatriya in India.

The Kassites lived in many different parts of the world, including Iran. Kassites are also found in Lorestan, Iran. Lorestan contains mainly three tribes: the Gutians, Lullubi, and Kassites. Since these tribes live in Lorestan, they are known as Lors.

The Sassanids living in Iran are none other than Sisodia, who are of Surya Vansh (Solar Dynasty), whose gotra, i.e., lineage, is Mudgal (Madgal, Akurgal). Mudgal was king of Larsa, located in Iraq. He was also the father of Prasnjit, Yuwanashwa, and Ahilya. Ahilya was married to King Gautam (Gaudumu, Pu-Annum).

2. Overview :

Below given is overview of books written by Lieutenant Colonel Laurence Austine Waddell which contains information about Kassites i.e. Khatri.

I cannot put all the information in this pdf because it will be very long hence, out of many I am giving few information related to Kassites i.e. Khatri.

The Indo-Sumerian Seals Deciphered :

1. It moreover explained the direct connecting link which I had found, namely that the first semi-historical king of India, with his "Syria-Phoenician" followers, and his capital near Delhi in the Ganges Valley, under whom the first partition of India traditionally took place in the post Vedic period, at the time of the Maha-Bharata War about 650 B.C., was the Bharat Khattiyo king Dhrita-rashtra, the last Aryan king mentioned in the Vedas, and who is shown in the detailed Indian Epic King-lists to be descended from those Early Aryan kings now found to be Sumerians. And he was the Son of the Khattiyo "Wicitra-the hero" (Vicitra-virya) who, I found, was identical with, and had the same predecessors as, the Khatti (or "Hittite") king Wi-sidi(n) who was the last Hittite king of Carchemish in Upper Mesopotamia, and slain by the Semitic Assyrian king Sargon II in 718 B.C. All this indicated that while the Indo Aryans were directly descended from the Sumerians, the so-called "Great Aryan Invasion of India," i.e., of the Ganges Valley, occurred no earlier than about 700 B.C., and in the post-Vedic period.
2. The Indus or Sindhu River was also an especial haunt of the "Horsemen of the Sun" (the Aswin of the Sanskrit, figured and named on the Catti coins of Early Britain) and as a pair they called Nasatya in Sanskrit, and Nassati of the Khatti, Catti or Hittites; and this pair is actually invoked in these seals. They were associates of the Maruts, and were the especial patrons of the Sun-worshipping Panch(-ala) or Phoenicians.' They are thus celebrated in the Vedas :

"This river with his lucid flow attracts you More than all the other streams-Even Sindhu with his path of gold."
3. And parchment, as Herodotus tells us, was the immemorial writing medium of the Aryan Getae or Scyths of Asia Minor, who I have proved to be the Khatti, Xatti or Hittites.
4. The "Aus'ija" of the Sindhu Valley, "the far-famed merchant" and Fire-priest, was a "Khattiyo" (or Kshattriya), i.e., Khatti or Hittite and of the Kas'i clan.
5. Khaiti seems used for Khati, Khatti, Catti or "Hitt-ite," the Khattiyo of Pali and Khattri of Hindi

The Makers of Civilization in Race and History :

1. Further comparison with the king-lists of the Khatii, Hatti or "Hitt-ites" of Asia Minor and Upper Mesopotamia accounted for the Indo-Aryan branch of the Aryans in the interval between the twelfth and seventh centuries B.C. I observed that the names of many of the "Hittite" kings,

and more especially those subsequent to the fall and expulsion of the Kassite Dynasty of Babylon, with the end of the Sumerian rule in Babylonia, bore names substantially identical with, and in the same chronological order as, the later pre-Indian kings of the Indo-Aryan lists in the Kuru Dynasty. Now Kur, literally meaning "Mountain-land," was an old Sumerian name for Asia Minor,' and especially its eastern portion, and I have shown that this Kur was also obviously the source of Suria of the Greeks, the "Syria" of the Romans, and that Suria was a name for Cappadocia in the time of Herodotus,' and was also used for Central and Eastern Asia Minor by the Seleucid Greeks. The leading clans also of the Indo-Aryans who formed "The Great Migration" to Gangetic India are often bracketed together in the Vedas as the Kuru-Panch(-ala), which corresponds as I observed to the Surio-Phoiniki of the Greco-Romans,' that is the "Syrio-Phoenicians"; and in the Vedas the "Panch(ala)," that is the Aryan Phoenicians, bear also the title of Krivi, which is obviously dialectically derived from this

1 WPOB. 12 f. The name appears to survive in Kurdistan, for S.E. Asia Minor, and in the Giaour title for Mt. Amanus and numerous old Hittite sites in Asia Minor.

• lb., 12. And see also its use by Alexander's historians. who included in Syria all Upper Mesopotamia west of the Tigris. Aman. Anabasis,.s. zs;

Kur or "Syria." 1 Besides this, as associating the Indo Aryan remnant of the Sumerians with the Khatti or "Hitt-ites," it was significant that all the Indo-Aryan princes of the Great Migration and who were of the Bharat line, who shortly after their arrival in Gangetic India fought amongst themselves for the partition of India in the Great War of the Bharats, called themselves and were called Khattiyo, which in the old Indian Pali and in its later Sanskrit form possesses the identical literal meaning of "ruler" or "ruling caste" as the Khatti title of the "Hitt-ites" has in both the Hittite and Sumerian languages.'

2. The Sumerian inscriptions tell us only that his father was Uruash Zikum and that his son and successor was Burash-Sin or Purash-Sin and that he had three other sons and two daughters. The Indian Epics inform us that his mother was the sister of the Gutti priest-king Nimirrud, son of Gudia (see genealogical Table, p. 371); and that he married the princess Kamal Renuka, daughter of Renu or Prasenajit, a prince of the Ikshvaku line, and "had by her the destroyer of the Kshattriya (Khattiyo) race, Parashu-Rama." The MahaBharata Epic adds that he had four other sons, Rurnanwat, Sushena, Vasu and Vishva-Vasu. In the Sumerian inscriptions his other sons were named Suashen-Sakh, Nadi and Uruash-Sin, and his daughters were Shat-Sin and Ningmidashu.

Note :

The Aryan Kings of Mesopotamia were also known as Kassites. To understand in detail as to know Khatti, Kassites and Hittites are same read the Kings names and their details given in family tree of Gautam (Gaudumu, Pu-Annum). Below is the webpage link given of family tree :

<https://rootshunt.com/angirasgautam/gautamfamilytree/gautamfamilytree.htm>

The Upper caste Khatri Sikhs and Khatri Brahmkshatriya belong to Bharadwaj, Gautam, Mudgal, etc. Gotra (lineage).

The Gohil surname is also found in Gujarat, India. Gohil were Kings and in this Gohil surname Hamirji Gohil was born who was of Gautam (Gaudumu, Pu-Annum) Lineage.

Through the Silk Trade route many of them used to do business and this is how the migration happened from various countries into India. The business flourished under Maurya Empire founded by Chandragupta Maurya (350–295 BCE). Chandragupta Maurya is descendant of Siddharth Gautam (c. 563 BCE or 480 BCE) who founded Buddhism. Siddharth Gautam was of Gautam (Gaudumu, Pu-Annum) Lineage. Thus, people belonging to Gautam lineage easily did business and spread knowledge from Iraq, Iran, India, etc. countries as they knew each other.

Along with traders of different countries and communities the Aryan Khatri (Kassites, Lurs, Hittites, Kurds, etc.), Brahmins, Kings and businessmen also used this silk trade route.

3. Sikh Khatri :

The Khatri are a community of the Kshatriyas who were based in the Punjab. Most of them became traders and some established small kingdoms.

They are divided into a certain number of 'gotras', each bearing the name of the rishi patriarch concerned. Each gotra also follows a particular sutra of a particular shakha or branch of one of the 4 Veds. Thus, the Kapoors belong to the Kaushik gotra and follow the Yajur Veda, their 'shakha' being Madhivandni and their sutra Katyayana. Some other gotras are Kashyapa, Bharadwaj, Kaushaliya, Angiras, and others.

The Kshatriyas of the various gotras were subdivided into the Surya Vanshi (Solar Dynasty), Chandra Vanshi (Lunar Dynasty), and Agni Vanshi (Fire Dynasty) subjects, each having further gotras.

A large number of Khatri from Punjab revere Guru Nanak. In Uttar Pradesh, they have become Vaishnavs, though they are Shivites in Varanasi.

Despite the variety of their religious leanings, they have two basic religious convictions in common: a faith in the Veds and Vedic rites and an intense devotion to Shakti (power), who is worshipped in every Khatri family under one of her many names: Barah, Chandika, Durga, Gauri, Rohani, Parbati, Jwala, Naina Devi, Jogmaya, Bindabasini, and Kali.

The Sikh gurus were all Khattris. Guru Nanak was a Khatri of the Vedi clan. The last six gurus, including Guru Govind Singh, were Khattris of the Sodhi clan, and they all belonged to the Surya Vanshi (Solar Dynasty).

Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak, who is considered of the Bedi lineage. The Bedi word comes from Vedi. A person who studies Veds is known as a Vedi.

It is said that Guru Nanak was of the Kush Gotra (lineage). Kush was the son of Lord Ram.

When we look at the family tree made as per the name mentioned by Lieutenant Colonel Laurence Austine Waddell, we come to know that the Indra of Veds is the Bharadwaj of Purans.

Indra had two wives, Paushtih and Inanna.

One of the sons of Indra and Paushtih was Sargon I, also known as Uruas and Sagar. He was married to Satyawati (daughter of Gadhi and Gudea) and Acchuraseni, also known as Keshini and Europa.

Sargon I and Acchuraseni had two sons, Mush (Ur-Mush) and Menes (Manis-Tusu). Menes had a son named Narmar, also known as Naram Sin and Vishvasaha. The son of Narmar is Shar-Guni, also known as Dilip and Khatvanga.

In this lineage of Dilip, Lord Ram was born.

It is highly possible that in the past, the descendants of Lord Ram, whether male or female, were married to Kassites belonging to the lineage of Sunutu, also known as Suhotra, Sumanta, and Puru. The children's belonging to this new matrimonial alliance called themselves Khatri, i.e., Kassites.

This makes the Upper Caste of Khattris have gotra brothers and sisters of Kassite Lurs living in Lorestan, Iran.

This is the reason why Guru Nanak traveled to Iran, Iraq, and other countries to find his family roots.

4. Silk Trade Route Part – 1 :

The Silk Road is one of the most important trade routes in world history, predicated on the trade of silk between China and Rome. Its legacy spans continents and centuries, bringing together empires, religions, technology and philosophy.



The Silk Roads refer to a series of trade routes that connected the Eurasian landmass

The history of the world is inextricably linked to the history of trade, in particular, the widespread trade of goods obtained on the back of atrocities and those capable of shaping our entire monetary system. In *Tracking the Trade Winds*, we look at the seismic importance of gold, sugar, silk, oil and more in connecting civilisations, enriching empires and facilitating the migration of people and resources.

When one thinks of global trade over the centuries, the first thing that comes to mind is probably the most famous trade route in world history. The route that connected the East to the West, bringing soft, smooth and strong fabric along with it. The route that spanned civilisations, disseminated religious beliefs and interwoven ideas — the nervous system of our Atlas, the Holy Grail of trade routes, the Silk Road.

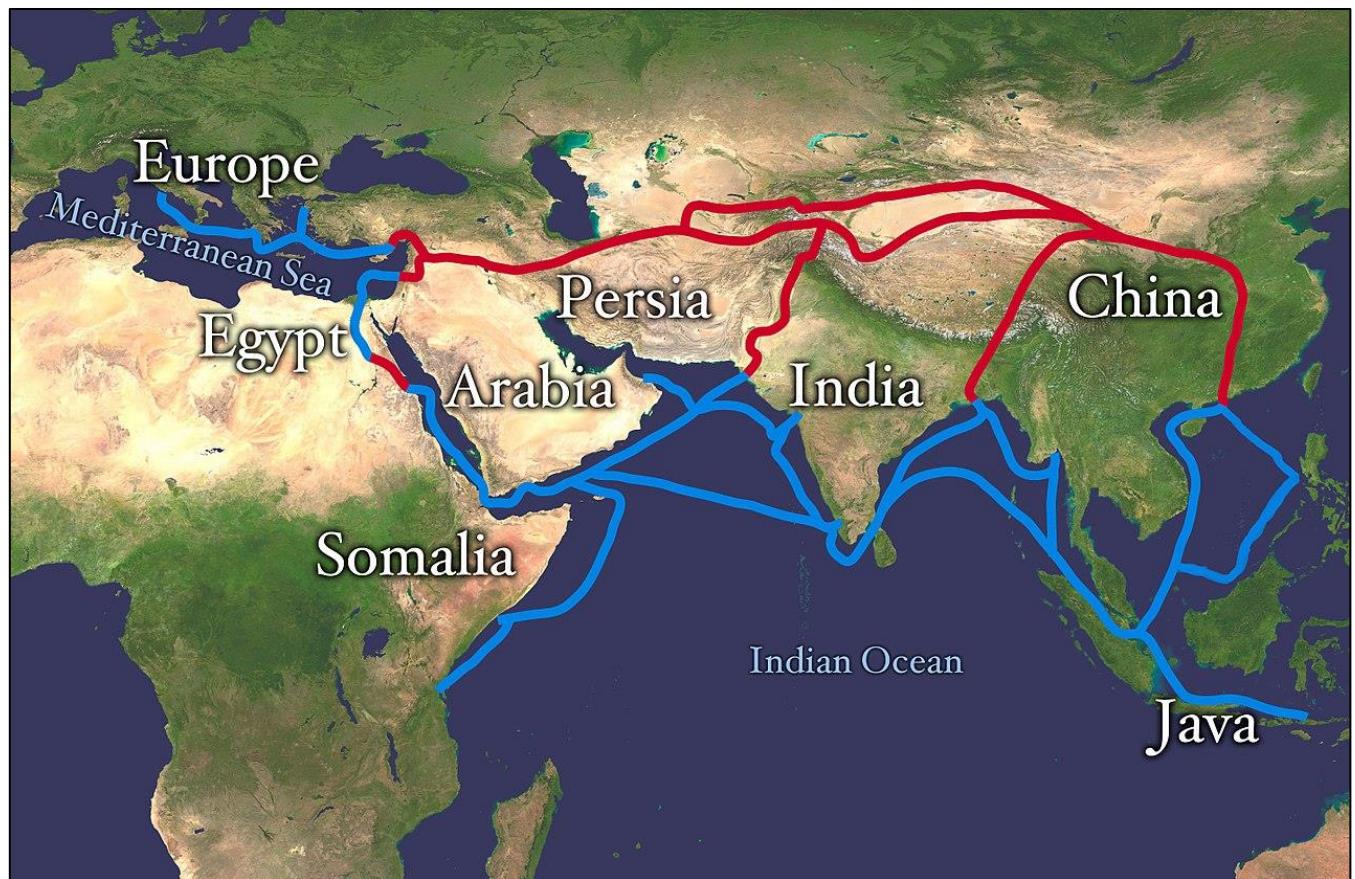


The Silk Road connected the Eurasian landmass

The Silk Road was a significant part of the development of the civilisations of India, China, Persia, Egypt, Arabia and Rome. Although the route was named after its most valuable commodity, in antiquity, many other goods were traded along it including spices, gold, medicine and jewels. And so were ideas, philosophies, diseases, technology and, of course, religion.

Source :

<https://indianexpress.com/article/research/the-fabric-that-connected-east-to-west-and-wove-the-myth-of-the-silk-route-8990182/>



The *Silk Road* was a network of ancient trade routes, formally established during the Han Dynasty of China in 130 BCE, which linked the regions of the ancient world in commerce between 130 BCE-1453 CE. The Silk Road was not a single route from east to west and so historians favor the name 'Silk Routes', though 'Silk Road' is commonly used.

The European explorer Marco Polo (l.1254-1324 CE) traveled on these routes and described them in depth in his famous work but he is not credited with naming them. Both terms for this network of roads - Silk Road and Silk Routes - were coined by the German geographer and traveler, Ferdinand von Richthofen, in 1877 CE, who designated them 'Seidenstrasse' (silk road) or 'Seidenstrassen' (silk routes). Polo, and later von Richthofen, make mention of the goods which were transported back and forth on the Silk Road.

From West to East these goods included :

- Horses
- Saddles and Riding Tack
- The grapevine and grapes
- Dogs and other animals both exotic and domestic
- Animal furs and skins
- Honey
- Fruits
- Glassware

- Woolen blankets, rugs, carpets
- Textiles (such as curtains)
- Gold and Silver
- Camels
- Slaves
- Weapons and armor

From East to West the goods included :

- Silk
- Tea
- Dyes
- Precious Stones
- China (plates, bowls, cups, vases)
- Porcelain
- Spices (such as cinnamon and ginger)
- Bronze and gold artifacts
- Medicine
- Perfumes
- Ivory
- Rice
- Paper
- Gunpowder

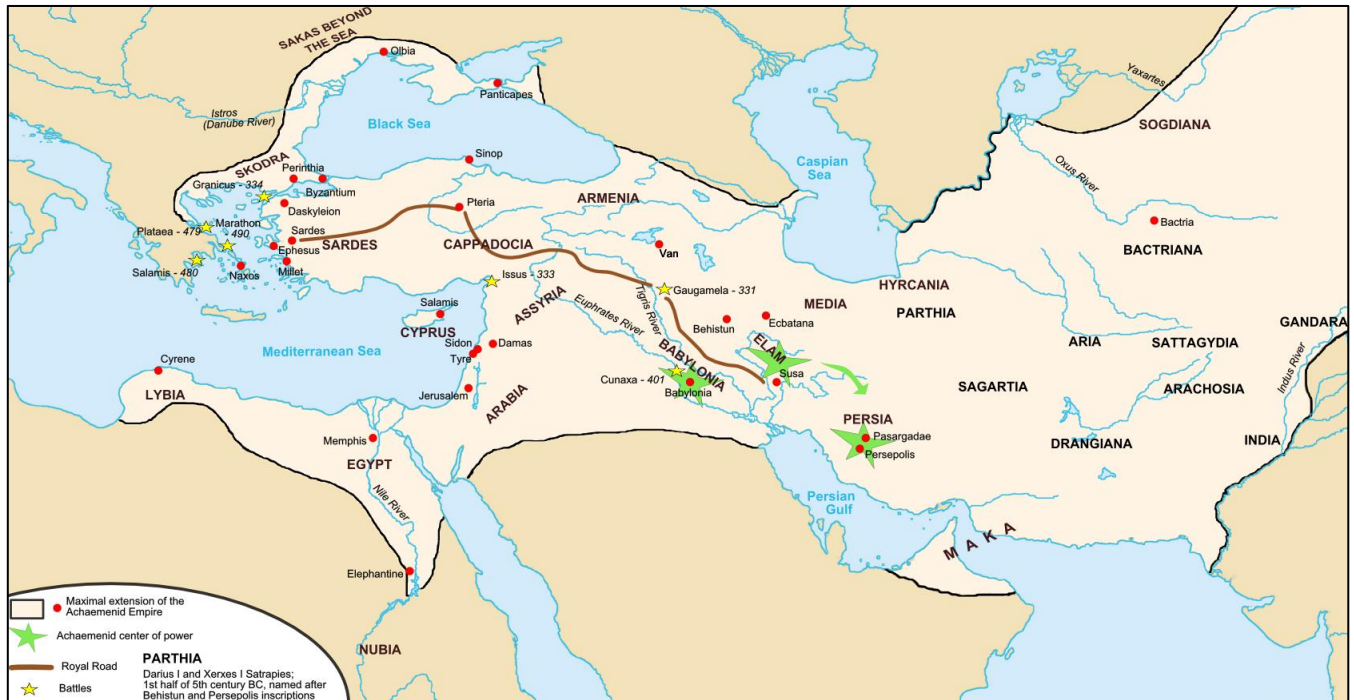
The network was used regularly from 130 BCE, when the Han Dynasty (202 BCE - 220 CE) officially opened trade with the west, to 1453 CE, when the Ottoman Empire boycotted trade with the west and closed the routes. By this time, Europeans had become used to the goods from the east and, when the Silk Road closed, merchants needed to find new trade routes to meet the demand for these goods.

The closure of the Silk Road initiated the Age of Discovery (also known as the Age of Exploration, 1453-1660 CE) which would be defined by European explorers taking to the sea and charting new water routes to replace over-land trade. The Age of Discovery would impact cultures around the world as European ships claimed some lands in the name of their god and country and influenced others by introducing western culture and religion and, at the same time, these other nations influenced European cultural traditions. The Silk Road - from its opening to its closure - had so great an impact on the development of world civilization that it is difficult to imagine the modern world without it.

Persian Royal Road :

The history of the Silk Road pre-dates the Han Dynasty in practice, however, as the Persian Royal Road, which would come to serve as one of the main arteries of the Silk Road, was established during the Achaemenid Empire (c. 550-330 BCE). The Persian Royal Road ran from Susa, in north Persia (modern day Iran) to the Mediterranean Sea in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey) and featured postal stations along the route with fresh horses for envoys to quickly deliver messages throughout the empire. Herodotus, writing of the speed and efficiency of the Persian messengers, stated that: "There is nothing in the world that travels faster than these Persian couriers. Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor darkness of night prevents these couriers from completing their designated stages with utmost speed." (*Histories* VIII.98)

These lines would, centuries later, form the creed of the United States of America's post office. The Persians maintained the Royal Road carefully and, in time, expanded it through smaller side roads. These paths eventually crossed down into the Indian subcontinent, across Mesopotamia, and over into Egypt.



Persian Royal Road

China & the West :

After Alexander the Great conquered the Persians, he established the city (later the Greek Kingdom) of Alexandria Eschate in 339 BCE in the Fergana Valley of Neb (modern Tajikistan). Leaving behind his wounded veterans in the city, Alexander moved on. In time, these Macedonian warriors intermarried with the indigenous populace creating the Greco-Bactrian culture which flourished under the Seleucid Empire following Alexander's death.

Under the Greco-Bactrian king Euthydemus I (r. 260-195 BCE) the Greco-Bactrians had extended their holdings. According to the Greek historian Strabo (63-24 CE) the Greeks "extended their empire as far as the Seres" (*Geography* XI.ii.i). 'Seres' was the name by which the Greeks and Romans knew China, meaning 'the land where silk came from' in East Asia. It is thought, then, that the first contact between China and the west came around the year 200 BCE.

The Han Dynasty of China was regularly harassed by the nomadic tribes of the Xiongnu on their northern and western borders. In 138 BCE, Emperor Wu sent his emissary Zhang Qian to the west to negotiate with the Yuezhi people for help in defeating the Xiongnu.

Zhang Qian's expedition led him into contact with many different cultures and civilizations in central Asia and, among them, those whom he designated the 'Dayuan', the 'Great Ionians', who were the Greco-Bactrians descended from Alexander the Great's army. The Dayuan had mighty horses, Zhang Qian reported back to Wu, and these could be employed effectively against the marauding Xiongnu.

The consequences of Zhang Qian's journey was not only further contact between China and the west but an organized and efficient horse breeding program throughout the land in order to equip a cavalry. The horse had long been known in China and had been used in warfare for cavalry and chariots as early as the Shang Dynasty (1600 – 1046 BCE) but the Chinese admired the western horse for its size and speed. With the western horse of the Dayuan, the Han Dynasty defeated the Xiongnu. This success inspired Emperor Wu to speculate on what else might be gained through trade with the west and the Silk Road was opened in 130 BCE.

Between 171-138 BCE, Mithridates I of Parthia campaigned to expand and consolidate his kingdom in Mesopotamia. The Seleucid King Antiochus VII Sidetes (r. 138-129 BCE) opposed this expansion and, also wishing revenge for the death of his brother, Demetrius, waged war against the Parthian forces of Phrates II, Mithridates successor. With the defeat of Antiochus, Mesopotamia came under Parthian rule and, with it, came control of the Silk Road. The Parthians then became the central intermediaries between China and the west.

Goods Traded via the Silk Road :

While many different kinds of merchandise traveled along the network of trade of the Silk Road, the name comes from the popularity of Chinese silk with the west, especially with Rome. The Silk Road routes stretched from China through India, Asia Minor, up throughout Mesopotamia, to Egypt, the African continent, Greece, Rome, and Britain.

The northern Mesopotamian region (present-day Iran) became China's closest partner in trade, as part of the Parthian Empire, initiating important cultural exchanges. Paper, which had been invented by the Chinese during the Han Dynasty, and gunpowder, also a Chinese invention, had a much greater impact on culture than did silk. The rich spices of the east, also, contributed more than the fashion which grew up from the silk industry. Even so, by the time of the Roman Emperor Augustus (r. 27 BCE – 14 CE) trade between China and the west was firmly established and silk was the most sought-after commodity in Egypt, Greece, and, especially, in Rome.



A map illustrating the ever-growing and ever-changing trade network of maritime and overland routes connecting China, India, and the Far East with the Middle East and Europe. Even though the term “Silk Road” was not defined until the late 19th century, the extensive trade exchange between the great ancient civilizations of Greece, Rome, Parthia, India, and China (to name just the most obvious) has been flourishing for millennia.

The Roman Love of Silk :

Prior to becoming Emperor Augustus, Octavian Caesar seized on the controversial topic of silk clothing to denounce his adversaries Mark Antony (l. 83-30 BCE) and Cleopatra VII (l. 69-30 BCE) as immoral. As they both favored Chinese silk, which was increasingly becoming associated with licentiousness, Octavian exploited the link to deprecate his enemies. Octavian would triumph over Antony and Cleopatra; he could do nothing, however, to curtail the popularity of silk.

The historian Will Durant writes :

The Romans thought [silk] a vegetable product combed from trees and valued it at its weight in gold. Much of this silk came to the island of Kos, where it was woven into dresses for the ladies of Rome and other cities; in A.D. 91 the relatively poor state of Messenia had to forbid its women to wear transparent silk dresses at religious initiations. (329)

The island of Kos became wealthy & luxurious through their manufacture of silk clothing.

By the time of Seneca the Younger (l. 4 BCE – 65 CE), conservative Romans were more ardent than Augustus in decrying the Chinese silk as immoral dress for women and effeminate attire for men. These criticisms did nothing to stop the silk trade with Rome, however, and the island of Kos became wealthy and luxurious through their manufacture of silk clothing.

As Durant writes, "Italy enjoyed an 'unfavorable' balance of trade – cheerfully [buying] more than she sold" but still exported rich goods to China such as "carpets, jewels, amber, metals, dyes, drugs, and glass" (328-329). Up through the time of the emperor Marcus Aurelius (r.161-180 CE), silk was the most valued commodity in Rome and no amount of conservative criticism seemed to be able to slow the trade or stop the fashion.

Even after Aurelius, silk remained popular, though increasingly expensive, until the fall of the Roman Empire in 476 CE. Rome was survived by its eastern half which came to be known as the Byzantine Empire and which carried on the Roman infatuation with silk. Around 60 CE the west had become aware that silk was not grown on the trees in China but was actually spun by silkworms. The Chinese had very purposefully kept the origin of silk a secret and, once it was out, carefully guarded their silkworms and their process of harvesting the silk.

The Byzantine emperor Justinian (r. 527- 565 CE), tired of paying the exorbitant prices the Chinese demanded for silk, sent two emissaries, disguised as monks, to China to steal silkworms and smuggle them back to the west. The plan was successful and initiated the Byzantine silk industry. When the Byzantine Empire fell to the Turks in 1453 CE, the Ottoman Empire closed the ancient routes of the Silk Road and cut all ties with the west.

The Silk Road Legacy :

The greatest value of the Silk Road was the exchange of culture. Art, religion, philosophy, technology, language, science, architecture, and every other element of civilization was exchanged along these routes, carried with the commercial goods the merchants traded from country to country. Along this network disease traveled also, as evidenced in the spread of the bubonic plague of 542 CE which is thought to have arrived in Constantinople by way of the Silk Road and which decimated the Byzantine Empire.

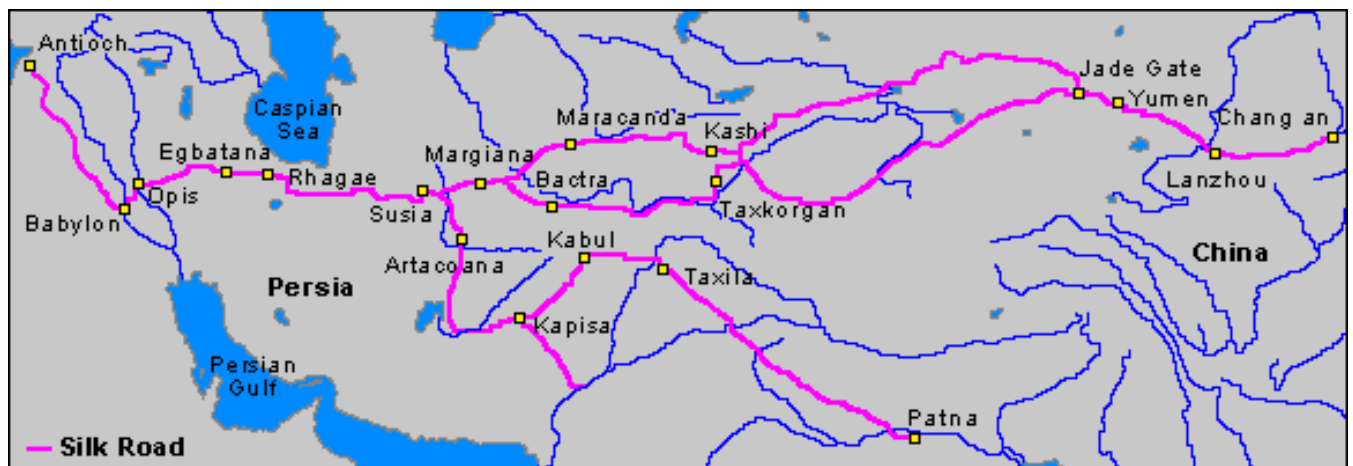
The closing of the Silk Road forced merchants to take to the sea to ply their trade, thus initiating the Age of Discovery which led to world-wide interaction and the beginnings of a global community. In its time, the Silk Road served to broaden people's understanding of the world they lived in; its closure would propel Europeans across the ocean to explore, and eventually conquer, the so-called New World of the Americas initiating the so-called Columbian Exchange by which goods and values were passed between those of the Old World and those of the New, universally to the detriment of the indigengous people of the New World. In this way, the Silk Road can be said to have established the groundwork for the development of the modern world.

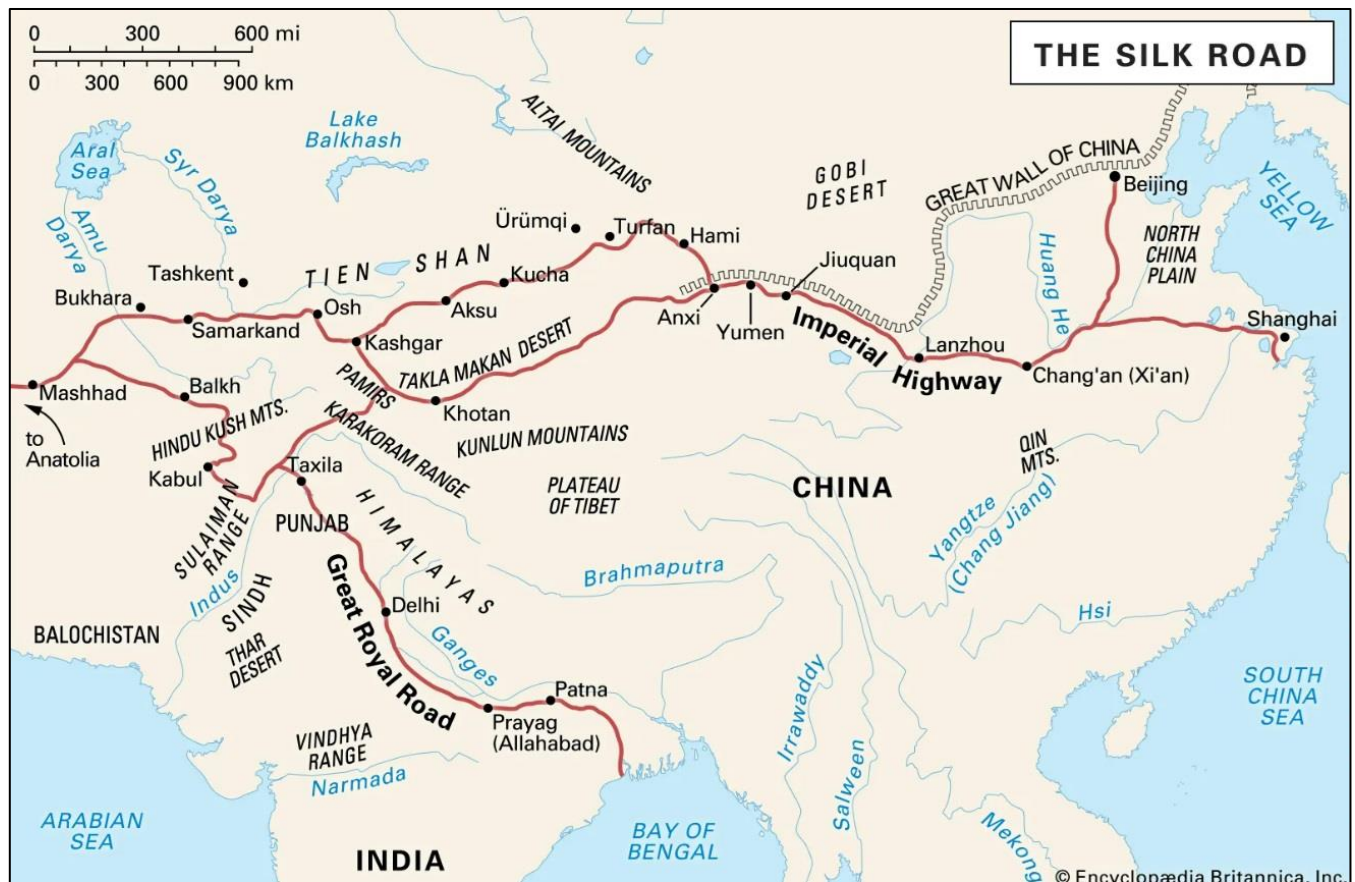
Source :

https://www.worldhistory.org/Silk_Road/

5. Silk Trade Route Part – 2 :

The Silk Road is the name for the trade route between the Mediterranean Sea and China. The first users of the road must have lived in the first half of the first millennium BCE, but the name 'Silk road' dates from the first century BCE. Its most famous traveler lived more than twelve hundred years later: Marco Polo of Venice (1254-1324 CE).





At the beginning of the sixth century BCE, the trade route started in Babylon, from where it passed through Opis/Ctesiphon (Baghdad) and Egbatana (Hamadân) and modern Sâveh - the place where Marco Polo was to see the tombs of the three Magi (Note : Magi are also known as Magh Brahmins) who had visited Jesus of Nazareth. Whatever the historical value of the story of the Magi, they must have traveled along the Silk road.

From Sâveh, the road continued to Rhagae (Ray near Tehrân), the religious capital of ancient Media. Further to the east, it passed through Parthia and reached Hecatompylus (Šahr-e Qûmes near Dâmghân) and Susia (Tûs near Mashhad). Here the road forked. The southern branch went through the Arian capital Artacoana (Herât) to Kapisa (Kandahâr) in Arachosia, and from there either to the southeast to the Lower Indus or to the northwest to Gandara (the valley of the Kabul) and the Punjab.

The northern branch went from Susia through the Karakum desert, passing along the oasis Margiana (Mary or Merv) and the Scythian tribes along the Amudar'ya, to Maracanda (Samarkand) in Sogdiana or to Bactra (Balkh, near modern Mazâr-e Sharîf) and Drapsaca (Kondûz). Here, lapislazuli could be found, a precious article that was much appreciated in Babylonia and Assyria. Other articles that were traded were horses and camels.

Almost no one traveled beyond Drapsaca, but there were a few continued upstream along the Amudar'ya. The most important towns along this road were modern Tâloqân, Feyzâbâd, and Eshkâshem. The traveler had now reached Wakshan, a small strip of land along the upper Amudar'ya, which is also called Ab-i-Panja. At the eastern end of this valley, he had to climb the Pamir mountains -the pass is 4,923 meters high- after which he reached a place named Stone Tower. It is probably identical to Taxkorgan and it seems to have been the place where westerners bartered their goods with the products from the Far East. Here, a second trade route joined the Silk road: across the Khunjerab pass, one could go to Kashmir and the capital of the Punjab, Taxila.

Another exchange point between westerners and Chinese was modern Kashi, an oasis in Xinjiang. It was reached by a more northerly branch of the Silk Road.

When the Chinese traders went home, they first passed along the Desert Without Return (Taklimakan) until they reached the Jade Gate (Anxi). From here, they continued via modern Yumen to Lanzhou, from where they could go to Chang'an, the City of Eternal Peace, which may be regarded as the last station of the road.

Chang'an was the capital of China under the rule of the emperors of the Han dynasty (206 BCE - 220 CE). Under the emperor Wu-ti (141-87 BCE), the Silk road was really opened. This ruler had to campaign against the Hsiung-nu nomads in the north -they are the ancestors of the Huns- and c.130 he sent out his general Chang Ch'ien to find allies and to buy the famous **Iranian war horses from Nisaia**. Although Chang Ch'ien failed in his mission, he had visited Bactria and had found the way to the west.

Trade was made easier when the Chinese acquired Xinjiang (also called Chinese Turkestan) in 104-102 BCE. The caravans received some protection from the authorities for a substantial part of their route. Moreover, bridges and paved roads were constructed. Beyond the Jade Gate, the political situation was more complex: the Pamirs were dominated by sometimes aggressive mountain tribes and the empires of the Parthians and Seleucids were fighting a more or less permanent war. Nonetheless, the Chinese received horses and other valuable articles -myrrh, frankincense, aloeswood- from the west; and the Parthians, Seleucids, Greeks and Romans acquired bales of silk, which had been carried by donkeys, mules, horses, yaks and camels for almost thousands of kilometers.

In the West, silk was considered more precious than gold and it remained very rare and expensive. To the best of our knowledge, the Roman emperor Elagabalus (218-222 CE) was the only Roman to wear a dress of pure silk. The westerners called the Chinese simply the Silk People (Seres); the capital of the Han dynasty, Chang'an, was known as Silk City.

When the Han dynasty collapsed in the third century, the trade between east and west was reduced to a minimum. According to the Byzantine historian Procopius (500-570 CE), two Christian monks discovered the secret of the silk production.

The emperor Justinian (527-565 CE) immediately dispatched secret agents to steal silkworm eggs and to bribe silk experts. They were successful, and from this time onward, silk was also produced in the Mediterranean.

This was not the end of the Silk Route, however, because the West remained interested in buying gums and spices. When the T'ang (618-907 CE) dynasty restabilized China, the long-distance trade route was reanimated. It became a road to spread Christianity as well: in 635 CE, Nestorian missionaries from Ctesiphon reached China. As we have already seen, its most famous traveler was Marco Polo, whose story is invaluable.

Source :

https://www.iranchamber.com/history/articles/silk_road.php

6. Nisaia Horse :

The Nisean horse, or Nisaeen horse, is an extinct horse breed, once native to the town of Nisaia, located in the Nisaeen plains at the foot of the southern region of the Zagros Mountains, Iran.

History :

The first written reference to the Nisean horse was in around 430 BCE, in Herodotus' Histories:

"In front of the king went first a thousand horsemen, picked men of the Persian nation then spearmen a thousand, likewise chosen troops, with their spearheads pointing towards the ground – next ten of the sacred horses called Nisaeen, all daintily caparisoned. (Now these horses are called Nisaeen, because they come from the Nisaeen plain, a vast flat in Media, producing horses of unusual size.)"

They were highly sought after in the ancient world. The Nisean horse was said[by whom?] to have come in several colors, including common colors such as dark bay, chestnut and seal brown, but also rarer colors such as black, roan, palomino, and various spotted patterns. The ancient Nisean horse was said to have had "not the slender Arabian head of the Luristan Culture but a more robust one that was characteristic of the great war horse". This suggests the Nisean may have been a descendant of the "forest horse" prototype.

The Nisean, according to one source, [who?] was "tall and swift, and color adorned his sides. The Chinese called the breed the tien ma – heavenly horse or Soulon-vegetarian dragon. The Nisean was the most valuable horse in the ancient world. Some were spotted, like a leopard or, as golden as a newly minted coin. Others were red and blue roan with darker color.

The royal Nisean was the mount of the nobility in ancient Persia. Two gray Nisean stallions pulled the shah's royal chariot, while four of the regal animals pulled the chariot of Ahura Mazda, the supreme god of Persia and Medea. Silver coins from the days of Cyrus the Great show him hunting lions from horseback using a spear. It is safe to assume [according to whom?] that courage and manageability were more important than color on these occasions, and without the stirrup, Cyrus also needed a smooth riding horse, so it is assumed that the Nisean horse also had smooth gaits. [citation needed]

During the reign of Darius, Nisean horses were bred from Armenia to Sogdiana. The Nisean horse was so sought after, that the Greeks (mainly, the Spartans) imported Nisean horses and bred them to their native stock, and many nomadic tribes, (such as the Scythians) in and around the Persian Empire also imported, captured, or stole Nisean horses.

Nisean horses had several traits that they passed on to their descendants. One of them was bony knobs on their forehead often referred to as "horns". [citation needed] This could have been due to prominent temple bones or cartilage on their forehead. The Greeks exported many horses to the Iberian peninsula, where the Nisean greatly influenced the ancestors of today's Iberian horse breeds, such as the Carthusian, Lusitano, Andalusian, Barb, and Spanish Mustang. [citation needed]

The Nisean horse was first mentioned in great detail by A.T. Olmstead, in his History of the Persian Empire. Pure white Niseans were the horses of kings and, in myth, gods. Cyrus the Great was so distraught, when one of his stallions was drowned while crossing a river, he had the river where the horse was drowned drained. He did not believe that anything could kill a horse so beautiful. [citation needed]

Olmstead also wrote that the Assyrians started their spring campaigns, by attacking the Medes for their horses. The Medes were the breeders of the first Nisean horses. [citation needed]

The Romans had their first encounter with the Nisean and the Parthian cataphract at the Battle of Carrhae (53 BC) when General Crassus went up against the great Parthian General Surena. After Crassus fell to the Parthians, his head and standards were presented to Orodes II. In 36 BC, Mark Antony avenged Crassus's death by ravaging the region of Media Atropatene with 16 legions. At his disposal were 100,000 infantry and 10,000 cavalry, drawn from as far away as Gaul and Spain. Of these, 30,000 were Roman Legionnaires. When the Parthians would not give him the battle he wanted, he ravaged Armenia, and brought back the Armenian King Artavasdes to Egypt. Among the prized possessions taken were the first Nisean horses in Rome. When Antony died, these horses fell into the hands of Augustus. According to Michael Decker in the Oxford Dictionary of Late Antiquity, Nisaeen horses were the most famous Iranian breed.

Elwyn Hartley Edwards also added it is possible that the Arabs also had influence in the breeding of legendary Nisean horses, since geographically the breed theoretically was bred in western Iran of Medes. Edwards further remarked the possibility that the Nisean were also infused with Arabian horse breed.

Historical events :

- Following their assassination of Bardiya in 522 BCE, the conspirators led by Otanes and Darius the Great agreed that whoever's horse neighed at the moment of sunrise would be rewarded with the kingship of Persia. According to legend, Darius' Nisean horse neighed first.
- In 481 BCE, Xerxes invaded Thessaly and raced his Nisean mares against the legendary Thessalian mares and beat them.
- In 479 BCE, General Mardonius was killed beneath his gray Nisean stallion at the Battle of Plataea. The stallion was so feared for its training that the Athenians had actually devised a plan to kill the horse.
- When Alexander the Great conquered Persia, he demanded a tribute of thousands of Nisean horses from the captured cities.
- When the Roman writer Strabo saw the Nisean horses, he said that they were the most elegant riding horses alive.
- The elite Sasanian cavalry unit Zhayedan are thought to have used the Nisean horses.
- St. Isidore of Seville stated that the Roman horses of the imperial stud, founded by Justinian I in Constantinople, were the most beautiful horses in the world.
- Emperor Wu Ti was told about the Heavenly Horses to the West and sent an army to get some for China; thirteen Heavenly Horses were taken from Ferghana along with a thousand lesser animals. When the Emperor saw the horses, he decided that the expedition was worth it.
- The Nisean became extinct with the conquest of Constantinople in 1204.
- Elwyn Hartley Edwards in The New Encyclopedia of the Horse called the Nisean the "super horse of the ancient world". [citation needed]

Note :

Apart from selling Bandhni design clothes the Khattris (Kassites, Lurs, Hittites) in Gujarat used to import, breed and sell horses in Gujarat and other parts of India. These horses are Known as Kathiyawadi Horse. Many horses were sold from Iran to India and it is highly possible that the Nisaia Horse was also sold by Khattris in Gujarat.

Source :

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nisean_horse

7. Nisaeen Plain :**The Nisaeen plain, surrounding Ecbatana (modern Hamadan)**

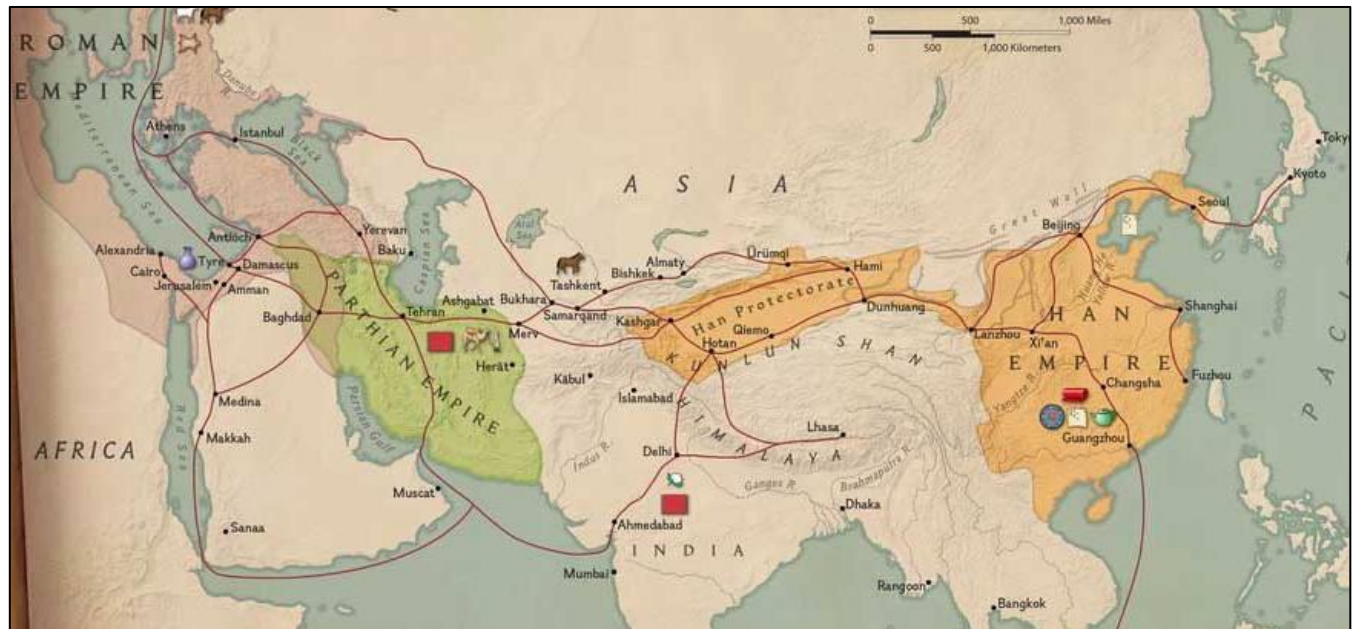
The Nisaeen plain (also spelled Nesaeen; Greek: Νέσαϊον πεδίον) was a fertile plain in Media, a historic region in Iran. It was best known for being the home of the esteemed Nisaeen horse. The plain may be identical with the Nisaya district mentioned in the Behistun Inscription of Darius the Great (r. 522–486 BC). However, Rüdiger Schmitt notes that this cannot be strictly proven. The name of the plain possibly survived into the Medieval era, as Yaqut al-Hamawi, writing in the 13th century, mentioned a town

in Hamadan (ancient Ecbatana) with the name Nisa. The city of Nahavand is located on the Nisaeen plain.

Source :

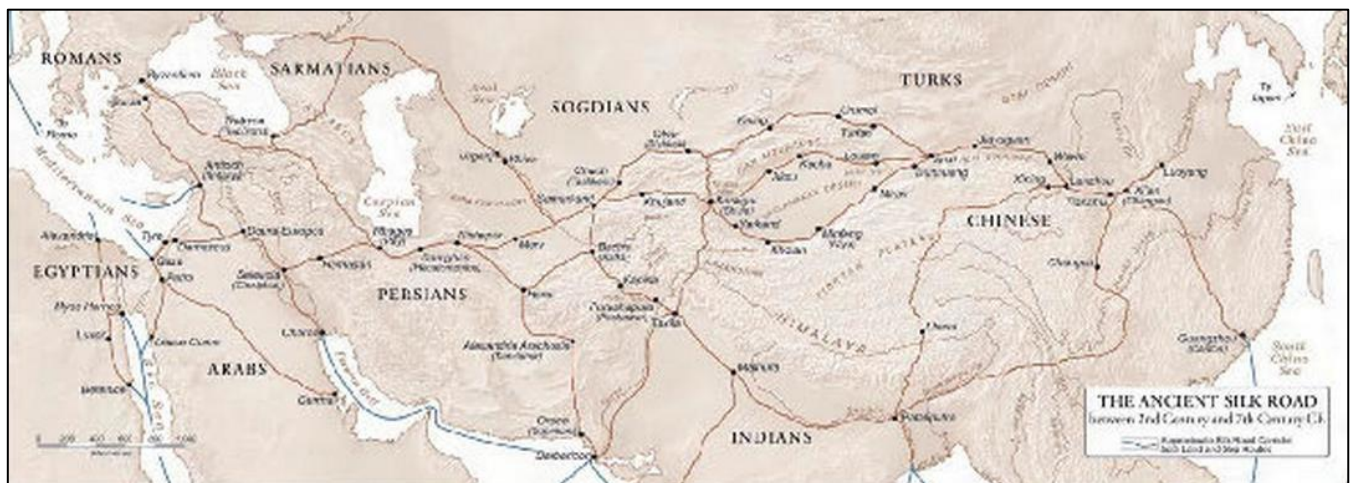
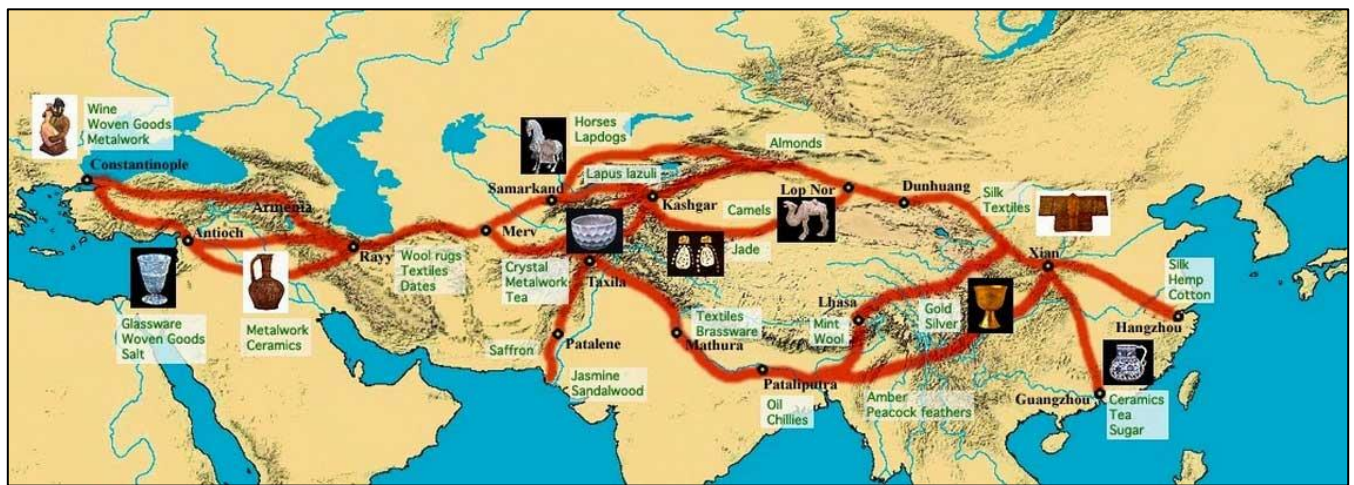
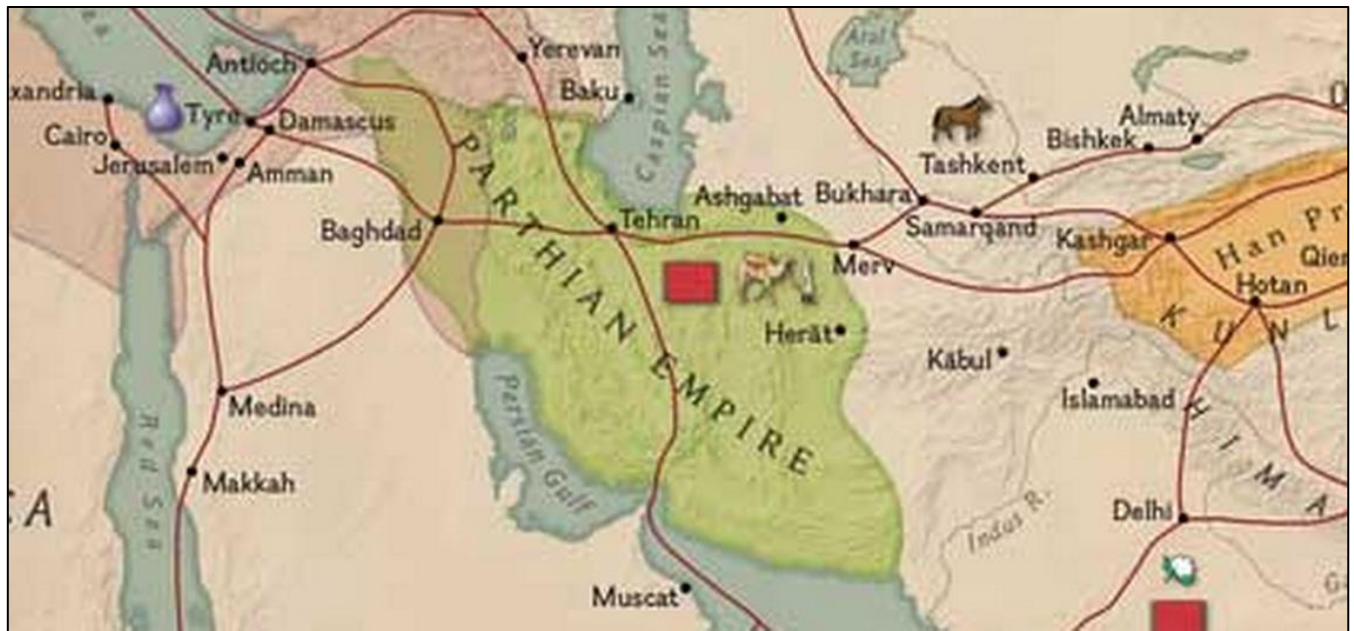
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nisaeen_plain

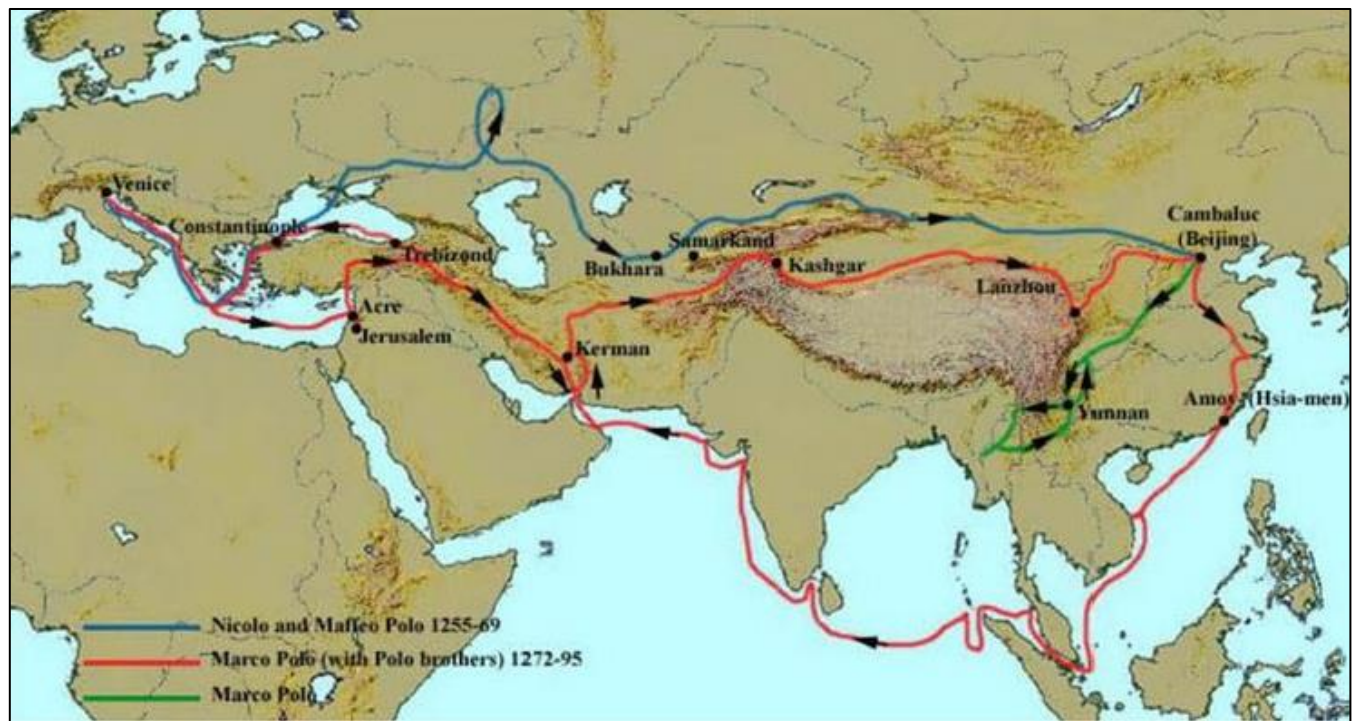
8. Silk Trade Route of Iran :



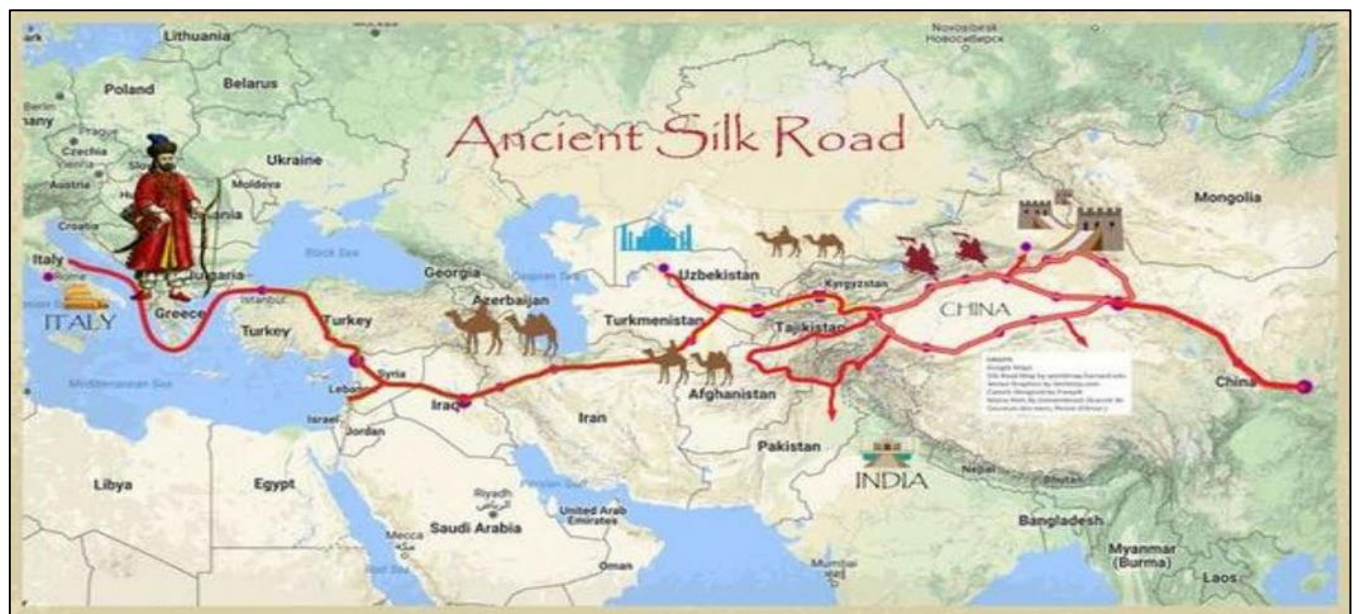
Iran was known as Persia during the Silk Road period. It was the main ring of the chain from East to West. It was strategically placed for the Silk Road trade with several routes passing through Iran's ancient and beautiful country.

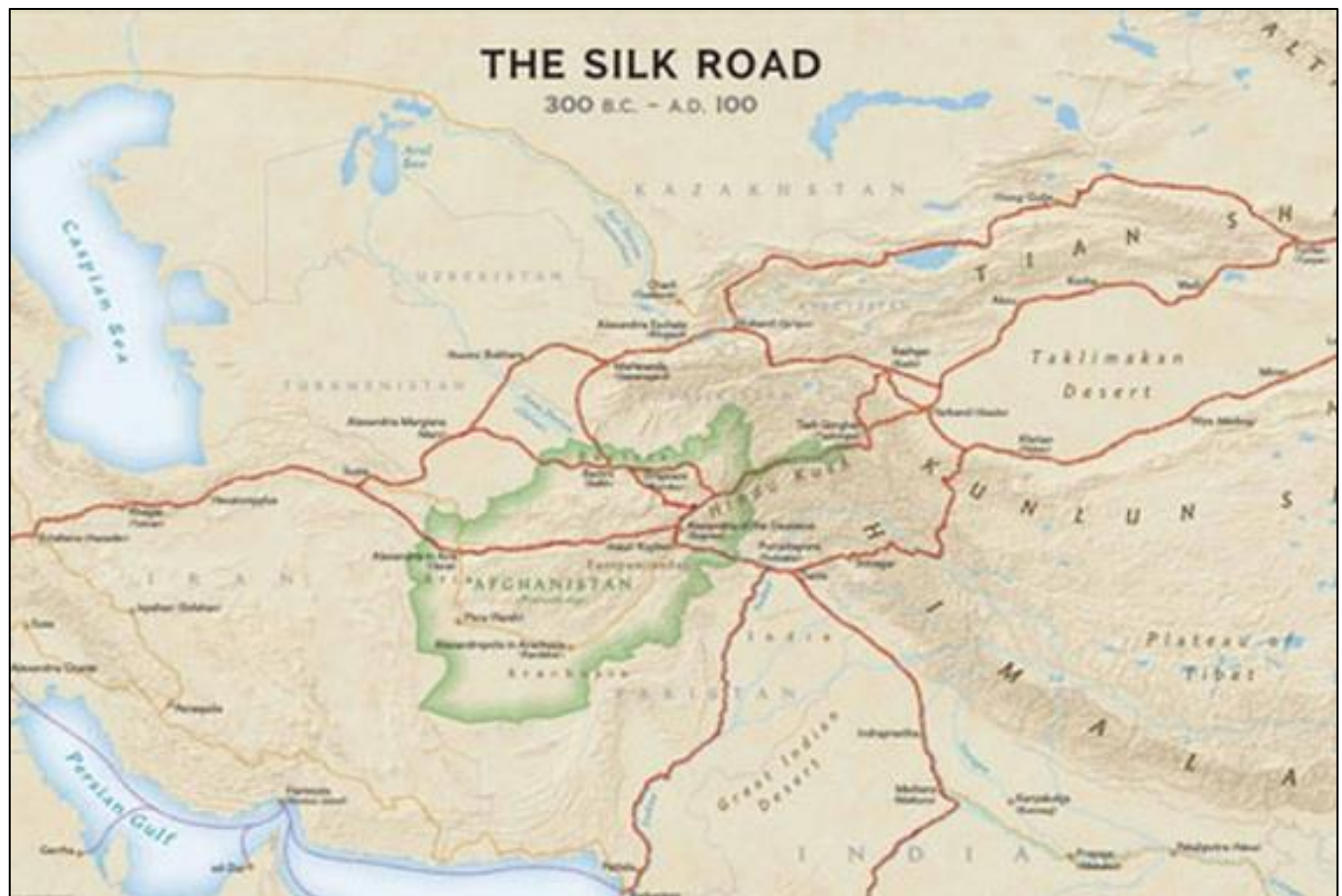
Nowadays, Iran is no longer considered so famous for the Silk Road route compared to other central Asian countries. The Iranian tourism industry did not invest much time in marketing this interesting piece of history due to Iran being at the center of several difficult issues during the last 40 years. Despite this unfortunate drawback, Iran is firmly back on the map. Thanks to its attractiveness, and numerous 'little-explored' parts of this amazingly diverse country, there is so much to offer experienced travelers wishing to journey through Iran's part of the Silk Road route which runs from China to Turkey.





A land route with myriad ramifications, through Central Asia, Iran and Turkey, linking India and China to the Eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea, ended up coalescing into what we came to know as the Ancient Silk Roads





One of the main highlights of the Iran Silk Road is seeing the many historical sites alongside this route. In Iran's Silk Road, there are plenty of ancient castles, caravanserais, citadels, and mosques that date back over a thousand years. There are a huge number of caravanserais, a lot of which have been renovated as boutique hotels. In addition, there are numerous oases in use in the Deserts of Iran on the original path of the Silk Road.

These areas are still inhabited. The names of a couple of them are mentioned in the books of Alfons Gabriel and Sven Hedin who crossed the Iran desert about 100 years ago. In the Iran Deserts article, we also recommended adventurous individuals should visit Iran's deserts to enjoy the countless attractions on offer.

Iran has many caravanserais, many of which have been destroyed, and some of them still remain in their original form. Some of them have been renovated and have been used as Persian traditional hotels for tourists for years. PERSIAN CARAVANSERAI is on the list of UNESCO world heritage tentative sites of Iran.



The Persian Caravanserai of Iran

Source :

<https://www.adventureiran.com/silk-road-iran/>

9. Origin of Khatris :

Origin of khatris - forefathers of gurus came from persia (in punjabi)

A 2500-year-old Bahishtan inscription reveals it all. With the blessings of Guru, it is we who have been able to link the Khshathrita (of Bahistan inscription) with KHATRETTA of the forefather of Khatris. It very clearly proves that the forefathers of Khatris were Persians. So, it is for first time that Khatreta stands identified.

ਗੁਰੂਆਂ ਦੇ ਵਡੇਰੇ ਈਰਾਨੀ ਸਨ

2500 ਸਾਲ ਪੁਰਾਣੇ ਬਹਿਸਤਾਨ ਸ਼ਿਲਾਲੇਖ ਨੇ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਮੂਲ ਸਥਾਨ ਦਾ ਖੋਲਿਆ ਭੇਦ

ਭਾਰਤੀ ਉਪ ਮਹਾਂਦੀਪ ਦੀ ਜੇਕਰ ਕੋਈ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਖੂਬਸੂਰਤ ਤੇ ਅਗਾਂਹਵਧੂ

ਕੌਮ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਹਨ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਖੱਤਰੀ। ਇਹ ਕਸ਼ੱਤਰੀ ਰਾਜਪੂਤਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਭਿੰਨ ਹਨ। ਪ੍ਰੰਪਰਾਗਤ ਇਹ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਹੁਕਮਰਾਨ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ। ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਦੱਸੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਇਸ ਜਾਤ 'ਚੋਂ ਸਨ। ਜਿਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਦੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੇਲੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਬਣ ਗਏ ਸਨ।

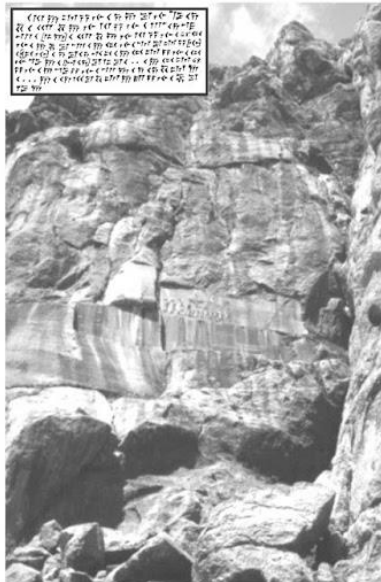
ਸਾਡੇ ਤੇ ਰੱਬ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪੁਰਾਤਨ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਘੋਖਦਿਆਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਪੂਰਵਜਾਂ ਦਾ ਪਤਾ ਲਗ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਈਰਾਨ ਦੇਸ਼ ਚੋਂ ਆਏ ਸਨ। ਇਸ ਗਲ ਦਾ ਸਬੂਤ ਹੈ ਈਰਾਨ ਚੋਂ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਰਾਜਾ ਡੇਰੀਅਸ (ਦਾਰਾ) ਦਾ 522 ਈਸਾ ਪੂਰਬ ਦਾ ਸ਼ਿਲਾਲੇਖ ਤੇ ਯੂਨਾਨ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਦਾ ਹੀਰੋਡੋਟਸ (484 ਤੋਂ 432 ਈ) ਦਾ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ।

ਈਸਾਪੂਰਬ ਪੰਜਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ 'ਚ ਇਕ ਇਟਲੀ 'ਚ ਇਤਹਾਸਕਾਰ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਹੈਰੋਡੋਟਸ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਉਸ ਵਕਤ ਦੀਆਂ ਇਨਸਾਨੀ ਨਸਲਾਂ ਤੇ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਹੈਰੋਡੋਟਸ ਹੀ ਹੋਇਆ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰੀ ਆਰੀਆ ਤੇ ਸਾਕਾ ਨਸਲ ਦੀ ਹਿਜਰਤ ਦੀ ਗਾਥਾ ਲਿਖੀ। ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਲਗਪਗ ਇਕ ਸਦੀ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਇਰਾਨ ਦੇ ਮਹਾਰਾਜਾ ਦਾਰਾ (ਡੇਰੀਅਸ) ਦੁਆਰਾ ਲਗਪਗ ਸੰਪੂਰਨ ਸਭਿਅਤਾ ਮੁਲਕਾਂ ਤੇ ਰਾਜ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਦਾ ਰਾਜ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਉਪ ਮਹਾਂਦੀਪ ਦੇ ਗੰਧਾਰ (ਅੱਜ ਦਾ ਪੰਜਾਬ) ਤਕ ਫੈਲਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ। ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਵਿਸਥਾਰ ਪੂਰਬਕ ਸ਼ਿਲਾਲੇਖਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਇਕ ਹੈ ਰਾਜਾ ਦਾਰਾ ਦਾ ਸ਼ਿਲਾਲੇਖ।

ਰਾਜਾ ਦਾਰਾ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਜਿਤਾਂ ਦਾ ਵਰਨਣ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਭ ਦਾ ਸਿਹਰਾ ਆਪਣੇ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਅਰ ਮਜਦਾ ਦੇ ਸਿਰ ਬੰਨਿਆ ਹੈ। ਸ਼ਿਲਾਲੇਖ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਤ ਮੂਰਤਾਂ ਵੀ ਪੱਥਰ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਘੜੀਆਂ ਪਈਆਂ ਹਨ।

ਏਸੇ ਹੀ ਲੇਖ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਜਿਤਾਂ ਦਾ ਵਰਨਣ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਦਾਰਾ ਨੇ ਈਰਾਨ ਦੇ ਪੱਛਮ ਉੱਤਰ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਮੇਦੀਆ (Media) ਤੇ ਜਿਸ ਦਾ ਜਿਕਰ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ, "ਰਾਜਾ ਡੇਰੀਅਸ ਇਹ ਬਿਆਨ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਇਕ ਭਰਾਤਾ (Phraortes) ਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਮੇਦ (Med) ਮੇਦੀਆ (Media) ਇਲਾਕੇ ਤੋਂ ਮੇਰੇ ਖਿਲਾਫ ਉਠ ਖੜਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਤੇ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਦਾਅਵਾ ਕਰ ਦਿਤਾ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਚੀਜ਼ਾਰੀ (Cyaxeres) ਖਾਨਦਾਨ ਦਾ ਖੱਤਰੀ (Khshathirita) ਹੈ। ਜਿਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਮੇਦ ਲੋਕ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਝਾਂਸੇ ਵਿਚ ਆ ਕੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਖਿਲਾਫ ਬਗਾਵਤ ਕਰ ਗਏ ਤੇ ਭਰਾਤ ਨੇ ਰਾਜਾ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਐਲਾਨ ਕਰ ਦਿਤਾ"

ਸ਼ਿਲਾਲੇਖ ਵਿਚ ਆਉਂਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਖਸ਼ੱਤਰੀਤਾ ਤੇ ਖਸ਼ੱਤਰੀਤੀ ਨੇ ਇਕ ਦਮ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਟੁੱਥ ਕੇ ਰੱਖ ਦਿਤਾ। ਤੇ ਸਾਡਾ ਧਿਆਨ ਇਕ



ਬਹਿਸਤਾਨ ਦੀ ਉਹ ਮੁਬਾਰਕ ਪਹਾੜੀ ਜਿਸ ਤੇ ਲੇਖ ਤੇ ਮੂਰਤੀਆਂ ਵਾਲੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ ਹਨ। ਨਾਲ ਪੁਰਾਤਨ ਲੇਖ ਦਾ ਨਮੂਨਾ

ਦਮ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਖਤਰੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਗਿਆ। ਉਂਜ ਖਤਰੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਕਲੋਂ ਸੂਰਤ ਈਰਾਨੀ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਡਾਹਵੀ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਏ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਬੋਲੀ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਕੋਈ 25-30 ਵੀਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਲਗਪਗ ਲਫਜ਼ ਫਾਰਸੀ ਅਰਬੀ ਦੇ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਹਾਂ ਸੰਨ 1947 ਉਪਰੰਤ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਨੇ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਜੁਬਾਨ ਤੇ ਇਕ ਕਿਸਮ ਦਾ ਧਾਵਾ ਬੋਲ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਹੈ। ਅੱਜ ਤੇ ਉਂਜ ਵੀ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਬੱਚੇ 'ਹਮਕੀ ਤੁਮਕੀ' ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਗੱਲ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਖੱਤਰੀਤਾ ਲਫਜ਼ ਸ਼ਿਲਾਲੇਖ ਵਿਚ ਮਿਲਣ ਉਪਰੰਤ ਅਸਾਂ ਇਨਟਰਨੈਟ ਤੇ 'ਹੋਰ ਰਲਵੇ' ਮਿਲਵੇ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਲਫਜ਼ ਪੁਛੇ ਤਾਂ ਫਿਰ ਨਜ਼ਰ ਆਇਆ ਯੂਨਾਨੀ

ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕਾਰ ਹੈਰੋਡੋਟਸ ਦਾ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਇਨਸਾਨੀ ਐਨਸਾਈਕਲੋਪੀਡੀਆ ਬਰੀਟਾਨੀਕਾ ਨੇ ਕੁਝ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਛਾਪਿਆ ਹੈ:

"ਈਰਾਨ ਦਾ ਇਹ ਭਰਾਵਰਤ ਖਸ਼ੱਤਰੀਤਾ (ਖਤਰੇਟਾ) ਜਾਂ ਫਿਰ ਅੰਸੀਰੀਅਨ ਖਤਰੇਤੀ, 675 ਈ. ਪੂ ਤੋਂ 653 ਈ ਪੂਰਬ ਤਕ ਮੇਦੀਆ ਮੁਲਕ ਦਾ ਰਾਜਾ ਸੀ। ਪੰਜਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਈਸਾ ਪੂਰਬ ਲਿਖਾਰੀ ਹੈਰੋਡੋਟਸ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਫਰਾਤਾ ਜਾਂ ਭਰਾਤਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ 'ਚ ਇਕ ਪਿੰਡ ਕਾਰਕਸ਼ੀ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਖੀ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਨੇ ਹੌਲੀ ਹੌਲੀ ਪਾਰਸੀ (ਈਰਾਨੀ) ਤੋਂ ਹੋਰ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਮੁਤਾਹਿਤ ਕਰ ਲਿਆ ਤੇ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਮੇਦੀਆ ਤੇ ਸਿਮਰੀ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਗਠ ਜੋੜ ਖੜ ਕਰ ਲਿਆ ਜਿਸ ਦਾ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨਾ ਸ਼ਾਮ ਮੁਲਕ ਸੀ। ਪਰ ਸ਼ਾਮ ਦੇ ਹਮਲੇ ਮੌਕੇ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਹਾਰ ਗਿਆ ਤੇ ਮਾਰ ਦਿਤਾ ਗਿਆ।

ਇਹ ਖਿਆਲ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਹੈਰੋਡੋਟਸ ਨੇ ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਰਾਜਾ ਡੇਰੀਅਸ ਵਾਲੇ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਦਾ ਜਿਕਰ ਹੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਸੁਣੇ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਕਰ ਦਿਤਾ ਹੋਵੇ।

ਪਰ ਇਥੋਂ ਇਕ ਨਤੀਜਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰ ਨਿਕਲ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਨਾਂ ਉਸ ਕਬੀਲੇ ਦੇ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਰਾਜੇ ਤੋਂ ਤੁਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਇਕ ਮਾਮੂਲੀ ਪਿੰਡ ਤੋਂ ਉਠ ਕੇ ਦੂਰ ਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਤੱਕ ਆਪਣਾ ਰਾਜ ਕਾਇਮ ਕਰ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਫਿਰ ਰਾਜਾ ਡੇਰੀਅਸ ਨਾਲ ਜਿਸ ਮੇਦੀਆ ਰਾਜੇ ਦਾ ਟਾਕਰਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਪੁਤਰ ਦੱਸਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਜਾਹਿਰ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਕਾਰਕਸ਼ੀ ਪਿੰਡ ਤੋਂ ਉਠਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਵਿਚ ਇਕ ਲੋਕ ਨਾਇਕ ਵਜੋਂ ਉਭਰ ਚੁਕਾ ਸੀ।

ਹਾਂ ਡੇਰੀਅਸ (ਦਾਰਾ) ਦੇ ਸ਼ਿਲਾਲੇਖ ਦਾ

ਇਹ ਦਾਅਵਾ ਕਿ ਰਾਜਾ ਭਰਾਤਾ ਲੋਕ ਪ੍ਰਸਿੱਧ ਮਹਾਰਾਜਾ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਦਾ ਅਸਲੀ ਜਾਨਸ਼ੀਨ ਹਾਂ ਉਹ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਚੀਜ਼ਾਰੀ ਘਰਾਣੇ ਦਾ ਸੀ।

ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਸਾਬਤ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਭਰਾਤਾ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਵੀ ਕੋਈ ਮਹਾਨ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਖਾਨਦਾਨ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਚੀਜ਼ਾਰੀ (Cyaxares) ਸੀ। ਪਰ ਰਾਜਾ ਦਾਰਾ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਿਲਾਲੇਖ ਤੋਂ ਸਾਬਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਇਸ ਲੇਖ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਪ੍ਰਾਪੇਰੀਡਾ ਵੀ ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਵਿਰੋਧੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਖਾਨਦਾਨਾਂ ਤੇ ਉਂਗਲੀ ਉਠਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜਿਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਤੇ ਹੈਰੋਡੋਟਸ ਦੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਦੇ ਮੱਦੇਨਜ਼ਰ ਆਪਾਂ ਇਹ ਕਹਿ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਚੀਜ਼ਾਰੀਆਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਨਿਕਲ ਕੇ ਇਕ ਸ਼ਾਖ ਅਲੱਗ ਹੋ ਗਈ ਤੇ ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਮੋਢੀ ਭਾਵ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਤੇ ਕਬੀਲੇ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਰੱਖਿਆ।

ਸੁਭਾਵਿਕ ਹੈ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਫਿਰ ਵੀ ਪਿੱਛੋਂ ਕਦੀ ਈਰਾਨ ਤੇ ਰਾਜ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ। ਤੇ ਉਸ ਉਪਰੰਤ ਕਦੀ ਹਾਰ ਵੀ ਹੋਈ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ ਤੇ ਹਾਰ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਕਬੀਲਾ ਏਧਰ ਭਾਰਤ ਉਪ ਮਹਾਂਦੀਪ ਵੱਲ ਭੱਜ ਆਇਆ।

ਹਾਂ ਜਦ ਤੱਕ ਕੋਈ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕਾਰ ਏਧਰ ਧਿਆਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਇਹ ਅਜੇ ਬੁਝਾਰਤ ਬਣੀ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਸੱਟ (Scythia or Saka) ਆਇਆ ਜਾਂ ਫਿਰ ਖੱਤਰੀ (Medes or Cyzaris)

ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਮੂਲ ਲੱਭਣ ਦੀ ਖਬਰ ਜਦ ਅਸਾਂ ਪੁਰਾਤਨ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਿਕ ਸਰੋਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਘੋਖਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਇੰਝ ਲੱਗਾ ਕਿ 'ਹੋ ਸਕਦੇ ਕਿ ਭਾਰਤ ਦੇ ਵਰਨ ਆਸ਼ਰਮ ਤੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਵਤ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਈਰਾਨ ਦੇ ਰਾਜਾ ਨੇ ਆਪਣਾ ਨਾਂ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਹੋਵੇ। ਜਾਂ ਫਿਰ ਉਹ ਰਾਜਪੂਤ ਰਾਜਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਵਡੇਰਾ ਹੋਵੇ।

ਇਹਨਾਂ ਵੱਖ ਵੱਖ ਵਿਚਾਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਇੰਝ ਲਗਦੇ ਕਿ ਭਾਰਤ ਅੰਦਰ ਜੋ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਹਾਰ ਰਾਜਪੂਤ ਰਾਜੇ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ, ਉਹਨਾਂ ਕਸ਼ੱਤਰੀ ਪਦ ਰਾਜਾ ਬਣਨ ਉਪਰੰਤ ਹੀ ਗ੍ਰਿਹਣ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ। ਖਾਨਦਾਨ ਦਾ ਮੂਲ ਰਾਜਾ ਕਸ਼ੱਤਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਕੋਈ ਗੁਜਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਰਾਜਪੂਤ ਬਣਿਆ ਕੋਈ ਯਾਦਵਾ ਆਇ। ਫਿਰ ਰਾਜਪੂਤ ਰਾਜਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਚੜ੍ਹਤ ਡੇਰੀਅਸ ਤੋਂ ਕੋਈ 1000 ਸਾਲਾਂ (ਤੋਂ ਵੀ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ) ਬਾਅਦ ਵਿਚ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਨਾਲੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਕਲੋਂ ਸੂਰਤ ਤੇ ਬੋਲ ਚਾਲ ਆਪ ਮੁਹਾਰੇ ਈਰਾਨ ਨਾਲ ਘੁੰਡੀ ਹੋਣ ਦੀ ਗਲ ਦਸਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਇਕ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾਂ ਬੋਲ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਜੜ੍ਹ ਈਰਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਇਸ਼ਾਰਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਅੱਜ ਵਿਦਵਾਨ ਪੁਛ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਲੜਕੀ ਪੇਕਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਘਰ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਬਲ ਦਾ ਘਰ ਕਹਿਕੇ ਕਿਉਂ ਬ੍ਰਿਹਾ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਬਾਬਲ ਤੇ ਈਰਾਨੀ ਲੋਕ ਬੈਬੀਲੋਨ ਨੂੰ ਆਖਦੇ ਹਨ।

(ਨੋਟ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਸੱਜਣ ਰਾਜਾ ਡੇਰੀਅਸ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਿਲਾਲੇਖ ਦਾ ਮੂਲ ਤੇ ਮੁਕੰਮਲ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਤਰਜਮਾ ਵਾਚਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਡੀ ਵੈਬ ਸਾਈਟ ਵਾਚਣ)

9 ਸਾਲ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਮੈਨੀਟਰ ਵਿਚ ਛੱਪ ਚੁਕੇ ਲੇਖ ਦਾ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਤਰਜਮਾ



ਖੱਤਰੀ ਜਿਨਾਂ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਸਾਜੀ ਤੇ ਫਿਰ ਤਿਆਗੀ



ਰਾਜਨੀਤਿਕ ਤਾਕਤ ਵੀ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੱਥ ਹੋਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸਮਾਜ ਦੀ ਸਦੀਆਂ ਤੱਕ ਸੁਯੋਗ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਕੀਤੀ ਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਗੁਲਾਮ ਹੋਣ ਤੇ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਹੌਲੀ ਹੌਲੀ ਅਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਵਪਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਢਾਲ ਲਿਆ। ਜਿਮੀਂਦਾਰੀ ਵੀ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕੋਲੋਂ ਹੋਈ ਹੋਈ ਜੱਟਾਂ ਨੇ ਲੈ ਲਈ। ਭਾਰਤ ਦੇ ਇਹ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਖੂਬਸੂਰਤ ਲੋਕ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਢਲੇ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰਕ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਰਾਜਨੀਤਿਕ ਕਾਰਨਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਧਰਮ ਵਿਚ ਆਏ ਕੱਟੜਵਾਦ ਕਰਕੇ ਬਾਅਦ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਨੂੰ ਅਲਵਿਦਾ ਕਹਿ ਦਿਤਾ।

ਉਤਰੀ ਭਾਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਇਕ ਨੰਬਰ ਦੇ ਪੜੇ ਲਿਖੇ ਹਨ। ਜੈਨ, ਬਾਣੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ ਪੂਰੇ ਭਾਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਸਭ ਜਾਤਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਅਮੀਰ ਹਨ। ਜੁਗਾਂ ਜਗਾਂਤਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਰਾਜ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਜਾਂ ਫਿਰ ਇਹ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਬੜੇ ਨਜ਼ਦੀਕ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ, ਭਾਵੇਂ ਰਾਜ ਬੋਧੀ ਦਾ ਹੋਵੇ ਜਾਂ ਫਿਰ ਯੂਨਾਨੀ, ਸ਼ੱਕ, ਹੂਨ, ਤੁਰਕ, ਪਠਾਣ, ਮੁਗਲ, ਸਿੱਖ ਜਾਂ ਐਂਗਰੇਜ ਦਾ। ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਮੂਲ ਦੇ ਇਹ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਬੜੇ ਯਥਾਰਥਵਾਦੀ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਕੌਮ ਦੇ ਸਮੂਹਕ ਫੈਸਲੇ ਕਦੀ ਜੱਜਬਾਤੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੇ।

ਖੱਤਰੀ ਸਿਰਫ ਯਥਾਰਥਵਾਦੀ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਰੂਹਾਨੀਅਤ ਦੇ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਮਾਅਰਕੇ ਮਾਰੇ ਹਨ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਇਕ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਧਰਮ ਦੀ ਨੀਂਹ ਰੱਖੀ ਜੋ ਕਰਮ ਕਾਂਡਾਂ ਤੇ ਰਸਮਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਨਿਰਲੇਪ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਰੱਬ ਦਾ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਵੀ ਵਿਗਿਆਨਕ ਹੈ।

ਖੱਤਰੀ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਨੂੰ ਅਪਣਾਉਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਸਿਰਫ ਮੁੱਢਲੇ ਲੋਕ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਨ, ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਇਸ ਮਜ਼ਹਬ ਦਾ ਡੱਟ ਕੇ ਦੂਰ ਦਰਾਡੇ ਮੁਲਕਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਕੀਤਾ। ਪਰ ਜਦੋਂ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਮਹਸੂਸ ਕੀਤਾ ਕਿ ਮਜ਼ਹਬ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਲਾਂ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਨੂੰ ਤਿਆਗਣ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਇਹ ਲੋਕ ਮੋਹਰੀ ਬਣੇ।

1947 ਦੀ ਵੰਡ ਸਮੇਂ ਅਪਣਾ ਸਭ ਕੁਝ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ ਫਕੀਰਾਂ ਵਾਲੀ ਹਾਲਤ ਵਿਚ ਭਾਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਦਾਖਲ ਹੋਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਇਹ ਲੋਕ ਅੱਜ ਉਤਰੀ ਭਾਰਤ ਦੇ ਮਾਲਕ ਹਨ, ਜੋ ਇਹ ਕਹਿ ਲਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬ, ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਤੇ ਹਿਮਾਚਲ ਵਿਚ ਦਰਅਸਲ ਪੜ੍ਹੇ ਪਿੱਛੇ ਇਹ ਲੋਕ ਹੀ ਰਾਜ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਅੰਤਕਥਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ। ਉਤਰੀ ਭਾਰਤ ਦੇ ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਦਫਤਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਿੱਕਾ ਚਲਦਾ ਹੈ। ਵਪਾਰ ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪੂਰੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਹਾਵੀ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਬਾਣੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਉਲਟ ਇਹ ਸਿਰਫ ਧਨ ਕਮਾਉਣਾਂ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣਦੇ, ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਖਰਚ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਵੀ ਪੂਰੀ ਅਕਲ ਹੈ। ਅੱਜ ਉਤਰੀ ਭਾਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਜਿਆਦਾ ਕਾਰਾਂ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕੋਲ ਹੀ ਹਨ।

ਬਹਿਸਤਾਨ ਪਹਾੜੀ ਦੇ ਬੋਲਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ

ਮ ਨੂੰ ਦੀ ਚਾਰ ਗੁਟੀ, ਉਹ ਵਰਗੀਕਰਨ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਲੀ ਜੋ ਬਾਅਦ ਵਿਚ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਸਮਾਜ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਤ ਪਾਤ ਦੀ ਲਾਭਨਤ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਬਣੀ, ਖੱਤਰੀ ਉਸ ਮੁਤਾਬਿਕ ਅਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਕਸ਼ਤਰੀਆਂ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਦਾਅਵਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਇਕ ਸੱਚਾਈ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਬੋਲਣ ਦੇ ਲਹਿਜੇ ਵਿਚ ਸੰਸਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਦੇ 'ਕਸ਼' ਨੂੰ 'ਖ' ਬੋਲਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਵੇਂ 'ਕਸ਼ਮ' ਨੂੰ ਖਿਮਾ, 'ਰਕਸ਼' ਨੂੰ ਰੱਖਿਆ, 'ਪ੍ਰੀਕਸ਼' ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰੀਖਿਆ ਅਤੇ 'ਕਸ਼ਤਰੀਆ' ਨੂੰ ਖੇਤਰੀ। ਐਨ ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ 'ਕਸ਼ਤਰੀਆ' ਦਾ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਬਣ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਪਰ ਮਜ਼ੇ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨੀ ਕਸ਼ਤਰੀਆਂ ਰਾਜਪੂਤਾਂ-ਠਾਕਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਅਲੱਗ ਹਨ। ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਰਾਜਪੂਤਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਨਾ ਤਾਂ ਵਿਆਹ ਸ਼ਾਦੀਆਂ ਹੁੰਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਆਪਸ ਵਿਚ ਗੋਤ ਮਿਲਦੇ ਹਨ।



ਨੀਕ ਐਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਮਹਾਰਾਜਾ ਖਤਰੇਟਾ ਦੀ ਛਾਤੀ ਤੇ ਪੈਰ ਰਖਿਆ ਸੀ ਮਹਾਰਾਜਾ ਡੇਰੀਅਸ ਨੇ। ਪਰ ਇਹ ਤਾਂ ਪੈਰਾ ਬੋਲੇ ਰਾਜਾ ਗੋਮਤਾ ਹੈ।

ਪ੍ਰਸਿੱਧ ਨਸਲ ਵਿਗਿਆਨੀ ਜੈਵ ਇਬਟਸਨ ਮੁਤਾਬਿਕ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਇਲਾਕਾ ਅਣਵੰਡੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ ਸਤਲੁਜ ਤੋਂ ਪੱਛਮ ਦਿਸ਼ਾ ਹੈ। ਵਪਾਰ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਖ ਧੰਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਇਹ ਪੰਜਾਬੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਸਾਹ (ਬੈਕਰ) ਵੀ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਇਬਟਸਨ ਲਿਖਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪਿਸ਼ਾਵਰ ਦੇ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਵਿਚ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਹਾਲਤ ਕੁਝ ਖਸਤਾ ਜਿਹੀ ਹੈ। ਉਹ ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਫਰੰਟੀਅਰ ਦੇ ਪਠਾਨ ਇਕ ਦੂਸਰੇ ਦੇ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਅਕਸਰ ਚੁੱਕ ਲਿਆਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਪੈਸੇ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਅਗਵਾਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦੇ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਉਥੇ ਆਮ ਹੀ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਚੁਰਾ ਲਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਪਠਾਣ ਲਵੇਰੀ ਮੱਝ ਨੂੰ ਚੁਰਾ ਲੈਂਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਹੈਰਾਨੀ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਖੁੱਦ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਰਾਜਪੂਤ-ਠਾਕੁਰ ਹਨ। ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਬਹੁਗਿਣਤੀ ਇਸਲਾਮ ਧਰਮ ਗ੍ਰਹਿਣ ਕਰ ਚੁਕੀ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਜਿਥੇ ਜਿਥੇ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਹਾਵੀ ਸਨ ਉਥੇ ਉਥੇ ਰਾਜਪੂਤ ਘੱਟ ਸਨ, ਰਾਜਪੂਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਉਲਟ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਫੌਕੀ ਆਕੜ ਅਤੇ ਫੂ ਫਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਅਤੇ ਮੌਕਾ ਪੈਣ ਤੇ ਇਹ ਲਿਫ ਕੇ ਵੀ ਗੁਜਾਰਾ ਕਰਨਾ ਜਾਣਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਲੜਾਕੂ ਰਾਜਪੂਤਾਂ ਤੇ ਵਪਾਰੀ ਬਾਣੀਆਂ ਦਰਮਿਆਨ ਅਪਣੀ ਜਗਾ ਬਣਾ ਰੱਖੀ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਰਾਜਪੂਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਬਹਾਦਰੀ ਨਾਲ ਲੜਨ ਦਾ ਐਸ਼ ਤੇ ਬਾਣੀਏ ਦੀ ਵਪਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਇਮਾਨਦਾਰੀ ਵਾਲਾ ਅਸ਼ ਲੈਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤੀ। ਇਹ ਯਥਾਰਥਵਾਦ ਨੂੰ ਪਾਲਦੇ ਹਨ। ਮੁਕਾਬਲੇ ਦੀ ਦੁਕਾਨਦਾਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਬਾਣੀਏ ਨੂੰ ਪਛਾੜਨ ਦੀ ਸਮੱਰਥਾ ਰਖਦੇ

ਹਨ। ਉਂਜ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦੁਕਾਨਦਾਰ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਵੀ ਉਸਤਾਦ ਹਨ।

ਸਤਲੁਜ ਤੋਂ ਪੱਛਮ ਦੇ ਅਣਵੰਡੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਦੋ ਹੋਰ ਵੀ ਵਪਾਰੀ ਜਾਤਾਂ ਸਨ, ਅਰੋੜੇ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਟੀਏ। ਇਹ ਦੋਨੋ ਵੀ ਅਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਕਸ਼ਤਰੀਏ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਦਾਅਵਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਭੌਤਿਕ ਤੇ ਸੁਭਾਵਿਕ ਨੇੜਤਾ ਵੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਅਧਿਅਨ ਤਹਿਤ ਆਪਾਂ ਅਰੋੜਿਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਟੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਦੀ ਪੁਰਿਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ।

ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸਿਰਜਨਾ ਵੇਲੇ ਤਕ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਬਹੁਤਾਤ ਸਿੱਖ ਹੋ ਗਈ ਸੀ-

ਖੱਤਰੀ ਤਿੰਨਾਂ ਧਰਮਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਹਨ, ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ 'ਖੇਜਾ' ਜਾਂ 'ਪਰਾਚਾ' ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। 1881 ਦੀ ਮਰਦਮਸ਼ੁਮਾਰੀ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਕੇਵਲ 9 ਫੀਸਦੀ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਅਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਾਇਆ। ਇਕ ਅੰਦਾਜ਼ੇ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਐਸ ਵਕਤ ਸਿਰਫ 5 ਤੋਂ 7 ਫੀਸਦੀ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਹਨ।

ਅਠਾਰਵੀਂ ਸ਼ਤਾਬਦੀ ਦੀ ਸ਼ੁਰੂਆਤ ਦੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਜਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਕੇਵਲ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਨ ਜਾਂ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ। ਪਰ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਨ, ਇਹ ਜਰੂਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਦਸ਼ਮੇਸ਼ ਦਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਵੀ ਸੱਜ ਚੁਕੇ ਸਨ। ਪਰ ਹਰ ਹਾਲਤ ਵਿਚ ਸਾਰੇ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਨੂੰ ਮੰਨਦੇ ਸਨ। ਇਹ ਵੀ ਦਿਲਚਸਪ ਸੱਚਾਈ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇ ਮਜਹਬ ਨੂੰ ਅਪਨਾਉਣ ਵਿਚ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਮੋਹਰਲੀ ਕਤਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਸਨ।

ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇ ਆਗਮਨ ਸਮੇਂ ਇਸਲਾਮ ਦਾ ਫੈਲਾਅ ਜ਼ੋਰਾਂ ਤੇ ਸੀ। ਚਨਾਬ ਤੋਂ ਪਰੇ ਦਾ ਇਲਾਕਾ ਤਾਂ ਅੱਧ ਪੱਚਾ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਹੋ ਚੁੱਕਾ ਸੀ। ਕਰਮ ਕਾਂਡਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਲੱਥ ਪੱਥ, ਬਹੁਈਸ਼ਵਰੀਵਾਦ ਵਾਲਾ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਧਰਮ, ਇਸਲਾਮ ਦੇ ਇਕੋ ਰੱਬ ਅੱਗੇ ਢਿੱਲਾ ਪੈ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ, ਨਾਲੇ ਰਾਜਨੀਤਕ ਤੇ ਸਮਾਜਕ ਗਲਬਾ ਵੀ ਇਸਲਾਮ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਸੀ। ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਤਾਨਿਆ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਲਾਜਵਾਬ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ। ਨਾਨਕ ਨੇ ਇਕ ਐਸੇ ਰੱਬ ਦਾ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਐਲਾਨਿਆ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਦੇਸ਼ ਕਾਲ ਤੇ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਤੋਂ ਉਪਰ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਸਦਕਾ ਸਮਝ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਬਸ ਫਿਰ ਕੀਹ? ਰੂਹਾਨੀਅਤ ਨਾਲ ਇਸ਼ਕ ਰੱਖਣ ਵਾਲੇ, ਕੱਚੇ ਧਾਰੀ ਨਾਲ ਬੱਧੇ ਚਲੇ ਆਏ।

ਕੁਝ ਵਿਦਵਾਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਵੀਚਾਰ ਹੈ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਸਾਰੇ ਦੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਸਨ, ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਵੀ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਸਮੂਹਕ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਧਾਰਨ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੋਵੇ। ਇਸ ਤਰਕ ਵਿਚ ਥੋੜਾ ਬਹੁਤ ਦਮ ਤਾਂ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਇਹ ਮੁੱਖ ਕਾਰਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਨੇ ਤਾਂ ਮੂਲ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਤੀਵਾਦ ਤੇ ਕਰਾਰੀ ਚੋਟ ਕੀਤੀ ਤੇ ਖੁੱਦ ਨਾਨਕ ਨੇ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਭੰਡਿਆ।

ਸਿੱਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਦੂਸਰੀ ਸਤਕਾਰੀ ਜਾਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਪੁਸਤਕ, ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਭੱਲੇ (1546-1637 ਈ.) ਦੀਆਂ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਹਨ। ਭਾਈ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਅਪਣੀਆਂ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਮੁੱਢਲੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਬਿਆਨ ਕੀਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਹੋਰ ਵੀ ਦਿਲਚਸਪ ਗੱਲ ਬਣ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਨਾਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਗੋਤ ਵੀ ਲਿਖੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਗੋਤਾਂ, ਜੋ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਵਿਚ 70 ਕੁ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਲਗਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸ਼ੁਰੂਆਤ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ 80 ਫੀਸਦੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਸਨ।

ਵਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਕੇਂਦਰ ਕਸ਼ਮੀਰ, ਕਾਬੁਲ, ਸਰਹਿੰਦ, ਕੁਰੂਕਸ਼ੇਤਰ, ਫਤਹਿਪੁਰ (ਸੀਕਰੀ) ਆਗਰਾ, ਸੁਲਤਾਨਪੁਰ, ਲਾਹੌਰ, ਗਵਾਲੀਅਰ, ਉਜੈਨ, ਬੁਰਹਾਨਪੁਰ, ਗੁਜਰਾਤ, ਪਟਨਾ, ਪਰਸਾਗ, ਲਖਨਊ, ਜੈਨਪੁਰ ਅਤੇ ਢਾਕਾ ਆਦਿ ਜੋ ਦੱਸੇ ਹਨ, ਇਹਨਾਂ ਕੇਂਦਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰਕ ਸਭ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਹੀ ਹਨ।

ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਸਾਫ ਇਸ਼ਾਰਾ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਦੋਂ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਦੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਤੇ ਹਾਵੀ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਉਹ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਅਪਣਾ ਮਾਣ ਸਮਝਦੇ ਸਨ।

ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਛੁੱਟ ਬਾਅਦ ਦੇ ਜਿੰਨੇ ਵੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਇਤਹਾਸਿਕ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਮਿਲਦੇ ਹਨ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੋਭਾ (1711 ਈ.) ਗੁਰ ਬਿਲਾਸ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ 6 (1843 ਈ.), ਗੁਰ ਬਿਲਾਸ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਦਸ (1751 ਈ.), ਗੁਰਬਿਲਾਸ ਸੁੱਖਾ ਸਿੰਘ (1797 ਈ.), ਪਰਚੀਆਂ ਸੇਵਾਦਾਸ (1708 ਈ.), ਬੀਸਵਲੀਨਾਮਾ (1769 ਈ.)

Qtrs. Ending: Sept. Dec. 2004 & March 2005

), ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ (1841 ਈ.), ਸੂਰਜ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ (1843), ਆਦਿ ਵਾਚਣ ਤੋਂ ਮਨ ਵਿਚ ਇਹੋ ਛਾਪ ਬਹਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਹੋਣਾ ਅਚੰਭੇ ਵਾਲੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੀ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦੇ ਵਿਕਾਸ ਨੇ ਪੱਛਮ ਤੋਂ ਚੜ੍ਹੇ ਇਸਲਾਮ ਦੇ ਹੜ੍ਹ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਇਕ ਬੰਨ੍ਹ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਕੀਤਾ ਤੇ ਹੁਕਮਰਾਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਜ਼ੁਲਮਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਉਜਾਗਰ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ, ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਵਿਰੋਧ ਵੀ ਕੀਤਾ। ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰਕ ਨੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਨਿਪੁੰਨ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰਕ ਦੀ ਤਰਾਂ ਕੰਮ ਬੜੀ ਸੁਚੱਜਤਾ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਨਿਭਾਇਆ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਭਲੀ-ਭਾਂਤ ਸਮਝ ਲੈਣੀ ਪਵੇਗੀ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋਣ ਨੂੰ ਧਰਮ ਪ੍ਰਵਰਤਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਨ ਮੰਨਦੇ, ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਕਈ ਪੁਰਾਤਨ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਲਿਖਾਰੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਤਾਂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਹੀ ਕਿਹਾ ਹੈ।

'ਸਾਰੇ ਦੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਹੀ ਸਨ', ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਅਜੇ ਵੀ ਕੋਈ ਸੰਕਾ ਹੋਵੇ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਕੋਲ ਜ਼ਰਾ ਕੁ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦੀ ਸਿਫਤ ਕਰੋ ਤੇ ਗੱਲ ਛੇੜੋ। ਦੇਖੋ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਉਹ ਦੁਖੀ ਹਿਰਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਬੋਲਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕਿ 'ਮੇਰੀ ਦਾਦੀ ਜੀ ਬੜੀ ਮਿੱਠੀ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਪਾਠ ਕਰਿਆ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ।' ਜਾਂ "ਸਾਡੇ ਘਰ ਅਜੇ ਵੀ ਇਕ ਗੁਟਕਾ ਪਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ।" ਜਾਂ "ਫਿਰ ਸਾਡੇ ਬਜ਼ੁਰਗ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਨਾਗਾ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਜਾਇਆ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ ਤੇ ਅਕਾਲੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਰੌਲੇ ਰੱਪੇ ਨੇ ਹੀ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਅੱਗੇ ਤੋਂ ਰੋਕਿਆ" ਇਤਿਆਦਿ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਬੋਲ ਚਾਲ ਤੇ ਮੁਹਾਵਰੇ ਦੇ ਪਿਛੋਕੜ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਅੱਜ ਵੀ ਲੰਗਰ ਲਵਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਵੱਡਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਨ ਸਮੇਂ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ 'ਧੀਰੀ ਪੈਣਾ' ਵਗੈਰਾ।

ਹੁਣ ਵੀ ਜਦ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਪੂਜਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਮਨ ਹੀ ਮਨ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦਾ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੀ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਨਮੂਨੇ ਦੇ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਬਣਨ ਵਿਚ ਅਜੇ ਵਕਤ ਲਗੇਗਾ, ਅਜਿਹੇ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਦੱਖਣ ਜਾਂ ਪੂਰਬ ਭਾਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਪਾਏ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਖੱਤਰੀ ਜੋ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਧਾਰਨ ਵਿਚ ਮੋਹਰੀ ਬਣੇ ਸਨ, ਸਿੱਖੀ ਤਿਆਗਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਵੀ ਇਹੋ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਤਬਕਾ ਬਣਿਆ। ਸਿੱਖ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਇਕਦਮ ਬਣ ਗਏ ਪਰ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦਾ ਤਿਆਗ ਬਹੁਤ ਹੌਲੀ ਹੋਲੀ ਹੋਇਆ। ਇਸ ਦੀ ਗਤੀ ਇੰਨੀ ਧੀਮੀ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਅਹਿਸਾਸ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਹੌਲੀ ਹੌਲੀ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਤੋਂ ਦੂਰ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ।

ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਨੂੰ ਅਲਵਿਦਾ ਕਹਿਣ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਖ ਕਾਰਨ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਸੰਮਿਲਤ ਰਾਜਨੀਤੀ ਸੀ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਕੀਤਾ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਿਤਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨਾਲ ਪੰਗੋ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਉਧਰ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਲੋਕ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਤੇ ਹਕੂਮਤ ਦਾ ਇਕ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾਤਰ ਦੀਵਾਨ, ਬਖਸ਼ੀ, ਵਜ਼ੀਰ ਤੇ ਲਗਪਗ ਪੂਰਾ ਦਾ ਪੂਰਾ ਮਾਲ ਮਹਿਕਮਾ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਹੱਥਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਸੀ। ਬਾਕੀ ਵਪਾਰੀ ਤੇ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਹੀ ਸਨ। ਜਦੋਂ ਕਦੇ ਵੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਦੇ ਸਬੰਧ ਹਕੂਮਤ ਨਾਲ ਕੌੜੇ ਹੁੰਦੇ, ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਬੇਚੈਨੀ ਵਧਦੀ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਤੇ ਵਪਾਰੀ ਬੰਦਾ ਬਗਾਵਤ ਵਿਚ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਤੰਗ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਉਧਰ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਇਕ ਹੋਰ ਵੀ ਮਨਫੀ ਮੁੱਦਾ ਪਨਪਦਾ ਗਿਆ। ਜਦੋਂ ਵੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਨੇ ਅਗਾਂਹ ਗੁਰਆਈ ਦਿੱਤੀ, ਗੁਰੂ ਦਾ ਇਕ ਅੱਧਾ ਜ਼ਿੰਦੀ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਨਵੇਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਖਿਲਾਫ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਤੇ ਬਾਗੀ ਪੁੱਤ ਖੁਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਬਣ ਬੈਠਾ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਬਾਗੀ ਗੁਰੂਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਰਕਾਰੋਂ ਵੀ ਸ਼ਹਿ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਰਹੀ ਤੇ ਧਰਮ ਵਿਚ ਰਾਜਨੀਤੀ ਦੇ ਖਿਲਾਫ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਵੀ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਉਤਸ਼ਾਹਤ ਕਰਦੇ ਰਹੇ।

ਮਸਲਾ ਉਦੋਂ ਸੰਗੀਨ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਜਦੋਂ 1604 ਈ. ਵਿਚ ਬਾਦਸ਼ਾਹ ਜਹਾਂਗੀਰ ਦੇ ਬਾਗੀ ਪੁੱਤ ਖੁਸਰੋ ਨੇ ਆ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਮੱਥਾ ਟੇਕਿਆ। ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਦੇਵ ਨੂੰ ਤਸੀਹੇ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਕਰ ਦਿਤਾ ਗਿਆ। ਜਹਾਂਗੀਰ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਸਵੈਜੀਵਨੀ (ਤੁਜ਼ਕ) ਵਿਚ ਇਲਜ਼ਾਮ ਲਾਇਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨੇ ਖੁਸਰੋ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਪੀ ਦਿਤੀ ਸੀ। ਸ਼ਹਾਦਤ ਦੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਬਹੁਤ ਸਾਰੇ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਨੂੰ ਬਚਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ ਪਰ ਕੱਟੜ



ਰਾਜਾ ਦਾਰਾ ਦੇ ਮਹੱਲ ਦੇ ਖਡਗਤ

ਮੌਲਾਣਿਆਂ

ਅੱਗੇ

ਇਕ ਨਾ ਚੱਲੀ। ਉਧਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਬਣਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਕੁੜਮ ਚੰਦੂ ਸਾਹੀ (ਖੱਤਰੀ) ਵਕਤ ਦਾ ਦੀਵਾਨ ਸੀ। ਉਹਨੇ ਝੱਟ ਆਪਣੀ ਲੜਕੀ ਦੀ ਮੰਗਣੀ ਤੋੜ ਲਈ ਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਘਰ ਦੇ ਬਾਗੀ ਪ੍ਰਿਥੀਏ ਦੀ ਹਮਾਇਤ ਕਰਨੀ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਦਿਤੀ। ਇਥੋਂ ਤੱਕ ਕਿ ਹਰਿਮੰਦਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਕਬਜ਼ਾ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਿਥੀਏ ਦੇ ਮੀਣੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦਿਵਾ ਦਿਤਾ ਗਿਆ।

ਸਰਕਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਬੈਠੇ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਉਦੋਂ ਹੋਰ ਨਮੋਸ਼ੀ ਦੇਖਣੀ ਪਈ, ਜਦੋਂ ਛੇਵੇਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨੇ ਫੌਜ ਖੜ੍ਹੀ ਕਰ ਲਈ, ਕਿਲ੍ਹੇ ਬਣਾਏ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨਾਲ ਲੜਾਈਆਂ ਲੜੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਜਿੱਤੀਆਂ ਵੀ। ਬਸ ਫਿਰ ਕੀ ਸੀ? ਗੁਰੂ ਘਰ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਰੜਕਣ ਲਗ ਪਿਆ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਤਾਂ ਹਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਨੂੰ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਪੇਸ਼ੀ ਦੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਆਉਣ ਲਗੇ। ਤੇ ਨਾਲ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਬਾਗੀ ਗੁਰੂਆਂ ਦੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਵੀ ਵੱਧਦੀ ਗਈ। ਪੇਸ਼ੀ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਰਾਮ ਰਾਏ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਿਆਈ ਤੋਂ ਹੱਥ ਪੈਣੇ ਪਏ ਤੇ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਦੀ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਤੇ ਜਾਗੀਰ ਹਾਸਲ ਕੀਤੀ। ਅੱਠ ਸਾਲ ਦੇ ਅੱਠਵੇਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਸੰਮਣ ਆ ਗਏ। ਨੌਵੇਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇ ਬਗਾਵਤ ਦਾ ਇਲਜ਼ਾਮ ਲੱਗਾ ਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਤਿੰਨ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਸਮੇਤ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਵਿਚ ਨਵੰਬਰ 1675 ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤਿੰਨਾਂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਦੋ ਪੱਛਮੀ ਸਮਾਜ ਦੇ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਮੂਲ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਭਾਈ ਮਤੀ ਦਾਸ ਤੇ ਸਤੀ ਦਾਸ ਸਨ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੋਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਔਲਾਦ ਅੱਜ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਤੋਂ ਕੋਹਾਂ ਦੂਰ ਆਰੀਆ ਸਮਾਜ ਵਿਚ ਬੈਠੀ ਹੈ। ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦਾ ਪਿਛੇ ਰਹਿ ਚੁਕਾ ਗਵਰਨਰ (ਜਰਨਲ ਫਿੰਬਰ) ਭਾਈ ਸਤੀ ਦਾਸ ਦੀ ਔਲਾਦ 'ਚੋ' ਹੈ ਤੇ ਕੱਟੜ ਆਰੀਆ ਸਮਾਜੀ ਭਾਈ ਪਰਮਾਨੰਦ ਦੇ ਬਾਲ ਮੁਕੰਦ, ਭਾਈ ਮਤੀ ਦਾਸ ਦੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ। ਹਰਿਆਣੇ ਦਾ ਸਾਬਕਾ ਗਵਰਨਰ ਭਾਈ ਮਹਾਂਵੀਰ ਵੀ ਇਸੇ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਰ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਹੈ।

ਸਿੱਖੀ ਤੇ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਦਿਨ-ਬ-ਦਿਨ ਵਧਦੀ ਕਸ਼ਮਕਸ਼ ਕਾਰਨ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਰ ਵੀ ਦਮ ਘੁੱਟਣ ਲਗਾ।

ਉਧਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕੀਤਾ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦਾ ਮਹਿਲ ਪੂਰਾ ਕਰਨ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਆਗਮਨ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ। ਦਸ਼ਮੇਸ਼ ਜੀ ਨੇ 1699 ਈ. ਨੂੰ ਮਹਿਲ ਦੇ ਪੂਰਾ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਐਲਾਨ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਤੇ ਗੁਰਿਆਈ ਸਮੁੱਚੇ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਦੇ ਦਿਤੀ। ਨਾਮ ਕਰਨ ਵੇਲੇ ਚਰਨ ਪਾਹੁਲ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਪੰਝੇ ਬਾਟੇ ਦੇ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਨੂੰ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਮਸੰਦ ਜੋ ਕਿ ਸਥਾਨਕ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰਕ ਸਨ ਤੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਤਿਲ ਫੁਲ ਦੀ ਭੇਟ ਗੁਰੂ ਘਰ ਤਕ ਪਹੁੰਚਾਇਆ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ, ਸਮਾਂ ਪਾ ਕੇ ਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟ ਹੋ ਗਏ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਮਸੰਦ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਲੀ ਦਾ ਵੀ ਭੋਗ ਪਾ ਦਿਤਾ ਤੇ ਐਲਾਨ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖ ਹੁਣ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਹਨ। 'ਖਾਲਸਾ' ਫਾਰਸੀ ਦਾ ਲਫਜ਼ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਅਰਥ ਹੁੰਦੇ

ਹਨ, ਉਹ ਇਲਾਕਾ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਬਾਦਸ਼ਾਹ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਧਾ ਹੀ ਅਧੀਨ ਹੋਵੇ ਭਾਵ ਵਿਚ ਜਗੀਰਦਾਰ ਜਾਂ ਛੋਟੇ ਰਾਜਾ ਨਾ ਹੋਣ ਜਾਂ ਇਹ ਕਹਿ ਲਓ ਆਜ਼ਾਦ। ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਨੇ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਤੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਰਮਿਆਨ ਵਿਚੋਲਗੀ ਖਤਮ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਦੇ ਦਿਤਾ ਕਿ ਹੁਣ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਾਹੀ ਲਿਬਾਸ ਪਾਉਣਗੇ, ਘੋੜੇ ਤੇ ਸਸਤਰ ਰੱਖਣਗੇ। ਯਾਦ ਰਹੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਿਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸੁਦਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਘੋੜੇ 'ਤੇ ਚੜ੍ਹਨ ਤੇ ਸਸਤਰ ਰੱਖਣ ਦੀ ਮਨਾਹੀ ਸੀ।

ਦਸ਼ਮੇਸ਼ ਨੇ ਫੌਜ ਵਧਾ ਦਿਤੀ, ਕਿਲੇ ਬਣਾਏ, ਲੜਾਈਆਂ ਲੜੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਜਿੱਤੀਆਂ ਵੀ।

1704 ਵਿਚ ਮੁਗਲ ਫੌਜਾਂ ਤੇ ਪਹਾੜੀ ਰਾਜਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਰੱਲ ਅਨੰਦਪੁਰ ਤੇ ਹਮਲਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਤੇ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਕੁਚਲ ਦਿਤਾ। ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਬਚ ਨਿਕਲੇ ਪਰ ਸਾਰੇ ਦਾ ਸਾਰਾ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਰ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਦਾ ਜਾਮ ਪੀ ਗਿਆ। ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਛੋਟੇ ਛੋਟੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਤੇ ਜਦੋਂ ਸਰਹਿੰਦ ਵਿਚ ਮੁਕੰਦਮਾ ਚਲ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ ਤਾਂ ਇਕ ਗੁਰ ਭਾਈ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਵਜ਼ੀਰ ਸੁੱਚਾ ਨੰਦ ਪੁਰੀ ਨੇ ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਚਮਚਾਗਿਰੀ ਦੇ ਹੱਦ ਬੰਨੇ ਟੱਪ ਕੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਕਰਵਾਇਆ। ਉਧਰ ਟੋਡਰ ਮੱਲ ਜੌਹਰੀ ਵਰਗੇ ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾਂ ਹਿੰਦੂਆਂ ਨੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਅਥਾਹ ਪਿਆਰ, ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਤੇ ਹਮਦਰਦੀ ਵਿਖਾਈ।

ਫਿਰ ਜਦੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੋਟਕਪੂਰੇ ਟਿਕੇ ਹੋਏ ਸਨ ਤਾਂ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਆਇ ਤਾਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਇਕੱਠੇ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲੇ ਤਾਂ ਸਲਾਹ ਦਿਤੀ ਕਿ "ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨਾਲ ਲੜਾਈ ਬੰਦ ਕਰ ਦੇਵੋ ਤੇ ਆਪਾਂ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਸੁਲਾ ਮੁਗਲ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਨਾਲ ਕਰਵਾ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹਾਂ।" ਗੁਰੂ ਨੇ ਬੜਾ ਕੌਰਾ ਜਵਾਬ ਦਿਤਾ ਤੇ ਕਿਹਾ, "ਵੇਖੋ ਇਕ ਪਾਸੇ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਕਹਿ ਕੇ ਸੰਬੋਧਨ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਦੂਜੇ ਪਾਸੇ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਦੇ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ।" ਉਲਟੇ ਬਾਂਸ ਬਰੇਲੀ ਵਾਲੀ ਗੱਲ। ਗੁਰੂ ਦਾ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਜਵਾਬ ਸੁਣ ਕੇ ਬਹੁਤੇ ਲਾਜਵਾਬ ਹੋਏ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਬਣ ਗਏ।



ਮਹੱਲ ਵਿਚਲਾ ਸ਼ਿਲਾਲੇਖ ਤੇ ਨਾਲ ਦੀਵਾਰਪਾਲਾ ਦੀਆਂ ਮੂਰਤਾਂ ਮਹੱਲ ਦੇ ਇਕ ਥੰਮ ਦਾ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼।

ਰਤਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਭੰਗ (1785 ਤੋਂ 1846 ਈ.) ਲਿਖਦਾ ਹੈ ਉਨ੍ਹੀ ਦਿਨੀਂ ਕੁਝ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਮਰੇਲਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਯਾਨੀ ਲੜਾਕੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖ, ਕਹਿ ਕੇ ਚਿੜਾਉਣਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਇਤ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਦਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੁਝ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਹੀ ਉਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਦੇ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ।

ਕਵੀ ਸੈਨਾਪਤੀ ਕਰਤਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੋਭਾ (1711 ਈ.) ਲਿਖਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਦੇ ਕੁਝ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਤੇ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੇ ਖਾਲਸਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਵਿਰੋਧ ਕਰਨਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਦਿਤਾ। ਇਥੋਂ ਤੱਕ ਕਿ ਖਾਲਸਿਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਦੁਕਾਨਾਂ ਤਕ ਬੰਦ ਕਰਵਾ ਕੇ ਬਾਈਕਾਟ ਕੀਤਾ। ਸਰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਐਨ ਨੱਕ ਬੱਲੇ ਹਥਿਆਰ ਰੱਖਣਾ ਤੇ ਪਿੰਦੇ ਦੇ ਮਰਨ ਤੇ ਵੀ ਝੱਦਣ (ਸਿਰ ਮੁੰਡਣ) ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਸੋ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਸਬੂਤ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸਿਰਜਣਾ ਦੀ ਵਿਰੋਧਤਾ ਕੀਤੀ।

1708 ਵਿਚ ਫਿਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਇਕ ਪਠਾਣ ਜੋ ਕਿ ਸੂਬਾ ਸਰਹੰਦ ਦਾ ਭਾੜੇ ਦਾ ਟੱਟੂ ਸੀ, ਦੀ ਕਟਾਰ ਤੋਂ ਜ਼ਖਮੀ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਚਲਾਣਾ ਕਰ ਗਏ। 40-50 ਖਾਲਸਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਬੰਦੇ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਦੀ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਹੇਠ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਤੇ ਹਮਲਾ ਕਰ ਦਿਤਾ। ਇਕ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਇਕ ਮੁਗਲ ਰਾਜ਼ੂ ਡਿੱਗਦਾ ਗਿਆ। ਨਿਰਪੱਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕਾਰ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਜਦੋਂ 1710 ਵਿਚ ਸਰਹੰਦ 'ਤੇ ਹਮਲਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਤਾਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਫੌਜ ਵਿਚ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾਤਰ ਦੱਬੇ ਕੁਚਲੇ ਜਾਂ ਸੂਦਰ ਕਰੇ ਜਾਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਲੋਕ ਸਨ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਰੋਹ ਦੇ ਹੜ੍ਹ ਅੱਗੇ ਸਰਹੰਦ ਵਹਿ ਢੇਰੀ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ। ਸਯਦ ਮੁਹੰਮਦ ਲੜੀਫ ਜਿਹੇ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕਾਰਾਂ ਦਾ ਇਲਜ਼ਾਮ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੇ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨਾਂ ਉਤੇ ਬੜੇ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਕੀਤੇ। ਪਰ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਕਹਿਣਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਿਰਫ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਤੀਆਂ ਕੂਕੂ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਸਜ਼ਾਵਾਂ

ਦਿੱਤੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ ਸਨ।

ਦਿੱਲੀ ਪਤੀ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੂੰ ਵਧਦੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਬਗ਼ਾਵਤ ਤੇ ਚਿੰਤਾ ਹੋਈ ਤੇ ਖੁਦ ਭਾਰੀ ਫੌਜ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵੱਲ ਚੜ੍ਹ ਆਇਆ। ਨਾਲੇ ਫਰਮਾਨ ਜਾਰੀ ਕਰ ਦਿਤਾ ਕਿ ਜਿਥੇ ਕਿਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਦਿਸੇ ਤੁਰੰਤ ਮੌਤ ਦੇ ਘਾਟ ਉਤਾਰ ਦਿਤਾ ਜਾਵੇ। ਪਰ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਲ ਸੀ। ਉਨ੍ਹੀ ਦਿਨੀਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਦੀ ਪਛਾਣ ਵੀ ਆਸਾਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਸਾਰੇ ਦੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਭਾਰਤ ਵਾਸੀ ਵਾਲ ਸਾਬਤ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਸਨ। (ਦੇਖੋ ਅਲਬਰੂਲੀ ਦੀ ਕਿਤਾਬ ਉਲ ਹਿੰਦ) ਤੇ ਸਿਰਫ ਵਡੇਰਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਮੌਤ ਤੇ ਹੀ ਭਦਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ। ਉਧਰ ਬਾਦਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੂੰ ਪਤਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਵਾਲ ਕਟਣਾ ਮਨ੍ਹਾ ਹੈ। ਉਹਨੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਚਾੜ੍ਹ ਦਿਤਾ ਕਿ ਸਾਰੀ ਦੀ ਸਾਰੀ ਜਨਤਾ ਹਜ਼ਮਤ ਕਰਵਾ ਲਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖ ਪਛਾਣੇ ਜਾਣ। ਨਾਈਆਂ ਦੀ ਚਾਂਦੀ ਹੀ ਚਾਂਦੀ ਹੋ ਗਈ। ਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਫੌਜੀਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਹਜ਼ਮਤਾਂ ਕਰਵਾ ਦਿੱਤੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ।

ਜੰਗਲੀ ਜਾਨਵਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰ ਹੋਣਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ। ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਿਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਲ ਰੱਖ ਦਿਤੇ ਗਏ। ਲਾਹੌਰ ਤੇ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਵਿਚ ਗੱਡੀ ਭਰ ਕੇ ਕੱਟੇ ਹੋਏ ਸਿਰ ਲਿਆਏ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਤੇ ਮੁੰਡ ਮੀਨਾਰ ਯਾਨੀ ਕਿ ਸਿਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਮੀਨਾਰ ਸਜਾਏ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਿ ਬਾਗੀ ਸੋਚ ਡਰ ਜਾਵੇ। ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ 1710 ਤੋਂ 1760 ਈ. ਦਾ ਯੁੱਗ ਸਿੱਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਲਮ ਜਮਾਨਾ ਕਹਿਲਾਇਆ।

ਖੱਤਰੀ ਤੇ ਬਾਕੀ ਵਪਾਰੀ ਲੋਕ ਅੱਧੇ ਸੌਂਬੇ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਜ਼ਾਰਾ ਕਰੀ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ, ਪਰ ਹੁਣ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਲ ਹੋ ਗਈ। ਵਾਲ ਕਟਾਓਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਮਰੇ ਜਾਂ ਫਿਰ ਭਗੋੜੇ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਜਥਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਜਾ ਰੱਲੇ। ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਮੁਲਾਜ਼ਮਾਂ, ਵਪਾਰੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਸ਼ਾਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਤਾਂ ਵਾਲ ਕਟਾ ਕੇ ਜਾਨ ਛੁਡਾਉਣੀ ਬਿਹਤਰ ਸਮਝੀ ਤੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਸਿੱਖ ਨਹੀਂ, ਹਿੰਦੂ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਆਪਣੇ ਰੁਜ਼ਗਾਰ ਤੇ ਕਾਰੋਬਾਰ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਬਚਾ ਲਏ। ਉਧਰ ਪੇਂਡੂ ਜੱਟਾਂ ਤੇ ਦੱਬੇ ਕੁਚਲੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਹੜੀਆਂ ਦੁਕਾਨਾਂ ਖੁਸ਼ਣ ਦਾ ਖਤਰਾ ਸੀ। ਉਹ ਜਾ ਜਥਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲੇ ਤੇ ਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਖਜ਼ਾਨਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਲੁੱਟ ਮਾਰ ਕਰਨ ਲੱਗੇ। ਫਿਰ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਿਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਦੇ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਭਰਾਵਾਂ, ਲਖਪਤ ਰਾਏ ਤੇ ਜਸਪਤ ਰਾਏ ਨੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਤੇ ਕਹਿਰ ਵਰਤਾਉਣਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਦਿਤਾ ਤਾਂ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਨੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਮਿੰਨਤ ਕੀਤੀ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਆਪਣੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਭਾਈਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਦਿਲੋਂ ਨਰਮ ਰਹਿਣ। ਖਾਲਸੇ ਦੀ ਮੰਗ ਨੁਕਰਾਈ ਗਈ ਤੇ ਐਮਨਾਬਾਦ ਵਿਖੇ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਨਾਲ ਮੁਨਭੇੜ ਵਿਚ ਫਿਰ ਜਸਪਤ ਮਾਰਿਆ ਗਿਆ। ਲਖਪਤ ਹੋਰ ਲੋਹਾ ਲਾਖਾ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਤੇ ਚਾਲੂਸੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਹੱਦਾਂ ਟੱਪ ਕੇ ਜਾ ਨਵਾਬ ਦੇ ਅੱਗੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਪੱਗ ਲਾਹ ਸੁਟੀ ਤੇ ਸਹੁੰ ਖਾਧੀ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਇਹ ਪੱਗ ਉਦੋਂ ਬੰਨਾਗਾ ਜਦ ਸਾਰੇ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਖਤਮ ਹੋ ਜਾਣਗੇ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਇਕ ਖੱਤਰੀ (ਨਾਨਕ) ਨੇ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਢ ਬੱਧਾ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਦੂਸਰਾ ਖੱਤਰੀ (ਲਖਪਤ) ਇਸ ਦੀ ਜੜ੍ਹ ਉਖੇੜੇਗਾ। ਕਾਹਨੂੰਵਾਨ ਤੇ ਕੁਪਰਹੋੜਾ ਦੇ ਘੱਲੂਘਾਰਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ 40000 ਸਿੱਖ ਮਾਰ ਦਿਤੇ ਗਏ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਿਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਲਛਮੀ ਦਾ ਉਚਾਰਨ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਨੂੰ ਝਟ ਫੜਾ ਦਿਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ। ਇਥੋਂ ਤਕ ਕਿ ਡਰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਲੋਕ ਗੁੜ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਰੋੜੀ ਜਾਂ ਪੇਸੀ ਕਹਿ ਕੇ ਹੀ ਗੁਜ਼ਾਰਾ ਕਰਨ ਲੱਗੇ।

ਐਨ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਮਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਇਕ ਹੋਰ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਦੀਵਾਨ ਕੌੜਾ ਮੱਲ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਇਹਨੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਨੰਗੇ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਮਦਦ ਕੀਤੀ ਤੇ ਇਥੋਂ ਤਕ ਸੂਬਾ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਦੇ ਨਵਾਬ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਨਵਾਜ਼ ਨੂੰ ਲੜਾਈ ਵਿਚ ਮਾਰ ਦਿਤਾ। ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਕੀਤੀ ਤੇ ਕੁਝ ਸਮਾਂ ਪਾ ਕੇ ਮਹੀਨਿਆਂ ਤਕ ਚਲਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਲੜਾਈ ਵਿਚ ਦੀਵਾਨ ਕੌੜਾ ਮੱਲ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ।

ਉਧਰ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਨਾਗਰਿਕ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਸਾਬਤ ਕਰਨ ਵਿਚ ਰੁੱਝੇ ਹੋਏ ਸਨ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ 50-60 ਸਾਲਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਸ਼ਵਾਸ ਦਿਵਾ ਦਿਤਾ ਕਿ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਅਲੱਗ



ਮਹੱਲ ਦੇ ਇਕ ਥੰਮ ਦਾ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼। ਸਪੱਸ਼ਟ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਦੋਂ ਅਜੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਕਪੜੇ ਦੀ ਸਿਲਾਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕੀਤੀ। ਇਥੇ ਰਾਜਾ ਦਾਰਾ ਦੀ ਫੌਜ ਦੇ ਸਿਪਾਹੀਆਂ ਚਾਦਰਾਂ ਬੰਨੀਆਂ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਹਨ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਜੱਟ ਬੰਨਦੇ ਸਨ।

ਅਲੱਗ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਨੇ ਤੇ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਹਨ।

ਪਹਾੜਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਡੋਗਰੇ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਉਤਰ ਆਏ ਤੇ ਨਵੇਂ ਬਣੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਹਿੰਦੂਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਪੁਰਾਣਿਕ ਕਥਾਵਾਂ ਤੇ ਸ਼ੇਰਾਂ ਵਾਲੀ ਮਾਤਾ ਦੀਆਂ ਭੇਟਾਂ ਜਗਰਾਤਿਆਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਸੁਣਾ ਕੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਨਾਲੇ ਮਨ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਵਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਨਾਲੇ ਮੁਢਲੇ ਧਰਮ ਨਾਲ ਫਿਰ ਜੋੜਿਆ ਤੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਗਰੀਬੀ ਵੀ ਦੂਰ ਕੀਤੀ। ਯਾਦ ਰਹੇ ਕਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇ ਆਗਮਨ ਸਮੇਂ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਨਾਥ ਜੋਗੀ ਮਤ ਹਾਵੀ ਸੀ।

ਸਦਾ ਫੌਜੀ ਮੁਹਿੰਮਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਲਝਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਫਿਰ ਅੱਧੀ ਕੁ ਸਦੀ ਦਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਰਾਜ ਆਇਆ ਤੇ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਰਾਜ ਦੇ ਸੁਭਚਿਤਕ ਵਜੋਂ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ। ਸਿੱਖ ਰਾਜ ਦੇ ਬਹੁਤੇ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਹੀ ਲਏ ਗਏ ਸਨ। 1849 ਵਿਚ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ਾਂ, ਪੰਜਾਬ ਤੇ ਕਬਜ਼ਾ ਕਰ ਲਿਆ ਤੇ ਅਖਰੀ ਮਹਾਰਾਜੇ (ਦਲੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ) ਨੂੰ ਤੇ ਕਪੂਰਥਲੇ ਦੇ ਰਾਜ

ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਈਸਾਈ ਬਣਾ ਲਿਆ। ਅੰਗ੍ਰੇਜ਼ ਸਿੱਖ ਯੁੱਧਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਿਪਾਹੀਆਂ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਵਿਖਾਈ ਗਈ ਆਪ ਹੁਦਰੀ ਬਹਾਦਰੀ ਤੇ ਦੇਸ਼ ਭਗਤੀ ਨੇ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਚੌਕੰਨਾ ਕਰ ਦਿਤਾ ਸੀ। ਹਾਲਾਤ ਭਾਪ ਕੇ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਵਪਾਰੀਆਂ ਫਿਰ 1881 ਦੀ ਮਰਦਮ ਸ਼ੁਮਾਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਹੀ ਲਿਖਵਾਇਆ। 1850 ਵਿਚ ਜੋ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਆਬਾਦੀ ਸੀ 1881 ਵਿਚ ਉਸਦੀ ਸਿਰਫ ਅੱਧੀ ਰਹਿ ਗਈ।

ਰਿਸ਼ੀ ਦਇਆ ਨੰਦ ਨੇ ਹਿੰਦੂਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਪੁਨਰ ਜਾਗਰਤ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਬੀੜਾ ਚੁੱਕਿਆ, ਪਰ ਪੰਜਾਬੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਸਵਾਮੀ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਨਾ ਸੁਣੀ। ਇਕ ਈਸ਼ਵਰੀਵਾਦ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਨੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕੀਤਾ ਤੇ ਬਾਅਦ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂਆਂ ਦੇ ਹੀ ਖਿਲਾਫ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਤੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਜੇ ਕੁਝ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਹੀ ਵੇਦਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਦਰਜ ਹੈ। ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਦਾ ਨਿੱਘਾ ਸਵਾਗਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਤੇ ਆਰੀਆ ਸਮਾਜ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰਕ ਬਣ ਗਏ।

ਵੀਹਵੇਂ ਦਹਾਕਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਮੀਆਂ ਫਜ਼ਲੀ ਹੁਸੈਨ ਤੇ ਸਰ ਛੇਟੂ ਰਾਮ ਦੀ ਲੀਡਰਸ਼ਿਪ ਤਹਿਤ ਸ਼ਾਹਾਂ ਤੇ ਦੁਕਾਨਦਾਰਾਂ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਸ਼ੋਸ਼ਣ ਖਿਲਾਫ ਚੇਤਨਾ ਪਥਪੀ। ਬਦਕਿਸਮਤੀ ਨਾਲ ਪੱਛਮੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਵਪਾਰੀ ਤੇ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਸ਼ੋਸ਼ਣ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕ ਮੰਨੇ ਗਏ। ਉਸ ਦਾ ਸਿੱਟਾ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਉਭਰਿਆ। ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਗਵਾਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਬਾਕੀ ਦੇ ਇਲਾਕਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਮੁਕਾਬਲੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਦੇ ਮਨ ਵਿਚ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਉਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਕੁਝ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਸੀ। ਮਾਰਚ 1947 ਯਾਨੀ ਵੰਡ ਤੋਂ ਪੰਜ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਹੀ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਘਰ ਤਿਆਗ ਕੇ ਭਾਰਤ ਵੱਲ ਆਏ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਵਿਖਾ ਦਿਤਾ ਕਿ ਤਬਕੇ ਦੇ ਹਿਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਜੰਮਣ ਤੋਂ ਦਾ ਮੌਹ ਬਾਅਦ ਵਿਚ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਵੰਡ ਪਿਛੋਂ ਅੱਜੇ ਲੋਕ ਧੌਕੇ ਧੌੜੇ ਹੀ ਖਾ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ ਕਿ ਅਕਾਲੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਡਾ. ਅੰਬੇਦਕਰ ਦੇ ਆਖੇ ਲਗ ਕੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਬੋਲੀ ਦਾ ਮਸਲਾ ਉਠਾ ਦਿਤਾ। ਰੋਜ਼ ਦੀ ਟੈਂ ਟੈਂ ਤੋਂ ਤੰਗ ਆਏ ਤੇ ਕਾਂਗਰਸੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਕਹਿ ਕਹਾਏ ਵਿਚ ਆ ਕੇ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਰੋਹ ਵਿਚ ਆ ਕੇ ਹਿੰਦੀ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਤ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਲਿਖਵਾ ਦਿਤਾ ਤੇ ਇਹ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਮਾਤ-ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਹੀ ਬਣ ਗਈ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਫਿਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਜਜ਼ਬਾਤ ਦਾ ਮੁਜ਼ਾਹਰਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ। ਕੁਝ ਵਿਦਵਾਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਸੋਚ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਪੜਾਅ ਤੇ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਡਰ ਗਏ ਤੇ ਨਤੀਜਾ ਨਿਕਲਿਆ ਸਿੱਖ ਬਹੁ ਸੰਖਿਆ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬਾ। ਜੇ ਜਜ਼ਬਾਤ ਤੋਂ ਕੰਮ ਲਿਆ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਤਾਂ ਅੱਧ ਹਰਿਆਣਾ ਤੇ ਹਿਮਾਚਲ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਣੇ ਸੀ।

ਪਰ ਯਥਾਰਥਵਾਦੀ ਖੱਤਰੀ ਸਾਹਵੇਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਤਬਕੇ ਦਾ ਹਿੱਤ ਸਰਬਉਤਮ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਅੱਜ ਖੁਸ਼ਕਿਸਮਤੀ ਨਾਲ ਅਕਾਲੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਖੱਤਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਅਹਿਸਾਸ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਕਿਸਮ ਦਾ ਕੱਟੜਵਾਦ ਨੁਕਸਾਨ ਹੀ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ।

→→ਸਫਾ 14 ਦੀ ਬਾਕੀ-ਕੀ ਕਾਕੇ ਨੂੰ ਪੰਥ ਮੰਨ ਲਏਗਾ—

..ਨੂੰ ਕਦੀ ਆਪਣਾ ਵਾਰਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਣਾਇਆ।

ਬਾਦਲ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਰ ਦੇ ਨਜ਼ਦੀਕੀ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਘਰ ਸਰਦਾਰੀ ਤਾਂ ਹੀ ਕਾਇਮ ਰਹਿ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ ਜੇ ਯੋਗ ਤੇ ਕਾਬਲ ਵਾਰਸ ਹੋਵੇ। ਇਹ ਲੋਕ ਦਾਅਵਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਕਾਕੇ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਤਾਂ ਬੀਬਾ ਪ੍ਰਨੀਤ ਕੈਰੋਂ, ਮਨਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਬਾਦਲ ਤੇ ਅਦੇਸ਼ ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੈਰੋਂ ਸਿਆਸਤ ਵਿਚ ਕਈ ਗੁਣਾ ਵੱਧ ਲਾਇਕ ਤੇ ਬਾਦਲ ਵਾਲੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਗੁਣ, ਲੱਛਣ ਤੇ ਸੁਭਾਅ ਦੇ ਧਾਰਨੀ ਹਨ। ਪਰ ਇਥੇ ਦੁਖਾਂਤ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਕਾਕੇ ਦੀ ਮਾਂ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤਿੰਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਹੀ ਵਿਰੁਧ ਹੈ। ਸਾਡਾ ਕਹਿਣ ਤੋਂ ਭਾਵ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪੂਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਰ ਵੀ ਕਾਕੇ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਤੇ ਬਗ਼ਾਵਤ ਵਾਲੀ ਘੁਸਰ ਮੁਸਰ ਘਰ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਹਾਲਾਂ ਬਾਦਲ ਢਿੱਡੋਂ ਧੀ ਤੇ ਹੱਥ ਰਖਦੇ ਸਨ ਜਿਸ ਅੰਦਰ ਪਿਓ ਵਾਂਗ ਰਾਜਨੀਤੀ ਦਾ ਸਮੁੰਦਰ ਠਾਠਾਂ ਮਾਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਇਸ ਜਵਾਬ ਭਾਣੇ ਨੂੰ ਕਾਕੇ ਦੀ ਕੀਮਤ ਘਰ ਦੀ ਚਾਰ ਦੀਵਾਰੀ 'ਚ ਹੀ ਕੈਦ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਜੋ ਦੇ ਮੁਖ ਮੰਤਰੀਆਂ ਬਾਦਲ ਤੇ ਕੈਰੋਂ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਾਰਸ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਮਾਂ ਦੀ ਵੀਟੋ ਨੇ ਪਿਓ ਦੀ ਪੇਸ਼ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣ ਦਿਤੀ।

ਐਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਜਲੰਧਰ ਦੇ ਇਕ ਪ੍ਰਸਿਧ ਪੜ੍ਹਕਾਰ ਦੀ ਟਿਪਣੀ ਯਾਦ ਆ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਬਾਦਲ ਦੇ ਕੁਝ ਕਾਕਾ ਕਲਿੰਟਨ ਹੈ, ਮੁਖ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਹੈ, ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਹੈ, ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖਤ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਇਕ ਗਲ ਯਾਦ ਰੱਖੋ ਜਿਸ ਦਿਨ ਕਾਕਾ ਬਾਦਲ ਦੇ ਕੁਝ ਡਿਗ ਪਿਆ ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਕਾਕਾ ਜੀ ਆਨੇ ਵਾਲੀ ਥਾਂ ਤੇ ਆ ਜਾਣਗੇ।

ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਬਾਦਲ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਸੋਚਦੇ ਹੋਣ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਮਾਇਆ ਦੇ ਸਿਰ ਤੇ ਬੇਟੇ ਨੂੰ ਮੁਖੀ ਬਣਾਈ ਰੱਖ ਸਕਣਗੇ। ਇਸ ਗਲ 'ਚ ਉਂਜ ਵੱਡਾ ਦਮ ਹੈ। ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਅੱਜ ਚੋਣਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਮਾਇਆ ਇਕ ਵੱਡੀ ਤਾਕਤ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਯਾਦ ਰਹੇ ਮਾਇਆ ਇਕ ਕਾਬਲ ਨੀਤੀਵਾਨ ਹੀ ਵਰਤ ਸਕਦਾ। ਜਾਂਦੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਲਗਦੀ। ਜੇ ਮਾਇਆ ਹੀ ਸਿਆਸਤ ਚਲਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਤਾਂ ਇਥੇ ਰਾਜ ਖਾਲਸ ਬਾਣੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਹੋਣਾ ਸੀ। ਕਿਸੇ ਬਿਰਲੇ, ਟਾਟੇ, ਅੰਬਾਨੀ ਦਾ ਫਿਰ ਉਧਰ ਢੀਡਸਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਅਰਬਾਂ ਖਰਬਾਂ-ਪਤੀ ਕੂੜਮਾਂ ਨੇ ਤਾਂ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਆਮ ਇਹ ਕਹਿ ਰਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਆਪਣੇ ਰਿਸਤੇਦਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਮੁਖ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਦੀ ਕੁਰਸੀ ਤੇ ਬੈਠਾ ਕੇ ਹੀ ਸਾਹ ਲੈਣਗੇ। ਓਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਤਾਂ ਕਹਿਣਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਗਲਤ ਫਹਿਮੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਵੀ ਕੇਂਦਰ ਦੀ ਵਜ਼ੀਰ ਬਾਦਲ ਨੇ ਢੀਡਸਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੂੰ ਦਿਵਾਈ ਸੀ। ਅਸਲੀਅਤ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਵੀ ਵਜ਼ੀਰੀ ਦਾ ਫੈਸਲਾ ਬੰਬੇ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ। ਬੇਅੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਟੱਬਰ ਨੇ ਅਥਾਹ ਮਾਇਆ ਕੱਠੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਸੀ, ਕਿੰਨੇ ਕੁ ਉਹ ਛਾਏ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ ਰਾਜਨੀਤੀ ਤੇ? ਜੇ ਪੈਸੇ ਨੇ ਹੀ ਲੀਡਰੀ ਤਹਿ ਕਰਨੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਫਿਰ ਰਵੀਇੰਦਰ ਬਾਜੀ ਮਾਰ ਜਾਊ। ਮਾਇਆ ਦੇ ਅਸਰ ਰਸੂਖ ਸਦਕਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਚੋਟਾਲੇ ਜਾਂ ਅਡਵਾਨੀ ਤੋਂ ਰਾਜ ਸਭਾ ਦੀ ਸੈਂਬਰੀ ਤਾਂ ਜਰੂਰ ਹਾਸਲ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਪੰਥ ਦੀ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਹਰਗਿਜ਼ ਨਹੀਂ। ਫੌਜਾਂ ਤੇ ਮਾਇਆ ਤਾਂ ਡੁਬਦੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਰਾਜ ਸਮੇਂ ਖੜਗ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੋਲ ਮਣਾਂ ਮੂਈ ਸੀ।

ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ 1947 ਉਪਰੰਤ ਅੱਜ ਤੱਕ ਕਿੰਨੇ ਹੀ ਲੀਡਰ ਹੋ ਗੁਜਰੇ ਹਨ। ਲਾਲਾ ਭੀਮ ਸੈਨ ਸੱਚਰ, ਗੋਪੀ ਚੰਦ ਭਾਰਗਵ, ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੈਰੋਂ, ਦਰਬਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ, ਤੇਜਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੁੰਤਰਤ, ਬੇਅੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸਵਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ, ਗੁਰਦਿਆਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਢਿੱਲੋਂ ਆਦਿ। ਪਰ ਕੀਹ ਕੋਈ ਆਪਣੇ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਨੂੰ ਮੁਖ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਬਣਾ ਪਾਇਆ ਹੈ। ਬੇਅੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਪੋਤਾ ਗੁਰਕੀਰਤ ਵਿਚਾਰਾ ਅੱਜ ਸਿਰਫ ਬਰਸੀਆਂ ਮਨਾਉਣ ਜੋਗਾ ਹੀ ਰਹਿ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਜੇਕਰ ਬਾਦਲ ਨੇ ਪੰਥ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਰਵਾਦ ਹੀ ਠੋਸਣਾ ਸੀ ਤਾਂ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਟੌਹੜਾ ਦੀ ਮੌਤ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਦ ਨੇਕ ਤੇ ਸ਼ਰੀਫ ਹਰਮੇਲ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਕਿਹੋਂ ਨਾਂ ਬਣਾਇਆ? ਇਹ ਦੇਹਰੇ ਮਾਧ ਦੰਡ ਕਿਓਂ ਟੌਹੜਾ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਕਾਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਕਾਫਲੇ ਅੱਜ ਬਾਦਲ ਨੇ ਬੇਗੋਵਾਲ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਹੋਂ ਮੋੜ ਦਿਤੇ ਹਨ?

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਲੋਕ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਲਕੀਰ ਦੇ ਫਕੀਰ ਨਹੀਂ। ਪੰਜਾਬ ਯੂ.ਪੀ., ਬਿਹਾਰ, ਤਾਮਿਲ ਨਾਡੂ ਜਾਂ ਫਿਰ ਕਸ਼ਮੀਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਹੈ।

Source :

<https://www.punjabmonitor.com/2013/05/origin-of-khatris-forefathers-of-gurus.html>

10. Khatri Part – 1 :

Khatri is a caste originating from the Punjab region of South Asia that is predominantly found in India, but also in Pakistan and Afghanistan. In the Indian subcontinent, they were mostly engaged in mercantile professions such as banking and trade. They were the dominant commercial and financial administration class of late-medieval India. Some in Punjab often belonged to hereditary agriculturalist land-holding lineages, while others were engaged in artisanal occupations and some were scribes learned in Sanskrit or Persian.

During the British colonial era, they also served as lawyers and engaged in administrative jobs in the colonial bureaucracy. Some of them served in the British Indian army after being raised as Sikhs. The Sikh religion was founded by Guru Nanak, a Bedi Khatri. Subsequently, all the Sikh religious leaders or Gurus were Sodhi Khatri. During the Sikh Empire, many Khatri formed the military vanguard of the Khalsa Army and its administrative class as Dewans of all the provinces. Hari Singh Nalwa, the commander-in-chief of the Sikh Khalsa Army, was an Uppal Khatri and responsible for most of the Sikh conquests up until the Khyber pass. Others such as Mokham Chand commanded the Sikh Army against the Durrani Empire at Attock while those such as Sawan Mal Chopra ruled Multan after wrestling it from the Afghans.

Khatri have played an active role in the Indian Armed Forces since 1947, with many heading it as the Chief of Army or Admiral of the Navy. Some such as Vikram Batra and Arun Khetarpal have won India's highest wartime gallantry award, the Param Vir Chakra.

During the Partition of British India in 1947, many Khatri migrated to India from the regions that comprise modern-day Pakistan. Hindu Afghans and Sikh Afghans are predominantly of Khatri and Arora origin.

Etymology :

The word Khatri in the Hindi Language comes from the Sanskrit word "Kshatriya" according to the Śabdasāgara Lexicon by Shyamasundara Das According to B. N. Puri, philologists agree that the terms "Khatri" and "Kshatriya" are synonymous. The Sanskrit conjunct Ksha turns into the Prakrit Kha as per the grammarian Vararuchi. This change is not only accepted in Prakrit but in all Indian vernaculars derived by it such as Gujarati, Urdu, Gurumukhi as well as Persian. For example, Sanskrit words kshetra, kshama, laksha, iksha turns into kheta, khama, lakha and ikha respectively.

The substitution of Ri from Riya is also witnessed in case of Hindi. Hence, the change from Kshatriya to Khatri is in consonance with the Prakrit rule and Hindi usage. The same is also testified by scholars R. G. Bhandarkar and Shapurji Edalji.

As per historian W. H. McLeod and Louis Fenech, Khatri is a Punjabi form of the word Kshatriya. Peter Hardy and A. R. Desai also agree that Khatri is derived from Kshatriya. Despite the etymology, Hardy says that Khatri is "a mercantile class" and Desai says the Khatri were "traditionally tradesmen and government officials". Dr. Dharamvir Bharati comments that in Punjabi language, Kshatriya is pronounced as Khatri. As per Dr. GS Mansukhani and RC Dogra, "Khatri appears to be unquestionably a Prakritised form of Sanskrit word Kshatriya." According to philologist Ralph Lilley Turner, the Punjabi word "khatrī", meaning "warrior", derives from Sanskrit "kṣatriya", whereas the Gujarati word "khātrī", meaning "a caste of Hindu weavers", derives from Sanskrit "kṣattr", meaning "carver, distributor".

John Stratton Hawley and Mann clarify that although the word "Khatri" derives from the word "Kshatriya", in Punjab's context Khatri refers to a "cluster of merchant castes including Bedis, Bhallas and Sodhis". Purnima Dhavan sees the claim as originating from a conflation of the phonetically similar words khatri and kshatriya, but refers to Khatri as a "trading caste" of the Sikh Gurus.

Early history :

Ancient Greek accounts from historians that accompanied Alexander the Great to Punjab mention a tribe called the Kathaioi whose territory lay from east of the Hydraotes (Ravi) but between the Hydarpes (Jhelum) & Akesines (Chenab) and whose capital was Sagala (Sialkot). They were described as a powerful nation who resisted Alexander's advance. Arrian in the Anabasis (VI.15) mentions the Khathrois of Punjab (χάθροις - Khathrois), whose territory lay between the Indus & Chenab. Ptolemy writing in the 2nd century AD refers again to another tribe called the Khatriaioi to whom belong cities lying east & west of the Indus.

Baij Nath Puri mentions that the modern descendants of these Kathaiois, Khathrois & Khatriaioi tribes mentioned by the Greeks in West Punjab are the Khatri of India. According to S. Sasikanta Sastri, Greek historians have mentioned that Alexander faced stiffed resistance from Indian army of "Kathiyo" warriors. Sastri further adds that "even in present day modern-India, a group of martial caste members called Khati (Khatri) exist in North-India". Michael Witzel, writing in his paper "Sanskritization of the Kuru State" states the Kathaiois were Kaṭha Brahmins.

Trans-regional trading history :

The Khatri played an important role in India's trans-regional trade during the period, being described by Levi as among the "most important merchant communities of early modern India." Levi writes: "Stephen Dale locates Khatri in Astrakhan, Russia during the late 17th century and, in the 1830s, Elphinstone, was informed that Khatri were still highly involved in northwest India's trade and that they maintained communities throughout Afghanistan and as far away as Astrakhan". According to Kiran Datar, they often married Tatar local women in Astrakhan and the children from these marriages were known as Agrija. As per Stephen Dale, the children born out of Indo-Turkic alliance was sufficient to form an Agrija suburb in the city.

Historian Stephen Dale states that most of the 10,000 (as estimated by Jean Chardin) Indian merchants and money-lenders in Isfahan (Iran) in 1670, belonged to the Khatri caste of Punjab and north-west India. **In Iran's Bazaar's, Khatri sold cloth and various items and also practised money-lending.** Dale believes that Khatri had possibly been travelling from Punjab via caravans since the era of Ziauddin Barani (around 1300 AD). Chardin specifically stereotyped and expressed disapproval of the money-lending techniques of the Khatri community. According to Dale, this racist criticism was ironic given Chardin's non-English background but adds that it was Chardin's way of giving an "ethnic explanation" to the economic disparity between Iran and India at that time.

Sikh theology :

According to Bichitra Natak, traditionally said to be the autobiography of the last Sikh Guru, Gobind Singh, but possibly not so, the Bedi sub-caste of the Khatri derives its lineage from Kush, the son of Ram (according to Hindu epic Ramayan). Similarly, according to the same legend, the Sodhi sub-caste claims descent from Lav, the other son of Ram. [better source needed]

In Guru Granth Sahib, the primary scripture of Sikhism, Khatri is mentioned as one among the four varnas.

Khatri brahman sud vais updesu cahu varna ku sanjha

Kshatriyas, Brahmins, Shudras and Vaishyas all have the same mandate

Guru Gobind Singh, said the following in a swayya :

Chattri ko poot ho, Baman ko naheen kayee tap aavat ha jo karon; Ar aur janjaar jito greh ko tohe tyaag, kahan chit taan mai dharon, Ab reejh ke deh vahey humko jo-oo, hau binti kar jor karoon ; Jab aao ki audh nidaan bane, att hi ran main tab kujh maroon.

I am son of a Chhatri (Khatri), not of a Brahmin and I will live according to my Dharma. All other complications of life are meaningless for me, and I set my heart on the path of righteousness. I humbly beseech thee God Almighty that when the time comes for me to fulfill my Dharma, may I die with honour in the field of battle.

— *Translated by Vanit Nalwa*

Demographics :

Before partition :

French traveller Thevenot visited India during the 1600s where he commented "At Multan, there is another sort of gentiles whom they call Catry, the town is properly their country and from thence they spread all over the Indies." According to Dr. Madhu Tyagi, Thevenot is referring to Hindu Khatri caste here.

The last caste-based census was conducted by the British in 1931 which regarded Khatri and Arora as a different caste. During 1931, Khatri were prominent in the West Punjab and North-Western Frontier Province (NWFP), which is now known as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK). The Khatri spoke Hindko and Potohari language. Highest percentage concentration of Khatri (excluding Aroras) were in Potohar regions of Jhelum and Rawalpindi. In NWFP, the Khatri were found mainly in Peshawar and Hazara.

Arora-Khatri were centered in Multan and Derajat regions of Punjab and NWFP. In the NWFP, the Aroras which are considered a sub-caste of Khatri by some scholars were concentrated in the districts of Bannu, Kohat and Dera Ismail Khan. The Aroras spoke Jatki language which is the 9th century version of Saraiki (Multani) according to Ibbetson.

They were also found in Afghanistan at a population of 300,000 in 1880. According to an 1800s colonial source referred by Shah Hanifi, "Hindki is the name given to Hindus who live in Afghanistan. They are Hindus of Khatri class and are found all over Afghanistan even amongst the wildest tribes. They are wholly occupied in trade and form numerous portion of the population of all the cities and towns, and are also to be found in the majority of large villages."

After partition :

Apart from Punjab, Khatri arrived in Delhi and Haryana among other regions after the partition where they make up 9% and 8.0% of the population respectively.

Clan organisation :

Historically, Khattris were divided into various hierarchal endogamous sections. This includes urhai/dhai ghar, char ghar, barah ghar/bahri and bunjayee or bavanjah ghar which translated to House of 2.5, 4, 12 and 52 respectively. They formed the majority of Khattris and were deemed superior. This was followed by Sareen Khattris who formed a minority. Another sub-group of Khattris include Khukhrain which had split up from the bunjayees.

Group	Clan names
House of 2.5	Kapoor, Khanna and Mehra/ Malhotra
House of 4	Including the above 3, Seth (also known as Kakar) is also added which forms this unit
House of 12	Including the above 4, Chopra, Dhawan, Mahindra, Mehrotra, Sehgal, Talwar, Tandon, Vohra and Wadhawan is added
House of 52 (Bunjahis)	Abhi, Bagga, Bahl, Bakshi, Bassi, Beri, Bhambri, Bhandari, Chandok, Chhachhi, Chaudhary, Dheer, Dhoopar, Duggal, Ghai, Handa, Jalota, Jhanjhi, Johar, Kandhari, Katyal, Khullar, Kochhar, Lamba, Mal, Madhok, Magoo, Maini, Makkar, Mangal, Nanda, Puri, Rana, Rekhi, Sachar, Sial, Sibal, Soi, Soni, Tangri, Thapar, Tuli, Uppal, Vij, Vинаik and Wahi
Khukhrains	Anand, Bhasin, Chadha, Kohli, Ghai, Sabharwal, Sahni (Sawhney), Sethi and Suri.
Aroras	Ahuja, Allawadi, Aneja, Babbar, Bajaj, Batra, Baweja, Bhutani, Chhabra, Chhimba, Chhapola, Channa, Chandna, Chawla, Chugh, Dawar, Dhingra, Dhuria, Dua, Dudeja, Gambhir, Gaba, Gandhi, Gera, Grover, Gulati, Gumber, Hans, Huria, Kalra, Kamra, Kaura, Khatkar, Khetarpal, Khurana, Luthra, Madaan, Manchanda, Mehndiratta, Mehta, Midha, Miglani, Munjal, Nagpal, Narang, Narula, Pasricha, Pruthi, Rajpal, Raval, Sachdeva, Saini, Saluja, Sardana, Sethi, Suneja, Taneja, Tuteja, Wadhwa and Walia
Others (including Sareens)	Abrol, Arya, Ajimal, Alagh, Badhwar, Baijal, Bawa, Bedi, Bhagat, Bhalla, Bindra, Chatrath, Chhatwal, Chhura, Dang, Dhariwal, Diwan, Goindi, Gujral, Jaggi, Jolly, Julka, Kanwar, Kashyap, Kaushal, Keer, Khalsa, Kharbanda, Khosla, Lal, Majithia, Malik, Marwah Nagrah, Nayyar, Nijhawan, Oberoi, Ohri, Pahwa, Passi, Popat, Qanungo, Ratra, Rekhi, Saggar, Sarna, Saund, Shroff, Sobti, Sodhi, Takiar, Thakkar, Trehan, Varma and Vig (Whig)

Medieval history :

Emperor Jahangir in his autobiography Jahangirnama while talking about the castes, he observed "The second highest caste (after Brahmins in the caste system) is the Chhattri which is also known as Khattri. The Chhattri caste's purpose is to protect the oppressed from the aggression of the oppressors".

Benares :

According to scholars, the Khatri Hindus dominated the weaving industry in Benaras. When the first caravan of Muslim weavers arrived in Benaras, the Khatri, who were considered low-caste Hindus at the time, helped them. The Muslims had to depend on the Khatri weavers because the Muslims found it difficult to interact with the high-caste Hindus directly at the time. Since these new immigrant Muslims were cheap labour, the Khatri took over marketing and thus transited from weavers to traders over time. The Muslims, who learned the technique of weaving from them, soon came to be known as Chira-i-Baaf or 'fine cloth weavers'.

Bengal :

In Bengal, Burdwan Raj (1657–1955) was a Khatri dynasty, which gained a high social position for Khatri in the region resulting in greater migration of Khatri from North to Bengal. [page needed] When Guru Tegh Bahadur visited Bengal in 1666, he was welcomed by the local Khatri, thereby supporting earlier waves of migration of Khatri to Bengal as well.

Punjab :

Historian Muzaffar Alam describes the Khatri of Punjab as a “scribe and trading caste”. They occupied positions in revenue collection and record keeping and learnt Persian during Mughal era. However, this profession often created conflicts with the Brahmin scribes who discontinued the use of Persian and started using Marathi in the Deccan. According to McLane, them being a trading group, had spread into many parts of India, possibly long before the 1700s and to Bengal, possibly even before the Mughals arrived.

The most prominent Mughal Khatri noble was Raja Todar Mal, who was the Finance Minister of the Empire. He introduced an entirely new system of revenue and taxation known as zabt and dahshala respectively. According to a 17th-century legend, they continued their military service until the time of Aurangzeb, when their mass death during the emperor's Deccan Campaign caused him to order their widows to be remarried. The order was made out of sympathy for the widows but when the Khatri community leaders refused to obey it, Aurangzeb terminated their military service and said that they should be shopkeepers and brokers.

This legend is probably fanciful: McLane notes that a more likely explanation for their revised position was that a Sikh rebellion against the Mughals in the early 1700s severely compromised the Khatri's ability to trade and forced them to take sides. Those who were primarily dependent on the Mughals went to significant lengths to assert that allegiance in the face of accusations that they were in fact favouring “Jat Sikh followers of the rebel leader, Banda”.

The outcome of their assertions - which included providing financial support to the Mughals and shaving their beards - was that the Khatri became still more important to the Mughal rulers as administrators at various levels, in particular because of their skills in financial management and their connections with bankers.

Khatri standards of literacy and caste status were such during the early years of Sikhism that, according to W. H. McLeod, they dominated it.

Gujarat :

Historian Douglas E. Hanes states that the Khatri weavers in Gujarat trace their ancestry to either Champaner (Panch Mahals District) or Hinglaj (Sindh) and the community genealogists believe that the migration happened during the late sixteenth' century.

Suraiya Faroghi, writes that, in 1742 Gujarat, the Khatri had protested the immigration of Muslim weavers by refusing to deliver cloth to the East India Company. In another case Khatri taught weaving to Kunbis due to receiving excessive orders who soon became strong competitors to the Khatri much to their chagrin. In the mid-1770s, the Mughal governor granted the Kunbi rivals rights to manufacture saris. This licence was later revoked in 1800 due to pressure from the British, after a deal was struck between the Khatri and the East India Company, in which the Khatri would weave only for the EIC until certain quotas were met.

The Gujarat Sultanate (1407-1523) was a medieval Muslim dynasty founded by Zafar Khan Muzaffar, a member of the Tank caste originally from South Punjab. The Tanks have been stated to be Khatri by some scholars, although others have stated the Tanks were Rajputs., or even a Jat He started as a menial but rose to the level of a noble in the Delhi Sultan's family and became the Governor of Gujrat. After Timur attacked the city, people fled to Gujarat and it became independent.

Afghanistan :

According to historians Roger Ballard and Harjot Oberoi, Afghan Hindus and Sikhs descend from the members of the country's indigenous Khatri population who resisted the conversion from Buddhism to Islam between 9th and 13th centuries. Later, they aligned themselves to the teachings of Guru Nanak, himself a Khatri and converted to Sikhism. Hence, Khatri of Afghanistan are in no way of "Indian origin" but are components of the original population of the region. George Campbell says "I do not know the exact limits of Khatri occupation to the West, but certainly in all Eastern Afghanistan they seem to be just as much part of the community as they are in the Punjab. They find their way into Central Asia."

Sikh Empire :

The Khattris took on a prominent role in the emerging Sikh milieu of post-Mughal Punjab. According to the Khalsa Durbar Records, Maharaja Ranjit Singh's army was composed of majorly Jats followed by Khattris. Sardar Gulab Singh Khatri founded the Dallewallia Misl, an independent 18th century Sikh sovereign state in Ludhiana and Jalandhar district that would later on join Maharaja Ranjit Singh's kingdom. [page needed] [page needed] In the Sikh Empire, Hari Singh Nalwa (1791–1837) an Uppal Khatri from Gujranwala, became the Commander-in-chief of the Sikh Khalsa Army. [page needed] He led the Sikh conquests of Kasur, Sialkot, Attock, Multan, Kashmir, Peshawar and Jamrud. He was responsible for expanding the frontier of Sikh Empire to beyond the Indus River, up to the mouth of the Khyber Pass. At the time of his death, the western boundary of the empire was Jamrud. [page needed]

Dewan Mokham Chand (1750-1814) became one of the most distinguished leaders of the Khalsa Army. He was the commander in chief of armies in Battle of Attock which defeated Durrani Empire Wazir Fateh Khan and Dost Mohammad Khan Other Khattris like Diwan Sawan Mal Chopra served as governors of Lahore and Multan, after helping conquer the region while his son Diwan Mulraj Chopra, (1814-1851) the last Punjabi ruler of Multan led a Sikh rebellion against British suzerainty over Multan after the fall of the Sikh Empire in the Anglo-Sikh Wars. He was arrested after the Siege of Multan and put to death. [page needed]

Purnima Dhawan described that together with Jat community, the Khattris gained considerably from the expansion of the Mughal empire, although both groups supported Guru Hargobind in his campaign for Sikh self-government in the Punjab plains.

In the 1830s, Khattris were working as governors in the districts like Bardhaman, Lahore, Multan, Peshawar and Hazara, but independent from the Mughal rule. [page needed]

British Colonial Era :

Punjab :

In Punjab, they were moneylenders, shopkeepers and grain-dealers among other professions.

Hyderabad :

A Peshkari Khatri family in Hyderabad State would become part of the Hyderabadi nobility and occupy the post of Prime Minister of Hyderabad. Notable individuals of the family include Maharaja Kishen Prasad, GCIE who would serve as Prime Minister of the State twice. In Hyderabad, around the mid-20th century, Khattris and Padmasalis were the leading "Hindu weaving castes" who owned 43% of the looms.

The Khattris specialised in silk, while the Padmasalis in cotton weaving.

Gujarat :

In Gujarat, during the colonial rule, Khattris contributed greatly to the weaving industry there. They as well as the Muslim and Kunbi weavers purchased imported yarn in the 1840s. In Mandvi, the silk products were highly valued and the Khatri dyers would work in the pits on the bank of the river Rukmavati because the water was supposed to have special properties to give steadfast colours. These products were often exported to east Africa. In Dhamadka, Kutch, "block printing cloth" was the traditional occupation of the Khatri men since the seventeenth century.

Rajasthan :

In the early 19th century, the Khattris, Bhatias and Lohanas were the main trading castes in Rajasthan, Delhi, Agra, Sind and Punjab. Banking, trading and business were considered "traditional occupations of the Khatri in Rajasthan".

Culture and lifestyle :

According to Prakash Tandon, during Khatri weddings, a ritual is carried out to test the Khatri groom's strength. The groom is supposed to slice the thick branch or stem of a Jandi Tree (*Prosopis cineraria*) in one blow using a sword. [better source needed] During the pregnancy period of a female, a baby shower ceremony called "reetan" or "goadbharai" is carried out amongst Khattris and Aroras. During the event, gifts are showered to the pregnant mother from family and friends among other traditions.

Post-Independence :

Harish Damodaran says the rise of Khatri industrialists in post-1947 India was a consequence initially of the cataclysmic Partition, which pushed them in droves towards Delhi and its neighbourhoods. This exodus opened new opportunities for them. A combination of enterprise, articulation, and strategic closeness to the national capital—which, in itself, was becoming a major growth hub - created conditions for Khatri capital to flourish in the post-Partition period.

Damodaran adds that the land Khattris originally belonged to had very little industry and rail infrastructure until the 20th century and hence were not comparable to merchant groups like Banias in terms of scale and spread of operation. Before independence they were only regional players and their rise in phenomenal proportions was a post-independence feature.

Since then, they have produced leading entities in fields of pharmaceuticals, two-wheelers, tractors, paper, tyre-making and hotels with the groups of Ranbaxy, Hero, Mahindra, Ballarpur Industries, Apollo Tyres and Oberoi respectively. They have also co-founded companies like Snapdeal, Hotmail, YesBank, IndiaToday, AajTak, IndiGo Airlines, Sun Microsystems, Max Group etc.

Punjabi Khatri and others, together with the traditionally “urban and professional” castes, formed a part of the elite middle class immediately after independence in 1947. According to P. K. Verma, “Education was a common thread that bound together this pan Indian elite” and almost all the members of these upper castes communities could read and write English and were educated beyond school.

Delhi NCR :

Delhi's population increased by 1.1 million in the period 1941–1951. This growth of 106% largely resulted from the influx of Partition migrants among other reasons. These were members of the Hindu and Sikh Khatri/Arora castes of the West Punjab. Many moved to the city for better economic opportunities.

Haryana :

During 1947, Punjabis who migrated to Haryana during Partition were mostly Khatri or Aroras. As per a survey conducted by Maharishi Dayanand University, the migrant population were forced to live in camps under open sky. Only a meager 5% received “grossly undervalued claims against their properties in shape of very poorly cultivable land, while remaining 95% though entitled for compensation could not get any thing to sustain”. This migrant population is also referred to as ‘refugee’ and ‘sharnarhi’ in a derogatory manner by some locals. A Punjabi organisation had approached the Haryana government with a demand to ban both words and to enact a law on the lines of the SC/ST Act with similar penalties. The community has a high literacy rate and are not dependent on money-lending and shopkeeping. They are engaged as doctors, engineers, administrators etc.

Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh :

Khatri of Kashmir, also known as “Bohras” were traders and had the second largest Hindu population after the Pandits. Many of these Khatri had to face the brunt of 1990 Kashmiri Hindu Exodus. Khatri of Himachal Pradesh are numerically most important commercial classes are mostly concentrated in Mandi, Kangra and Chamba.

Maharashtra :

Anthropologist Karve, based on the post-Independence research of castes by a in Konkan, Maharashtra, classified Marathi Khatri as one of the "professional/advanced castes" as they were doctors, engineers, clerks, lawyers, teachers, etc. during independence. She states that their traditional professions were silk weaving and working as merchants although they had entered other professions later. Khatri in modern Maharashtra are divided into endogamous subgroups, such as the Brahmo Khatri and Kapur Khatri.

Varna status :

Khatri claim that they are Kshatriyas. While some historians agree with the claim of Khatri to be of Kshatriya varna, many others don't. According to some historians, even though they participated in mercantile or other occupationally diverse professions such as Agriculture, they were originally Kshatriyas. In Indian historian Satish Chandra's opinion, certain castes like Khatri and Kayasthas "do not quite fit" in the Hindu Varna system. According to him, Khatri are neither Vaishyas nor Kshatriyas but are "par excellence traders". Some scholars consider castes in north India, like Khatri and Kayastha to be merchant castes who claim higher status to benefit the educational and economic progress they made in the past. The Saraswat Brahmins are the purohits of Khatri and accept gifts only from them.

According to Anand Yang, the Khatri in the Saran district of Bihar, were included in the list of "Bania" along with Agarwals and Rastogis of the Vaishya Varna. Jacob Copeman also agrees and writes "Agarwal, Khatri, and Bania usually denote people of merchant-trader background of middling clean-caste status, often of Vaishya varna". Mark Juergensmeyer suggests that many Khatri claim their caste is the warrior caste, as the name and etymology itself suggest but that some scholars dispute these claims and regard Khatri as merchant castes who claim higher status as benefit of their economic success and educational achievements.

Susan Bayly states that the Khatri had scribal traditions and despite that Khatri caste organisations in the British Raj era tried to portray their caste as Kshatriyas. Similar caste glorifying ideas were written by the historian Puri who describes Khatri as "one of the most acute, energetic, and remarkable race [sic] in India", "pure descendants of the old Vedic Kshatriyas" and "true representatives of the Aryan nobility". Puri also tried to show the Khatri as higher than the Rajputs whose blood he considered "impure", mixed with 'inferior' Kolis or 'aborigines'. She considers his views to represent those of "pre-Independence race theorists". Bayly further describes the Khatri as a "caste title of north Indians with military and scribal traditions". Hardip Singh Syan says Khatri considered themselves to be of pure Vedic descent and thus superior to the Rajputs, who like them claim the Kshatriya status of the Hindu varna system. M. N. Srinivas states that Khatri made different Varna claims at different times in the Census of India before Independence.

In 1911, they did not make any Varna claim, while in 1921 and 1931 they claimed a Kshatriya and Vaishya status respectively.

Punjab

Historian Kenneth W. Jones states that the Khatri of Punjab had some justification in claiming Kshatriya status from the British government. However, the fact that this claim was not granted at the time showing their ambiguous position in the varna system. Although Jones also classifies Khatri as one of the Vaishya caste of Punjabi Hindus, he shows that their social status was higher than the Arora, Suds and Baniyas in the 19th century Punjab. He quotes Ibbetson who states that the Punjabi Khatri who held prominent military and civil posts were traditionally different from the Aroras, Suds or Baniyas who were rural, of low status and mostly commercial. Punjabi Khatri, on the other hand, were urban, usually prosperous and literate. Thus, the Khatri led the vaishyas in seeking a higher social position in the flexible Varna hierarchy based on their superior achievements. Similar social mobility efforts were followed by other Hindus in Punjab McLane also describes them as a "mercantile caste who claimed to be Kshatriyas".

In the 19th century, British failed to agree whether their claim of Kshatriya status should be accepted. Nesfield and Campbell were leaning towards accepting this claim but Risley and Ibbetson cast doubts on it. McLane opines that the confusion was caused since Khatri pursued mercantile occupations and not military ones. However, he adds that this Vaishya occupation fact was balanced by their origin myths, the "possible" derivation of the word Khatri from Kshatriya, their large physical stature, the superior status accorded to them by other Punjabis as well as the willingness of the Saraswat Brahmins, their chaplains, to accept cooked food from them.

In the case of Sikh Khatri, their Kshatriya claim reflects a contradictory attitude towards the traditional Hindu caste system. It is evident in Guru Granth Sahib, which on the one hand rises above the Hindu caste paradigm and on the other hand seeks to portray the Khatri gurus as a group of warrior-defenders of their faith, just as with the Kshatriya varna.

Majority of the male members of the Arya Samaj in the late 19th century Punjab came from the Arora and Khatri merchant castes. In Punjab, the Kshatriya castes who were ritually higher than the Aroras and Khatri had been disempowered and thus the Brahmins who had lost their patrons had to turn to these non-Kshatriya castes. Christophe Jaffrelot explains the attraction of these trading castes to the Arya Samaj as a means of social mobility associated with their prosperity during the British rule. He cites N. G. Barrier to show that the philosophy of the Arya Samaj founder, Dayananda Saraswati, was responsible for the aspirations of these Vaishya castes from Punjab to higher status:

Dayananda's claim that caste should be determined primarily by merit not birth, opened new paths of social mobility to educated Vaishyas who were trying to achieve social status commensurate with their improving economic status.

Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra :

Dasharatha Sharma described Khatri of Rajasthan as a mixed pratiloma caste of low ritual status but they could be a mixed caste born of Kshatriya fathers and Brahmin mothers. Banking, trading, agriculture and service are traditional occupations of the Khatri in Rajasthan. The literacy rate is appreciably high among them.

Ashok Malik, former press secretary to the President of India, says that there were two groups of Khatri in Gujarat, that arrived right after the Mughal invasion and during the reign of Akbar respectively. The latter considered themselves superior to the former and they called themselves "Brahmakshatriyas" after arriving in Gujarat. When the older Khatri community of Gujarat started prospering, they also started calling themselves "Brahmakshatriya", causing the new Khatri community to panic and adopt the name "Nayar Brahmakshatriyas" for themselves. In addition, another community - the Gujarati Telis, considered an Other Backward Class (OBC) in India began to call themselves Khatri. Malik calls this as Sanskritization.

Historian Vijaya Gupchup from the University of Mumbai states that in Maharashtra, Brahmins showed resentment in the attempt by the Marathi Khatri or Koshti to elevate themselves from ritually low status to Kshatriya by taking advantage of the British neutrality towards castes. She quotes a translation from a Marathi publication that gave a Brahminic opinion of this attempt:

Everyone does what he wants, Sonars have become Brahmins, Treemungalacharya was insulted by throwing cowdung at him in Pune, but he has no shame and still calls himself a Brahmin. Similarly a Khatri or Koshti who are included in Panchal at places other than Bombay, call themselves Kshatriya in Bombay and say their needles are the arrows and their thimbles are the sheaths. How surprising that those Sonars and Khatri at the hands of whom even Shudras will not take water have become Brahmins and Kshatriyas. In short day by day higher castes are disappearing and lower castes are prospering.

Religious groups :

Hindu Khatri :

The vast majority of Khatri are Hindu. Many Hindu Khatri made their first newborn a Sikh. Daughters were married into both Hindu and Sikh families according to the Khatri sub-hierarchy rules. Hindu-Sikh intermarriages among Khatri and Aroras were common in the cities of Peshawar and Rawalpindi. They worship Hinglaj Mata, Chandi Mata, Shiva Hanuman and Vishnu's avatars. Worship of totemistic symbols such as snakes and trees used to be common among them. Meditation upon the flame while reciting Vidhyavasini's hymns was a common practice and reverence was paid to the dead ancestors.

They are both vegetarian and non-vegetarian depending on their affiliations with the sects of Vaishnavism and Shaktism respectively. Sects of Arya Samaj, Nirankari and Radhasoami are also followed.

Sikh Khatri :

All the ten Sikh Gurus were from various Khatri clans: The early followers of Guru Nanak were Khatri but later a large number of Jats joined the faith. Khatri and Brahmins opposed "the demand that the Sikhs set aside the distinctive customs of their castes and families, including the older rituals."

Bhapa (pronounced as Pahpa) is a term used in a derogatory sense to denote Sikhs who left Potohar Region of modern-day Pakistan during Partition, specifically of Khatri and Arora caste. Bhapa translates to elder brother in the Potohari dialect spoken around Rawalpindi region. McLeod, referring to the Khatri and Aroras says "The term is typically used dismissively by Jats to express opprobrium towards Sikhs of these castes. Until recently it was never used in polite company or print, but today the word is used quite openly" According to Birinder Pal Singh, Jat Sikhs consider only themselves as Sikhs and consider Khatri as "bhapas". In Nicola Mooney's opinion, Jat Sikhs consider Arora Sikhs as "Hindu Punjabis" which reserves Sikhism for the Jats alone, denying even the fully baptised Arora as Sikhs.

Muslim Khatri :

According to Historian B. N. Puri, Muslim Khatri are commonly known as Khojas in Punjab. Khattak tribe of Pashtuns is credited with origin from the Khatri but was divided in belief to its descent according to the 1883 book "Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province".

Literature and in popular culture :

Khatri are mentioned in a popular Punjabi literature "Heer Ranjha" written by Waris Shah. Heer's beauty slays rich Khojas and Khatri in the bazaar, like a murderous Kizilbash trooper riding out of the royal camp armed with a sword

— Waris Shah (Translated by Charles Frederick Usborne)

Related communities :

Arora :

The Arora is a community that Levi describes as a sub-caste of Khatri. They originate in Punjab and Sindh region. The name is derived from their native place Aror and the community comprises both Hindus and Sikhs. As per W. H. McLeod, a historian of Sikhism, "traditionally the Aroras, though a relatively high caste were inferior to the Khatri, but the difference has now progressively narrowed. Khatri-Arora marriages are not unknown nowadays."

Lohana, Bhatia and Bhanushali :

According to Claude Markovits, castes such as Bhatia and Lohana were close to the Khatri and intermarried with them. Jürgen Schaflechner mentions that many Khatri and Bhatias were absorbed into Lohanas when they arrived in Sindh during the 18th century from cities in Punjab such as Multan. He further adds that the genealogy of communities such as Khatri, Lohana and Arora is described in the composition of *Himgulā Purāṇ* that brings them all into one mytho-historic narrative. He also notes that common mythologies found among Khatri and Lohanas. Some members, around 10-15% of the Sindhi Lohanas began working for the local rulers and hence achieved a higher status than Khatri and Lohanas. These people came to be known as "Amils" while the ones who continued with their merchant professions came to be known as "Bhaibands". The Amils then started to recruit members from the general Khatri and Lohanas. Upendra Thakur mentions that there is a strong connection between the Khatri, Aroras, Lohanas and the Bhanushalis who all recruit the Saraswat Brahmins as their priests.

Gaddi :

Gaddi is a nomadic herding tribe that resides in the mountainous terrains of the Himalayas. Gaddi is an amalgamation of various groups such as Khatri, Rajputs, Brahmins etc. Most Gaddis of Himachal Pradesh call themselves Khatri. There is a popular saying among them "Ujreya Lahore te baseya Bharmaur" meaning that when Lahore was deserted (possibly by the Muslim invasion), Bharmour was inhabited. Some Khatri clans are known to have settled there during Aurangzeb's reign.

Note :

The Khatri belonging to upper caste and having gotras are through the matrimonial alliance between Aryan Brahmins and Kshatriyas.

Source :

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khatri>

11. Khatri Part – 2 :

Every caste, every community of India has some special traits which distinguishes it from others in a number of ways. These qualities and characteristics were developed and deepened as time passed and their surroundings changed and they faced and managed the exigencies of life. The Khatri too have long and remarkable history and their social dynamics. They have their ancestry, the social roots of which plunge back to a distant past. They have given to this country its ruling class and some of its outstanding people. The Khatri of Punjab have also played an important role in the history of this state.

This article enumerates their various contributions to different spheres of life. But one thing that makes them unique and special is that all the Ten Masters of Sikhism, who changed Punjab and its future destiny for all times, were born in this caste. The Khatri also played an eminent role in making pioneering efforts in the growth and development of Gurmukhi a script which was to achieve great distinction of being the language of the holy Granth Sahib' The writer traces with great lucidity the ups and downs that this caste has faced through the upheavals of time.

The Khatri are not only the most beautiful and literate people of all the Indian castes, they are among the richest being second only to the Banias and the Jains. They were the first community to embrace Sikhism and many of them were the first to renounce it but they have yet many more firsts to their credit.

The Kapurs, Khannas, Malhotras, Chopras, Sehgal, Dhawans, Wadhawans, Anands, Chaddas, Sahnis, Suris, Kakkars, Talwars, puris etc. are the surnames we often come across in the offices and business houses. These are the Khatri whose original home is the undivided Punjab, roughly west of the river Satluj.

In Punjabi, as a rule the Sanskrit syllable 'ksha' is pronounced as 'kha'. Therefore 'raksha' becomes 'rakhia' 'kshama' khima and so on. Similarly, the Kshatriya is transformed to Khatri when it entered the Land of Five Rivers. Therefore unquestionably 'Khatri' is the Punjabi form of the Sanskrit word 'Kshatriya'. Philologically 'kshatriya' appears to be connected with the Sanskrit word 'Kshetra' 'dominion' or 'country'. The Khatri claim Kshatriya origin for themselves and are made up of at least three racial elements, Solar, Lunar and the Agni-kula or fire-race. Although it is claimed sometimes that they are really the Rajput Thakurs but "the Rajput characteristics of inflated pride, rigidity etc. are absent in the Khatri". Believes the noted ethnologist Sir Denzil Ebbetson (1883 AD). Further, agriculture has never been their main occupation in sharp contrast to the Kshatriyas of Hindustan. They were the money-lenders and shopkeepers of Punjab and dominated the bureaucracy of this territory as well.

Again, the Khatri 'gotra' or the sub-castes are different from that of the Rajputs and also no inter-marriages take place between the Khatri and the Rajputs. The two other castes of Punjab namely the Aroras and Bhatias also claim the Kshatriya origin for themselves. Their

appearance and profession are also identical with that of the Khatri. We would, therefore, for the purpose of this study club these three castes into one common class of Khatri.

Of late intermarriages among these communities are also becoming common. In appearance the Khatri resemble their Jatt neighbours. It is likely that some of their tribes entered Punjab from the West and the present race of Khatri was evolved through social interaction with the locals.

One ethnologist, at least believes that the Khatri were a ruling Buddhist clan which on the decline of Buddhism and during the process of their assimilation and absorption into Hinduism claimed the Kshatriya status for themselves. It is believed that Khatri ruled Punjab till the Muslims invaded it, whereafter they accepted secondary positions like ministers, revenue officers and generals under the Muslim rulers. Historians believe that King Porus and Salwan too might have been Khatri. Being the gateway to India, Punjab has seen many an invasion and has undergone several social and economic ups and downs' Khatri, the leading community of Punjab, thus acclimatized and adjusted themselves and learnt to bend before the fury of storms rather than to remain erect and break. They are thus the most practical people. Unlike the other wealthy communities, they not only know how to amass wealth but also know how to enjoy it to the last rupee. Community wise also they own more cars than any other Indian caste and know how to lead a rich and luxurious life.

At the time of partition, the Khatri left their homes, hearths and havelis in Pakistan and entered India penniless. Delhites often remember how many of them who were tonga drivers, vendors etc. in 1947 or who stayed in jhaupries (straw huts) camps are now millionaires of Delhi. A large chunk of Delhi and much of its wealth are now in the hands of the Khatri. The Khatri are slowly climbing the political ladder to regain their supremacy in the capital of India.

It is established by researches that the undivided Punjab, west of river Satluj was the original home of the Khatri. According to Ebbetson the Khatri were found in Peshawar and Afghanistan also, but were, as a rule, confined to the position of humble traders and money lenders. "But in that capacity," he adds, "the Pathan seems to look at them as a kind of a valuable animal, and the Pathan will often steal another man's Khatri, not only for ransom, as is frequently done in the Frontier region but also as he might steal a milch cow". Punjab was under the Greek rule for about two centuries beginning from 190 BC. Thereafter, on several occasions in history, it was a part of Central Asian empires, for example, the Kushan the Achaemenian, the Arab, the Turkish and the Manghol. It provided the Khatri (otherwise also a mobile community) a golden opportunity to explore these western regions. There are ample evidences which indicate the wide-spread presence of Punjabi traders, especially in the areas beyond Punjab. A 16th century bronze vessel found at Orsk in Southern Urals, and a fire temple cell discovered in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, bears inscription dated 1714 AD in Gurmukhi. The inscriptions beginning with Japuji records the names of the Guru and the Khatri trader, a Sikh builder of the temple cell.

The Khatri presence in Afghanistan has been more than felt even till recently. In 1831 the Punjabi Maharaja signed a treaty with Shirja-ul-Mulk of Afghanistan on one of the conditions that the comfort and the security of the Khatri in Kabul will be ensured. However, according to 1881 census the major cities with the concentration of Khatri were Multan, Lahore, Amritsar, Rawalpindi and Peshawar. Today perhaps Delhi houses a larger number of Khatri than any other city.

The founders who renounced Sikhism :

At present less than 5% of the Khatri in India are Sikhs (Delhi Tel. Directory). In 1881 however the percentage of Bhatras-as the Sikh Khatri are often referred to by the rural Sikhs, was 9. Around 17th AD almost the whole of Khatri population had polarised around the teachings of the Sikh Masters except some who had already embraced Islam. Interestingly the Khatri were the first people to embrace Sikhism and were its first preachers. Accordingly, no history of the Khatri would be complete if it is pursued in isolation to Sikhism. Before the advent of Nanak, most of the Punjabis west of Chenab had become Muslims. Some of them still stood on the fringes from where they could be swept away by the tidal wave of Islam. But for them the great ship of Nanak arrived to take them to a safe haven. The Khatri were immediately swayed by Nanak's revolutionary concept of one God who is omnipresent, omnipotent and beyond time, space and matter.

Free from rituals, Sikhism then was a much simple religion. Had there been no Nanak the Khatri might have embraced Islam as Khojas or Pathans. Within about 50 years of Nanak's passing away many of them became Namdhari Sikhs. The fact that all the Ten Gurus of the Sikhs came from the Khatri caste might also have contributed to the influx of their Khatri devotees into Sikhism. But the Gurus were very critical of this Khatri caste and would condemn their 'opportunistic approach'. In principle the Gurus were highly critical of the caste system in society. It may however be clearly understood that embracement of Sikhism from Hinduism and Islam was not considered as conversion, though the Fifth Nanak had enunciated, "neither we are Hindus nor Muslims" (G. Granth p.1 1 36).

'Warran' or the ballads of Bhai Gurdas Bhalla (1546-1637 AD), an acknowledged classic among the Sikh scriptures, makes a detailed mention of the early Sikhs and the Sikh missionaries. Incidentally in the "Warran", are mentioned the names along with gotras of the Sikhs. A surprise for the casual student of Sikh history, the Warran reveals that more than 80% of the early Sikhs and Sikh missionaries came from the Khatri clan.

Gotras or the sub-castes appearing in the Warran are: (Gotras of those other than the Khatri are in bold) :

Popat, Keer, Khera , Mirasi, Sehgal, Diddi, Ladhi, Ohri, Uppal, Monga, **Randhawa, Lohar**, Julka, Sahi, Deo; Bhandari, **Nagauri**, Mehta, Bhalla, Passi, Sud, Sabharwal, Khatra, Khullar, Jhihgar, Jhanji, Soni, **Vij**, Dhir, **Bhatt, Tiwari, Bhagat**, Chadha, Sekhri; Kapoor, Behl, **Bhardwaj**, Ghai, Kohli, Kandra, **Chhimba, Sanghar, Dhillon, Langah, Chhajjal, Goel, Pathak**, Chandok, Puri, Marwah, Suri, Seth, Beri, Sodhi, Handa, Talwar, Nanda, Tuli, Wadhawan, **Ghumar, Ray**, Malhan, **Saniara, Bhabra** and Arora. Some of the places to which prominent missionaries belong, as given in the Warran, are: Kashmir, Kabul, Sarhind, Kuruksheitra, Fatehpur (Sikri), Agra, Sultanpur, Lahore, Gwalior, Ujjain, Burhanpur, Gujrat, Patna, Praypg, Lukhnow, Jaunpur, Decca etc.

Thus 80% of the early Sikhs are from the Khatri while it will be interesting to note that initially all the missionaries or the so called masands were Khatri only. Not only "Warran", even all the Chronicles written prior to 1850 AD give an impression that Sikhism was the religion of the Khatri of the Punjab although it was becoming popular among the Jatts of Punjab also. There are at least a dozen chronicles available in Gurmukhi script which leave this impression that Gurmukhi script was popularized by the Khatri also. With the passage of time almost all the Hindus including Brahmins west of river Ravi became Sikhs. It will be interesting to note that not long ago i.e. till 1920's all the gurudwaras were managed by Brahmins. They were ousted during the Akali Movement. The forefathers of the present Governor of Punjab B.K.N. Chhibber and Bhai parmanand and Bhai Mahavir were also Sikhs and they are successors of Bhai Sati Das and Bhai Mati Das respectively who were assassinated by Aurangzeb along with Guru Tej Bahadur in 1675, AD.

Note :

The Khatri belonging to upper caste and having gotras are through the matrimonial alliance between Aryan Brahmins and Lohars.

Disgusted They Renounced it :

Khatri who were the pioneers in accepting, propagating and thus nourishing Sikhism, incidentally became the first community to renounce it as Sikhism was becoming more and more politicized and the latter Gurus were often at daggers drawn with the state. As officers in the government and with much of the business in their hands, the Khatri were thus intimately linked with the state and any strain in the relationship between the state and the faith was a source of embarrassment to them. On the other hand, on each and every succession in the guruship, except 'the selection of the Fifth and the Ninth Gurus, the ignored sons of the Gurus would revolt and raise their parallel gurudom Usually the rebel sect thus formed turned out to be pro-state and the pro-government. Khatri would often extend their support to the rebel side.

In 1604 AD, however, another untoward incident occurred. Prince Khusro rebelled against his father Emperor Jahangir and while fleeing from his father's army he called on Guru Arjun Dev-the Fifth Master and sought his blessings. The Guru was later arrested, tortured and executed at Lahore. Jahangir admits in his memoirs that he nurtured hatred for the Guru and was looking for an appropriate moment to punish him. The Khusro episode provided the Emperor with the necessary stick to beat the Guru. Incidentally, in those days a Khatri named Chandu Shahi was a minister in Delhi and his daughter was betrothed to the son of the Guru. Chandu severed the engagement. He not only developed animosity towards the Guru but also encouraged the rebel Guru Prithia, the son of the Fourth Guru who was ignored at the time of succession.

So much so, that even Amritsar; (now called the Golden Temple) passed into the hands of the Pirthia sect called the 'Meena Sikhs and remained in its possession until the advent of the Tenth Guru. Guru Hargobind the Sixth Master further embarrassed the Khatri when he raised an army and fought and won battles against the Mughals. This was disliked by the Khatri who felt that the Guru should restrict himself to spiritualism only. Thus the number of the Meena sect swelled. As the estrangement with the state kept mounting, the Khatri felt more and more suffocated and their tension got aggravated.

The last of the Gurus, Guru Gobind Singh, introduced changes of a far-reaching nature. He abolished the Masands-the missionaries who collected offerings from the Sikhs to pass them on to the Guru. The Masands had become corrupt with the passage of time. He also abolished the system of Guruship and passed it on to the Khalsa brotherhood, who was to be guided by Gurbani (In persian Khalsa means 'directly linked' and he made Sikhs the Khalsa to God). Further he gave Khalsa an identity which was more martial than spiritualistic in nature. The Guru increased his army and built forts. On the other hand, the changes introduced by the Guru were being vehemently opposed by the Khatri traders and officers. According to Rattan Singh, the author of 'Panth Prakash' (1840 AD), the Khatri referred to the Guru as the 'marela one' i.e. the fighter Guru in a derogatory sense.

According to Kavi Senapati a court poet of Guru Gobind Singh; (Sri Gur Sobha : 1711AD) the merchant 'Sikhs started opposing the Khalsa and questioned the new code, so much so that at Delhi the shops of the Khalsa were forcibly closed for some days until some working compromised was hammered out. "How could they keep arms with them right under the nose of the government ?" they questioned.

Fall of Sarhind :

In 1708 the Guru passed away in the Deccan succumbing to the injuries inflicted on him by a Pathan hireling of the Governor of Sarhind. The Sikhs, led by Banda Bahadur, thereafter attacked and plundered Sarhind. The perpetrators of many inhuman atrocities were punished. The whole of the Punjab "revolted and one after the other, the Mughal bastions fell.

Bahadur Shah, the successor to Aurangzeb, was alarmed at the rebellion and ordered that the Sikhs be killed at sight. In those days however everybody kept his hair intact, uncut and unshaved (See: India by Al-Biruni). To facilitate the identification of the Khalsas the emperor ordered all the citizens to get hair-cuts and beards shaved. The pronouncement was complied with immediately and thus the barbers had a hay day. Earlier similar 'firmans' were also issued by Aurangzeb twice as he felt that clean shaving means a step, towards 'Sunnat' or conversion. (Akhbar -e- Durbar-e-Maula-The official records of the Mughal emperor). The Akhbar records an interesting episode where a Kayasth feudal (Srivastva, Saxena, Mathur etc.) from near Saharanpur made a mercy plea before the Emperor that he might be spared as he was not a Khatri. Khatri officers in those days were under the strict surveillance of the state.

Hunting of the Sikhs like wild animals commenced and the Khalsa went into hiding. The period from 1710 to 1760 AD is considered a very crucial era in the Sikh history when the persecution of the Sikhs was at its peak. Rewards on Sikh heads were fixed. Cart-loads of the same were brought to Lahore and Amritsar to raise pyramids of the severed heads at public places scare away the rebels.

On the other hand only a fraction of the Khatri had subscribed to the new code according to which the Khalsa was strictly prohibited from shaving his head and beard. Officials and shopkeepers among the Khatri had thus reluctantly complied with the new royal promulgation and thus shaved their beards and had their hair cut. Only a few Khatri who had become Khalsa went underground with their Jatt and Shudra brothers and kept the torch of rebellion alight and burning.

During this critical period, a 'Khatri named Lakhpat Rai was a military commander of the Lahore army. In order to prove his faithfulness to the Moghuls, he launched a reign of terror on the rebel Khalsa. Attempts to persuade him to be mild towards his brothers were in vain. Lakhpat's brother Jaspat was incidentally killed in a skirmish. Lakhpat became more furious that he resolved to finish the Sikhs. During these days two famous Sikh carnages took place where some 40,000 Sikhs were massacred.

Punjab was now cleared of the Sikhs, many of whom fled, to the hills and Rajasthan. So, during this turbulent period the Khatri made every attempt to prove that they were not the Sikhs and were rather ordinary Hindus because otherwise they knew they would lose both their possessions and their lives too. On the other hand, the Khatri encouraged the Dogra Brahmins, descending down the hills, to sing 'jagrata' and tell the Puranic tales. But the deep reverence for Nanak and his hymns still remained supreme in their minds. During the short rule of the Sikhs lasting for about half a century the Khatri looked after the administration of the Sikh state which was deeply engaged in launching military expeditions. Almost the whole of the non-Muslim population west of Satluj declared itself Sikh.

In fact, in those days Sikhism was not treated as a religion different from Hinduism. Punjab was annexed by the British in 1849 and the young Sikh emperor as well as the ruler of the Kapurthala state was converted to Christianity. Again there was an anti-Sikh wave. The British were maintaining a strict vigil over the Khalsa. The fence-sitters immediately declared that they were the Hindus' In the 1881 census the Sikh figure fell just to its half of the 1850-figures.

(Swami) Daya Nand on the other hand was attempting a revolutionary reform in Hinduism but he received only a lukewarm response wherever he in India. He visited Punjab, used gurudwaras for propagating views and was given a rousing come. Shortly thereafter he declared that Nanak's concept of all pervading God was not new was rather already enshrined in Vedas. At this the Khatri felt relieved and thronged the Samaj. Akali Gurudwara Movement made such a polarisation that Khatri felt that a middle path no longer possible. The Akalis moved the idols of the Hindu deities from the periphery of the Golden Temple. Ousted Khatri and Brahmins constructed their own Temple in the form of Durgiana Mandir at Amritsar. Thus the Khatri who nourished Sikhism in its infancy, renounced when militant element in it became manifest. A business can't afford tension with the state.

Mehras : A famous Khatri family of Amritsar

Bhai Taru Singh, -whose scalp was removed and yet he laughed and lived for a number of days.

The severed heads of Sikhs, raised on javelins, being carried by the Mughal soldiers as trophies to get a prize.

Mr. B.K.N: Chhibbar, Governor Punjab He is one of the descendants of Bhai Sati Das who was martyred along with Guru Tegh Bahadur in 1675 A.D.

A painting representing the famous martyrdom of Guru Arjun Dev by Emperor Jahangir'. The Guru was severely tortured and here he is shown sitting on a red-hot girdle.

Source :

<https://www.punjabmonitor.com/2013/04/khatris-most-mobile-and-magnificent.html>

12. Khatri Part – 3 :

Khatri from traders and bankers to Bollywood royalty :

The earliest records we can find of the Khatri ascendancy are in the two hundred years either side of the sixteenth century. In this 400-year period, the Khatri became the spine of India's trade with what is today Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Iran and Russia. Through the passes in the Hindu Kush mountains (Khyber, Bolan, Sangar and Sarwand), the Khatri would take tens of thousands of camels loaded with cotton, spices, weapons and sugar and sell these products in the great bazaars of Iran, Central Asia and Russia (all the way up to Moscow). They would then finance the local harvest in the hinterland around market cities like Isfahan, Kandahar, Samarkand, Astrakhan, etc. Then on the way back, the Khatri would import to India hundreds of thoroughbred horses from Central Asia along with dry fruits, fresh fruits, carpets and furs.

As Scott Levi says in his book: "We have seen that, from the middle of the sixteenth century, the Multanis not only mediated India's trade with Central Asia, they established settlements in key locations beyond the Hindu Kush and laid the foundation for an extensive commercial network that would endure even into the twentieth century. A circulating population of tens of thousands of Multanis, and then Shikarpuris, moved merchandise, wealth and information between north-western India and distant markets of Afghanistan, Central Asia, Iran and Russia, eventually reaching as far as Moscow and St. Petersburg...From their time as young apprentices, agents of these family firms were instructed in complicated legal codes, accounting techniques, various methods to calculate interest, and other skills that they would need to utilize the commercial techniques available to them...The agents would then be loaned a large amount of capital, usually in the form of cotton textiles, before they would travel by caravan to a distant market. On arriving at these markets...as they gradually sold their merchandise, the agents would reinvest the cash retrieved in other profitable activities, most notably short-term high interest moneylending ventures. Following this model, agents could realise a 200 to 300 per cent annual increase in their total wealth. After several years - the Multanis' average tenure abroad was seven or eight years - the agents would return home..."

The sheer skill and success of the Multani and Shikarpuri merchants made them obvious targets for envious local elites. The first major attack on the community took place in the middle of the eighteenth century. The Ghilzai Afghans, who occupied the Safavid capital of Isfahan in 1722, came down hard on the Indian merchants by looting and extorting from them. They were overthrown by Nadir Shah in 1736 and he in turn retained policies hostile to the Indians. This gave his supporters a ready excuse to confiscate the Indians' wealth and properties.

The Indian merchants regrouped under the patronage of Ahmed Shah Durrani (who ruled from 1747 to 1722) and shifted base from Multan to Shikarpur (with the latter city being a Durrani protectorate). The next blow to the Indian merchants came with the rise of Imperial Russia (1865-1918) - during the 1870s the Russians implemented a series of policies designed to undermine the Indians' business interests in Central Asia. And then when the Bolsheviks took charge in Moscow in 1918, it was game over for the Indian businessmen in Central Asia.

The Khatri then reinvented themselves as regional merchants, moneylenders and officials in pre-Partition Punjab. As Harish Damodaran says in his book, "The majority were merchants, moneylenders and shopkeepers, if not employed as lawyers, teachers, munshis (clerks) or kanungos (revenue officials...). Moreover, the land to which the Khatri belonged had very little industry or rail infrastructure till well into the twentieth century...industry in Punjab was nothing more than an assortment of flour mills, iron foundries, cotton ginneries and shawl-making and carpet-weaving units. The scope for emergence of big indigenous capital in a primarily agriculture-based, landlocked province was limited."

The Partition of India resulted in the Khatri being dislocated again from their heartland in an undivided Punjab. Quoting again from Harish Damodaran's engrossing book, "The community's full-fledged emergence on the national business map had to wait for a cataclysmic event like Partition, which literally pushed them in droves towards Delhi and its neighbourhoods. This massive exodus marked a human tragedy unparalleled in history, even as it opened up new avenues for a middle class with sound moorings in education and trade...Proximity to the seat of power provided a platform from where they could be heard and also a vantage position to influence policy. A combination of enterprise, articulation and strategic closeness to the national capital - which, in itself, was becoming a major growth hub...- created conditions for Khatri capital to flourish in the post-Partition period." However, since the Marwaris were not dislocated as profoundly as the Khatri by Partition, the Khatri ascendancy in independent India marks them out as a uniquely enterprising business community.

Source :

[https://www.valueresearchonline.com/stories/49240/the-khatris-reinvention/#:~:text=Through%20the%20passes%20in%20the,the%20way%20up%20to%20Moscow\).](https://www.valueresearchonline.com/stories/49240/the-khatris-reinvention/#:~:text=Through%20the%20passes%20in%20the,the%20way%20up%20to%20Moscow).)

13. Sikhs on the Silk Road :

Despite a lack of information on the subject, there is quite a large history of Sikh traders on the Silk Road, stretching from Eastern Europe to China. A large number of Sikh-related artefacts can be found across these destinations due to many Khatri merchants professing the Sikh faith. This article will only mention traders who had migrated across the Silk Road and steer clear of other occupation-based migration e.g. the policemen of Shanghai or the petty moneylenders of the Philippines.

Russia :

St. Petersburg :

St. Petersburg was a city established on a small Swedish town by Peter the Great, who attempted to create a port city signalling Russia's window to the West. This city had a few Khatri traders, who had worked up the Volga river, from the southern cities of Astrakhan and Kazan. The book '*Sikh Sampradavali*' by Piara Singh Padam helps provide evidence for Sikh establishments in St. Petersburg:

ਇਹ ਇਕ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਹਕੀਕਤ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਮਹਾਤਮਾਵਾਂ ਚਿਰੰਕਾਲ ਤਕ ਦੂਰ ਦੂਰ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕਮਤ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਕੀਤਾ, ਭਾਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਵੀ। ਜੈਸਾ ਕਿ ਉਨ੍ਹੀਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਵਿਚ ਬਾਵਾ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਨੇ ਰੂਸ ਦੀ ਰਾਜਧਾਨੀ ਪੀਟਰਜ਼ਬਰਗ (ਲੈਨਿਨ ਗ੍ਰਾਡ) ਵਿਚ ਧਰਮਖਾਲਾ ਸਥਾਪਨਾ ਕੀਤੀ।

It is a historical truth that these Udasi priests propagated the message of Guru Nanak far and wide, not only in India but also abroad. For example, in the nineteenth century, Bawa Ramdas established a gurudwara in the capital of Russia, St. Petersburg (Leningrad).

The British published '*Calcutta Review*' also mentions the same Bawa Ramdas of Jhang and an Indian noble, making a journey from Amritsar to St. Petersburg. Whilst at Tbilisi and Astrakhan, he was robbed but with the help of a Russian officer, he was able to reach St. Petersburg. Unfortunately, the Indian noble died before meeting Bawa Ramdas at St. Petersburg. Accordingly, the Tsar Alexander II pitied the Udasi and summoned him to his royal court, allowing to prove his connection to the Indian noble and allowing him to inherit a crore.

Astrakhan

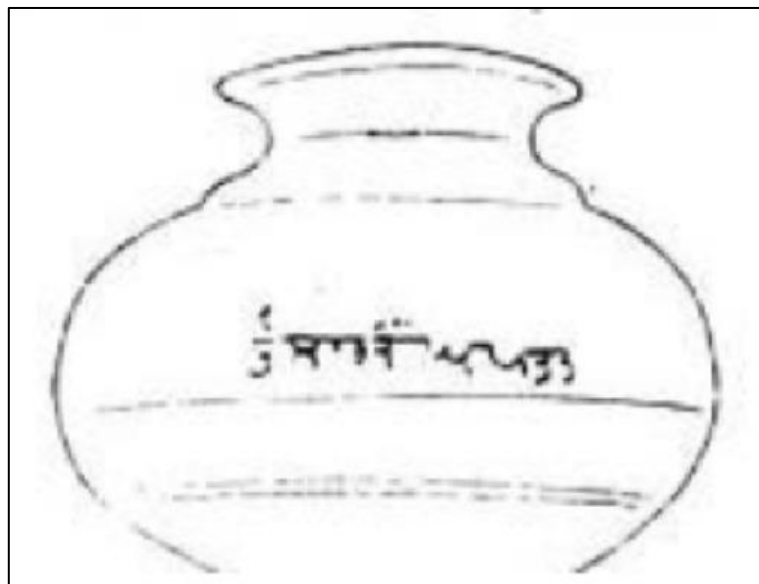
The city of Astrakhan is found on the northern coast of the Caspian Sea and was a large trade outpost on the northern areas of the Silk Road. It had a large concentration of Khatri traders, both Hindu and Sikh. '*The Calcutta Review*' mentions:

The Seikhs have a shrine at Astrakhan, and another in some obscure place on the shores of the Red Sea, which the Khalsas view with the same veneration that the Christians of the middle ages viewed Jerusalem, and the Moslems of all ages have viewed Mecca and Medina.

From this quote, it is evident that Astrakhan was considered an important town for Sikh traders, viewing it as a local pilgrimage. Karam Singh Historian's '*Katak Ki Vaisakh*' also mentions a historical gurudwara in Astrakhan from his conversation with Bhai Gurmukh Singh of Oriental College Lahore. Astrakhan (and Bukhara) was also briefly home to Kripal Dass of Multan and Sikkar, who brought many Sikh manuscripts across the Silk Road.

Orsk :

The city of Orsk is strategically on the southern tips of the Ural Mountains, located on the present-day Russia-Kazakhstan border, in the region of Siberia. The 1952-1956 number of '*Epigraphica Vostoka*' published in Leningrad had revealed excavations undergone in Orsk and created a sketch of the unknown vessel and its inscription. In this city of Orsk, a bronze vessel with the one-line inscription of 'Bhola Singh Pandit' in Gurmukhi was found. This helps to identify the establishment of a Sikh community, even in the smaller trading cities of Russia.



A sketch of the bronze vessel with the Gurmukhi inscription 'Bhola Singh Pandit' found in Orsk, Siberia

Central Asia :

Afghanistan :

The Sikh history in Afghanistan deserves an article of its own but one of the main reasons for its growth as a large Sikh sangat is due to its large Khatri population and continual work by Sikh missionaries. Among the first preachers in Afghanistan was Baba Khuda Singh, an ex-police officer who became a missionary, converting many Hindu Khatri to Sikhi. He had previously stayed with Baba Bir Singh of Naurangabad and then migrated upwards to Potohar, Kabul and Kandahar.

The book '*Jiwan Baba Khuda Singh Ji*' by Giani Partap Singh, records Baba Khuda Singh's missionary efforts, with his first convert being a local soldier, Bhai Gulab Singh:

ਭਾਈ ਗੁਲਾਬ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੁਝ ਚਿਰ ਬਾਹਦ ਨਾਮ ਅਭਿਆਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਬੜੀ ਉਚੀ ਸੁਰਤ ਤੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਪੱਕ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ। ਉਸ ਨੇ ਅਮੀਰ ਕਾਬਲ ਦੀ ਨੌਕਰੀ ਛੱਡ ਦਿਤੀ। ਸਾਧੂ ਬਣ ਕੇ ਬਾਬਾ ਜੀ ਨਾਲ ਅਫ਼ਗ਼ਾਨਿਸਤਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਚਰਨ ਲਗ ਪਿਆ।

After meditation upon naam, Bhai Gulab Singh had spiritually matured. He left his job for the Amir of Kabul. After becoming a sadhu, he travelled throughout Afghanistan with Baba Khuda Singh.

These sorts of continual interactions between Punjabis and Khatri in Afghanistan allowed for effective parchar there. Although, it should be said that Afghanistan has had a relation with Sikhs since the times of the Gurus, with Bhai Nand Lal being born in Ghazni. However, the Sikh population only became large, towards the start of the 20th century, when Akali Kaur Singh and other Singh Sabha affiliates arranged a number of Amrit Sanchars amongst the mostly Sehajdhari population; allowing for the Afghan Sikh population to grow into the large population that exists today.

Uzbekistan :

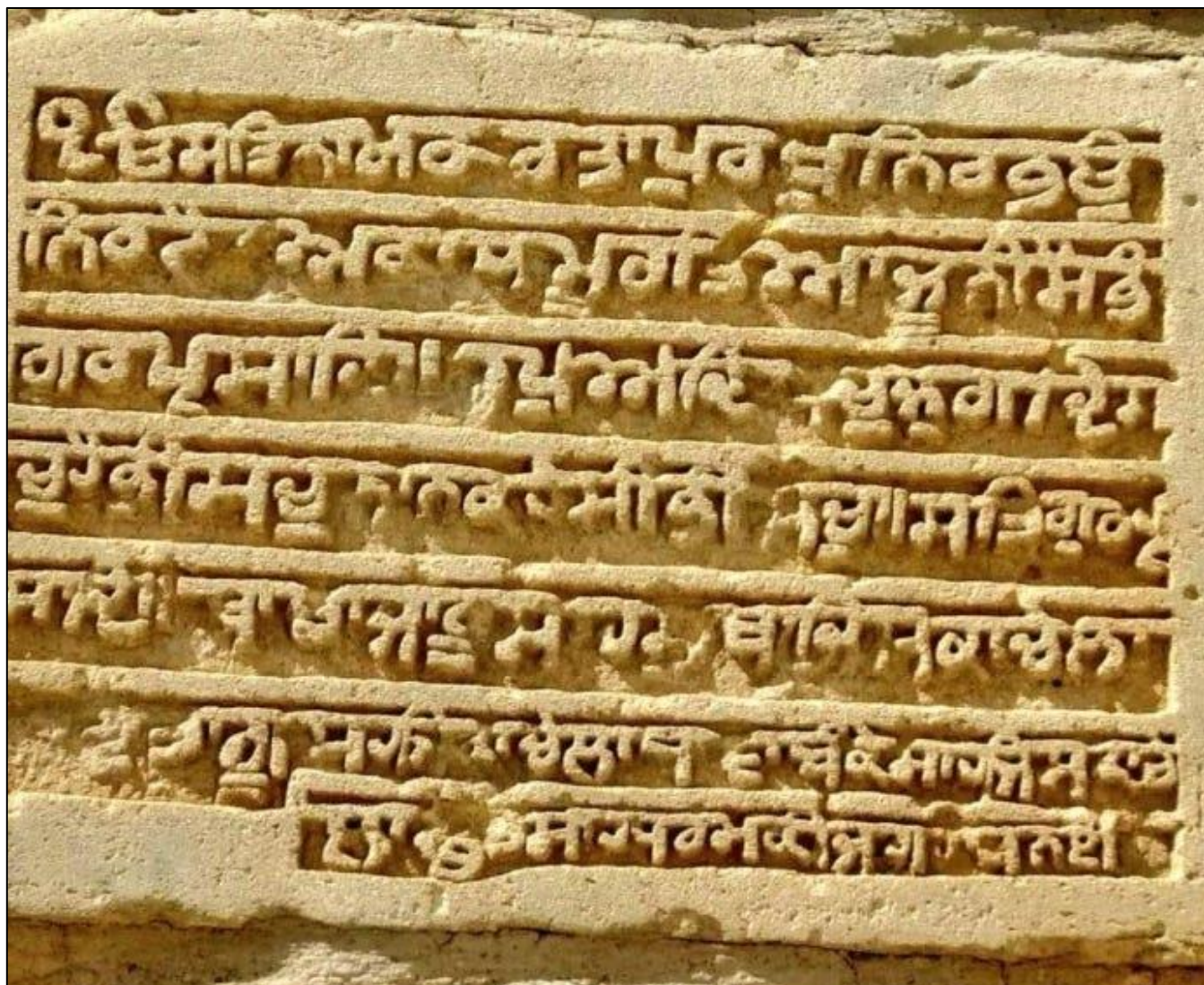
Uzbekistan contains the cities of Bukhara and Samarkand, which were key cities on the Central Asian portion of the Silk Road; both being immensely important to control as key trade hubs. As mentioned before, Kripal Dass of Multan and Sikkar briefly stayed in Bukhara, as a merchant. His manuscripts were acquired by the Institute of Oriental Studies, Leningrad and reported by a Soviet scholar in 1973. These contain Gurbilas, Heer Ranjha, Hanuman Natak, Bhagwad Gita and various other Janamsakhis.

Pandit Arjun Muni's '*Gurdwara Darpan*' also recorded a number of gurudwaras built by Multani and Sindhi Nanakpanthis in Central Asia. These were found throughout Central Asia with notable ones in Andijan, Karmana, Samarkand and Bukhara. Bukhara was home to the biggest gurudwara out of these, owing to its large Khatri trader population. After the Russian revolution of 1917, almost if not all of the Khatri traders moved back to India.

Iran and the Caucasus :

Baku :

Baku is a strategic trade hub located on the western coast of the Caspian Sea. This is home to the Ateshgah of Baku, a Zoroastrian fire temple, later used by Hindus and Sikhs as a place of worship too, containing Farsi, Devanagari and Gurmukhi inscriptions. The Gurmukhi inscription starts off with the Mool Mantar and then also has an invocation to Jvala (the holy fire). A second Gurmukhi inscription also starts off the same but then refers to the disciples who built the place. It is thought the inscriptions were built by Khatri merchants, most likely from Multan.



A Gurmukhi inscription at the Ateshgah of Baku, most likely built by local Khatri traders in Azerbaijan

Zahedan :

The city of Zahedan is located in Iranian Balochistan, on the current-day Iranian-Pakistan border. Local folklore posits that the city of Zahedan gets its name from a visit by the Shah of Iran, who had confused the local Sikh population for zaheds or Sufi ascetics, so had renamed the town to Zahedan or the city of the Sufi ascetics. Sikh migration to this city began in the early 20th century, with Sindhis and Khatri both setting up many businesses there. One of the most influential businesses in India had its roots in Iran: the Hinduja Group; other businesses include the Hind-Iran bank.



A fresco of two Akali Nihangs on the walls outside a mandir in Bandar Abbas, Iran

Little is known about Sikh traders in Iran before British rule in India but there are a few references. Mountstuart Elphinstone's *'An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul, and Its Dependencies in Persia, Tartary, and India'* mentions how an intelligent Sikh goldsmith believed that Iranians were among the least hospitable to non-Muslims, compared to Afghans:

One Sik Goldsmith in particular (who was a very intelligent man, and had travelled over great part of Afghaunistaun, Persia, Khorassan, and Tartary), always spoke of the kindness and hospitality he received in the former country, which he contrasted with the contempt with which he was treated by the Persians, who would not allow him to draw water, for fear of polluting the well, or to walk in the streets during rain, lest he should splash some Mahomedan, and thus render him impure.

China :

Xinjiang :

There isn't much written about the Khatri traders of China; the majority of Sikh history in China comes from after British occupation. However, there were a few Khatri that resided in Xinjiang, the most notable cities being Hotan, Urumqi and Kashgar. Robert Shaw, the British explorer to Central Asia and Xinjiang mentions a tired Sikh trader in his memoirs, '*Visits to High Tartary, Yarkand, and Kashgar*':

I shall never forget that night's bivouac on the snow. As soon as the horse carrying the brush-wood fuel came up (it was past 12 o'clock at night), we two Englishmen made shift to light a fire against a rock, clearing away the snow for the purpose. Attracted by this, a Sikh merchant who was crossing the pass the same day, came and sat down with us. His long black beard and moustache were covered with pendant icicles which dragged down the hair by their weight. His face was haggard, and his only thought seemed to be of the fire. I presently found a bottle of rum, and was proceeding to uncork it, when he looked round, laid his hand on my shoulder, and said earnestly : "I am partner in that." I laughed, and gave him some, and it seemed to revive him, for he began to bewail his fate.

Tara Singh (the Sikh merchant) would accompany Robert Shaw through most of Yarkand and the Bara Lacha Pass in 1867. Many of the traders that stayed in caravanserais across Xinjiang would eventually intermarry within the local populace and some were even unable to converse in their mother tongues anymore. After the warlord, Sheng Shicai, rose to power in Xinjiang, most Sikh traders were forced to leave and left for either India or Afghanistan.



An embroidered silk panel depicting Guru Nanak from China

East China :

Although, there were large populations of Sikhs in Shanghai, Hong Kong and other large Chinese cities, these were mostly a result of British non-trade related employment. The Sikh population in Shanghai was largely a result of Sikh police officers being hired to monitor the city. There is little to mention about the Sikh inhabitants of Hong Kong and other cities until British rule in India.

Conclusion :

The role that Khatri traders played on the Silk Road allowed for the geographical transmission of Sikhi beyond India. Similar to how Christianity, Buddhism and Islam had flourished across the Silk Road, Sikhi was also able to do the same albeit to a smaller extent. Afghanistan's Sikh minority is a result of this transmission with the Silk Road, alongside a healthy relationship with Punjab.

With the emergence of the nation state, many of these minority Sikh communities found themselves migrating back to India or in more gruesome circumstances, killed by ideological rebels. In Russia and Central Asia, Khatri left due to a brewing class conflict between themselves and local communists whereas in Afghanistan and Iran, it was due to religious fundamentalists. It is unfortunate that although Sikh heritage might remain in these trade hubs but not many Sikhs exist across the once bustling Silk Road but such is the fate of many similar trading communities e.g. Sindhis, Armenian Christians.

Source :

<https://khalsachronicle.substack.com/p/sikhs-on-the-silk-road>

Dr. Gaurav A. Vyas completed his Graduation and studies in I.T. field after which he was conferred as Researcher in Vedic Science, Doctor of Spiritual Science and Doctor of Cultural studies.



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Global Researcher Award, Individual Achievement Award, Intellectual Quality Excellence Award, Global Business Leadership Award, Universal Peace and Harmony Award, Certificate of Excellence for Establishing Global Peace, Asia Pacific Gold Star Award. In recognition of Sterling Merit, Excellent Performance and Outstanding Contribution for the Nation and World Wide, Jewel of India Award, Janseva Sadbhavna Award for Services Empowered to the Society and Nation, Felicitation of Corona Warriors for Dedication to the Society in Pandemic Period, Most Promising Teacher of Agnihotra with Science and Kund Construction, Special Achievement Award in Crystal Reiki Healing, Valued Product of the Year (Agnihotra Ash - Bhasma) and Great Achiever of Vastu and Astrology Technology Award.



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