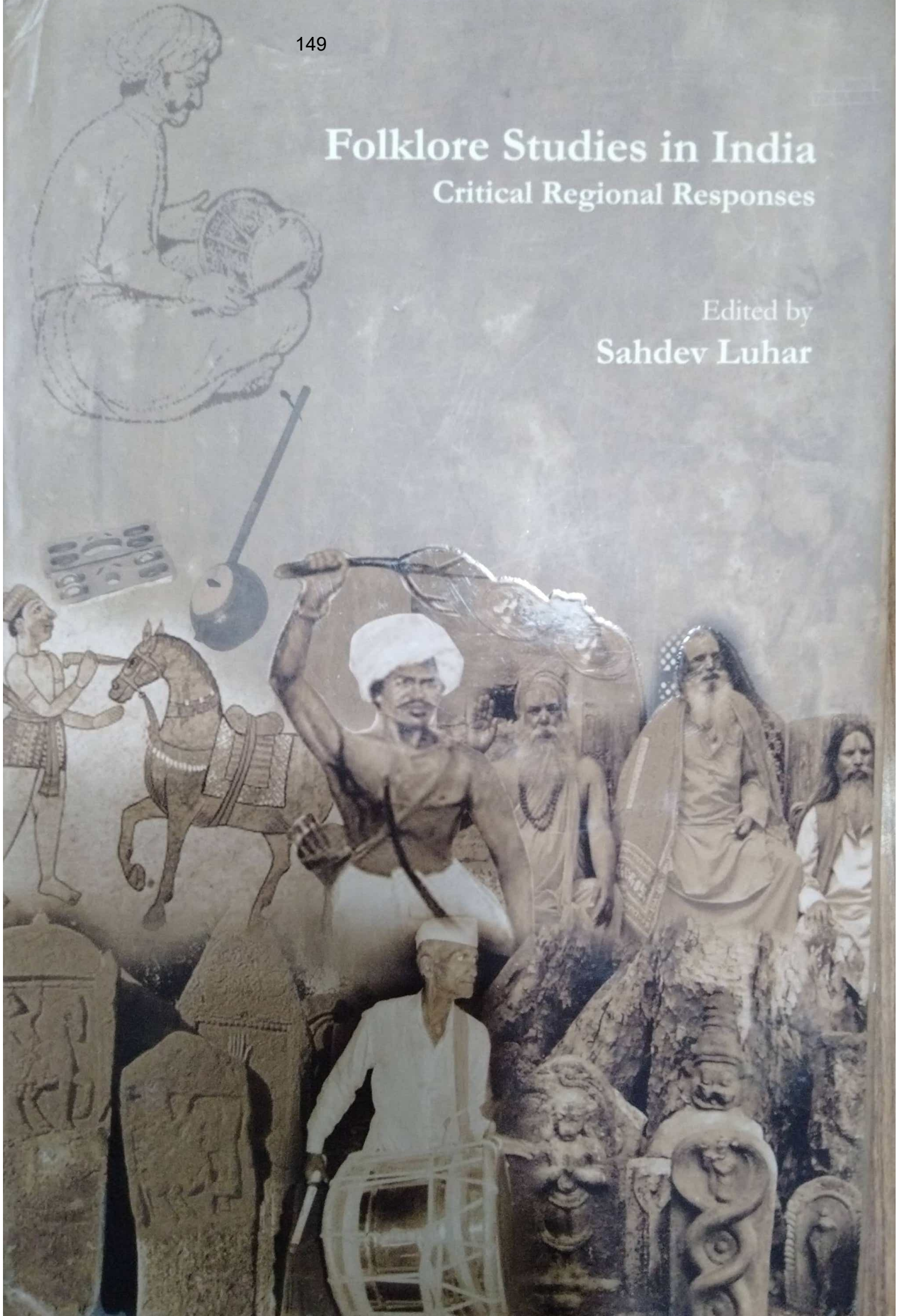


# Folklore Studies in India

## Critical Regional Responses

Edited by  
**Sahdev Luhar**



# **Folklore Studies in India: Critical Regional Responses**

**Edited by  
Sahdev Luhar**



**NS Patel Arts (Autonomous) College  
Bhalej Road, Anand-388001  
Gujarat, India**



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## CONTENTS

<i>Acknowledgement</i>	vii
<i>Preface</i>	ix
<i>Introduction</i>	01
<b>● Northern India</b>	
1 Folklore Studies in Kashmir: Rattan Lal Talashi	19
2 Folklore Studies in Haryana: Devendra Kumar	23
3 Folklore Studies in Himachal Pradesh: Jitendra Kumar	39
4 Folklore Studies in Punjab: Darya	51
5 Folklore Studies in Uttar Pradesh: Gauri Tripathi	61
6 Folklore Studies in Uttarakhand: Chandrakala Rawat	76
<b>● Southern India</b>	
7 Folklore Studies in Andhra Pradesh: N. Bhakthavathsala Reddy	101
8 Folklore Studies in Karnataka: Purushothama Bilimale	132
9 Folklore Studies in Kerala: PV Lovelin	139
10 Folklore Studies in Tamil Nadu: J. Joseph Antony Raj	146
<b>● Eastern India</b>	
11 Folklore Studies in Jharkhand: M. Ramakrishnan	163
12 Folklore Studies in Orissa: Kailash Pattanaik	194
13 Folklore Studies in (West) Bengal: Sk. Makbul Islam	199
14 Folklore Studies in Bihar: Dalip Kumar & Arundhati Sharma	232





## Folklore Studies in Uttarakhand

Chandrakala Rawat

The state of Uttarakhand came into existence on 9 November 2000 as the twenty-seventh state of India. This state was carved out of Uttar Pradesh and was formed under the name 'Uttaranchal', but on 1 January 2007, the name of the state was changed and it was called 'Uttarakhand.' According to the provisional population figures of 2011, the population of Uttarakhand is 1,01,16,552. The state of Uttarakhand is world-famous for its culture, religiosity, and spirituality. The famous pilgrimages Badrinath and Kedarnath are situated in this state. The state animal of this state is the musk deer, the state bird is Himalayan Monal (*Lophophorus Impejanus*), the state flower is Brahma Kamal (*Saussurea Obvallata*), and the state tree is Buransh (*Rhododendron*). Kumaon and Garhwal are two divisions in the state of Uttarakhand. The Kumaoni language is spoken in the Kumaon area and the Garhwali language is spoken in the Garhwal area. No one knows when and how the word 'Uttarakhand' came into use, but in the *Skanda Purana*, the names of both its divisions under the five divisions of Himalayas are found in Kurmanchal (Kumaon) and Kedarkhand (Garhwal):

खंडः पंच हिमालयस्य कथिता नैपाल कुर्मांचलौ ।

केदारोऽथ जलंधरोऽथ, रुचिरह कश्मीरसंज्ञोन्तिमः ॥

(Transliteration: *khandah panch himaalayasy kathita naipaal kurmaanchalau. kedaaroth jalandharoth, ruchirah kashmeerasangyontim.*)

One may describe the geographical location of Uttarakhand as "The Kali river in the east of Uttarakhand forms the international border between India and Nepal. To the west, the Tons - Pabbar rivers and adjoining mountains separate it administratively from Himachal Pradesh. The southern end is connected to the extreme northern part of the Ganges - Yamuna plain. Administratively, these plains form the border

between Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh. The belt situated to its north is called Terai. The Terai-Bhabar belt is present as a distinct natural formation in the Himalayas. In this way, the Doon region becomes a distinct part of the Shivalik ranges in the south and the Brahma Himalayas in the north. There are three Himalayan ranges present in Uttarakhand. These are called - Small, High, and Tethys Himalayas” (Bhatt and Pathak xxxi).

It is difficult to mention which human races dominated this region called Uttarakhand in the absence of authentic evidence. However, based on *Mahabharata*, *Puranas*, and ancient Sanskrit literature, it can be argued that Kol, Kirat, Kinnar, Yaksha, Kulind, Khas, and Naag were some of the human races that habituated in this region. The references from *Brahma Purana* and *Vayu Purana* also point to the existence of Kirat, Kinnar, Yaksha, Gandharva, and Naag races in the Himalayas. In Ved-Puranas the description of Uttarakhand’s forests, mountains, and vegetation is also found. Hiranyashring, Gandhamadan, Hemkoot, Mainak, Mandarachal, Kedarnath, and many other mountains are mentioned in the Puranas. According to *Matsya Purana* (121-126, 32, 42), the mountain named Hiranyashring was famous for medicines and gold sand, whose presence was on the northern border of Garhwal. It is said that the Pipilak gold of Garhwal was famous and is mentioned in the *Mahabharata* (Sabha 52). According to Dr. Govind Chatak, “Badrikaashram was situated on Gandhamadan mountain, near which Mount Meru was famous for gold” (Chatak 13).

The Jakhan Devi temple located in Almora of Kumaon district and the tradition of the creation of conch-padded alpanas (designs) on the thresholds on various festivals is believed to be the evidence of the residence of the Yakshas in Kumaon. Dr. Chatak describes the Yaksha of Kalidas as the resident of Alkapuri near Badrinath. It is believed that in different periods of the history of India, many races/communities made Uttarakhand their initial refuge. This has been evident through a wool-selling caste called ‘Kanaur’ in the Rawai region of Uttarakhand (Garhwal Mandal), which is considered a descendant of eunuchs. In the Jaunpur and Jaunsar regions of Uttarakhand, the people of the Kol caste are called ‘Kolta.’ In the context of the Kol or Mund caste in Uttarakhand, Dr. Shekhar Pathak writes, “When the Indus Valley Civilization of Dravid race started to develop, Kol or Mund caste was already born due to the meeting of Negroid and original Australoid groups.” Regarding the gradual shifting of the Kol species to the Himalayan forest areas and later to the Bhotantik regions, Dr. Grierson believes that “this species was defeated by the Dravidian race, due to which it had to either go to the plateau of the south or the forested areas of the Himalayas.” Similarly, Dr. Shiv Prasad Dabral



believes that “when Kirat began to arrive, the Kol community had to re-surrender or migrate to Bhotantik regions from their area. There were settlements of the Kirat community in Uttarakhand – such a mention is also found in *Mahabharata*. This region of the Himalayas is referred to as ‘Kirat Tanganakir’ in the *Mahabharata*” (Vanaparva 140.25). Historians believe this region was dominated by the Munda language-speaking Kirat caste of the Agney family for years. Even today its descendants are famous as the Raji tribe. Many names or the names of places-rivers such as Bhaldiyana, Bhilang, and Bhilangna are often associated with the Bhil tribe. All these castes were the original castes of Uttarakhand and no one is surprised by this fact. Dr. Chatak believes these castes/communities are mentioned in the Vedic literature as the non-Aryan tribal mountain castes. They emphasize the possibility that Raj-Kirats of the Askot region of Kumaon are the original Uttarakhandi.

Historians believe that when the strong Khas caste arrived in the Himalayas from the west, the Kirats also migrated to remote areas like the Kols. Later the contact between the Kirats and Tibetan Huns through Indo-Tibetan trade strengthened the relationship between the two. Shiv Prasad Dabral writes, “Kirats are told herbs-collectors in the texts of *Ayurveda*.” The descendant castes of Kirats still reside in different parts of Uttarakhand. In this regard, Dr. Shekhar Pathak mentions, “Jad of Uttarkashi; Marchha and Tolcha of Chamoli; Johari, Darmi, Chaudansi, and Byansi of Pithoragarh; Banaraji of Askot and Lul Raut of Champawat; Tharu and Boxa of Terai; Mihir (who have now mixed with the rest of society) of Dehradun are the present representatives of Kirats” (Chatak xxxvi). In the context of the arrival of the Khas race in India, along with many other scholars, Dr. Harishankar Joshi believes that “after the centuries of the spread of the Kirats in the small Himalayas and before the arrival of the Vedic Aryans, a powerful caste named Darad-Khas which was a pastoral race arrived in India through the north-western Himalayan passes. Thus, the Khas caste gradually spread.” About the descendants of the Khas caste, Atkinson writes that “Today, from Kabul to Assam, a large part of humanity settled on the Small Himalayas, which now follow various faiths, are the descendants of the Khas caste.” According to DN Majumdar, most of the Brahmin and Rajput castes of Uttarakhand belong to the Khas caste (Majumdar 110). Historians accept that the Shaka caste came to India centuries before Christ. Rahul Sankrityayan and Shiv Prasad Dabral, in their books, hold the possibilities of tombs of the Shakas in Dwarahat, Baijnath, and some other places of Kumaon; they believe that places and gods-goddesses of the Himalayan areas are named by the Khasas; on the other hand, Dr. Dabral believes that the idols and temples to Lord Sun should be credited to the Shakas (Dabral 70, 206).



Dr. Shivprasad Dabral believes that the Dravid existed before the arrival of the Aryans in Uttarakhand. However, no evidence of the conflict between these two races is found in history, albeit some words used as the basic terminology of Uttarakhand suggest the cordial relationship between the Aryans and the Dravidian races. On studying the cultural terminology of the Middle Pahari, it is observed that many words are related to the Dravidians. For example, the vocabulary related to worship and house chores is chiefly marked by the influence of the Dravidian culture. Concerning the terminology related to jewelry, Dr. Chandrakala Rawat writes that "In Kumaoni terminology, three names of the ornaments 'Kankan,' 'Mukut,' and 'Kundal' are found similar. Of these three terms, 'Mukut' and 'Kundal' are considered to be Dravidian which have been adopted in the Sanskrit language from the Dravidian language" (Rawat 200). Similarly, Dr. Omkar Prasad notes that "the different forms of Lord Shiva are considered to be based on the Aryan beliefs, but the form that is worshipped in the form of Linga is believed to be non-Aryan" (Prasad 118). Confirming the Aryans' borrowing from the Dravidians, Dr. Chatak writes that "Those Aryans, who first opposed the Linga worship in the Vedic age, started worship the Linga after the influence of the Dravids" (*Sanskriti: Samasya Aur Samadhan* 10).

Scholars have different opinions regarding the arrival of Aryans, but it is widely accepted that many groups of Aryans came to India through many routes. Dr. Chatak believes that the most mighty Aryans came from the north. Banafe has also confirmed that a branch of Aryans had entered India through Garhwal-Kumaon. Public opinions also confirm this fact. Banafe firmly upholds that many elements of the mechanism dealing with tantra (spells), magic-black magic, and the wondrous elements described in the Vedas are borrowed by the Aryans from the Himalayan settlers like Yaksha, Gandharv, Kirat, Naag, Khas, and Dravid. During the post-Vedic period, this region became a religious area. Being the land of Rishis and Munis, this region, on the one hand, is marked by the traditions nurtured by the Rishis and Munis, and, on the other hand, it is influenced by the ancient culture.

The cultural tradition of Uttarakhand has been intact in the form of the systematic worshipping of the local gods-goddesses like Gvel, Gangnath, Saim, Gananath, Bhumiya, Jakh, Nanda, Ghantakarn, etc. Along with these, the tradition of songs, Jagar, dance, fairs, sacrifices, and festivals is also found in Uttarakhand. Thus, the integrated culture of folk and Vedas is seen in the Uttarakhand region. Of course, these different groups would have learned many things, including language, from each other to form composite culture. The Kol community has played an



important role in Uttarakhand's agriculture, cattle-bird rearing, and cultural formation. In addition, this community has played an important role in adding different dimensions like black magic, the incarnation of the village gods, questioning these gods, and offering sacrifices to the folk gods of Uttarakhand. In all these activities, the different communities have borrowed-lent many things from each other. Along with conducting economic pursuits, these communities have also worked in the direction of cultural formation. Dr. Shekhar Pathak opines that "... for this purpose, the experiments of folk science or traditional knowledge- science were performed. Agriculture, animal husbandry, trade, water-irrigation, mining, metallurgy, bridges, roads, etc. developed under special ecological and geopolitical pressures, but along with these, folksongs, music, instruments, various dances, folk deities, and the Jat travels also developed" (Bhatt and Pathak xxxv).

So far as the hereditary history is concerned, some evidence of the earliest Katyuri dynasty are found in Uttarakhand. Dr. Govind Chatak believes that the Katyuri dynasty ruled over both divisions of Uttarakhand, respectively Garhwal and Kumaon for thirteen generations (850 AD to 1050 AD). It is said that Veerdev was the last ruler of this dynasty, who was very tyrannical, and the stories of his atrocities are described in the folk songs and saga of this region. The narratives of the Jagar stories inform that Katyuri kings employed different strategies to exploit the people. For example, they collected tax from the public even for the shattered water mill; they used to demand milk even if there was no milking cow; while giving grains to the people, they used to ask people to fill their containers from the bottom side of the funnel and while taking the grains from the people, they had to fill the container from the top-side of the funnel, etc. This dynasty, decimated by its own atrocities, was conquered by the Nepali (Gorkha) invader, Ashok Challa. As a result, this region was marked by anarchy around the fifteenth century. Kumaon became the region of small tributary kingdoms, while the Garhwal region broke into strongholds. Meanwhile, the state got divided into two distinct political entities, Kumaon and Garhwal. This allowed Chandvanshi Kshatriyas to establish their single-hand rule in Kumaon. Meanwhile, the Pawar dynasty established its rule in Garhwal. It is a popular belief that the founder of the Pawar dynasty came from Dharanagari and got this kingdom by marrying the daughter of Bhanupratap, the Ganpati of Chandpurgarh. This episode is narrated in 'Jaydev ke Pavade,' a piece of Garhwali folk literature. Thus, Ajaypal was the first ruler of the Pawar dynasty. He had a special reverence for Nath and Siddhas. He was possibly a Nathpanthi Guru who expanded his kingdom by the grace of Satyanath Bhairav. His



name also appears in 'Nathon ki Bani' and 'Shabar Granth.' Despite immense struggling, the reign of the Pawars is appreciated for their construction work. Vaishnavism, Shakta, and Nathpanth flourished here during this period. The Pawar kings had to struggle for their existence many times with the Bhot, Kumaon, Sirmaur, and Delhi Sultanates. Raja Manshah is mentioned as the third generation of Ajaypal. About the frequent plundering by the Dapa/Daba people from Tibet, Dr. Govind Chatak writes that "Manshah defeated the ruler of Dapa and according to the terms of the treaty he made them offer sava ser gold and a four-horned ram as a present every year. Over time, a Chanwari cow was added to this present. During the reign of Mahipatshah, the problem again raised its head. Hence, he sent Rikhola and Madhosinh to conquer Dapa. The Pavada (heroic songs) are still sung in Garhwal to praise of these two brave men (Chatak 26). There is a popular saying in the Garhwali society on Madhosinh: एक सिंह रण का, एक सिंह रणका, एक सिंह माधोसिंह और सिंह काहे का। At present, the Pavada (heroic song) on the bravery of Madhosinh is not available now, but he is always present in the minds of people of Uttarakhand through folk songs.

The successive tradition of the Chand Kings in Kumaon is found from King Thoharchand to King Mahendrachand. During this period, many wars also took place between Kumaon and Garhwal only, to increase the borders. After Kumaon King Laxmichand defeated the Garhwal king in the seventh attack, Kumaon celebrated this victory by burning 'Khatduwa,' a man of grass. This festival is still celebrated in Kumaon on the solstice of the month of Ashwin. This hate-rivalry between Garhwal and Kumaon was due to the interests of certain groups of people, but today both Garhwal and Kumaon are the representatives of an integrated culture of Uttarakhand. Both these regions spread affinity among the general public. Vaishnav, Shakta, and Nathpanth flourished in the Garhwal region during the reign of the Pawar kings. Until 1838, Kumaon and Garhwal were called 'District Kumaon'. In 1839, British Garhwal became an independent district. In 1804, Pradyumna Shah was killed in the invasion by the Gurkhas. Thus, until 1815, the Gurkhas ruled over Garhwal for twelve years. In the Kumaon region too, the Gurkha ruled from 1790 to 1815 later, the British defeated the Gurkhas and got hold of the Kumaon region. Gurkhas perpetrated atrocities against the people of Uttarakhand and did injustice to them. These atrocities are famous as 'Gorkyol' in Kumaon and 'Gorkyani' in Garhwal. Even today, a proverb is prevalent in the Kumaoni folk — गोरख्याक राज जिकि छ? — which means, 'Is this the rule of the Gorkhas?'



Like India's multicultural identity, in the culture of Uttarakhand, which was the abode of the Aryan and the non-Aryan foreign people, one may find the elements of fundamental unity. Uttarakhand is very rich in terms of 'folklore'. The term 'folklore' was coined by William Thoms in 1846. Moreover, he considers region-specific traditions, customs, law legislation, superstition, legends, proverbs, etc. as the parts of folklore. For him, folklore means the knowledge of ordinary people. Krishnadev Upadhyay writes, "the study of 'folklore' had started many years before William Thoms, but in those days, all these materials were given the name of 'Popular Antiquities,' which did not give a clear idea. Therefore, William Thoms should be credited for the coinage of the term 'folklore' in 1846 AD" (Upadhyay 4). Except German scholars, the most scholars have used the term 'folklore' for customs-traditions and the study of folk literature.

The term 'folklore' is made of two words, 'folk' and 'lore.' Etymologically the term 'folk' is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word 'folk.' In a narrow sense, the term 'folk' denotes an uncultured and idiosyncratic society, whereas in a broader sense, it is used for all the people of a cultured nation. In Hindi, three words, 'Lok,' 'Jan,' and 'Graam,' are synonyms of 'folk.' Of these three Hindi words, the word 'Lok' is more prevalent. Similarly, the term 'lore' has its roots in the Anglo-Saxon word 'lare,' which means 'something that can be learned' or 'knowledge.' Thus, 'folklore' commonly means 'knowledge of the common people. Due to the wide range of knowledge of the common people, it is tough to adequately describe the boundaries of 'folklore' and the subjects contained within it. It is in the life of the common men, the elements of folk culture are found. The comprehensive study of common people's ethics, ideals, beliefs, traditions, passion, jealousy, customs, rituals, lifestyle, etc. is the central objective of folklore. In the Hindi language, in addition to the term 'Lokvarta' (folktale), the terms like 'Lok Sanskriti,' 'Lokabhivyakti,' 'Lok Tatva,' 'Lokyan,' 'Lokshastra,' and some others are used to refer to folklore. Dr. Krishnadev Upadhyay has considered the term 'Lok Sanskriti' (folk culture) to be more appropriate and expedient than 'Lokvarta' (folktale). Dr. Hazari Prasad Dwivedi has also preferred the term 'Lok Sanskriti' to denote the meaning of 'folklore'. In the scholarly works of Dr. Govind Chatak, Dr. Krishnananda Joshi, Dr. Keshvdutt Ruwali, and Dr. Devsinh Pokharia, the term 'Lok Sanskriti' is employed to mean folklore. Many sources inform us about the folk culture of Uttarakhand. These sources can be categorized into two parts: (i) the different forms of culture visible in the folklife of Uttarakhand, such as social order, lifestyle, cuisine, business, clothing, rites, faith, worship patterns, religious rituals, folk gods-goddesses, spells-magic, celebrations, fairs and the dances-songs that



are sung at fairs, folk art, folk literature, and various forms of traditional knowledge that are found scattered in public life; (ii) different types of inscriptions, copper-plate inscriptions, genealogies, and ordinances; the *Mahabharata* and the Puranas; gazetteers, annual reports; travel details; various texts, letters, magazines; and researches.

It is widely known that the study of folklore first started in Europe. The European scholar John Brand first published his folklore-related research as *Popular Antiquities*. Since it was the first book on folklore, scholars of other discipline got attracted to it. In 1725, Henry Bourne collected the opinions and beliefs of the Roman Catholic followers under the title, *Antiquitates Vulgares or the Antiquities of the Common People*. Later in *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, from a church pastor named Thomas Percy, one finds wonderful stories of witchcraft, ghosts, and fairies. However, so far as the proper study of folklore in Europe is concerned, Dr. Krishnadev Upadhyay notes that "The credit of initiating the proper study of folklore in Europe can be given to the Grimm Brothers who worked in this field and spent their whole life in it. Both these brothers, Jacob Grimm (1785-1863) and Wilhelm Grimm (1786-1859), were German. The Grimm brothers did not just work on the folksongs and folktales of Germany, but did unprecedented research on mythology and legend. They published an authentic collection of German folktales under the title, *Deutsche Hausärchen*, which is very famous". (Upadhyay 30)

The European folklorists have given a new direction to folklore research in Europe and inspired many scholars across the globe to carry out research in the field of folklore. In India, the research on Indian folk culture began during the colonial period. The British officials and the Christian missionaries were the pioneers of folklore research in India. According to Dr. Krishnadev Upadhyay, Lieutenant-Colonel James Tod started the noble work of studying Indian folk literature. Since he was appointed as a political agent for many princely states of Rajasthan, he could intensively study traditions-customs, lifestyle, and costumes of the people of Rajasthan and published his work, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajast'han or the Central and Western Rajpoot States of India* (volume I) in 1829. This book is the first systematic attempt to study Indian culture. The first collection of Indian folk songs, *The Folk Songs of Southern India*, was published in 1871 by Charles E. Gover. Mr. FT Cole wrote an article on the folksongs of the mountain-dwelling race living in the palaces. The famous Bengali poet, Toru Dutt, published *Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan* in 1882. Thus, many English scholars have collected and published material related to Indian folk literature.

Sir George Grierson's name is foremost among those who



contributed to collecting and preserving Indian culture and folk literature. William Crooke was an English man who published a folk-literary-critical journal, *North Indian Notes and Queries*, and thus served in preserving important folk material. In 1896, his other book, *Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, was published. Among the Indian folklore scholars, Pt. Ram Naresh Tripathi studied the folk songs of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Devendra Satyarthi researched the folk songs of India, Burma (Myanmar), Sri Lanka, and other countries. Dr. Krishnadev Upadhyay collected-published the Bhojpuri ballads and folksongs. Dr. Hardwarilal Sharma, Dr. Shyam Parmar, Dr. Vasudevsharan Agarwal, Pt. Banarsidas Chaturvedi, and others have published important works towards the study of folk literature. The folklore studies on Uttarakhand also include the thematic study of inscriptions and copper-sheet letters by the ancient dynasties and the ethnic, religious, economic, and political condition of local tribes. One can find the use of the Kumaoni language in the ancient inscriptions of the fourteenth century. The genealogies contain descriptions of different Kumaoni castes, dynasties, and ethnic heroes, which are important for understanding local history and trends in folk literature. Comparing these genealogies with those mentioned in the folktales helps in connecting the missing links of history. In the gazetteers of Hamilton, Atkinson, Nevill, and Walton, important information concerning all the aspects of the life of local people is found. Hamilton's *East India Gazetteer* (1812-1828) seems out of date now, but Atkinson's Gazetteer, popularly known as *Himalayan Districts*, Volume 1-4 (1882), presents rare material. Nevill's *Gazetteer of Nainital* (1904) and Walton's *The Gazetteer of Almora* (1911) are also important (Pandey 2).

The annual reports prepared by the British commissioners provide details on different aspects. Commissioner Report of 1823 is the oldest one among them. This report provides details on the food habit of people. Commissioner Watton, in his report of 1844, throws light on the farming system of Terai's cultivators, Thadu-Bokso. The information provided by Charles Atmore Sherring, Joga Singh Negi, Swami Pranavanand, and others in their travel documents helps to understand local folklife and folk works. Charles Atmore Sherring and Tom Longstaff's *Western Tibet and the British Borderland* (1906) gives interesting interpretations of the Johar-Darma Bhotia life, language, and folk literature. Joga Singh Negi's *Himalayan Travels* (1920) sheds light on the daily life, food habits, and customs of Bhotia. Swami Pranavanand's *Kailash Mansarovar* (1946) is the same kind of work. These travel documents highlight the changing form of folksongs, folktales, and other folk material place-to-place. The earliest works of folk literature belong to



the Russian scholar, Ivan Pavlovich Minayev (1840–1890). Minayev came to Kumaon in 1875 and collected folk tales, Holi songs, and hymns. These tales and fables were published in Russian translation in 1876. In 1892, Gangadutt Upreti's *Proverbs and Folklore of Kumaon and Garhwal* was published. In 1900, his other book, *Hill Dialects of the Kumaon Division*, was published under the title *Parvatiya Bhasha Prakashak*. Thus, Gangadutt Upreti was the first to throw due light on the Kumaoni language and literature. Subsequently, George Grierson's *Linguistic Survey of India* was published (1894–1927). The detailed material on Kumaoni was published in the first and ninth parts which consisted of examples of different Kumaoni dialects. In 1920, Pannalal wrote a book on Kumaon customs and culture. Laxmidutt Joshi's book on family laws of the Khas caste was published in 1929. Pastor ES Oakley and Tara Dutt Gairola co-authored a book titled *Himalayan Folklore* (1934) which was a scholarly collection of heroic tales and animal-bird stories. In terms of historical significance, Badridutt Pandey's *Kumaon Ka Itihas* (1937) is a famous treatise. Rahul Sanskritayan's *Kinnar Desh* (1951), *Himalay Parichay* (?), *Garhwal* (1953), and *Kumaon* (1958) are examples of books on local dialects and folk literature. The 1910 issue of *The Indian Antiquary* consisted of an essay by Gangadutt Upreti entitled, "A Specimen of the Kumaoni Language." In 1911, a journal of Bengal's Royal Asiatic Society comprised an essay, "A Dictionary of Pahari Dialects as Spoken in the Punjab Himalayas," by Tikaram Joshi, which is useful in terms of interpreting the meaning of Kumaoni. Local magazines like *Saptahik Shakti* (1918), *Kumaon Kumud* (1822-1848), and *Achal* (1938-40) own the notable folklore material. *Achal* was being published in the Kumaoni language only. In addition to these magazines, *Himalaya* (Ranikhet), *Parvatiya* (Nainital), *Nav Jyoti* (Pithoragarh), *Byantar*, *Hilans*, and, in the present, the issues of *Pabru* and *Kumgarh* publish important folklore material with sufficient research.

In 1935, Dr. Shivdarshan Pant wrote a dissertation on the "Social Economy of the Himalayas." In 1950, Dr. Gunanand Juyal, in his *Madhya Pabadi Bhasha* (Garhwali-Kumaoni), clarified its relation to Hindi. In 1957, Dr. Govind Chatak discussed the folk culture expressed in the folk songs of Garhwali, which is useful in the context of Kumaoni folklore. His *Garhwali Lok Gathae* (1958), *Uttarakhand Ki Lok Kathae* (Garhwal), *Garhwali Lokgeet: Ek Sanskrutik Adhyan*, *Bhartiya Lok Sanskritaka Sandarbh: Madhya Himalay*, and *Garhwal Bhasha, Sahitya Aur Sanskriti* (2008) are important books. In Dr. Trilochan Pandey's dissertation on "Kumaoni Jan Sahitya," a systematic discussion of folklore was made for the first time. In addition to his dissertation, his two other books, *Kumaoni Bhasha Aur Usaka*



*Sabitya* (1977) and *Kumaoni Lok Sabitya Ki Prushthabhumi* (1979), are important with reference to the Kumaoni language, literature, and folk literature. In 1962, Dr. Ram Singh worked on Kurmanchaliya agricultural and industrial terminology. In 1971, Dr. Krishnanand Joshi published an introductory book, *Kumaon ka Lok Sabitya*, which was the first of its kind to introduce folk songs, stories, riddles, and proverbs in a comprehensive manner with Hindi translation. It was followed by the publication of another folk ballad, *Ramola* (1989). Dr. Bhawanidutt Upreti's *Pithoragadhi Lok Sabitya*, which came out in 1960, is an important book on the dialects and folk literature of the Pithoragarh division which uses an innovative system of descriptive analysis as used in linguistics. It is based on the Eastern Kumaoni language. His *Kumaoni Lok Sabitya Tatha Geetkar* (1976) is considered remarkable by the song-writers of the region. In 1972, Dr. Prayag Dutt Joshi, in his dissertation, presented the critical study of folk tales of Kumaon and Garhwal along with the historical analysis of Jagar tales, heroic tales, and Malushahi-Ramol tales. His *Kumaoni Lokgathae* (Part 1-2) was published in 1973-74, followed by *Kumaon Ki Lokgathae: Ek Sanskritik Adhyan* in 1990. Dr. Puttulal Shukla's *Malusahi* (1967); Dr. Urwadutt Upadhyay's *Kumaon Ki Lokgathaon Ka Sabityik Aur Sanskritik Adhyan* (1979); Madan Chandra Bhatt's *Kumaon Ki Jagar Kathae*; and Jugal Kishor Petshali's *Rajula Malushahi* (1977, 1991) are considered important in the study of folk ballads. In 1973, Dr. Shambhusharan Shukla critically analysed Tharu folk songs. Thus, enough books have been published, and enough research has been carried out on the Kumaoni language and literature. Apart from these scholars, Harishankar Joshi, Nityanand Mishra, Shivprasad Dabral, Gangadutt Tiwari, Chandra Lal Verma, Tara Chandra Tripathi, Charuchandra Pandey, and others are considered pioneers to work on Kumaoni material. Harishankar Joshi has tried to explain the basic condition of Indo-Aryan languages through the Kumaoni language, *Pratibha Darshan* (1964). Nityanand Mishra is an expert in Kumaoni history. He has done a special study of ancient inscriptions and copper plates. In Chandra Lal Verma's *Kumaoni Bhasha Ki Kabavate* (1960), there is an extensive collection of Kumaoni Nyoli songs, folk tales, sayings, and proverbs. He published more than 1200 Kumaoni proverbs in the book, *Pyaas* (1940). Dr. DD Sharma has worked extensively on folk gods and festivals of Uttarakhand along with the Kumaoni language. Dr. Sher Singh Pangti's *Madhya Himalay Ki Bhotia Janjati* and Ratan Singh Raypa's *Shaukaa: Simavarti Janjati* (1974) focus on the tribes living in the marginal regions of Uttarakhand. Besides, Shailesh Matiyani's *Kumaon Ki Lok Kathae* (1959); *Garhwali Bhasha Aur Uska Sabitya* by Dr. Haridutt Bhatt 'Shailesh'; Taradutt Sati's article "Kumaon Ke Lok Nritya" (1977) and



*Sanskriti Sangam Untaranchal* by Yamunadutt Vaishnava 'Ashok' (1978) are important texts in this direction. From the point of view of folk art, Yashodhar Mathpal's *Kumaon Ki Chitrakala*, Nathuram Upreti's article "Kumaoni Lok Kala" (1977), and Kamala Belwal's *Kumaoni Lok Kala* are important books-articles. Prof. Keshavdutt Ruwali has presented Kumaoni words with their etymology in *Kumaoni-Hindi Vyutpatti Kosh* (1983). In addition, his *Kumaoni Tyar-Bar* (1990), *Kumaoni Bhasha and Sanskriti* (1994), and *Kumaon Himalay Ki Bhasha Sahitya Evam Sanskriti* (2012) are important texts in the growth of Kumaoni. Tarachandra Tripathi has tried to determine the present status of local historical sites in addition to the social interpretation of Kumaoni folk songs. Prof. Devsingh Pokharia's *Kumaon Ke Lok Chhando Ka Shastriya Adhyayan* (1979), *Kumaoni Lok Sahitya* (1983), *Kumaoni Bhasha Sahitya Evam Sanskriti* (1994), *Kumaoni Lokgeet*, and *Nyauli Satsai* have brought the Kumaoni folk literature to the fore. Dr. Mohan Chandra Pant's research work *Kumaoni Lok Kathae* and Dr. Prabha Pant's *Kumaoni Lok Kath* are important with reference to the folktale collection. Narayan Dutt Paliwal's *Kumaoni-Hindi Shabdakosh* (1984); Dr. Achalanand Jhakhmola's *Garhwali-Hindi Shabdakosh*; Dr. Sher Singh Bisht's *Hindi-Angrezi-Kumaoni Shabdakosh* and *Kumaoni Kahavate Evam Muhavare* (2014); Dr. Lata Kandpal's *Kumaoni Lokokti Muhavara Kosh*; Ramakant Benjwal edited *Garhwali-Hindi Shabdakosh* (2007); Prof. Uma Bhatt and Prof. Chandrakala Rawat edited *Jhikkal Kamchi Udayli* (2016), and *Uttarakhand ki Bhashaye* published under People's Linguistic Survey of India (editor, GN Devy) in 2014, and Prof. Chandrakala Rawat's *Kumaoni, Gujarati Aur Marathi Samstrotiya-Samanarthi Shabdakosh* (2002) are notable dictionaries.

### Folk Culture or Folklore of Uttarakhand:

On the basis of the social classification, it can be argued that mainly three castes—Brahmins, Rajputs, and Shilpkar (craftsmen)—existed in Uttarakhand from the beginning. Like Brahmins and Rajputs, there are many categories of Shilpkar in Uttarakhand. They have been categorized based on their profession. Their craftsmanship is unmatched. From the very beginning, they knew various techniques of metalwork, woodwork, resin-work, stone-work, color-work, etc. It is believed that these castes were the originators and the protectors of different songs-music and they had the knowledge of using different devices. Along with these castes, Christians, Gurkhas, Muslims, and other communities are also found today in Uttarakhand. Tharu, Boksa, Bhotia, and Banraut tribes represent primitive tribes and they are categorized under Scheduled Tribes. Kol, Kirat, Bhil, and Nag are also categorized as Scheduled Tribes even though they do not have unique identities. Moreover, Dr. Chatak



believes that the tribes like Khampa, Marchchha, Jaad, and others are related to the Huno tribe which has often been mentioned in the folksongs of Uttarakhand. The castes like Jogi, Gosai, Nayak, and others are seen to be associated with Nath and Kabirpanth. In some villages of Uttarakhand, Muslims live and they are known as "Chured," and they do the work of "Manihari."

If we do not consider the elites for the last fifty years, the state food of Uttarakhand commonly consisted of Kodo millet or barley bread, Zangora (a variety of rice), butter-milk, Sisun, and local vegetables. Joula, Bhat, Gahat Ke Dabke/Dal, Palyo/Jhoi (curry), Thathavani, Chence, etc., are the typical dishes of Uttarakhand. During festivals, Urad Dal (dal made black gram), Bade-Puri, Taidu (*Dioscoreadeltoides*), vegetable-recipe made of Gethi (*Doiscoreabulbigera-Linm*) are popular and the custom of making Arase, a recipe made of rice, is prevalent in villages.

The main occupation of the people of Uttarakhand is farming and cattle-rearing. It is difficult to carry out agricultural operations in high-stony places. Hence, rearing sheeps-goats has also become an occupation of the people here. They prepare clothes, blankets, and other items from wool. Brahmins and Rajputs do the farming, and Harijans commonly carry out ploughing. All castes together do the sowing of the crops. For the labor avoidance in Garhwal Mandal, the songs of 'Jeetu Bagadwal' are sung along with the playing drums; while the songs sung at the time of transplanting in Kumaon are called 'Hudkiboul,' these songs are also sung while narrating the ballads in Kumaon. On the beats of drums and Hudkas, women do the planting work in a musical atmosphere. Hudka is a musical instrument, and 'Baul' means – labour (i.e., labour performed on the beat of the hudka). The songs sung while hoeing in the field are called 'Godole' or 'Gudoul' in Kumaon. 'Hudkiboul' or 'Gudoul' is a song whose main purpose is to avoid the labour of the worker through entertainment or music.

In the Garhwal region, the old-generation people commonly wear Mirzai, Fatuhi, Pyjama, Dhoti, and cap, while Churidar Pyjama and Pak are worn by some people. At some places, 'Gaati' of unstitched cotton or warm cloth is worn. The women living in the colder regions wear 'Lavaa,' a black blanket. Along with 'Lavaa,' a warm cloth is wrapped at the waist, known as 'Patuka.' A cloth is wrapped around the head, called 'Talkho.' In some places, there is a practice of wearing a petticoat and blouse, just like Kumaon. These petticoats are known as 'Aaddi.' A cloth muffled along with 'Aaddi' is called 'Pichhouda.' Today, wearing a sari-blouse, suit-salwar, and shirt-pants is common everywhere. On special occasions like marriages, women wear Radwali Pichhouda. Women wear around-the-neck



jewelry like Gulkand (necklace), Hansuli jewelry, Kantha, Chandrahar, Rupees, or garlands of mung (green) beans. Lounghphul, nose-ring, and Bulak (nose-pin) are worn in the nose. Kundal (earrings), Munde, Jhupajhupi, Bale, Murkhale, and Utraule are worn on the ears; Bangles, Dhagule, Kara, Pahunchi, and rings are worn on the hands. Chenppatti, Nuari, and Bichhawa are worn on their feet and the special occasions, women wear Sheeshphool (Mangtika) on their foreheads.

Among the sixteen sacraments (sanskaras) of Hindu culture, birth, the naming of the kid, Chudakarm (Mundan sanskara), Vratbandh (Upnayan), and marriage are the major sanskaras. In Uttarakhand, joyous songs are sung during the various rites of celebration of these sanskaras. In Kumaon, these songs are known as "Shakunakhar" or "Faag." The opening lines of the song sung at the beginning of every auspicious occasion are described here:

शकूनां दे, शकूनां दे ।  
 काज ए अती नीको  
 शुभ रंगीलो पाटैलै अंचली कमली को फूल  
 सोही फूल मोलावांत गनेस, रामीचंद्र, लछिमण  
 जीवाजनम आद्या अमरु होय ।  
 सोही पाटु पैरी रैना सिद्धि बुद्धि  
 सीतादेही, बहुराणी आईवांती पुत्रवांती होई ।।

[*Meaning:* Sing joyous songs, it is an auspicious work. The girls are in beautiful and colorful odhani (a saree-like cloth) and a lotus flower in the lap. These beautiful flowers are brought by Ganesh, Ramchandra, and Laxman. You all may be graced with happiness, health, and long age. These odhaniya are worn by a great and wise goddess-like Sita. Daughters-in-law, may you be gifted with long age and sons.]

Hindu sanskaras are prevalent in Uttarakhand. Among the Sankar songs, the songs sung at the birth of a child are widespread. In Garhwal, the birth songs sung on the fifth day of birth are known as "Panchula." In Kumaon, there is a tradition of celebrating "Chhaththi" on the sixth day of the birth of a child along with a practice of keeping a fire burning to remove ghost spirits from the midwifery room. In Uttarakhand, the pre-marriage ceremonies like Tik-Pithya or Dhhak Pintha are also performed. The rituals performed after someone's death are quite prevalent in Uttarakhand. The cremation rites are performed on the bank of the river. In some areas, rituals like Ling-Vaas (Dhhud Tipan) and Pitrukudi are prevalent. Most probably, the Ling-Vaas ritual has been taken from the Dravidians who perform Linga Puja. As a part of the Ling-Vaas ritual, after



a month of death, the Linga of the deceased (symbolically in the form of a stone) is installed in a small house of a particular caste – this ritual is called “Pitrukudi.”

In the Rawai region of Garhwal, the songs related to seeing the deceased on the boundaries of his/her fields and eating the Pind (a round-shaped food item made of rice and barley flour, black sesame, and ghee which is offered to ancestors at the funeral and in Shradh rituals) are prevalent. Among the Tharu tribe of Kumaon, mourning songs are also sung. In the border-line areas of Kumaon, the spirit of the deceased person is guided through various stories known as “Dhhurid.”

There is great importance of beliefs like good and bad omens in the public life of Uttarakhand. For instance, sneezing while leaving the house, a cat crossing someone’s way, falling of ghee, crying of jackals, crows cowing in a loud voice, giving a broom to someone, twitching of the right eye, and watching snakes fight is considered inauspicious. On the other hand, falling of oil, twitching of the left eye, watching pots filled with yogurt, water, and a bundle of green grass are considered good omens. A crow’s cowing nearby the home in the morning is considered a sign of a guest’s arrival. Hiccups or brittling fire are considered a sign of being remembered by loved ones in the folk belief.

The feelings of affinity and fear towards nature have greatly influenced people’s life in Uttarakhand. The different forms of nature – trees, fruits, flowers, mountains, rivers, water, etc. – are worshiped by the people of Uttarakhand. Yaksha and Naga (snake) worship are also prevalent in this region. In some regions of Garhwal, the Yaksha is considered to be a malefic force and in the Rawain region, the god of peace and security. The folk deities like Kshetrapal, Bhumiya, and Narasimha are considered as the Yaksha gods. Many beliefs regarding Naga worship are prevalent among the people of Uttarakhand.

In the Fatehparvat region, milk is not drunk because of the taboo related to the snake deity. If a snake is killed by the plough while ploughing, farming will not be done at that place. Among the local deities, Golla (Gwel), Ganganath, Bholanath, etc., are considered the forms of Lord Shiva. Major folk deities like Bhairav, Siduva Bidua, Kalbishta, Haruseim, etc., are worshiped. Nanda Devi, Gadevi, Kali, Pari, Aancharis-Kincharis, and Maatris are worshipped here. Aancharis and Maatris are considered evil forces. Referring to, *Hindu of the Himalayas* (p.113, 377) by a scholar named Gerald Duane Berreman, Dr. Govind Chatak writes that “There is Maatri’s Daanda (a place that marks boundary) near Sirkanda ... where the people of the village worship after harvesting the crop and sacrifice a goat for the good harvest. In the folk songs, it is



claimed that Aancharis are seven sisters. It is believed that Aancharis enter the body of women and make them suffer. Aancharis are enchanted by men and they kidnap or kill them”.

A local goddess-god is incarnated in a person's body, known as “Dungariya” – this process of incarnating is called, “Jagariya.” For the blessings of gods or the expiation of Pitru Dosh (a sin committed to forefathers' spirit by not offering proper rituals), a process is organized known as ‘Jagar’ in Kumaon and as ‘Ghadyala’ in Kumaon. Dr. Govind Chatak believes this process was probably there among the Kinnars (eunuchs), Kirats and Dravidians. The traditions of the Jagar worship and animal sacrifices in Shaktipeeths (Shakti temples) are found in Uttarakhand. On the occasions of injustice, the sufferer cries out for justice to the god, known as ‘Ghaat Dalan’ (black magic that kills a person against whom it is used). To solve, worship is made to the god by offering ‘Navanna’. A tradition of offering girls to temples like Badrinath, Tungnath, Devalgarh, Kalimath, etc., has also been in Uttarakhand. Ghost-worship is also prevalent here. The rampant fear of malicious powers or ghosts is found among the people of Uttarakhand, which hints at their primitive beliefs. The mechanism for freeing from this fear has led to the tantra-mantra, guarding spirits, and many other rituals. For not having progeny, women are treated with tantra-mantra methods like ‘Mochh Utarana,’ ‘Ojo Jhando,’ and ‘Gaanthu Bandh.’

Tantra-mantra and spells-black magic are the important practices of the folk culture of Uttarakhand that can be considered indicative of primitive nature. “Bhed Karan” is a practice that can cure toothache, earache, and body pain. Different types of tantra-mantra cure fever, exacerbation, Ghaat Dalan, and the evil eye. There is a practice of “Rai Mantaran” (spell created by using mustard seeds) mantra to cure the evil eye; in this process, a person who knows this mantra spellbound the mustard seeds to heal the evil eye. There is an intention of getting rid of diseases, enemies, and family obstacles behind using such mantra-tantra. In this context, Dr. Chatak writes that “This tradition of mantra-tantra seems to have come from the tribals. Later, this tradition was followed by Guru Gorakhnath and his disciples. Many kings of Garhwal were good tantriks. The names Ajaypal, Shyamshah, and Rani Karnavati appears in many mantras. Many stories narrate the misdeeds of many tantriks. The descendants of Kanphate Jogis and Gusai are also found in many parts of Garhwal.” Dr. Chatak also acknowledges a significant impression of the Vedic period to the medieval period on these mantras-tantras of this region in addition to the impression of the Aryans and the non-Aryans. The mantras of disease-prevention, cure from snake-bite,



Vashikaran (bewitchment), Ghaat Dalan, exacerbation, etc., mark these impressions. Even these mantras reflect the tradition up to the Vedic period. People believe that one can overcome the negative influences of these tantras-mantras and spells-black magic and can reverse the negative power of mantras by a mechanism called "Jhodo-Todo." The mantras used for the prevention of diseases are called "Rakhwai." Jaundice, a disease with no cure in allopathic treatment, is removed from the human body with the mantras. There are certain spells and mantras to remove the effect of paralysis, snakes-scorpion bite, physical pain, controlling ghosts, spell-bounding stone weapons, and curing intestinal worms.

The religious tradition of Uttarakhand is often followed in celebrating different auspicious occasions, festivals, and fairs. The festivals that fall on the Sankranti of every month are 'Phool Sankranti,' 'Bikhoti,' 'Harela,' 'Ghee-Sankranti,' 'Makar Sankranti,' and 'Basant Panchami' are celebrated with great reverence and enthusiasm. On the day of 'Basant Panchami', the plants of barley crops are offered to god and people garland their heads with these plants. Some homes, have a tradition of putting these plants on the entrance gate. Phool Sankranti, celebrated in the month of Chaitra, is also known as 'Phuldei.' In Jaunsar-Babar regions of Garhwal, this tradition is known as 'Goga.' This tradition is known by different names like Phulera, Phulhaar, and Phuldholi at different places. The word 'Phooldei' is made of two regional words: 'Phool' (flowers) + 'Dei' (or Dehri, which means 'threshold'). On the day of Phooldei, unmarried girls worship the threshold with the flowers, especially of Rhododendron tree and Fyoli plants, and make prayers.

In the month of Chaitra, the girls receive clothes and gifts from their brothers called "Bhitoli" or "Bhaitoli." The married girls living at their in-laws' homes eagerly wait for this month. In Uttarakhand, the folksongs dealing with memory vividly portray the hope and aspirations of women. In such songs, women ask the local birds like 'Nyoli' (Hill Nightingale), 'Ghughuti' (Spotted Dove), and 'Kafuwa,' etc., to chirp in their parents' villages. On this occasion, a singer called "Auji" sings a ballad and narrates the story of a sister's wish to visit her brother's home and the brother's arduous journey to the remote home of the sister. The month of Chaitra means the peak of the spring season. The songs sung in the month of Chaitra are known as 'Riturain' in Kumaon, and in Garhwal, these songs are known as 'Vasanti,' 'Jhumailo,' 'Khuded Geet,' and 'Chaiti.' 'Bikhoti' (Vishuvat Sankranti - Vaisakhi) and 'Makrain' (Makar Sankranti) are the main festivals of bathing. 'Harela,' the main festival of the state, is celebrated on the Sankranti of Sawan month. It is considered a symbol of greenery. Nine or ten days before this festival, five or seven



grains are sown in a basket, which are cut on the day of Harela, and are offered to the deities and later they are placed on the heads of family members. According to Dr. Govind Chatak, some scholars consider it an agricultural festival related to the Kol caste. In Uttarakhand, Diwali is also known as 'Bagwal.' In the Garhwal region, the fists of pine wood are made on this day called 'Bhailo.' People fire these Bhailo and dance-play around the fire. The celebration of the first day on Bagwal is known as 'Danyun,' while the celebration that takes place a month after this day is known as 'Rikk Bagwal' which is associated with a folk belief that Diwali was celebrated a month after the arrival of Lord Ram's friend Rukk in Ayodhya.

On these festivals, fairs are held at many places. The Nanda Devi fairs of Nainital, Almora, Kot Bhramari, and Chamoli are very famous. Besides these fairs, the 'Bikhoti' (Baisakhi) fair of Dwarahat, the 'Somnath' fair of Masi, the 'Uttarayani' fair of Bageshwar, the 'Moun Kodai' fair of Jaunpur, the 'Sita' fair of Mansar, the 'Goril' fair of Chandpur, the 'Magh' fair of Uttarkashi, the 'Ghadiyal' fair Lostu, the 'Gindi' fair of Dadamandi, the 'Bhumyal' fair of Kandolia, the 'Surkanda' and the 'Kujapuri' fairs of Tehri, and the 'Nagraja' fair of Sem-Mukhkhem are noteworthy. The 'Nandajaat' of Garhwal is the most famous religious caste. They worship deities through yatra. This worship (Jaat-yatra) takes place once in twelve years. In this yatra, Nanda (Gauri) is taken to Her in-law's home, the Kailash mountain. The rural people decorate the gold idol of Nanda as if She were their daughter and perform a yatra of 280 kilometers to drop Her at Homkund via Roopkund. Along with Nanda, a decorated-ornamental ram – 'Khadu' – with four horns and a decorated umbrella (Chhantoliya) are also sent. People from India and foreign come and participate in this yatra. Once Nanda reaches Her in-law's home (Kailash), the Chhantoliya is immersed, and the ram is re-decorated and sent back. The departure of daughter-like Nanda makes everyone emotional. In the context of a prevalent belief concerning the caste of Nanda, Dr. Govind Chatak writes that Roopkund is a halt in the middle of the Nanda Yatra. Roopkund is a lake wherein years-old skeletons and shoe-slippers are found. In the folksongs, it is told that once the King of Kannauj came here to be a part of the Yashodhaval caste along with his wife Ballabha and his army. The king lacked religious faith; in Patar Nachouniya, he made the lady dancers dance, and in Swilda, his wife had a delivery that made Nanda angry. During the night, there was a heavy snowfall, and the king, queen, and their army got absorbed in Roopkund. Since then, their skeletons have been found here.

The songs that are sung in fairs-festival are known by different names like 'Chhopati,' 'Laaman,' 'Bajubandh,' 'Chhuda' etc., in Garhwal and like



'Jhoda,' 'Chanchari,' 'Chhapeli,' 'Beir,' 'Jod,' 'Nyoli,' etc., in Kumaon. 'Chopti' is a dance song mainly sung in Rawai Jaunpur. 'Jhoda' is a group dance song popular in Kumaon. 'Jhoda' also narrates the divine stories of gods. 'Laaman' is a dance-less song which is sung at festivals in the Rawain area. 'Bajubandh' songs narrate the romantic dialogue between men and women and composed immediately as per the need. 'Chhuda' is also a song that expresses love. Apart from these, there are also some estranged songs in which mutual sympathy for married life can be seen. There are many songs related to parting in which the deep experiences of life get an expression. 'Chanchari' is a distinctive style of Kumaoni dance songs in which the lead singer is called 'Chanchariya.' The song 'Chhapeli' is based on love and adornment. 'Beir' is an argumentative song style and that can be presented on any problem or topic. The 'Jod' song is formed by adding rhythm to the rhythm and reflects the Sringar rasa. 'Nyoli' is a singing style. It is immersed in the Sringar rasa and depicts the parting of beloved ones. In addition, nursery rhymes are also found in Uttarakhand, although nowadays, they are not used so frequently.

Uttarakhand is rich in terms of folk art. Since ancient times, metal art, sculpture, woodwork, painting, and architecture have been found here. Blacksmiths and coppersmiths make different types of utensils, decorative items, utensils, and tools from the metals extracted from the mines. Fibers are made from the fabrics of Dholan and hemp. Mats are made from the stalks of Malu, Bhimal, wheat, and barley. Similarly, the baskets and punnets are made from Ringal-Bibal. The different sacred designs, drawn on the floor on auspicious occasions, like 'Epan,' hint at the paintings of Uttarakhand. Shri Nathuram Upreti, Shri Vishwabarnath Sah 'Sakha' and Smt. Kamala Belwal are some notable names in this field. The different wooden items indicate the rich heritage of woodwork in Uttarakhand. Different types of buildings and structures show architecture and mosaic art. However, today the dissolution of the traditional economy, displacement, unemployment, and urbanization has caused great damage to the folk arts.

The ordinary people of Uttarakhand have traditional knowledge about agriculture, weather, technology, and medicine (herbs). They use many important proverbs related to agriculture in their day-to-day life. For instance, "जैक हल सपड़, वीक कव सपड़" means "one who does the timely ploughing with his plough, his work will be fruitful." Similarly, the proverb, "जैक असाढ़, वीक असोज, जैक असोज, वीक बैशाख" hints at the fact that one who carries out the agricultural operation in time will be benefitted in every way. The people of Uttarakhand consider the earthquake useful in terms of crop yield, whereas the eclipse is considered the symbol of famine. This



is suggested by a saying, 'चलक सुकाव, गरण अकाव.' A proverb, 'मैलकि सैल', means that there will not be a good harvest even after proper sowing, weeding, and irrigation until a sufficient quantity of cow dung manure is applied in the fields. This proverb highlights the importance of organic farming. In addition, some sayings reflect the indigenous knowledge of the people and information on when to sow rice, wheat, finger millet, and other grains to get better produce. Some proverbs illustrate the usefulness of animal rearing. For example, the proverb, 'घर में घिनाली तो रोज त्यारै-त्यार,' means there is always a festival in the homes wherein people rear milking animals. The people have the traditional knowledge of forecasting the weather based on thunders of clouds, lightning, storms, and the cries of birds and animals.

The folk literature of Uttarakhand is rich with antecedent folksongs along with numerous folktales. These folksongs and folktales are occasion-specific and narrated without any alteration. Hence, their narrations have become commercial enterprises, and their narrators are limited to specific communities like Jagari-Purohit, Avaji-Vadak, Chamfya-Hudkya, etc. Out of these, Jagari Purohit sings the Jagar songs during the worship of the deity, while Avaji-Vadak plays drums and dances. In the month of Chaitra, Avajis go home-to-home and dance while narrating ballads. Chamfya and Hudkya are Dalit singers who sing by playing Chamf or Hudka (musical instruments). It is believed that they used to narrate chivalric tales in the feudal courts, but now they are disappearing except for their presence in some villages. Dr. Chatak writes that the people of the Avaji caste commonly play drums. The instrument that Jagari-Purohit plays during the worship of deities is called 'Ghadiyal.' Jagari Purohit tells the stories of gods and ghosts. Avajis also narrate the tales of gods and they sing 'Chaiti' ballads in the month of Chaitra. These 'Chaiti' ballads can be categorized in the following way based on the above-mentioned traditions:

Jagar or religious tales; Pavadas or heroic tales (these tales are known as 'Bhadau' in the Kumaon region); love tales and Chaiti tales are famous in Uttarakhand. Religious tales are centered on religion, while, despite having a tinge of love in heroic tales, their purpose is to depict valor. The Chaiti tales focus on the feelings of women, especially the memory of their parents' home or their oppression. From the point of view of composition, the folktales of Uttarakhand are very ancient. The tradition of Indian folktales begins with the Vedas and Brahmin texts. The Jagar tales of Uttarakhand narrate the puranic tales of Lord Ram, Krishna, Devi, Pandavas, Goril, and Nirankar, which are believed to be written in different ages. In Uttarakhand, stories of gods are found in the forms of Jagars,



Pavadas, and Bhadau. The musical instrument in Jagar is called 'Ghadiyala,' played with Hudka and Bronze plate specially. The singer of Jagar and the person who makes Jagar worship is called 'Jagar,' and the person who is possessed by the god is called 'Dangariya,' 'Paswa,' or 'Dhami.' Following *Natyashastra*, the gods are pleased with the dance. Therefore, in the Jagar dance 'Dangariya' or 'Paswi' is made to dance – perhaps this tradition was also prevalent among the Yaksha, Gandharva, and Kinnars. The purpose of Jagar tales is the prevention of evil forces. The ceremonies performed to make the deity dance are known in the Garhwal region as 'Jatra' or 'Mandan.' The caste of Pandavas is known as 'Pandavart,' and the caste of Devi is called 'Athavad.' Along with other gods and goddesses, the Jagar of Goll and Nanda Bhagawati and in the Garhwal region, the Jagar of Krishna (Nagaraja) are chief. According to Atkinson, there were 61 Naga temples in Uttarakhand in which the worship of snakes was carried out. The famous stories of Uttarakhand like 'Gangu Ramaula,' 'Sidua – Bidua,' 'Brahma Kaul,' 'Suraj Kaul,' Ramaula stories of Kumaon, Rukmini stories, 'Chandravali Haran' ballads, and others are connected to Lord Krishna. Among the Krishna-related stories, Sidua – Bidua are considered masters in using Gorakhnath's "Boksadhi Vidhya" (a kind of black magic), and the reference to the effectiveness of this black magic is also found in the mantras of Bhadoes and Pavadas.

In conclusion, it can be said that these Jagar tales express ethnic life, aspirations, and fantasies. The heroic legends would have a connection with the medieval period. These tales, composed in the coordination of history and imagination, are related to various wars, and their period is from 800 AD to 1700 AD. In medieval times, the feudal kings were busy with wars, and they used to keep valiant heroes under their control. These heroes were called Bhad (Bhat) or Mal (Malla). ES Oakley and Taradutt Gairola have compiled these heroic ballads of the Garhwal region in their edited volume *Himalayan Folklore*, but these have yet to be heard today. Today, in the Garhwal region, the Bhadaus and Pavadas are related to the heroes like Rikhola Modi, Madhosinh, Gadhu Sumriyal, Suraj Kunvar, Brahma Kunvar, Jaydev Panwar, Kala Bhandari, Tilu Rauteli, Supya Rout are found. In the Kumaon region, the Bhadaus and Pavadas related to the heroes like Sakram Karki, Ramola, Bhima Kathat, Ajubfaul, Aju Raut, Bharti Chan, Gyani Chan, and Daljit Bor are found.

Malusai, Aanthu, Riturain, and Thulkhel are the best ballads of Uttarakhand. Malusah Katyuri was the prince of the Katyuri ruler Dulasah. It narrates the love story of Malusah and Rajula, the princess of Johar, which is an example of oral akhyani (narrative performance). This ballad, full of historicity, covers the region from Bairath to Johar, the



capital of the Katyurs.' 'Aanthu' is a festival associated with the Ashtami (the eighth day) of the month of Bhadrapada. In this ballad, the tale of Gaura-Maheshwar (Gamra-Meinsar) is sung. On the fifth day (Panchami), the whole grains of wheat-gram, etc., are soaked, and on the next day, they are washed with pure water; on the day that follows, Gaura arrives. Unmarried girls make Gamra from the samplings of Dill Seeds, then, Gamra is placed in Dalia (basket) and is welcomed by the music band; Biruds are offered, and the songs from the birth of Gamra and to her marriage departure are sung. 'Thulkhel' is organized and sung by men on Krishna Janmashtami in Bhadrapada. On the folk-ballads, in the Kumaon region, Dr. Prayag Joshi, Dr. Madan Bhat, and, in Garhwal, Dr. Govind Chatak have done considerable work.

It is believed that Indian folklore is ancient in world folklore. The source of folklore is found in the Vedas. The folktales of Uttarakhand, are related to demons, fairies, nature, and its various forms which are fantasy-oriented stories. Besides, folktales related to animals-birds, social background, Vrata, and comedy are found. In ghost-related tales, the idea of superstition, fear, exaggeration, good-bad omens, results, miracles, and heroism prevails.

In Uttarakhand, folk dramas like Ramlila, Swang (farce), Hiljatra, etc. are prevalent. Celebrated mainly in the Pithoragarh district, 'Hiljatra' is considered a symbol of various activities that take place after the arrival of the rainy season. For example, some men act as bulls, some as ploughmen, and some as women sowing the seed. This performance is called 'Putari' and is performed along with the singing of folk songs.

In conclusion, it can be argued that the folklore studies which is initiated by western scholars is carried forward by Indian scholars with great enthusiasm. In Uttarakhand, folklore studies also focuses on the different aspects and genres of folklore. Though Uttarakhand has a rich oral tradition, its folklore has the fragrance of Indianness. In short, the height of grandeur, which is perceptible in other folklore of other Indian states, is also present in the folklore of Uttarakhand.

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*Folklore Studies in India: Critical Regional Responses* is an extensive collection of twenty-eight critical essays on the beginning of folklore studies in the different parts of India. In the absence of a book that could map the diachronic history of Indian folklore studies single-handedly, this book can be deemed as the first of its kind to feature the historical development of folklore studies in the different states of India. Nearly all the essays in this book succinctly introduce the readers to the folk culture, folk arts, and folk genres of a particular region and to the different aspects of folkloristic researches carried out in that region.

