APPENDIX

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UNANTIQUATINGFOLK NARRATIVES IN THE NEW DIGITAL WORLD

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Abstract
This research paper proposes to bring folklore out from the world of antiquities and examine the ethnopreneurial aspects of the cultural representation in the context of Jhaverchand Meghani's folk narratives by drawing on the critical frameworks of orality, visuality, and performativity in the age of hypertext and digitalization.Folk narratives mirror not only the communities that produce and transmit them, but also reflect a vast spectrum of ethnicity, human thoughts and feelings. Folk literature being oral in nature traditionally surfaced in the forms of songs, but with scientific advancements, orality now perceived as Primary orality, Secondary orality and Tertiary orality (Ong) has further been transformed by media and the cutting-edge digital innovations of hypertext redefining folk literature in terms of visuality and performativity. Secondary orality in the form of written word has always been confined to the printed page and linear frameworks. However, with the advent of hypertext, and network information establishment of a database of texts on interconnected computers, commercial and capitalist tendencies initiated a paradigm shift through ethnopreneurship, opening new vistas of comprehensions and analyses of the academic, literary 'folk' along with the non-academic, non-literary, market oriented 'folk' which does not alienate the producers, but rather promotes and enhances orality, visuality and performativity redefining individual and community identity, creating a non-linear and textual-visual-digital network. This research article reflects on various perspectives, how digital media has opened new avenues of ethnopreneurship in all its varieties and has been instrumental in relocating folk literature in the age of hypertext and digitalization in context of folk narratives of Jhaverchand Meghani.
Keywords- Folk Narratives, Hypertext, Digitalization, Ethnopreneurship

Introduction
Folk narratives are no longer just a collection of words; but are now thought of as a living social phenomenon with a historical, anthropological, cultural, and technological context that can be received, expressed, passed on, recreated, developed, and performed. These narratives are no longer perceived only as written, performed, or recorded texts, but rather as a collection of images, symbols, sounds, semiotics, associationsand textures that have a semantic, pragmatic, and communicative confluences.Women dancing and singing while fetching water from wells or while performing their daily chores, workers singing songs while embroidering silk sarees or weaving carpets in cottage industries, farmers singing the songs while harvesting the crops and mothers singing lullabies to their infants represent the concept of folk engrossed in the work of everyday lives.Today's highly adapted visual generation appreciates folk mediated through YouTube,Instagram, Facebook, Amazon Prime, Twitter, Netflix and other OTT mediaplatforms. The revolution in the multi-media has brought the present generation far away from Ong's concept of primary orality evolving itself into the newfound domain of tertiary orality.

The research paper traverses at the outset through the concept of Hypertext in the digital world and has been instrumental in creating entrepreneurial opportunities in all spheres including folk literature, folk art and folk craft. The next segment of the paper discusses Ong's theory of Orality and explains how tertiary orality engages itself in creation of multiplicities of texts of folklore-performative and non-performative, creating new means of economic production.These concepts, ideas and theories are the basis of analyzing Jhaverchand Meghani's Folk narratives with an entirely new dimension and perspective.

Hypertext, Digitalization and Folk Narratives

It has been stipulated by scholars that folklore depends mainly on oral traditions and there are little margins for their recreation or change in developing society. However, when we look at the developing societies of today, we observe that, although the basic genesis of a folklore may not change but its manifestations and interpretations may see perceptible or imperceptible changes.

Tertiary Orality has changed everyaspect of all narratives with the intervention of media; producing lyrical, musical, and audio-visual impacts that are scientifically interlinked through a variety of digital platforms.Hypertext, a method of organizing information enables meaningful, non-linear access to resources that are text-oriented. Instead of using traditional computer-based databases and instructions, hypertext systems let users navigate through a collection of electronic links to access information from encyclopedias, books, magazines, journals, databases, knowledge bases, and other resources. From a technological perspective, the power of hypertext is evident as previously static information (primary orality in context of folk) is linked and cross-referenced; information can be arranged and rearrangedtheoretically in infinite ways, access barriers across traditional media can be removed andpeople can create and combine their own information with electronic data creating their own mediaversein accordance with one's own idea of pleasure and experience.
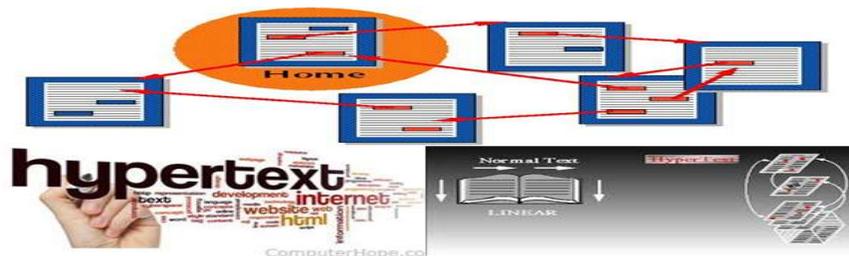

Figure 1: Hypertext-A method for organizing information that allows meaningful, non-linear access to text-oriented resources(mentioned in Works Cited)

The multiplicity of text and the multiplicities of its representation has led to the birth of electronic literature, where one text is interacting with the other using combinatory poetics. Insta poetry, kinetic and interactive poetry, interactive fiction and hyper text fictions like Robert Arellano's *Sunshine 69*, Sarah Smith's *The King of Space,* Stuart Moulthrop's *The Victory Garden,* Shelly Jackson's *My Body- A Wanderkammur, Girl Patchwork Girl* andCaitlin Fisher's *these Waves of Girls*area few examples, where primary text is mediated and transformed by digitality and multimedia into a collective network-based experience.

Folksongs of Gujarat sung and performed during Garba are digitally mediated into electronic texts, songs, performances**,** graphical representations; merchandises, artifacts, clothing, jewellery, closely interacting with each other, constantly evolving and regenerating itself into a consumerist product which Ong termed as tertiary orality. It is now obvious that thisTertiary Orality culturally abridges texts, performances and generations. The evolution of Hypertext aligned tertiary orality abridged folklore and the new globalized world of economic production.

Performativity, Orality and Folk Lore

Performativity as a concept is thus closely related to the concepts of orality and folk, where the performance is seen as something that permeates social, cultural, ideological, political, material, and spiritual worlds rather than something that is only observed as intrinsically artistic or theatrical in nature(Austin,1955). *Lok Dayro,* arenowned folk music tradition of Gujarat performed at various occasions where the performer (a folk artist) sings and narrates stories based on the works of Dulha Bhai Kag, Jhaverchand Meghani and others, is an amalgamation of lively folk and classical music accompanied by *bhajans, Prabhati, Katari* etc. *Dayro* as a folk form has evolved over the ages from being sung, performed live in the physical presence of audience (primary orality) to being printed (secondary orality) and being electronically, digitally recorded, telecasted, digicasted as an audio, a video, audio-video albums, or on various other platforms (Tertiary Orality). It is not only transcribed

locations, cultures, languages, and settings by adding new meaning, forms and experiences to the already existing genre, recreating folk narratives, adding longevity to it without making it devoid of its quintessential cultural features at the same time imparting and propagating social, moral, religious, values, constructing a sense of cultural nationalism, local, regional, national identity in the globalized world, also historiograpahing the nationitself. Textual Multiplicities of Dayro as oral, written, electronic, performative, engage and interact with each other giving us multidimensional interpretations from literary, ethnographic, anthropological, historical, cultural, philosophical, economic, entrepreneurial perspectives.

The art of the words is viewed through the prism of folk literature, which not only entices our restless souls but also serves as a mirror to society, becoming a means to validate cultural values and the history associated with them. The evolution of Indian folk literature can be characterized and defined by diversity and change in subjects, concepts, and literary forms. Folk literature, despite variations and differences, remains relevant in light of the Indian subcontinent's multi-linguistic diversity and openness to absorbing all the great aspects of any language or culture.
Orality, as a language phenomenon, has been used in a wide range of contexts, most prominently to define, in a broad sense, the frameworks of perception and consciousness seen in civilizations that do not use, or minimally uses the writing technologies. Walter J. Ong's work established the foundation for the study of orality, reminding us that, despite a written language's remarkable accomplishment and subsequent power, the vast majority of languages are never recorded, and that basic orality is permanent. Humans communicate in a variety of ways, using all of their senses, including touch, taste, smell, and, most pertinently, sight, as well as hearing.Thus, writing from the beginning enhanced orality by allowing the 'principles' or constituents of oratory to be organised into a scientific 'art,' a sequentially ordered body of explanation that showed how and why oratory achieved and could be made to achieve its various specific effects(Ong, 1982).

Orality relied on proverbs, verses, parables, idioms, metaphors, epic poetry, and stylized cultural heroes and legends to guide their decisions as a lot of energy was invested in memorizing the notions and beliefs that had to be remembered more by condensing and modifying their understanding and knowledge.The transition from oral traditions to visual experiences, interwoven with print and media discourses, can be divided into three stages: Primary Orality, Secondary Orality, and Tertiary Orality.Various folk forms of India, such as *Alha*, ethnically portraying the Bundelkhand province of Madhya Pradesh, are chanted in the admiration of Alha and Udal, who were prolific commanders of Rajput king Chandel. Assamese folklore known as *Bihugeet* is practiced by the farmers as they begin their arrangements for harvesting of their crops for soliciting good fortunes from the holy spirit and the almighty; *Magh Avadh*, a form of Assamese folklore is used to commemorate the completion of the harvest season; *Lavani* is a seductive folk style used for entertainment in Maharashtra; *Paanihari* and *Maand* are Rajasthani folk songs sung by women going to fetch water to a distant village, expressing their love and disappointment about the mundane life of their unappreciated sacrifices; *Pandavani* is a Chhattisgarh folk singing style that entails narrative discourses from the ancient Indian epic Mahabharata; *Dandiya Raas* of Gujarat is a socio-religious folk dance famously and widely performed during the Navratri festival as a portrayal of the glorious victory of righteousness over evil;*The Bauls* of West Bengal are a community of mystic minstrels from the Indian states of West Bengal, Tripura, Assam's Barak Valley, and Meghalaya who perform folk for the celebration of religious ceremonies, ritual practices and festivities using Ektara, a common musical instrument of Bauls; A traditional form of folk music from Karnataka called *Bhavegeete* captures the spirit of Hinduism in its purest form by fusing the aspects of rustic emotion, native wit, and spontaneity; A type of folk music that is believed to incorporate the most rhythmic and harmonious elements called *Bhakha* is sang by the villagers in Jammu and Kashmir, celebrating the completion of the harvest season and the folk music known as Bhuta songs of Kerala is accompanied by ferocious dancing and music, used as part of rituals to drive ghosts and evil spirits away.The diverse folklore associates itself with a particular geographical area by reminiscing about the geographical locations, its people, and their way of life, peculiarising the inherent spatiality in intrinsic and underlying temporality. The idea of storied spaces representing individuals in association with geographical

regions to study the multiplicities that chiefly depicted Primary orality is thus represented in these folk forms in the terms of their storytelling, where singing orality is referred to as thoughts and expressions unaffected by the culture of writing and print.

Figure 2: Various Folk Forms of India(mentioned in Works Cited)

Secondary Orality, on the other hand is *oral being documented*as it is extensively dependent on the use of writing and print technologies. China and Korea were the first nations where printing was conceptualized. Despite the fact that the notion of printing was originated by Eastern countries, Johann Gutenberg, a German metalworker, invented the first automated printing press in 1452. Europe revolutionized print media, but India already had a rich cultural heritage in the form of manuscripts dating back to the courts of royals over 5000 years ago.The Vedas, Shashtras, and Upanishads which were portrayed in a variety of folk art forms, are instances of the ancient wisdom that was preserved in the classical Indian languages.The investigation and research on the concepts of life, death, existence, survival and nature established the structure and foundation of the ancient Indian literature where even the subjects like Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Astronomy, Astrology and other significant branches of studies were thoroughly examined. The largest collection of written texts and documents can be found in Indian manuscripts containing rich cultural diversities of ancient and medieval Indian literature . A manuscript is a handwritten composition on paper, bark, cloth, metal, palm leaf or any other material.These written records revealed the existence of various civilizations and signified the importance of their sustenance. India is thought to have the world's largest collection of around five million manuscripts representing magnificence of Indian culture, incorporating languages, philosophy, art, and architecture that serve as a remarkable source of Indian history. They were discovered among other languages and scripts namely *Grantha, Devanagiri, and Nandinagiri*. The Vedas, which were written down in 1500 B.C., are one of the world's oldest collections of literature.

*The Rig-Veda, The Yajurvaveda, The Samveda*and *The Atharvaveda* are a collection of hymns and ancient religious writings composed to cover aspects such as morals, values, ways of living, music, religion, medicine, and cosmology that are still widely applicable in today's times. The *Rig-Veda*, the oldest of all the four Vedas, is made up of 1028 hymns and 10,600 verses organized into 10 *Mandalas* (books). The philosophical works of religious teachings and ideas that are still largely practiced in Hinduism are known as Upanishads, depicting an oral legacy of saints and ascetics in the form of verse, prose, or occasionally a combination of the two.

Moreover, the development of printing radically transformed how information was transmitted, used, and preserved. It was almost impossible to obtain the exact replicas of original manuscripts due to the complicated and lengthy procedure of scribal era's copying process that resulted into the production of numerous versions of the same text. Each manuscript had to be safeguarded in public settings due to the limited number of copies, usually by being chained to bookcases or hidden away in vaults and other secure locations for prevention of its loss or destruction. Therefore, it can be said that the invention of the printing press significantly influenced how mediaeval oral society became literate one (written) or one that prioritized silent and private reading (Ong 1982).
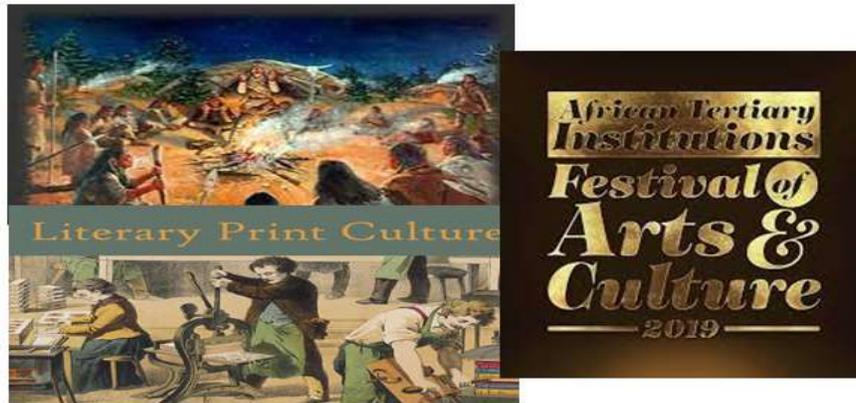
Figure 3: Depiction of Secondary Orality with the evolution of Print Culture (mentioned in Works Cited)

As the book trade and industry grew more profitable and readers increased, publishers invested in the creation of books that would appeal to a wider audience. Early printed literature was primarily religious and devotional, but by the eighteenth century, new literary genres subtly started to gain popularity.The society and modern human civilization that built and expanded on the individual acts of writing and reading, fostered the concepts of originality and innovation that were reflected in the new literary forms. The growth and expansion of print media led to a paradigm shift from one type of literary society to the emergence of another.It became simpler and convenient to produce multiple copies in less time and with less effort as the printing costs significantly declined. Books flooded the market, attempting to appeal to a readership that was expanding exponentially. The easy accessibility of books spawned an entirely new reading culture, in contrast to the age of manuscripts when access was restricted only to a particular class of people. The main difference between oratory today and oratory in the past, can thus be observed from the evolution of technology and what is available to us today.

Subsequently, the conversion of oral literature into printed books expanded and flourished with the enhancement of Secondary Orality.*Tales of Wit and Wisdom, Tales from Bengal, Indian Folktales, Most Loved Tales from Panchatantra, Russian Folktales, Japanese Folktales, More Tales from Jataka, The Day it Snowed Tortillas, Chinese Fables, The Arabian Night, the People Could Fly, The Gift of the Sun, Beautiful Blackbird, Little Red Riding Hood, Hansel and Gretel, The Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, Sleeping Beauty, Rapunzel, Cinderella, Aladdin and his Magic Lamp, August house, the Ugly Duckling, Tales of Tenali Raman, Forty Fortunes, Stories of Akbar-Birbal, Flossy and the Fox, The Little Red Fort,The Three Little Superpigs, Endlessly Ever After*and numerous other books of folk and different genres portraying traditions, customs, civilization, value systems, societal standards, and daily life started getting published, entirely providing a new dimension to literature.Folk Narratives of Jhaverchand Meghani produced in the form of books namely*Dadaji ni Vaato, Meghani ni Navalikao, Vilopan ane Biji Vaato, Apradhi, Kalchakra, Niranjan, Prabhu Padharya, Bidela Dwar, Satya ni Shodhma, Samrangan, Loksahitya nu Samlochan, Rang Chhe Baarot!, Kankavati, Charano ane Charani Sahitya,Mansai na Diva, Vasundhara na Vahala-Davala*, *Saurashtra ni Rasdhar, Sorathi Baharvatiya, Kurbanini Kathao, Sorath Tara Vehta Pani, Tulsikyaro, Killol, Shauryakathao, Gujarat no Jay* and many more are the representation of Secondary Orality.
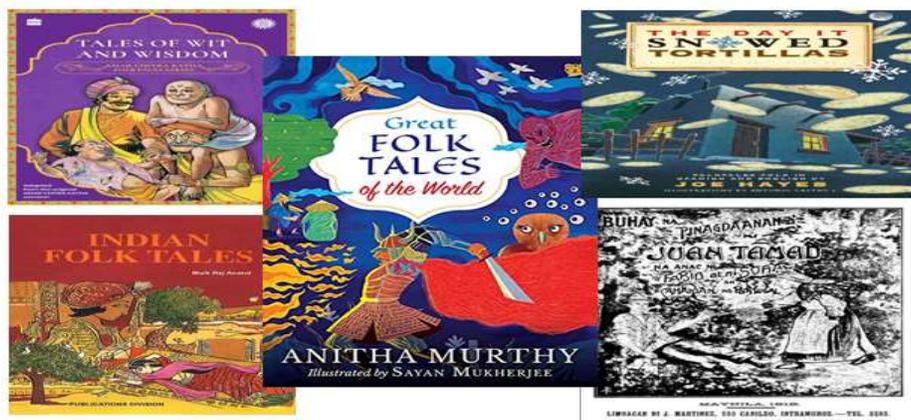
Figure 4: Representation of Secondary Orality in form of Books(mentioned in Works Cited)

Even though, Secondary Orality can still be speculated as an era of imagination and visual representation; the advent of radio, television, and other electronic devices revolutionized media and reciprocated culture, ushering into a new era of Tertiary Orality that advanced in Electronic and Digital phases. The folk narratives being sung by combining and blending them in the contemporary music or being archived digitally, results in the framework of Tertiary Orality. As, Tertiary Orality transforms folk literature into a different medium, Gujarati folk traditions have also evolved into tertiarility.Outside Gujarat, very few were aware of the songs *Mahendi te vaavi malve ne eno rang gayo Gujarat re, Dholi taro dhol baje, Chhogada tara, Udi udi jaye, Maru man mor bani thangat kare* and *Heji re…,* but the same when recreated in its audio-visual form transcribed into Tertiary orality mediating the primary orality of yore and the technology driven, digitally oriented the tertiary orality of the present.

Figure 5: Digitally Oriented Tertiary Orality of the Present(mentioned in Works Cited)

J. L. Austin, a linguist and philosopher, introduced the terms *Performance and Performativity*for the first time in a lecture at Harvard University in 1955 where he described the concept of *performing in everyday life* as a major element of Performativity and asserted that, it can be found everywhere—in everyday behavior, in the professions, on the media and the internet, in the arts and in languages.

Figure 6: Performance of *Dayro*(mentioned in Works Cited)

Ethnopreneurship and Folklore

The idea of folk for the market was made possible by the capitalist economy's Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization policies of 1991, which gave rise to producers, consumers, and buyers of folk.The Indian crafts industry has long been acknowledged for its brilliance for artisanship and creative thinking.The formation of cottage and small scale industries enabled the villages to become self sufficient since years, where traditional artisans and craftsmen inherited their work as an art form from their ancestors and manufactured different products like khadi, muslin, silk, leather, wool, cotton, ornaments, monuments, cultural icons, jewels, precious stones, and edible items like spices, oils, honey, etc. that enabled India to effectively develop trade relations with the Greek, Chinese, and Arab empires.In India's cottage industries, our art forms have always been kept alive by the production of pickles and papads especially by women and by the creation of paintings and sculptures by the artisans. Furthermore, the market-driven revival of these folk arts gave rise to a new idea known as Ethnopreneurship.A market for folk music, folk dance, folk accessories and artifacts, folk literature revolving around the idea of ethnicity regaining the lost grounds amidst the wave of modernity/modernism was created. Ethnopreneurship and ethnopreneurs capitalized on the folk in print, electronic, digital media, encashing on its vast reach, socio-economic, political and cultural impact, creating markets for folk music, folk art, folk culture and ethnic products.

Figure 7: The concept of Ethnopreneurship(mentioned in Works Cited)

The non-profit organization named Craft and Community Development Foundation that specializes in Indian arts and crafts has been carrying out the *Gondwana Art Project* since 2019. It has become increasingly challenging for artisans in the Gondwana region of central India to sell their merchandise in recent years. The objective of the project is to lessen the enormous gap between consumers, artists, and the supporting artisans. It supports the three art traditions of the Gond, Warli, and Bhil regions' indigenous tribal and folk artists. Each of these artistic expressions has a unique visual identity, a unique history, and a prolonged line of artists who have transmitted the

paintings frequently use geometric patterns and spirals on mud walls painted with a special mixture of white paste to depict the subjective experiences and perceptions of the individuals.

Figure 8: Glimpses of Warli paintings(mentioned in Works Cited)

During their investigation into the Indian arts and crafts sector, the officials came to realise the need for a venue, where tribal and folk artists could exhibit and demonstrate their artistic skills. In order to encourage the artisans to create tribal arts that are urban, futuristic, highly imaginative and have a significant appeal to the domestic and international markets, the organization started this project with the goal of training the artisans, providing them with training and design innovations. The organization held an exhibition in New Delhi in January 2020 in conjunction with the *India Art Fair*. In order to provide visibility to the artists, the organization intends to discover new possibilities to show their creations around India and eventually the world.

Figure 9: Paintings at Indian Art Fair(mentioned in Works Cited)

Many traditional musicians and organizations are currently focusing on the recognition, resurgence, and re-establishment of old traditional folk music. The primary motivation behind this is the desire to pass down and instill these traditions to the current generation as well as to add musical value and revive the rapidly declining art. According to the accomplished folk singer and Padma Shri recipient Malini Awasthi, *Folk traditions serve as the societal archives of the values that our ancestors upheld as Indians*, who as a part of her folk performances has recorded a number of traditional folk forms of Indian music including *Thumris, Dadras, Kajri, Jhula, Holi, Chaiti, Sanskar Geets, Shram Geets, Ritu Geet, Sufiyana Kalams*, and other styles from Awadh and Benaras.

The performative and narrative interactions have been initiated due to pandemic through some digital media platforms where artists now perform. Folk musicians have been utilizing accessible technology to narrate their stories with the audiences since last year.*Mehfil-e-Rajasthan*, a live podcast on the audio streaming platform *Mentza*, was created with the objective of reviving the faith of the artists in their ability to continue creating their age-old traditional music, which has allowed people to listen to authentic Rajasthani music from the comfort of their homes by keeping the roots alive. In fact, a Mumbai-based organization has been working on digital preservation and scripting of *Assamese folk songs and tales* in order to revive the magnificent treasures of folk culture in states like Assam and the Northeast.The project titled *Scripting, Research, Recreation, Digitalization and*

of Culture under the senior fellowship programme for the *Centre for Cultural Resources and Training*.

Figure 10: Folk Songs being commercialized for the Ethnopreneurship Market(mentioned in Works Cited)

Similar to this, it is possible to trace the transition from Primary to Secondary Orality to the age of visual representation and ethnopreneurship that is constantly attempting to revive the incredible folk legends of Jhaverchand Meghani that portray the horizons of the Saurashtrian region, religion, and culture. Before being published in five volumes in the 20th century titled *Saurashtra-nee Rasdhar*in Gujarati language, these folk narratives were sung and performed orally in the regions of *Kathiawar, Zalawad, Gohilwad*, and other territories of Saurashtra. This work has established itself to be a timeless classic of Gujarati literature. Vinod Meghani, the son of Jhaverchand Meghani, has translated *Saurashtra-nee Rasdhar* into English and published into three volumes titled *A Noble Heritage, The Shade Crimson,* and *A Ruby Shattered* respectively.The shift to tertiary orality, visuality and ethnopreneurship can also be observed where so many folk songs namely *Maa ni Yaad, Charan Kanya, Chheli Salaam, Takdir ne Trofnari, Navi Varsha, Dariyo Dole*, *Zulan Morali Vagi, Aage Kadam, Shivaji nu Halaradu, He Jode Rahejo Raj* (which is also widely used and sung in the festival of Navratri and even sung and performed in marriages), *Kaal Jage*!, *Chando Ugyo Chowk Man, Koino Ladakvayo, Kan Tari Morali Ae Ji Re, Chheli Prarthana, Chhelo Katoro, Ajara kai Jarya Na Jai, Virat Darshan, Ubhi Ubhi Ugamne Darbar, Kasumbi no Rang*, *Sona Navdi* and *Swatantrata ni Mithaash*are transcribed into audio visuals and are widely available on YouTube.Many Gujarati folk singers and artists perform and narrate various folk tales and folk songs of Jhaverchand Meghani every week and upload their videos on their respective channels on YouTube in an effort to preserve the rich Gujarati folk culture and even creating a platform for the generation of revenue out of it.Recently, as a concept of ethnopreneurship also entering the realms of Saurashtrian folk narratives, a man named Mitesh Solanki is working on converting a book named Khumari and Khandani of Jhaverchand Meghani into a comic based graphic novel, which will not only be a pictorial book,but would also contain the meaning of difficult words from the colloquial language used by the people at that times. He received this idea of preserving and popularizing Saurashtra's rich cultural traditions when he discovered that there were no books of Jhaverchand Meghani easily available even in the bookstores of Gujarat State.

Figure 11: Folksongs of Jhaverchand Meghani transcribed into Audio-Visuals(mentioned in Works Cited)

Conclusion

The first folk literature existed in oral culture, which gradually shifted to written and print media, which further transcribed into audio-visuals in the form of cassettes, CDs,Radio, television, documentaries, YouTube and multimedia, and now has emerged as a concept of capitalization and ethnopreneurship where markets for folk culture, folk art, folk music and folk traditions are created. Thus, this concept can also be known as folkpreneurship, where traditional myths like 'whatever not modern is folk and whatever is modern is not folk' are broken, where new generation identifies and perceives the identity of folk with new media.

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EXPLORING SPATIALITY IN THE FOLK NARRATIVES OF JHAVERCHAND MEGHANI

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Abstract

'Folk narratives are reflections of the societies and individuals which create and transmit them; consequently, they reflect a wide range of human ideas and emotions.' The purpose of this research paper is to examine the framework of Space as a tool for positing Saurashtra as a region and place in the context of Jhaverchand Meghani's folk narratives by looking at social, cultural, psychological, topological, and other spaces that can be correlated to storied spaces in folk narratives. This research paper proposes to focus on Jhaverchand Meghani's folk narratives through the theories of Edward Soja and other critical thinkers dealing with the research questions - How has Saurashtra emerged as a region in Jhaverchand Meghani's folk narratives? ; How region contributes in comprehending 'space/s' in the narratives in the context of social fabric, culture, region, and the lives of people and what are the critical concepts and literary dimensions that can be examined in the folk narratives of Jhaverchand Meghani in understanding the idea of storied spaces? Attempts are made to locate and explore Saurashtra as a region in terms of geography, culture, and literature in Jhaverchand Meghani's folk narratives.

Keywords: *Storied spaces, Folk Narratives, Spatial literature*

Introduction

The genre of folk narratives is basically the form of short stories that have been handed down from the remote past orally from one eternity to another, reflecting the people's traditions, feelings, beliefs and judgments. These diverse folk narratives can be presented into various forms such as folklores, folktales, fables, fairy tales, myths and legends. Folk Narratives has

always been conjointly viewed with the tales of peasants, simple and ignorant people. It was used to mean the description of the culture and social life of peasants, farmers and people with lower statures and their performances of dance, music and festival in some parts of South America and Europe; whereas on the other hand, in the United States of America, it was meant as the incidences of the past which included superstitions, stories and performances of the ballads. Thus, in the 19th century, where folk narratives were not given much importance, now it is greatly vibrant and alive in the 21st century and thus plays a great role in the transmission and the formation of the era of new folk cultures. Folk literature and the concept of writing and creating folk narratives has always been rich, developing and reformative in the terms of narratives and themes in India, and are considered as an inspiration because of the unique culture of writing the oldest tradition with the blend and amalgamation of oral sources and narrative techniques as compared to the folk literatures all over the world.

Figure 1: Classification of Folk Narratives

The theory and concept of folk narratives originated in mid nineteenth century in Europe. The collective implication of all the ancient traditions, customs, superstitions, myths, fairy tales, historical archetypes, legends, timeless festivals and surviving proverbs have played a significant role in the emergence of folk narratives. As these folk narratives has sporadically and scarcely clarified the examination of discernment, shrewdness, wisdom, native intelligence and insight to exposure and grounding; it has directly insinuated and implicated the concepts of unreasonableness and impracticality pertaining to the acceptance in blind faiths, superstitions, myths, ghosts, demons and evil spirits. As observed from the domains of urbanization, the two characteristics of historic cultural conventions and illogicality could only limit itself to Barbarians and agricultural workers, thus attaching a very significant quality of 'rurality' to the concept of folk narratives. As an outcome of primitive human

civilization with villages, nature and activities of hunting, the peripheries of folk narratives were thought to be a 'natural form and expression of man and life' far before the establishments of cities, commerce, civilization, privatization and globalization entered and adulterated the sterility, morality and righteousness of our lives.

Hence, these three main features of historical conventions, unreasonableness and rurality subjugated and overshadowed the abstraction and postulation of the folk narratives for years to come and still continue to do so. This notion has set a significant benchmark for the incorporation and expulsion of the folk narratives within the spheres and realms of this genre. These features of folk narratives led this genre to be more commonly used in speech and in the print media among the people. The original significance and identity of the authors were concealed and camouflaged as a result of this tradition and custom, and the transmission from generation to generation obscured their origins. Furthermore, by default rather than by the credit worthiness; ambiguity, anonymity and indistinctness became the significant benchmark of the folk narratives. Indian piece of art such as poetry, prose or fiction was considered as a part of this genre only after the reminiscences of the author had been faded away from the minds of the people. The tradition of anonymity was regarded as legitimate and veritable, allowing the folk narratives to be accepted as an integral part of a region's cultural, social, economic, and political hegemonies.

The obscurity and anonymity of the genre of folk narratives rarely solved the question of its origination and inception. Thus, the whole domain of region and community was held responsible for the creation and establishment of the folk narratives in the absence of any creator to be held accountable for its authorship. The authors and singers often attributed and accredited their work to the joined and combined conventions of the society as a whole, not confining its copyrights and authorship to a single individual. In fact, this tradition of communality became a hallmark in the structuring and articulation of the folk narratives, as any expression of the literature had to be passed through the filters of the culture and traditions of the society, region and community to be considered as a folk narrative, leaving no room for personal work of fiction and literature. This notion of folk narratives raises multifarious questions such as- 'Should these genres of folk narratives kept free from the shackles of communal and regional spheres and boundaries or should these copyrights be confined to its regional and cultural domain of its history and origin, solving the problems of its authorship?' and 'Which of the following characteristics fosters and connects the bond

between its people and their folk narratives, relating to the region and society at large?.' These and the other issues and problems have sharpened the debates that were significant to the origination of this genre. Accordingly, it may be determined from numerous assertions and arguments, that the attributes of regionalism imply communal creation, recreation or simply the idea of its existence and expression.

Folk narratives reflect the combined happenings and acquaintances of the society at large and work as mirrors, which the community constantly faces as it juggles around the peripheries of life. The idea that 'folk narratives are universal' is ironically interwoven with the concept of communality. While folk narratives may be addressed within the power structure of regional hierarchies, they also transcend and rise above the peripheries that language and space inflict and develop in many groups and distant countries, preserving a fundamental unity. The concept and idea of space and spatiality emerges and intertwines through the genre of folk narratives from themes and metaphors related to the subjects of stories and sayings of people who live in completely different countries far apart from one another, speak completely different languages, live completely different lives with completely different cultures, living standards, customs, and mindsets, and then explains and demonstrates a high degree of harmony and affinity that history cannot explain.

Introduction to Spatiality

Space is an abstract concept which can be a constitute to an absolute entity with the relationship of the society and its people. Space is also considered as a product of political, social, cultural and the literary formations which in turn reconstructs the region and the literary texts; creating and recreating the 'real and lived spaces' for the society and to disseminate its literary representations. It is the domain of settings and surroundings of the characters, events and the objects in the literary narratives along with the other domains such as story, time and ideology constituting a fictional universe. It is known as a semantic construct built with linguistic structures employed by the literary text. The fictional constructs of space are the products of the integration of dynamic bodies and their spatial information. In the domains of literary and cultural studies, spatiality has also become a major topic. It has spawned new ways of comprehending and describing space, as well as a greater awareness of space, its intricacies, and the issues that come with it. Literature provides a unique perspective about the new manifestations of subjectivity and spatiality brought about by technology advancements, which shape the perceptions of spatial existence

in the world and our connectivity with other people and the rest of the world. The 'Spatial turn' refers to a period of growing interest in space. The distinct mixture of local and global spatial relations in a certain territory and the in-betweenness of the region is what constitute the spatial literature.

As Michel Foucault states, "The present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space. We are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed." As Foucault explains it, the 'epoch of space' is both observed as a sensibility and an aesthetic movement in art, literature, and architecture, as well as a historical moment that represents a new way of interpreting human life and the surrounding world. The Spatial literature connects the literary works to a certain geographical area and approaches the problems of spatiality from a specific location on earth. Doreen Massey also quotes from her book *Spatial Division of Labor*, "Geography matters. The fact that processes take place over space, the facts of distance or closeness, of geographical variation between areas, of individual character and meaning of specific places and regions – all these are essential to the operation of social processes themselves. Just as there are no purely spatial processes, neither are there non-spatial social processes."

Michel de Certeau and numerous advocates of literary spatial studies emphasize the importance of spatial elements connected to locales, settings, orientations, and textual spatiality in his book *The Practice of Everyday Life*, particularly in the chapter headed 'Spatial Stories.' Literature is both temporal and geographical. Aside from the concept of literature as a spatial story, another concept also prevails namely 'storied spaces'. As Certeau states, "Every story is a travel story- a spatial practice," as fiction not only tells spatial stories or provides poetic spatial dimensions, but it also activates spatiality by stratifying places and spaces into numerous layers of meaning, where spaces are literary storied and stored in fiction. Space, according to Immanuel Kant in his work *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), is a form of sensible intuition. He divides time and space into metaphysical exposition and transcendental exposition which discusses what is contained in a pure form, where a priori knowledge arises due to priori content. Space and time for Kant is outer form of intuition and perceives space to be 'transcendental idea' yet 'empirically real'. Michael Foucault describes space as 'Heterotopia' where he discusses about Heterotopia being real and accessible, juxtaposing and combining many spaces at one place.

'Space' in the literary domain can be expounded as a conceptual tool which deals with the object and its products associated with social, cultural, political and literary sphere within it in a heterogeneous way; also exploring the ideological space, literary space, topographical space, the space of dream and psychoanalytical space. These diverse spaces can also be represented under the umbrella of social space. Edward Soja extends the idea of space and introduces to the concepts of first space, second space and third space. He describes the first space as the 'real space' which shows the geographical area as a physical space; second space as the 'imagined space', where the emotions of individuals are attached with geographical area and lastly the third space as the amalgamation of the first space and second space. Soja depicts third space as 'a fully lived space, a simultaneously real and imagined, actual and virtual locus of structured individuality and collective experience and agency'.
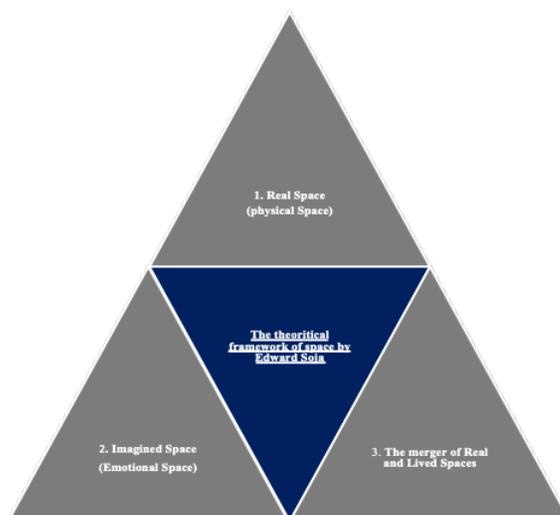

Figure 2: The theoretical framework of Space by Edward Soja in his work the *Thirdspace*

When the social space is analyzed from the realistic perspective, it acts as a tool to analyze the society which largely incorporates social actions. The social space can be defined as the space of society, where all the 'subjects' are placed in a particular space where they can either recognize or lose themselves to modify their own social life. Social space, a concept that was first introduced by Emilie Durkheim depicts how social space plays a significant role in social processes. In his work, *The Division of Labor*, he reviews about the concept of anomie which outlines the cultural norms and values, creating instability for the people living in that particular society, giving rise to alienation as a result. Social space can be conjointly viewed with relation to the topological space. Ideological space is constructed within the

social space by the experience and cultural influence that people gain from by residing in a society. Ideological space establishes a space for freedom which in turn grants access to the marginalized section of the society. The 'space' becomes an agency whereby it paves their way towards freedom of speech and thought as well as elevates their voices against the unjustness, injustice and the decisions that were taken without their outlook towards a certain affair. Thus, this ideological space becomes a medium for the marginalized to propaganda their notions. Psychoanalytical space, an element of ideological space, unveils the inner thoughts, wishes and aspiration of an individual for a particular situation or about a particular society.

The concept of region and place is also needed to be understood in order to understand the concept of space explicitly. A region is basically a geographical concept, but it has also become a social science concept with the passage of time. Usually, studies of the region are on a physical level but, as we move on to explicate the regional aspects extensively; we can discover the cultural, political and economic aspects that are also tied together with that particular region. The region is socially constructed totality and therefore it is a site where the humanities come across each other and find a resolution. The area synthesizes and connects the diversity of the people and places that make up the region, giving it a whole new significance.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this research paper are to explore and build a relationship between the concept of space by examining the social, cultural, and regional space in the language and text of Jhaverchand Meghani's folk narratives and to critically examine the concepts and literary dimensions of real spaces versus the fictional spaces by exploring the narrative and performative spaces for locating and exploring 'Saurashtra' as a region in the terms of geography, culture and literature by scrutinizing the 'storied spaces' of the narratives.

Methodology

This academic endeavor aspires to be a work of exploratory research on the notion of Space and the folk narratives of Jhaverchand Meghani, through various critical interpretations. The proposed research will try to engage with the ideas of Space through the theories of Edward Soja and other critical thinkers related to spatial theory. Understanding that the space that serves as context and is container for the text, the spatiality of text, textualization of space

and also the thematisation of space along with the spatial dimensions like narrative space and performative space can be examined in the folk narratives of Jhaverchand Meghani addressing the East-West binary, the folk narratives of Jhaverchand Meghani offer food for thought.

Jhaverchand Meghani: A brief Overview

Jhaverchand Meghani (1896-1947) is an eminent and illustrious name in the Gujarati literature. In a comparatively short literary career of about twenty-five years, he turned out to write more than eighty volumes of the folktales, biographies of the outlaws, novels, plays, poems and the critical essays containing valuable materials which can be helpful for further research in the folk literature of the Saurashtra depicting the horizons of the region, religion and culture. These folk narratives were published during the twentieth century in five volumes, titled *Saurashtra-nee Rasdhar* in Gujarati language which has proved to be a timeless classic in Gujarati literature. He has paid homage to the era by responding to the contemporary burning issues of social disparities and the surge of nationalism in his novels, folk narratives, translated folklores and plays from Bengali into Gujarati. He has dealt with his exhaustive discourses in the perspectives of the universal folk narratives by crafting the culture and region of a unique land located amidst the heart of Gujarat, known as Saurashtra.
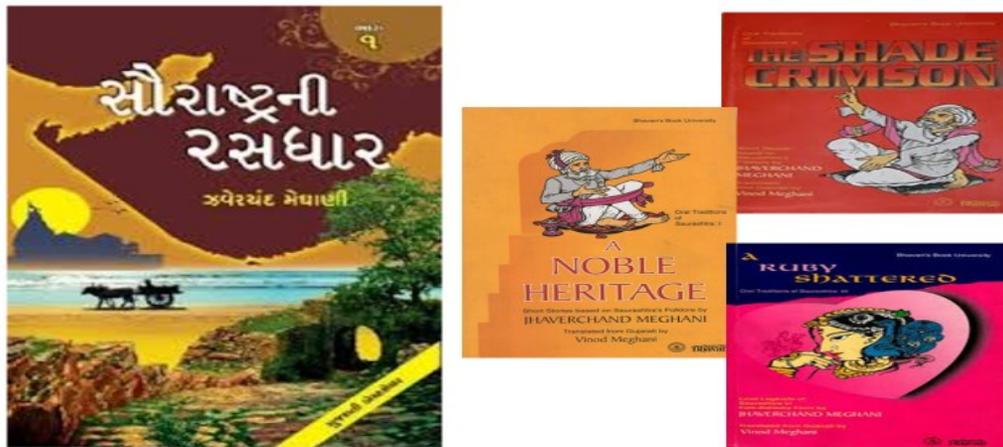

Figure 3: The Folk Narratives of Jhaverchand Meghani

Vinod Meghani, the son of Jhaverchand Meghani has translated his work *Saurashtra-nee Rasdhar* into English into three volumes namely *A Noble Heritage*, *The Shade Crimson* and *A Ruby Shattered* respectively. The folk narrative *A Noble Heritage* represents 'Oral

Tradition of Saurashtra: I'. *The Shade Crimson*, 'Oral Traditions of Saurashtra: II' is the second part of the trilogy of three works of folk narratives translated from *Saurashtra-nee Rasdhara.* It is a continuous sequel of different folk narratives based on the above book *Noble Heritage. A Ruby Shattered,* 'Oral Traditions of Saurashtra: III' is the third part of the trilogy. It is a collection of translated work depicting love legends in folk balladry form of Saurashtra. The folk narratives here include major region of Kathiawar and Saurashtra.

Space in the Folk Narratives of Jhaverchand Meghani

In the last few decades, the scholarly approach towards folk narratives has moved away from examining these as just written or recorded texts, instead these narratives are now considered as a living social phenomenon that has a historical, social and anthropological as well as a folkloristic context; that can be uttered as well as received, passed on, recreated, developed and performed not just as words but as a series of images, symbols, sounds, associations and textures. 'Folk narratives are the product of a special form of verbal art', arguably a characteristic of a space (region) and also characterized by the space itself. It can also be argued that all the folk narratives unconsciously involve the ideas of boundaries and inhabited space, especially with regard to its relationship with the recurring and closely associated ideas concerning the 'inside' and the 'outside' of the worlds inhabited by the people, probably most clearly reflected through festivities, games and folk narratives. As suggested by Lewis Henry Morgan's theory of Diffusionism, in the field of folk narrative studies, the concept of space has taken on ever-increasing importance over the last few years, especially with regard to the examination of the direct living context of the performance event that has produced the story and then the role played by the space which the individual storyteller has inhabited throughout his or her life.

Jhaverchand Meghani has displayed and depicted the map of a specific area of Saurashtra region in each and every folk narrative, depicting and rationalizing the concept of region, culture, and space as a whole, in tandem with Thomas Hardy, the regionalist, who provided locations of Wessex in his works, depicting the nature and significance of the ideas of the city, which consisted of a small area of Dorset in which he grew up.
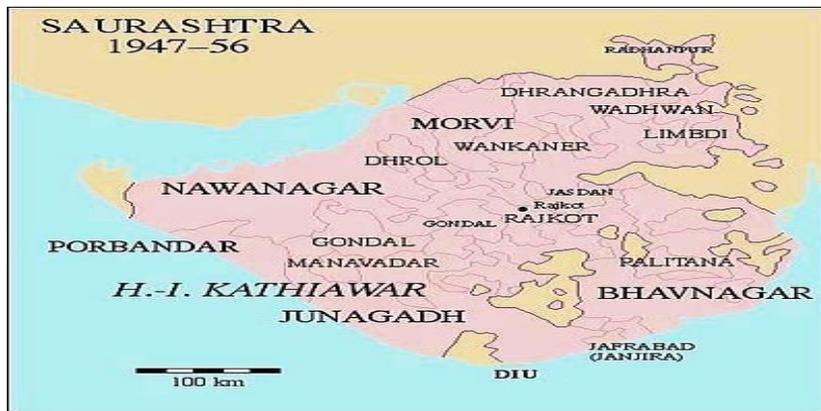
Figure 4: The Map of Kathiawar and Saurashtra

Researchers have translated the works of Jhaverchand Meghani in the context of contemporary literature and translation and they have also worked on the theories of regionalism and culturalism on the English folk narratives of Jhaverchand Meghani. Works related to the socio-cultural and topological domains have also been done in relation to space. Multifarious research works has been carried out by Jayvantbhai K. Khuman and Sarvaiya Priyaba on Jhaverchand Meghani's work which is translated from Gujarati to English as a comparative literary translation along with a critical introduction on regionalism and a comparative study depicting regionalism in the themes and characterization in the translated works of Jhaverchand Meghani in comparison with the works of Thomas Hardy and Kristina Malmio and Kaisa Kurikka's *Contemporary Nordic Literature and Spatiality* examines the spatial tracks and trails of modern Nordic literature to map the region's imaginative geographies. Thus, there are plenitudes of research on folk narratives of Jhaverchand Meghani in Gujarati literature exploring various specificities of folk literature but there seems a paucity of research in the departments of English more so through the critical lenses of spatiality. The critical concepts of space in the textual narratives of Jhaverchand Meghani paved a new way to explore the 'storied spaces' in depth.

"TO PROTECT A WOMEN'S VIRTUE", a Folk narrative from *A Noble Heritage,* rightly depicts how Hebatkhan, a Jat warrior who was employed in a regal court of the king named Sumaro, who ruled Sindh, fled with his kinsfolk for the protection of his beautiful daughter named Sumari. He did not want his daughter to marry Sumaro, who had demanded her hand in marriage and had declined saying that, "I shall rather let my daughter Sumari wed a simpleton, just like me, than getting tied down to the king's diamond and pearl studded

necklaces." Enraged by the rejection, the king had banished Hebatkhan from his kingdom stating that, "Start running! At the end of the six months, I shall snatch your daughter from you." He then went to Bhuj, to seek the protection from the Rao of Kuchchh, who first readily sheltered Hebatkhan, but after the warning from his minister about the dangers of attack from king Sumaro, he could not further give him protection and shelter. "Ya Allah!" sighed Hebatkhan, who then left with his family and clan and paused on the outskirts of Jamnagar and Dhrol, whose kings too refused to let them stay in their kingdom, they moved on, knowing that it was the end of the road and that was only a question of time, before they would be annihilated by the army of Sindh.

Along their way they passed by the Mooli town. Young Sodha Urchins playing in the outskirts heard the Jats' children and saw tears as big as berries rolling down the lemon large eyes of Jat women. Outskirts of Mooli, served as a resting place for the wayfarers, who were always offered a meal by the towns' people. How come these lamenting fifteen hundred men and women did not pause for a breather? Sodha young men wondered. They asked the Jats, "Where to, brothers?"

"Into the sea…" was the forlorn response.

"How's that?"

"The earth has shut its door on us. It can no longer bear our burden."

"Why do you speak in riddles, brother?"

"No riddles. We are telling you the truth. It seems Parshuram had really wiped out the Rajpoots! Didn't let even one go alive!"

"But brother, how about telling us what's the matter? What's your problem?"

Hebatkhan then related his plight. The Parmar clan learnt it all. Mooli was then ruled by Lakhdarjee the Second, who provided shelter to the whole clan and said that, "If we cannot protect you, we certainly know how to die fighting!" Mooli town, which was built on a flat terrain, could not be defended by a small army. Jats and Parmars sought shelter atop the formidable hill of Mandav. They kept on fighting and defending bravely against the Sumara's army who camped at the foothills surrounding the mount. Seeing the bloodshed of Jats and Parmars, Sumari sat in a corner listening to the harsh words of condemnation from the Jat

women who used to curse her and staring at the twinkling starlets in the sky, she let out a sigh, "O Khuda! What is my crime? Why did you make me so beautiful?" After the news of death of Sumari's only brother in the battle, this proved to be a last straw for Sumari, which led her to do something unthinkable, she asked the mother earth to make a way for her. The mother earth parted, accepted her into the cleft and closed the crack. A grave still stands at the spot at which Sumari slid into the earth. The site today is known as the 'Pond of Sumari Bibi' and the folks propitiate by her name at the shrine. All were greatly shocked by this news. Jats were gratified that their daughter preferred death, rather than falling into enemy's hands. Parmars were however outraged by her victimization. As for them, a woman killing herself was as depressing an act as that of someone killing a woman. The war ended, but the sacrifice and the mingling of the blood of Jats and Parmars was thus immortalized. From that day, the Muslims and Hindus remarry. There is a Duha folk couplet that puts the whole event in a compact form:

Hearken o Isa, Says Asa,

Build no bunds between us in death!

Behold! Jats 'n Parmars're but one!

Don't undo what's done!

Figure 5: Map of Kathiawar and Saurashtra depicting the region where Jats and Parmars became one and fought against Sumaro, the king of Sindh

Similarly, the folk narrative named "HER INHERITANCE" from *The Shade Crimson,* greatly describes a courageous act of a very young and beautiful girl, dealing bravely with her cousins for the protection of rights and inheritance for her father and herself. The eighteen year old belle sitting in the wagon, dreamily gazing with admiring eyes at the husband riding his mare at a trotting pace along the file, is beautifully described in the folk narrative as follows:

In the courtyard of grand-pa stands a mango tree.

A tree-trunk portly, proud and profound;

Plucked I've only a single leaf, o grand-pa!

Please don't be cross with me, o grand-pa!

A sparrow of the wild and green I am, o grand pa,

Soon I shall fleet away and soar afar;

Today I am in the homeland of the grand-pa;

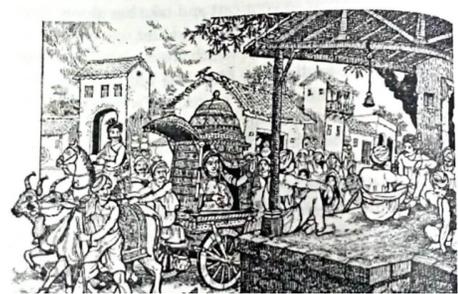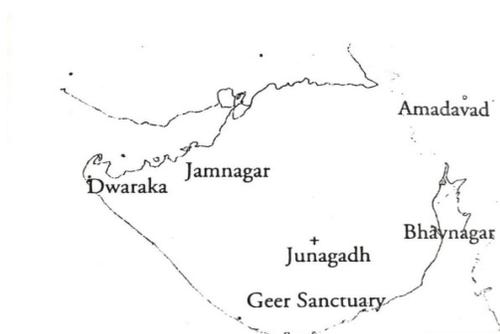*Morrow I'll be perched on another cliff.*

Figure 6 & 7: Depiction of a particular region of Kathiawar, where a courageous daughter fights for the rights of inheritance

Thus, the ideas of space, region and the concept of Space as depicted by Edward Soja in his work *Thirdspace*, are broadly and widely depicted in the translated folk Narratives of Jhaverchand Meghani. According to Edward Soja's concept of Space, where first space is depicted as the real or physical space, in the same way the folk narratives of Jhaverchand

Meghani widely portrays and depicts the culture and traditions of the geographical locations of the regions of Saurashtra and Kathiawar. When the concept of second space, namely imagined space is analyzed, it acts as a tool to analyze the society which largely incorporates social actions. Hence, the second space can be defined as the space of society, where all the 'subjects' are placed in a particular space where they can either recognize or lose themselves to modify their own social life. Similarly, these translated folk narratives of Jhaverchand Meghani also display the emotions of the people attached with the geographical area and especially depicts the men who righteously protect the chastity of women in spite of all the difficulties. The portrayal of brave and courageous women who would speak up for their own rights, the tales of daughters equally treated as a son mark the social space in the narrative. The work encompasses and depicts the cultures and values like honesty, chivalry, bravery and respect among the people of Saurashtra. The third space, the amalgamation of first and second space can be conjointly viewed in relation to all the spaces. These spaces are constructed within the social space by the experience and cultural influence that people gain from by residing in a society. It establishes a space for freedom which in turn grants access to the less empowered or even marginalized section of the society.

Conclusion

Through a detailed study on storied spaces in the folk narratives of Jhaverchand Meghani, a conclusion can be drawn that it engages with the ideas of Space through the theories of Edward Soja and other critical thinkers related to spatial theory. The 'space' becomes an agency whereby it paves their way towards freedom of speech and thought as well as elevates their voices against the unjustness, injustice and the decisions that were taken without their outlook towards a certain affair. Thus, this space becomes a medium for the marginalized to propaganda their notions and unveils the inner thoughts, wishes and aspirations of an individual for a particular situation or about a particular society.

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