Introduction

A survey of origins and development of English ballads in Scotland and Dogri ballads of the Jammu region reveals that these ballads mostly belong to fourteenth century and onwards. This study is comparative, it will discuss the common characteristics of this form of poetry especially the common thematic patterns and similar historical backgrounds. The problem of ballad origins has occupied the attention of folklorists and balladists from the beginning of the ballad studies. Much confusion about the matter of origin comes from the failure of the first scholars, Herder, Grimm and Gummere, in not making a clear distinction between the ballad and folk song in general. They saw the ballad as continuing tradition from the primitive times and consequently applied to the ballad, conclusions arrived at from the study of primitive folk songs in general. Ballads were composed by the folk under the direction of a patron who brought the necessary discipline into the composition and who functioned as an organizer. James Reeves writes:

All poetry of a civilized community can be divided into two major categories - anonymous poems and poems written by individuals.

For hundreds of years before the beginnings of poetry written by individuals whose names are known, there was in existence a vast oral culture and a body of poems handed
down from one generation to another by word of mouth only. We may call this ballad literature. The authors of ballads were not remembered, and we can only conjecture who they were. This ballad tradition continued side by side with the more literary tradition, right on into the nineteenth century, and it has existed wherever there have been considerable bodies of people to whom reading came with difficulty or not at all. (47)

In the past, people sang lively little tunes and danced to them. They called these songs ballads. During the Middle Ages in Europe, men known as “troubadours” used to make up verses about all manners of things-battles, weddings, shipwrecks and tales of people’s lives and sing to them to entertain the people. These songs were so interesting that people found that they would rather listen than dance and after a while, the word ballad, no longer meant a dance, but a song that told a story. In the early middle ages, when very few people could read and write, ballads were important as a means of remembering stories and even history. It is much easier to remember the words and music in a song than to remember a story.

Mathew Hodgart broadly defines ballad as “a song that comments on life by telling a story in a popular style” (II). It is a form of verse, often a narrative set to music. Ballads derive from the medieval French
chanson balladee or ballade, which were originally “dancing songs”. Ballads were particularly characteristic of the popular poetry and song of the British Isles from the later medieval period until the 19th century and used extensively across Europe and later the Americas, Australia and North Africa. Many ballads were written and sold as single sheet broadsides. The form was often used by poets and composers from the 18th century onwards to produce lyrical ballads. In the later 19th century it took on the meaning of a slow form of popular love song and the term is now often used as synonymous with any love song, particularly the pop or rock power ballad.

The ballad derives its name from the medieval French dance songs or “ballares”. As a narrative song, its theme and function has originated from Scandinavian and Germanic traditions of storytelling. Ballads were originally composed to accompany dances. But they were not just songs, they contained a definite story. Ballads usually tell stories of battles, heroes, outlaws, or unhappy love affairs.

The tradition of singing ballads orally continued from very early period, almost in all ballad knowing countries. The Bards or minstrels sang ballads orally and made the ballads interesting by their musical instruments. They would listen to stories from the experienced old persons and would change them into a ballad by their efforts and would also add new stanzas and lines to them from time to time borrowing from
other narrations. Sometimes, they were eyewitness to happenings as they
used to accompany armies to battlefields and saw for themselves valour
and heroism of their princes and chiefs and formed ballads orally and
passed them to their descendants. Their transmission took place orally as
there was no written record at that time.

Ballads never carried the names of authors because no one knew
exactly who composed them. In the Middle Ages, few people could read
or afford books and hence, minstrels who sang or recited stories in
ballads, were very popular everywhere. Ballads were repeated by one
man to another; minstrel would learn them by listening, often adding lines
of his own. Thus, in course of time a ballad grew as a result of
contribution of several generations of a particular Bard family.

Scholars of ballads are often divided into two camps, the
‘communalists’ and the ‘individualists’. The advocates of communal
authorship argue that ballads arose by a combined communal effort and
did not have a single author. They were created collectively, or by a
group of people, with each performer having a hand in the composition
by means of a variation. On the other hand, advocates of individual
authorship assert that there was a single original author and that one
person’s work has been passed on from generation to generation, with
variations occurring as a result of faulty memory on the part of singers.
For the single author theory to be true, the single author would have had
to be an extremely talented individual, and that we would not know something about him or her, such as his or her name, is unlikely.

Most of the scholars pointed out that the ballad is certainly the product of the late Middle Ages, that it is certainly not a product of the primitive society. It is a highly artistic and rather difficult form. The music was intimately and fundamentally a part of it. Ballads were oral; the folk took them over. Through the years of singing them, the folk modified them, changed them and over the years, put their mark upon them. The mark is a distinguishing and unmistakable one.

The word ballad, when talking about Scottish song traditions is used as a general word for a song or a poem that tells a story using short verses and secondly as a specialized word for one of a group of songs that are hundreds of years old and tell dramatic stories of war, love and betrayal, trickery or strange events. Many factors have contributed to the ballad’s longevity and shaped its legacy in Scotland. The first has to do with the form itself, most observable in ballads that have been transmitted primarily through oral tradition over generations, many of which bear evidence of their medieval origins. This type of ballad is most commonly defined as a narrative song, that is, a song that tells a story. Scottish ballad stories are dramatic in nature, centering on moments of intense conflicts and marked by violence, ranging over themes such as murder, fatal consequences, encounters and treachery. For example, The sailor,
Sir Patrick Spens in the ballad “Sir Patrick Spens” mourns his fate, and that of his men, at the king’s capricious order to sail during an unfavourable time of the year when sailing the North Sea means a probable death.

*Dictionary of Literary Terms & Literary Theory* by J.A Cuddon has classified the ballads into two basic kinds, “the folk or traditional ballad and the literary ballad. The former is anonymous and is transmitted from singer to singer by word of mouth. It thus belongs to oral tradition” (71). On the other hand, a literary ballad is not anonymous. It is written down by a poet who composes it. A third kind of ballad called the popular ballad is also distinguished but it is similar to the traditional or folk ballad. It is associated with semiliterate or literate urban rather than rural communities.

With regard to the English ballads, this thesis will focus on the ballads collected by Sir Walter Scott in his book *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802-03) Scott divided the contents of the book into three categories- Historical Ballads, Romantic Ballads and Imitations of the Ancient Ballad. This thesis will make an attempt to study the historical ballads collected by Sir Walter Scott in Vol. I and Vol. II of *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*. The historical ballads narrate events, which we know to have actually taken place. Such ballads were early current upon the Anglo-Scottish border, which had a long tradition of
balladry, such that a whole group of songs existed that are often called ‘Border Ballads’. A.L Lloyd said of the ballads:

The bare rolling stretch of country from the north Tyne and Cheviots to the Scottish southern uplands was for a long time the territory of the men who spoke English but had the outlook of Afghan tribesmen; they prized a poem almost as much as plunder, and produced such an impressive assembly of local narrative songs that some people used to label all our greater folk poems as ‘Border ballads’. (150)

These ballads of the Scottish border were famous for their emotive power. The Border ballads are dramatic in content. For subject matter, they are ripe with the soaring themes of kinship, old battles, cross border raids, and the supernatural. Ballads like “Sir Patrick Spens”, “Auld Maitland”, “Jamie Tefler of the Fair Dodhead”, “The Sang of Outlaw Murray” are few examples of historical ballads.

William Montgomerie writes:

The three balladists of greatest historical significance among English speaking people are Bishop Percy, Sir Walter Scott, and Professor F.J Child. All three were editors basing their printed work primarily on ballad manuscripts. Percy and
Child did no field work in oral tradition, and the case of Scott needs to be reconsidered. (158)

Compared with his predecessors, Sir Walter Scott was a conscientious collector. But he probably patched up many ballads with lines of his own. Sir Walter Scott has been criticized in much of his writing for depicting an overly romantic and even mythological picture of Scotland’s history when he published Border Ballads, he certainly did not hesitate to edit and ‘improve’ them, but he did not invent the romantic reiver heroes; these figures already existed in the ballads. However, Scott certainly did nothing to diminish the myth of the reiver as a hero who fought to a code of honour, avoided unnecessary bloodshed and was decent at heart. The reality was often different.

In the Border Ballads, Sir Walter Scott adopts a distinctly patriotic tone and emphasizes the enmity between the Scottish and English borderers. However, in reality, nationality was of little importance to the inhabitants of the Marches. Loyalty to other borderers superseded any loyalty to either England or Scotland. The disregard for nationality in preference to kinship was seen as a problem by both England and Scotland. In perpetuating the myth of the reiver hero, Sir Walter Scott was not altering the spirit of the existing Ballads. However, in emphasizing the national rivalry along the Border, he was imposing his
own ‘cultural patriotism’ on history. It was at this time that ‘The Borders’ came to mean the Scottish Borders rather than the Marches and it is to Scott that much of the popular perception of the romantic past of the Borders is owed.

Scott was first introduced to the Border ballads during his visits to his grandfather’s farm near Kelso. In 1773, the young Walter became ill with what was probably polio, and was sent to his grandfather’s farm to recuperate. The illness severely affected Walter’s left leg, and he was forced to spend much of his time indoors, where he listened to tales of the Borders told to him by his grandfather and aunt. As an adult he retained his interest, and from the late 18th century he collected ballads upon his trips to the Borders, publishing *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* in 1802.

As with many other collectors, Scott was not averse to working on the original pieces. Stanzas were added, rhymes and rhythms reinstated or altered versions melded and so on. He gives information on his editorial constructions throughout the text of the *Minstrelsy*, noting if he was dealing with mangled versions; if, from historic documentation, names seemed to have been altered, if he set out verses in a more logical narrative sequence and so on.
Oral literature belonging to different countries may appear different at the surface level but its implications are the same. Although it belongs to different geographical regions, yet the inherent spirit is universal.

In India, the ballad form *Raso* was the form of poetry during the medieval period. During this time, men called *bhat* or *bhutt* travelled around the countryside playing their harps and singing ballads in Castles and villages. They sang the traditional folk ballads and also composed new songs for their listeners. Important events such as a great victory or the coronation of a king were described in the ballad form. This type of composition appears to have arisen spontaneously in almost all literatures, representing one of the early stages in the evolution of poetic art. Its origin is much in dispute, but it seems to have begun, as its name implies as a song intended to accompany a dance. Hence, the term was applied to a spirited poem, and then to a poem in which a popular story was vividly and simply told. It originally received its present name and shape in Jammu probably during fourteenth or fifteenth centuries.

Like other literatures, in Dogri too, poetry came to be written earlier than prose. Hence, poems were composed and sung much earlier than prose, even before any written form of literature came into existence. A long, continuous and rich tradition of oral literature existed as an integral part of Dogra community’s day-to-day life. For centuries, ‘Jogis’, ‘Gardis’ and ‘Dreses’ have been singing ballads called *Lok Gatha* which
exists in two forms:- ‘Bars’ and ‘Karaks’ They narrate the bravery and sacrifice of great sons of the Duggar region and express its history, experiences, values, beliefs, ideas, traditions, legends and mythology. Most of the great heroes of these ballads have occupied the minds of the local population. ‘Karaks’ are the ballads with religious themes. They are primarily the narratives connected with ‘Brahmanical’ gods and goddesses, village deities and those of family deities. They may be called eulogistic commemorations of noble-minded persons who command reverence of the people for their edifying influence on them. The intensify the human qualities like sense of justice, piety, religious and moral fervor.

The second form of ballads prevalent in the region is Bar. Bar is the corruption of Hindi term Bir, which means brave or chivalrous. Since these ballads deal with the theme of prowess and adventure, they are called ‘Bars’ or the ballads of heroism. They are usually more stirring than ‘Karaks’ because they appeal to the feelings of mystery and romance which predominate over all other feelings in a common man. These ballads are woven around the valour of the characters which grips the heart and arouses a feeling of hero-worship.

Ballads became so popular among Dogra Community that they gave rise to a new class of ballad singers called Jogi Gardi or Dres. They used to recite the ballads at social gatherings, festivals and at the royal
courts. They handed down the ritual of minstrelsy from generation to generation. Thus, ballad poetry makes a direct appeal to all the classes of readers and listeners from the Middle Ages to our own day.

With regard to Dogri ballads, this thesis will focus on historical ballads or ‘Bars’ and the ballads of folk or family Deities (‘Karaks’). These ballads were not compiled by a single person but it was a joint labour on personal as well as institutional level. The organizations like the Dogri Sanstha and Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages played an important part in the compilation of Dogri ballads.

Oral tradition is important in all societies, despite the reliance of some cultures on written records and accounts. These traditions account for the way things are and often the way they should be, and assist people in educating the young and teaching important lessons about the past and about life. Because many oral traditions are highly structured and are told faithfully without alterations, they can be as reliable as other non-oral ways of recording and passing on experiences. While oral literature can vary from teller to teller, variations are also open to contradiction in the same way that written accounts are. In the same way the force of oral tradition can continue through generations although small details in the telling may change. Jan Vansina defines oral traditions as, “Verbal messages which are reported statements from the past beyond the present generation. The definition specifies that the message must be oral
statements spoken, sung, or called out on musical instruments only” (27). He further states that, “There must be transmission by word of mouth over at least a generation” (28).

The historical messages contained within the ballads are passed on from generation to generation. This means that all the successive historical messages are lost except the last one which is recorded by the historian or the folklorist.

This thesis will attempt to bring out the invisible context of the heroic English and Dogri ballads. All available scholarship in English is deficient in this regard. Though Dogri ballads invite a comparison with the ballads written in English of the British Isles both in technique as well as their impact on society, yet it is also a fact that if ballads are narrative poems telling the story of development and growth of societies from the feudal ages to the point of time in history when they were collected from the oral form of literature and printed, these ballads only make visible the intensity of feeling, economy and directness of expression in a dramatic style which has won the admiration of scholars and ordinary readers for centuries.

The spirit of literature is one but it finds different expressions in different places. It is cast in the mould with which the people present it— the mould of their customs and emotions. It speaks their language,
represents their customs, suffers in their grief and rejoices in their festivities. Thus, a work of literature, apart from possessing form and structure, also exists in time, space, history and society. To appeal to audience, a literary work must speak of concerns that readers recognize as relevant to their own lives. It must have a social dimension. In addition, a literary work always bears the imprint of the historical moment in which it was written. The ballads in English and Dogri selected for this research project are about feudal ideals, court intrigues and written at a time when these things meant a lot to the audience. The feudal system was held together by bonds of fealty and duty; serfs were bound to lords and could not seek work elsewhere. But once trade developed, work became available in towns and serfs could flee the land and become wage labourers for guilds. According to the Marxist theory of history, feudalism contained within it a contradiction that allowed it to evolve into capitalism. The feudal economy which was organized around agricultural labour by serfs for lords generated surplus grain / stock that allowed trade to develop. The new class of traders required new rules of social relationship (contract as opposed to fealty). Their trading activity made it necessary for them to live in towns where the feudal lords could not control them or interfere with them. The development of towns and the growing power of the merchant class allowed the development of new political forms (law, constitutions and republic) according to the interests
of the merchant class. In conjunction with the economic might of the merchant class such new political forms meant the demise of feudalism.

This thesis will situate the English and Dogri ballads at the juncture between the old feudal forms and the emerging mercantile economy or capitalist form of society in Jammu and British Isles. Though the region of Jammu does not totally compare with British Isles, yet the contradictions of the political system are apparent in the ballads. Both Jammu and England underwent social and economic upheaval. In England, monarchy was overthrown in 1649. It is a historical fact that in Jammu, the Rajput warrior Gulab Singh, by entering into a contract with Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Lahore established the Dogra rule in 1822. The rule of Gulab Singh came not out of feudal fealty of Maharaja Ranjit Singh but as a part of the social /political contract in which the gift of goods and human resources to Ranjit Singh was annually submitted. The heroic ballads of “Bawa Jitto”, “Mian Deedo”, “Data Ranpat” and others give a panoramic view of the feudal society of Jammu region just as the Scottish ballads present the British feudal structure with its inherent contradictions.

The role that the minstrelsy played in the creation of these ballads is of great significance both in Dogri as well as English literature. Minstrels were the professional poets, employed by a patron, such as a monarch or nobleman, to commemorate the patron’s ancestors and to
praise the patron’s own activities. They sang the songs recalling the tribal warriors’ deeds of bravery as well as the genealogies and family history of the ruling strata. They were blessed with artistic qualities like composing, singing and playing music.

The singers could not read and although they had wonderful memories, they did not aim at reproducing a text exactly, but at simply telling the old stories in the old way. No two versions of the ballad were ever exactly alike, and every singer was both a transmitter of tradition and an original composer. In the feudal social structure the minstrel and the religious priests had an allotted place in the social ladder. The minstrel was patronized by the feudal lord / chieftain or king and the ballads happened to be songs sung in praise and glory of the patron deity, lord or king. A preliminary research into this subject reveals that the ballads do not narrate the reality about the patron. There are silences and absences in the texts of these poems which can be filled up through a proper study of the historical background of the feudal times as well as through a survey of the sociological development of the cultures represented by this form of poetry.

‘History’ is an attempt to represent the past in a truthful way and make it useful for the society. History is true. In contrast, Folklore is a pack of damned lies. History is important; momentous events are ‘historic’ while folklore is marginal, fetching but trivial. Folk history is
an oxymoron: a false truth, may be false, may be only irrelevant. Folk history is absurd because there is no meaningful relation between folk history and a historian’s chronicle of facts. But in contrast, Jan Vansina states:

Oral traditions have a part to play in the reconstruction of the past. The importance of this part varies according to place and time. It is a part similar to that played by written sources because both are messages from the past to the present, and messages are key elements in historical reconstruction… Wherever oral traditions are extant they remain an indispensable source for reconstruction. They correct other perspectives just as much as other perspectives correct them.

(199)

A historian must remain truthful to the past and useful to the society. But all historical traditions contain charlatans who pretended to act responsibly to advance the cause of the self. Minstrels are the true examples of such charlatans. Minstrels were employed and patronized by the royal chiefs, lords etc. Hence they could not compose anything that went against the dignity of these patrons. They constructed ‘events’ in the ballads only to appreciate the deeds of the lords and by doing so they tried to justify even their false acts. Thus, they composed the ballads only to legitimimize their patron’s power and dominance over their subjects.
In medieval Gaelic and Welsh society, bards (Scottish and Irish Gaelic) would compose a satire if the lord who employed him failed to pay the promised amount. This proves that the bards or minstrels behaved in a selfish way. They did not act as responsible composers by narrating the truth about the patron. They distorted history only to gain rewards. They felt no responsibility towards society. In such circumstances the power of the patron became an agent of manipulating events. It dictated him what to include in the composition and what to exclude. Only those incidents which favoured the powerful lords were included and the incidents which went against them were excluded from the text.

The line of argument will be developed by drawing in theoretical concepts of Michel Foucault and George Lukacs with reference to history as discourse and historical realism respectively.

The concept of Discourse as delineated by Michel Foucault when applied to the reading of history as represented in the ballads, reveals the role of power in constructing the narrative of these ballads. He defines discourse not only as:

…groups of signs (signifying elements referring to contents or representations) but as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak. Of course, discourses are composed of signs, but what they do is more than use these
signs to designate things. It is this *more* that renders them irreducible to the language (*langue*) and to speech. It is this ‘more’ that we must reveal and describe. (49) (emphasis original).

Foucault traces the role of discourse in wider social processes of legitimating power, emphasizing the construction of current truths, how they are maintained and what power relations they carry with them. He later theorized that discourse is a medium through which power relations produce speaking subjects. Discourse joins power and knowledge, and its power follows from our causal acceptance of the reality with which we are presented. He argued that power and knowledge are inter-related. Discourse is created and perpetuated by those who have the power and means of communication. The ballads of “Mian Deedo” in Dogri and “Johnie Armstrang” in English truly represent the role of power. Both the folk heroes have been eulogized by the minstrel but the pressure of power of the king can be easily discovered. Hence, power is always present and can both produce and constrain the truth. According to Foucault, truth, morality and meaning are created through discourse. Every age has a dominant group of discursive elements that people live in unconsciously. Thus, in a work of literature ‘truth’ is built to justify the power.

Foucault very persuasively explains how power works and why some people perform very irrational acts. Within Foucault’s world view
there is no absolute morality. Morality is created through exercise of power. Mian Deedo is called a bandit, an outlaw and Johnie Armstrong is presented as a ‘traitor’. Power controls the process of composition by dictating what can be spoken of, where and when one may speak and who may speak. In his view, knowledge is inextricably connected with power.

George Lukacs developed his theory of historical realism in his book *The Historical Novel* (1962). His perception is grounded in his conception of totality in art. He lays emphasis on realism. In his view, a literary work ought to reveal underlying patterns in the social order and provide a sense of wholeness of existence with all its inherent contradictions, conflicts and tensions. Realism was not a question of a text’s ability to provide a surface authenticity or verisimilitude in terms of detailed physical description but rather to what extent the sense of underlying historical relations were depicted. Thus, he commented on composers / writers who were preoccupied with form, technique and literary innovation. He emphasizes the process of legitimating feudal societies which contributes “to eradicate from history the greatest historical events of the epoch,” (26). He further states:

…history is a silent, imperceptible, natural, “organic” growth, that is, a development of society which is basically stagnation, which alters nothing in the time-honoured, legitimate institutions of the society and above all, alters
nothing consciously. Man’s activity in history is ruled out completely. (26)

With the help of these two critical thoughts, this thesis will discover the social development of the feudal ages which comprise of ceaseless class struggles, revolutions, successful or abortive uprisings. The ballads of both the origins will be analysed in totality and the underlying role of discourse and realism will be made visible.

The review of literature is in two parts: available critical material on ballads in English and available critical work on Dogri ballads.

The traditional, classical or popular ballad has been seen as originating with the wandering minstrels of late medieval Europe. From the end of the fifteenth century, there are printed ballads that suggest a rich tradition of popular music. In England the songs of the people were very early printed in the shape of broadsheets, such as were sold in Shakespeare’s time “stall copies”, as Scott styles them. In the time of Charles II, these broadsheets were eagerly collected by the famous Mr. Pepys, of the Diary, and by lord Dorset. *Samuel Pepys Ballads* at the English Ballad Archive (1500-1800) features facsimile images of 1,857 ballads at the Pepys’ Library, Magdalene College, Cambridge, with transcriptions, background essays and notes. As the printing of broadsides and ballads became easy, their selling among common people became
popular. But during the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the surviving sheets were sought after by collectors. The most early collections were made by Ambrose Philips in *A Collection of Old Ballads*, (1723-25) and Allan Ramsay in his two publications, *The Evergreen*, (1724) and *The Tea-Table Miscellany*, (1724). By the middle of the eighteenth century, Thomas Percy, Bishop of Dromore was able to publish a considerable volume of anonymous ballad literature in his book *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, 5 Vols. (1765). He was the wellspring of ballad collecting and ballad scholarship in England. In 1769, David Herd published his *Ancient and Modern Scottish Songs, Heroic Ballads, & C.*, a work which was enlarged in two volumes in 1776. He was a most successful and faithful collector who avoided tampering with his collections. In 1777, appeared the first edition of Evan’s *Old Ballads, Historical and Narrative*, in two volumes. Pinkerton published his *Scottish Tragic Ballads*, (1781), followed by *Select Scottish Ballads*, (1783). In 1783 Ritson commenced the publication of that long series of volumes which is of such inestimable value to the literary antiquary, with *A Selected Collection of English Songs. The Bishopric Garland, or Durham Minstrel*, followed, in 1784; *The Yorkshire Garland*, in 1788; the *Pieces of Ancient Popular Poetry*, in 1791; *Ancient Songs and Ballads from the reign of Henry II to the Revolution*, in 1787; *The Northumberland Garland*, in 1793; *Scottish Songs*, in 1794; and Robin
Hood, in 1795. James Johnson’s *The Scots Musical Museum*, (1787), was a collection of many new songs.

In 1801, *Scottish Poems of the XVIth century* edited by J.G Dalzell was published in Edinburgh. In 1802, Sir Walter Scott published the first two volumes of *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*. Scott’s miscellanea of indices, essays, notes and glossaries provide an authoritative framework to the *Minstrelsy* ballads. In 1806, Robert Jamieson who published his *Popular Ballads and Songs, from Tradition, Manuscripts and scarce editions* worked simultaneously with Scott. John Finlay of Glasgow published in 1808 his *Scottish Historical and Romantic Ballads*, a collection of twenty-six ballads. John Gilchrist’s *Collection of Ancient and Modern Scottish Ballads, Tales and Songs*, (1815), was compiled from former books. In 1822 David Laing published *Select Remains of the Ancient Popular Poetry of Scotland*. The year 1824 was marked by the publication of volumes, C.K Sharpe’s *A Ballad Book* and James Maidment’s *A North Countrie Garland*. J.H Discon, in 1845 entitled his work *Scottish Traditional Versions of Ancient Ballads* based on collection of some more unpublished compositions. In 1826, Allan Cunningham published *The Songs of Scotland*. William Motherwell’s *Minstrelsy, Ancient and Modern*, (1827), is a work which contains the best account of ballad literature. In 1829, Robert Chambers published his collection of *Scottish Ballads*, which contains eighty pieces including modern ballads.
or imitations. Peter Cunningham published *The Songs of England and Scotland*, in 1835, and Thomas Wright printed *The Political Songs of England from the reign of John to that of Edward II.* in 1839. In 1840, the Percy society was founded in honour of Bishop Percy. It continued to print some old songs and collections of old ballads until 1852. William Chappell published *Collection of National English Airs, consisting of Ancient Song, Ballad, and Dance Tunes*, (1840), which was re-arranged and enlarged and issued in 1855 as *Popular Music of the Olden Time.* In 1844 Alexander Whitelaw published *The Book of Scottish Ballads and The Book of Scottish Song.* Frederic Sheldon’s *Minstrelsy of the English Border*, (1847), is a work of little value. Dr. Rimbault printed in 1850, the valuable *Musical Illustrations of Bishop Percy’s Reliques.* In 1858 William Edmondstoune Aytoun published his *Ballads of Scotland,* a collection of thirty-nine ballads, with short introductions. Another Book entitled *The Bagford Ballads*, (1878), was a collection of ballads made by John Bagford for Robert Hartley, I Earl of Oxford. This collection was donated to the British Museum upon his death and is now known as the Harleian Collection. By the end of the nineteenth century, a considerable body of published ballads was in existence and on these, the American scholar, Francis James Child of Harvard based his monumental edition of ballads titled *English and Scottish Popular Ballads,* in five volumes, (1882-98).

Dogri has had a long, continuous and rich tradition of oral literature, which cannot be fixed in any time. It has always been there as an integral part of the Dogra Community life, providing it with a creative medium of self-expression and enshrining its history and experiences. Dogri folk literature, especially the Dogri ballads have fulfilled the functions of a living, vibrant literature for a vast majority of Dogras for many generations. Some of it may have been lost in the flux of time but some of it has been collected and documented.

It contrast to the English ballads, the Dogri ballads that are available in printed form constitute only a small fraction of the rich ballad tradition. The work of collecting and preserving Dogri folk literature has been done at institutional as well as individual level. Among the organizations, the roles of Dogri Sanstha, Jammu followed by Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages and the Sahitya Academy are very crucial. The other organizations which have also done
some work in this field are the Dogra Mandal, Jammu; Dogra Research Institute, Jammu; Dogra Mandal, New Delhi; Bandralta Sahitya Mandal, Ramnagar; Bhadroli Sanstha, Bhaderwah and Hillman’s Cultural Centre, Bhaderwah. The government or autonomous agencies in addition to Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages include Sahitya Academy, New Delhi; Jammu University, Information Department of Jammu and Kashmir, Radio Kashmir Jammu and Doordarshan. In addition collections have been brought out and some analytical studies have been made by individual authors.

In 1954, Dogra Mandal, Jammu published a small booklet *Amar Katha* which describes the life of the peasant-saint of Duggar, Bawa Jitto. Dogri Sanstha took up the pioneering work of collecting and publishing Dogri folktales and folksongs as well as Dogri proverbs and idioms. Dogra Mandal, Delhi started the first journal of Dogri *Nami Chetna* in collaboration with the Dogri Sanstha, Jammu. Publication of the journal was later taken over by the Dogri Sanstha, Jammu and it became its quarterly publication. Since then, Dogri Sanstha has been publishing off and on, articles, books and special issues of its quarterly *Nami Chetna* concerning Dogri folk songs, folk ballads and folk-tales and other material pertaining to folk-arts.

The Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (established in 1950’s) with the active support of the members of the
Dogri Sanstha, complemented and expanded the activities undertaken by the Dogri Sanstha with its much larger resources. In 1959, five selections of Dogri poetry, a quarterly journal *Sheeraza* (Dogri), an annual literary digest *Sarha Sahitya* and a large number of publications, including collections of Dogri writing, Dogri folksongs, folktales and translations into Dogri from other languages like Hindi, Bengali etc. were brought out. Among individuals who have done some specialized work, the major are Prof. Lakshmi Narain and Sansar Chand who have written *An Introduction to Dogra Folk Literature and Pahari Art* in 1965. This book contributes towards the study of folk literature, culture and history of *Duggar* region. In 1965-66 the Academy published a collection of Dogri folk ballads under the title *Dogri Lok Geet (Karakan-Baran) Vol.II.* edited by Neelamber Dev Sharma and Kehari Singh ‘Madhukar’. The Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages which stepped in with a planned publication of Dogri orature had published seven collections of Dogri folksongs and four of Dogri folktales by 1970.

The role of Prof. Ramnath Shastri in the field of Dogri literature in the formative years is immemorial. He gave a new direction to Dogri literary renaissance movement. His research papers dealt with subjects like Bawa Jitto, a folk hero; Gugga, a legendary figure; history of *Duggar* and his essays covered subjects like different aspects of Dogri life, art, culture, language and literature. He edited Dogri Sanstha’s quarterly

Om Goswami’s work as an editor was of very high order. He edited some issues of *Nami Chetna*, the quarterly journal of Dogri Sanstha. Later on, he was appointed as the editor (Dogri) in the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and languages. He edited from 1975 onwards several issues of *Sheeraza* (Dogri) and *Sarha Sahitya*, collections of Dogri folksongs and folktales. The 1976 edition of *Sarha Sahitya: A Detailed Study of Dogri Folk Song* edited by Om Goswami contains some essays on Dogri folk ballads. Shivnath has written *History of Dogri Literature, 1976*, published by Sahitya Academy, New Delhi. He has written a chapter on Dogri folk literature in this book besides writing stray articles on the same subject.

In 1977, Dogri Sanstha published a collection of local ballads popular in Marh block titled *Marh Block De Shaheed*, compiled and edited by Shri Surender Pal Gandalgal. The 1979 edition of *Sarha Sahitya* edited by Om Goswami was titled *Dogri Lok Gatha: Ik Adhyayan (A Study of Dogri Folk Ballads)*. It was totally devoted to the study of Dogri folk ballads. The 1980 edition of *Sarha Sahitya Special* titled *Dogri Lok Sahitya Vigyan*, again edited by Om Goswami devotes two chapters to the study of Dogri ballads.
Prof. Ashok Jerath made a memorable contribution to the compilation of some important and extinct Dogri ballads which he collected from a beggar turned Dres (minstrel) named Peeran Ditta and collected them in his book *Namian Dogri Baran- Dres Gathan* published by the Dogri Sanstha in 1980. A more ambitious effort towards the survey of Dogri folklore was seen in the publication of *Nami Parakh Nami Khoj*, a collection of essays edited by Ramnath Shastri and Shiv Ram ‘Deep’ by the Dogri Sanstha in 1980. The articles deal with subjects like folklore of *Duggar*, ‘Karaks’, ‘Bars’ and Dogri folk songs. The Dogri Sanstha published the folk legend of Gugga Chauhan entitled *Gugga Gatha*, edited by Prof. Ramnath Shastri and Shivram ‘Deep’ in 1981. The ballad is the Himachali version describing the incidents in the life of this legendary figure deified in Rajasthan, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and the Jammu and Kashmir. In 1982, Shiv ‘Nirmohi’ wrote a book in Hindi titled *Duggar Ki Lok Gathayen*. In this book he defined Dogri ballad and also discussed the different types of ballads. *Duggar De Lok Nayak* written by Prof. Ramnath Shastri and published by the Dogri Sanstha in 1990 is a masterpiece in the history of folk literature. In this book, there is complete study of the ballads of four Dogra heroes – “Bawa Jitto”, “Data Ranpat”, “Mian Deedo” and “Gugga Chauhan”. The J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages published a compilation of folk ballads titled *Dogri Lok Gathan* edited by Om Goswami in 1990.
This book contains 56 folk ballads, covering its each form, popular in Jammu region.

Nasib Singh Manhas from Dogri Department, Jammu University worked on Dogri ballads and produced a thesis entitled “Dogri Ballads-An Analytical Study” in 1993. Ms. Surashta from History Department, Jammu University also worked on Dogri ballads and produced a thesis entitled “Socio- Cultural aspects of Dogri Ballads (Jammu – Kangra Region)”.

After a survey of the available literature on ballads written in English as well as Dogri, it is found that the folklorists were interested in collecting texts. They aimed at recording minimal informant data for instance, name and age, place and the data, of recording but no attempt has been made to discover how this form of poetry which was very popular among the common folk intended to represent historical facts and characters. The available criticism in English and Dogri has made no serious efforts to study the sociological origin of the poems. The role of society and power in the ballads has not yet been discovered by scholars of English and Dogri.

The subject area of this thesis is ‘Comparative Literature’. It will attempt to make a comparative analysis of the heroic ballads written in English and Dogri. Ballads written in English and ballads written in
Dogri have been analysed separately. But so far, no attempt has been made to study the ballads in a comparative manner. This thesis will discuss the cultural coherence and contradictions arising in the ballads belonging to the two different regions. The focus will be on the study of heroic ballads in English and Dogri, and attempt will be made to locate the origin of these tales in the history of the nations as no culture can be understood without taking into account the history of that culture. This research will also discover the contrasts and similarities with regard to their themes, style, form, technique, historical background and above all bring out the silences and absences in the ballads.

‘Comparative Literature’ is a kind of world religion. The underlying suggestion is that all cultural differences disappear when the literatures of two different nations are compared. ‘Comparative Literature’ in India is directly linked to the rise of modern Indian Nationalism and native literatures have been used to assert national cultural identity. This thesis will try to contribute to and establish the identity of Dogri cultural practices.

It implies a study of literature which uses comparison as its main instrument. It enhances awareness of our own tradition and openness to works written in other countries and other languages. Comparatists are comfortable with theme and forms which may involve literary
representation of natural phenomenon and men’s reaction to them; or be interested in recurring motifs in literature and folklore or recurrent situations: the eternal triangle, the oedipal situation, or literary representation of the types – professional groupings, social classes, races etc. Thematic studies enable us to examine and contrast the spirit of different societies and epochs as well as those of individual talent. It is fascinating to see how the problems facing the groups, classes and societies become embodied in literary figures with the life and will of their own. This research hopes to meet the contemporary needs by providing the context and background from the sociological perspective. Such research will take into account History, Geography, Sociology and Culture of Jammu region along with a similar study of the British regions from where the ballads in English originate. This research is thus interdisciplinary in nature and hopes to satisfy the requirement of research in Indian Universities on regional literatures.

Both English and Dogri ballads subvert historical truth. The content of the ballad is changed to suit the governing power structure and institution of monarchy is used to legitimize the suppression of revolts by feudal chieftains. Thus, this thesis will reveal the historical truth and make the invisible visible. It will also, as D.N Jha states:

…enhance the efficacy of feudal model by undertaking a comparative and cross-cultural study of English and Indian
societies, to comprehend their shared historical experience and to examine the process of change on a wider spatial and temporal canvas. Such a perspective will certainly provide a universalist perception of human past and equally certainly, will provide an effective antidote to the fashionable studies in which social criticism floats free of any universalist theoretical ground.(30)

This topic is very much relevant today as cultural materialists are revisiting history of societies to locate the origins of the present day political uncertainty and turmoil the world is experiencing. Literature as cultural history encapsulates the visible tale as well as the invisible / visible by subverting the oral form. The ballads narrate the minstrel’s story. The minstrel may subvert the truth to legitimize the power structure of the society.