CONCLUSION
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We have tried to show that the region which we call Uttarakhand today was inhabited from pre-historic times. The habitation sites of this predominantly mountainous region were governed by a host of factors. Physical features played a major role in the origin, distribution and density of settlements in this region, whereas the cultural milieu and interaction with other regions, technological and economic developments determined further growth and patterns of change. That is why we have a variety of spatial patterns of settlements in this region. These are true dispersed settlements in the northern region and large compact settlements in the areas adjacent to the plains. Depending upon the nature of the tract, five types of human settlements are found. Stair-pattern villages and hamlets are to be seen on mid-slopes; confluence type of settlements called Prayāgas are located at the confluence of affluent streams and convergence points of the pilgrim routes have given rise to small settlements. The seasonal settlements appear at the high altitude places. Lastly we have the settlements of the pastoral peoples. These settlements are characterised by a set of cultural and physical features and a deterioration of any one of these usually led to the abandonment of the settlement. Transhumance being a natural phenomenon, the region is full of seasonal settlements. Permanent settlements are found in those areas where all conditions of development are met with. Such areas were more developed economically and experienced the processes of state formation. These are also the areas where human habitation can be traced to c.600 B.C. if not earlier. Continuous contact with the people of contiguous regions of the plains resulted into the introduction of new forms of subsistence, i.e., plough agriculture which in turn resulted into urbanisation and the rise of Kuṇinda.
ganaraśīya and later the rise of Paurava-Varman dynasty of Brahmapura and Katyuri dynasty of Kārttikeyapura.

A curious practice of naming the plots of land in Kumaon and Garhwal shows that the cultivable land was scarce in the region. A study of such names, appearing in the Paurava-Varman and Katyuri inscriptions shows that plot-names were fashioned after some specific feature of the land in question. Some of the plot-names refer to the process of reclamation of new fields for the purpose of cultivation, which fact shows that land was continuously being colonized because of population pressure. In a large number of cases the Sanskrit names of plots and non-Sanskritic names of their owners indicates that the area in which lands were granted had been in the hands of tribal peoples and more and more land under the possession of the tribals was being granted to temples and other brahmanical institutions. This aspect of landgrants has an important bearing on the process of brahmanization of this mountain tract.

A detailed study of the settlement names, which in most cases are large compound words, shows that in the naming of a settlement sometimes geographical and sometimes ethnic or religious factor played the crucial role. Thus the place-names Uttaragaṇa, Gomatiśāri, Gorunnasāri, Thappalasāri, etc. were situated on the erstwhile bed of rivers; Lavaṇodaka, Madhyamapūraka and Sunthīnāvānūpa show their association with water; Vurāṣikadantavanikā, Puṭavanaka, Śīraṇāya, Vāsantivanaka, Tapovana, etc. indicate their proximity to forests; Kapīḷgartā, Chidragartā, Karavīragartā, Anāṅgalagarṭā etc. show that they were situated in the valleys. There are many place-names which suggest their association with the aboriginal groups inhabiting these settlements, for example, Kollapuri, Taṅganapura, Udumbaravāsa, Khasiyāka Pallikā, Bhūta Pallikā, etc. Some settlements derive their names from the occupational groups living there.
Svarṇakārapallika, Devadāsatoli, Rajakya toli, Gogga pallika and Skambhāra toli are such cases. A large number of place-names are derived from different kinds of religious establishments, such as Sivamusicapuri, Vāruṇaśrama, Brahmapura, Karṇtikeyapura-grāmaka, Jayabhata pallika, Badarikāśrama and Tapovana. A few settlement names such as Uttaravāsa, Karavirakośṭha show that they were temporary settlements and were used during the transhumance period.

Many of the site-names appearing in the inscriptions are similar to those appearing in the inscriptions of other regions which shows that the naming pattern in different regions was similar and followed the same principles. Thus Brahmapura is a name found in many parts of India. Some of the names found in the Vākāṭaka inscriptions are astonishingly similar to those found in the inscriptions of our region. The place-names like Nandikeḍa, Vilvāṇaka, Suvarṇakāraṇagrama of the Vākāṭaka inscriptions are similar to Nandikeraṇa, Bilvaka and Suvarṇakāra pallika of the inscriptions of Uttarākhaṇḍa. This shows that the dissemination of brahmanical ideas was taking place all over India.

We have a large number of settlement types mentioned in the inscriptions such as, grāma, palli or pallika, toli, grāmaka, pura, purī, āśrama, vanaka, garīta, koṣṭha, vātaka, vāsa, karaṇṭaka, karmānta, koṭṭa, garha, durga, viśaya, and bhukti. A large number of palli or pallika type of settlements indicate a large presence of aboriginal peoples. Toli type of settlements were usually the habitation of specific communities. Karmānta was a workshop or a craft village whereas karaṇṭaka was a group of many villages.

The social and economic development of the region around 500 B.C. resulted in the establishment of Kuṇinda gaṇarājya, known to us from silver and copper coins and from references in the Mahābhārata and the
The establishment of a gana rājya implies the existence of a stratified society. Kulinda gana punyagain mentioned by Varāhamihira shows that even in the sixth century A.D. the Kuṇindas were known for having derived their wealth from trade. Later Kuṇindas turned into a monarchy. We have evidence of Kuṇinda kings issuing coins till the third century A.D. One of the local rulers even claimed to have performed four Āsvamedha scarifices. Some time in the fourth century A.D. The Paurava-Varman dynasty established the kingdom of Brahmapura and ruled till the middle of the seventh century. The existence of another kingdom in the region, the kingdom of Goviśāna, is known to us from Hieun Tsang. A kingdom might also have existed at Lakhamandal. However, the kingdom of the Paurava-Varmans was the most important one. The Paurava-Varmans were able to establish a sound system of administration and gave landgrants to the temples, which in turn added to their glory and legitimacy. The administrative set-up of the Paurava-Varmans shows that the monarchy was now increasingly being modelled on the pattern of other sates of the plains, particularly the Gupta kingdom. For some time Uttarākhanḍa was included in the empire of Harṣavardhana and a part of it was also invaded by the Tibetan king Srong-Tsang-Gompo. After this period, the region was divided into many petty polities and the centre of political and social activity shifted to the Katyur valley with its nerve centre at the present day Baijnath which is identified with Kārttikeyapura, the capital of the Katyuri kingdom. Basantanadeva the founder of the Katyuri dynasty was probably a feudatory of the Paurava-Varmans and became an independent ruler on the decline of the dynasty.

The administrative set-up, which the Katyuris inherited from the Paurava-Varmans, became more elaborate during their rule. This development was as much the result of a more intensified interaction between the plains and the hill areas as of the internal dynamics of the local
polity. We find that a number of official designations having their parallels elsewhere appear for the first time in the Katyuri records in this region. The organisation of military units became more elaborate due to extension of the territory. Some terms which are applied to feudatories in eastern and central India during this period make their appearance in this region too, showing the rise of an intermediate class wielding political power.

The early historical economy of the region was characterized by a sort of market system having a fairly developed coinage system and trading networks. Uttarakhanda seems to have been connected with the great trunk route through many feeder routes. The main items of trade were minerals; such as copper, lead, gold, slate, iron and some forest products like timber, guggula, musk, etc. For intra-regional communication there were two type of main routes, first, the one along the banks of major river systems traversed by the pilgrims and second, the routes followed by the pastoral nomadic communities transhuming during seasonal migrations. It was through this system of trade that Uttarakhanda was integrated into the economic and political system of the north and north-west India. The trade and the profit accruing therefrom sustained the tribal oligarchy of the Kuryindas. After the third century A.D. when the long-distance trade declined the urban centres of Uttarakhanda also declined and it that only petty trade of a local nature continued.

The early medieval economy of the region was, mainly a land-grant economy. By the fifth century A.D., land-grants began to be made in this region. Agrahara settlements were created and agricultural land, villages and artisanal work places began to be granted to the temples. Although evidence of grants of land to the individual brähmanas or to their communities are not met with but the fact that the brähmanas were landowners is alluded to in the inscriptions. In the grants of the Paurava-
Varmans settled villages were granted. But no administrative rights were transferred to the donees as yet. This practice was started by the Katyuris. We also find that landed property had become a saleable item in the sixth century A.D.

The grant of cultivable plots and villages to temples in perpetuity transformed the temples and their brāhmaṇa managers into landlords. The creation of agrahāras resulted in breaking the tribal pattern of ownership of land and creation of private property. The gift of wasteland shows that the grants were instrumental in bringing fresh areas under cultivation. Creation of agrahāras led to the spread of improved methods of agriculture, expansion of agrarian space, and a stratified society.

The economy of the period ranging from the eighth to the thirteenth centuries was essentially a continuation of the process that started during the fourth-fifth centuries A.D. but it shows greater development and may be described as feudal economy. The parihāras, i.e., tax exemptions, were introduced and some administrative rights were also transferred. The villages were donated along with pasture land, trees, gardens, springs and cascades. This shows that pasture land which was earlier under common ownership now belonged to the donees, infringing upon communal rights. However, there are clear indications in the Katuyri grants which show that much of the land was still held communally. Thus, tribal norms were not completely eroded and we have prevalence of communal property in land along with individual property rights. Nevertheless, grants provide evidence of deliberate infringement of communal rights by royal authorities.

The society of early medieval Uttarākhaṇḍa was predominantly tribal with some infiltration of brahmanical elements. The brahmanical texts of the early medieval period view the people of Uttarākhaṇḍa as
According to these sources the Kirātas, Bhils, Bhadras, Taṅgaṇas, Khaṇas and Bhotias were the main ethnic groups living in this region. Out of these, the Khaṇas were numerically the largest group. They were exposed to contact with the people of the plains and established an oligarchical state or gaṇarājya in which the ruling gaṇa was distinguished from the commoners. However, the categories of social stratification do not seem to have been multilayered and there was still close interaction among the rulers and commoners.

The Khaṇas have been described as mleccha, vṛāyya kṣatriya, kṣatriya-gaṇa etc. all pointing to their lowly status in the brahmanical varṇa system. The origin myth of the Khaṇa and Kirāla tribes also emphasize their lowly status. A few myths in which Khaṇa women figure as brides of brāhmaṇas or outsiders may be symbolic of the assimilation process of the Khaṇas through hypergamous unions.

Buddhism appears to have been popular with the ruling elite of the gaṇarājyas in the centuries preceding the Christian era. Brāhmaṇa presence in this region is noticeable from the first century A.D. onwards as Sanskrit began to be used in official records. In the third century A.D. we have evidence of the performance of Aśvamedha sacrifices. The Brāhmaṇa population increased through immigration and also by the absorption of tribal priestly lineages into the brāhmaṇa varṇa. They emerge as a powerful and influential class due to patronage of the ruling families and creation of agrahāras. However the stratification on varṇa lines could not take deep root in this region at least during the period of our study. Some of the practices adopted by the ruling house of the Paurava-Varmans may be explained with reference to the concept of brahma-kṣatra. Since the trade was carried out by a distinct tribal community called Bhotias, we do not
find any evidence of a vaisya community in this region. The Khasā peasant population was generally given the sudra status.

Although, available documentary evidence suggests that patriarchy was a well established norm, anthropological studies have shown that Khaṣa society was originally matrilineal and it changed over to patriarchal customs under the influence of Brahmanic cultural traditions. However, brahmanization of this region has been a slow process and vestiges of old practices can still be found amongst many communities. Thus, the Khaṣas of Jaunsar, Bawar, Rawain and Jaunpur, and the Bhotias of eastern region practise polyandry which is against brahmanical rules. We have identified three subregions of the area depending on the extent of Brahmanic influence in them. Thus, in Almora, Nainital and Southern parts of Pithoragarh and Garhwal, which forms the core of this outlying region, brahmanical institutions are well established. Most of the early medieval temples belong to this region, and this region saw the rise of ruling dynasties following brahmanical religion. The second sub-region is the periphery consisting of Rawian, Jaunpur, Jaunsar and Bawar where fraternal polyandry is an accepted practice. Here village exogamy is practised. The third segment consists of outlying regions still dominated by tribals, such as Bhotias. However, now patriarchy is the general norm everywhere. Some social institutions such as sautiya bant and mama-jholi seem to be survivals of earlier matrilineal traditions. The community of Nayaks continue to practise an archaic tradition looked upon as prostitution by the brahmanical peoples. The family organisation of the Nayaks is matrilineal, matrilocal and matripotestal and on this basis we have argued that the social institutions of the Nayaks represent the earliest forms among the Khaṣas of this region.
Buddhism was the earliest religion to penetrate the region and was adopted by the early Kuṇinda rulers. However later Kuṇinda rulers and the Paurava-Varmans and Katyuri kings were patrons of Śaivism. Many stūpas and icons of the Buddha have been found in the region. Hieun Tsang noticed the existence of many Buddhist monasteries and Buddhists following Mahāyāna sect. However, Buddhism does not seem to have been a strong force in Uttarākhaṇḍa. Śaṅkarācārya has been credited with the disappearance of Buddhism from this region. But this appears to be a later tradition invented by the Śaivas. The decline of Buddhism in this region synchronizes with its decline in other part of India when separate identity of the followers of Buddha was lost through his assimilation into the cult of Viṣṇu.

Vaiṣṇavism in Uttarākhaṇḍa revolves around the cult of Badarāṁātha, mainly associated with Nara-Nārāyaṇa legend. In the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas Badarikāśrama is enumerated among the famous āśīs. However, the idol placed in the Badarāṁātha temple is identified as that of the Buddha and suggests the earlier association of the place with Buddhism. Although Śaivism was the most popular religion in Uttarākhaṇḍa temples of Viṣṇu were also constructed. Lands were also donated to Vaiṣṇavas. Subhikṣāraṇadeva was the only Katyuri king who claimed to be a great devotee of Viṣṇu and from his times Badarikāśrama seems to have gained prominence.

The importance of Śaivism can be gleaned from the fact that we find a large number of temples of Śiva and his associate deities. Starting from the early historical period Śaivism played an important role in integrating tribal peoples in one cultural framework. The Paurava-Varmans and the Katyuris were all predominantly Śaivas. Our study shows that the influence of Śaivism spread in Uttarākhaṇḍa from the time of the Guptas and
culminated in increased construction activity during the Katyuri period.
The cult of Kedāra acquired a prominence which transcended its regional character. We have tried to show that Kedāranatha was originally a tribal deity, who was subsequently assimilated into the cult of Śiva. Its great importance and fame may be gauged from the fact that in the tenth century a Kedār temple was established at Belgave in Karnataka which came to be known as Dakṣiṇa - Kedāresvara.

Another important deity with a cult was the Nandādevī. Her cult was well established in the eighth century. The Katyuri kings were devotees of Nandā-bhagavati, a goddess of the Śaiva pantheon generally identified with Pārvatī and Durgā. Most of the tribal female deities were assimilated in the cult of Nandā. A number of temples dedicated to her and her different forms are found in the region. In the early - medieval period with the growth of Tantric cults in India, Gaṅgādvara, Kedāra, and Badarī became important cult centres.