With the growing consciousness that history is not merely the story of kings and the record of events but the story of a people defined by geographical situation and the forces of time, historians began to understand the importance of the non-conventional sources of history, particularly literature. The conventional sources comprising official reports, memories, travelogues and chronicles are no doubt, inevitable to know the facts of a period, but the truth of the period, which stands to be the real focus of a historian, lies in literature in general, and folk-literature in particular. This philosophy of history founded by Vico in 1725 with his publication of La Scienza Nuova, has been universally accepted. The philosophy is based on the cardinal concept that every piece of literature is ineluctably an historical fact of “the moment, the milieu and the race.”

The present study is an humble attempt to explore the various genres of Kashmiri folk literature to find glimpses of Kashmiri society during the period of great historical crisis. The truth remains that the real history of the people lies embedded in folk literature which needs a fastidious and systematic exploration to find out the truth and the collective view of the period and the people.

I have in this dissertation, in my humble way tried to remove precisely the deficiencies and attempted to evaluate folk literature from the stand point of history. In all my assessments and analyses, Kashmiri folk literature has been my main concern. How for I have been able to succeed, is a matter to be decided by others. This much I can say that my attempts are sincere, though my draw backs are many.

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