

**CHAPTER 2**  
**THEORETICAL PARADIGM:**  
**DEFINING HERITAGE, INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**  
**AND SATTRIYA PERFORMANCE**

Before we begin analyzing the resource material collected from the field and from secondary sources, it is integral to lay the methodological structures used to understand the social phenomena in the area of this research. Apart from looking into social theories, there was a necessity of defining certain terms to be able to provide a framework for the completion of this thesis.

**2.1 Heritage: A Brief Introduction**

“Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations. Our cultural and natural heritage are both irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration.”<sup>1</sup>It is generally understood that the past is our ‘inheritance’ or ‘legacy’ whether we like it or not. Is it our ‘heritage’ - or is heritage just selected, valued and respected bits of the past?

“Heritage is such a strong term that it seems to have become popularly interchangeable with history itself. It suggests however some obligation on the part of the present to the past and also on behalf of the future, and that the past should give us, in some way, a lesson for the present and future. This is because heritage suggests continuity, perhaps of ideas and ideals felt to be on the decline, and usually suggests some fixity of form or practice. One can safely suggest that ‘Heritage’ (like tradition) is a way of ‘managing’ the past, managing history and (re)presenting it in the present. In a sense it is not only a ‘reading’ of the past but a ‘writing’ of it - a way of establishing ‘history’ itself. This places considerable responsibility on the presentation and also offers great opportunities for manipulation of it.”<sup>2</sup>

After the World War I, the idea of creating an international movement for protecting heritage emerged. In 1972 the 'Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage' came out from two movements where:

- The first focused on the preservation of the cultural sites
- The second dealt with the conservation of Nature.

This convention recognised the fundamental need to “preserve the balance between the two” (UNESCO)

“The Convention concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage was adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO on 16 November 1972. The same General Conference adopted on 16 November 1972 the Recommendation concerning the Protection, at National Level, of the Cultural and Natural Heritage.”<sup>3</sup> ...The World Heritage Convention propelled the sense “of belonging to an international community of appreciation and concern for universally significant properties that embody a world of outstanding examples of cultural diversity and natural wealth...”<sup>4</sup>

The sites listed on the World Heritage Map open the doors for international cooperation and may open the channels of financial assistance for heritage conservation projects from a variety of sources. “Sites inscribed on the World Heritage List also benefit from the elaboration and implementation of a comprehensive management plan that sets out adequate preservation measures and monitoring mechanisms. In support of these, experts offer technical training to the local site management team.”<sup>5</sup> But most importantly the listing of a site on the World Heritage List increases a public awareness of the site and of its “outstanding values”. Alongside, if organised and planned, sustainable tourism principles, “... can bring important funds to the site and to the local economy.”<sup>6</sup>

‘Today the word ‘Heritage’ broadly refers to Natural Heritage- an inheritance of fauna and flora, geology, landscape and landforms, and other natural resources; Cultural Heritage- the legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society; man-made heritage such as Food Heritage or Industrial Heritage- monuments from

industrial culture; Virtual Heritage; Inheritance of physical goods after the death of an individual; of the physical or non-physical things inherited through heredity i.e. the biological inheritance of physical characteristics; Birthright- something inherited due to the place, time, or circumstances of someone's birth or kinship- the relationship between entities that share a genealogical origin.' (UNESCO)

A widely used term that has come to stand in a very general way for everything that is inherited, heritage includes structures, objects, images, ideas, sentiments, and practices. Not all of this need to be very old, although some of there is. Distinctions are sometimes made between the cultural heritage and the natural heritage. All heritage objects, however, are constructed in the sense that people or communities have selectively assembled, defined, and validated those things that they wish to consider components of the ideated phenomena of 'heritage'. Scale is often important here and the appropriation of a heritage is often linked to the creation of global, national, or local identity. (Susan Pearce and David Clarke in Pearce 1994: 19-29, 44-47). Though it seems to represent what is 'dead', heritage is very much a living idea - it is about the present and the future as much as the past. Like, in case of a museum object for its own value of a work of art - or for what it represents for example- a ruined palace or an activity (a craft skill e.g. weaving - or some element of folklore e.g. a dance) are considered today as 'heritage'. Heritage has become effective and affective in the sense that it is felt or 'experienced' what is and what ought to be. This makes the term 'heritage' as interesting as what it represents.

To view the term heritage more holistically, it becomes almost inevitable to define the social (i.e. the tangible and the intangible heritage) as well as the natural heritage (i.e. the flora and the fauna) which constitutes the Material Culture<sup>7</sup>, put together as a whole for the study and interpretation of the living culture of any place keeping its socio-economic-political past and existing beliefs and practices in mind (Pearce 1994: 9-11, 19-29). According to Susan Pearce, "setting the parameters of material culture studies has always been difficult because the term is capable of a range of definitions, some of them very broad."<sup>8</sup>

Our identities are defined by our gender, social class, occupation, generation, nationality etc - so we are all part of many cultures. Heritage, as culture and identity, is multiple

within each of us - perhaps this helps to explain our often ambivalent responses to objects designated as 'heritage'. Heritage does not only mean different things to different people, but different things simultaneously within each one of us. In some ways our educational identity, culture or heritage brings us closer to one another than to others in our own countries.

## **2.2 David Clarke's Functional Models to Analyse Material Culture**

A functionalist approach adopted, by David Clarke can have a good deal in common with a system approach to understanding material culture. Though he coined this model for the analysis of 'tangible culture', however it is well applicable for the analysis of the 'intangible culture' as well and the phenomena of the 'heritage' remains same for both.

David Clarke divided our "cultural ecology" into 'sociocultural system' and 'environmental system' where,

“...the arbitrary setting devised... is intended to distinguish five subsystems with which we will imagine the information in sociocultural systems to be more richly interconnected than externally networked within the system as a whole:

1. Social Subsystem: The hierarchical network of inferred personal relationships including kinship and rank status
2. Religious subsystem: The structure of mutually adjusted beliefs relating to the supernatural, as expressed in a body of doctrine and a sequence of rituals, which together interpret the environment to the society in terms of its own percepts.
3. Psychological subsystem: The integrated system of supra-personal subconscious beliefs induced upon the individuals in a society by their culture, their environment and their language; essentially the subconscious system of comparative values.
4. Economic subsystems: The integrated strategy of component subsistence methods and extraction processes which feed and equip the society.

5. Material culture subsystem: The patterned constellations of artefacts which outline the behaviour patterns of the system as a whole and embody that system's technology.”<sup>9</sup>

These five will “conceptualize cultural systems as integrating these five main information subsystems as a coherent ensemble in dynamic equilibrium at the three levels:

- (i) Within each subsystem,
- (ii) Between the subsystem outputs,
- (iii) Between the whole system and its environment”<sup>10</sup>

Clarke gave diagrammatic representations that help us understand the co-relation of each of these elements clearly. Fig. 2 is a “static model representing the dynamic equilibrium between the subsystems networks of a sociocultural system and its environment. The psychological subsystem may be envisage as centrally encased by other subsystem”<sup>11</sup>

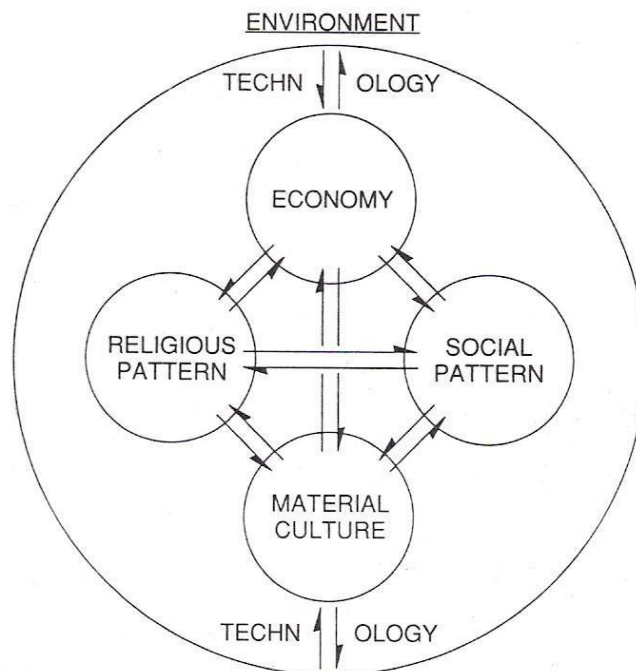


Fig. 2

Fig. 3 is a “schematic model suggesting the oscillating subsystem states and values in the networks of a sociocultural system in dynamic equilibrium with the oscillating states of its original environment.”<sup>12</sup>

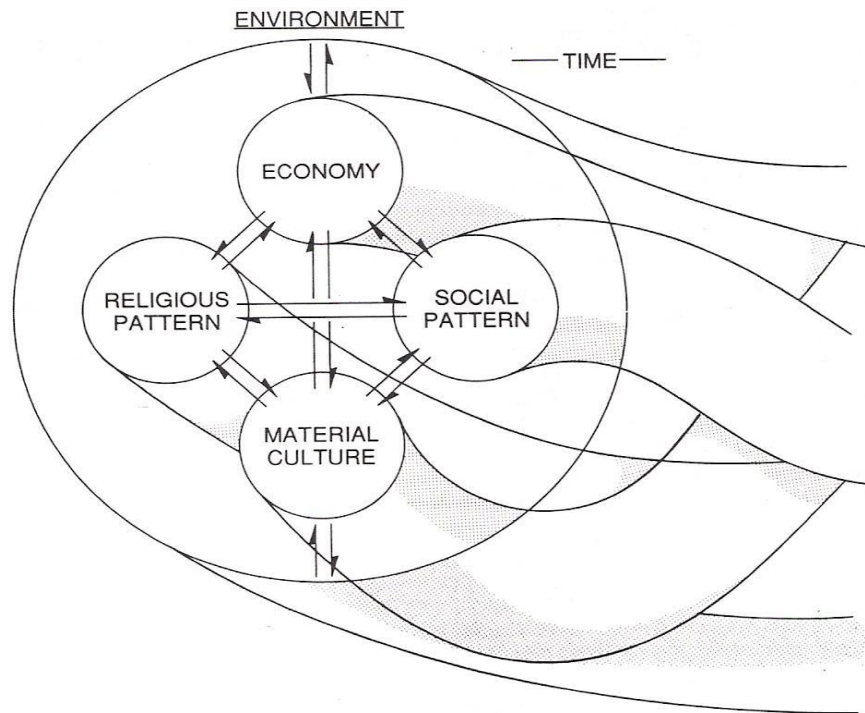


Fig. 3

“The environment of a culture system expresses the attributes external to that system and their varying and successive states in time and space. These environmental attributes can be partly perceived by the enclosed culture and partly not; from the culture's point, some environmental attributes are inessential, some essential, and some are key attributes for that culture system. Conventionally, we organize the external environment many headings but these can be roughly subsumed under - other sociocultural systems- fauna, flora, climate and geology; taking these terms in their broadest sense so that geography and topography are mere manifestations of geology, for example. These five sub systems are taken as interconnected networks of

attributes forming complex wholes and themselves an ensemble within the environmental system.”<sup>13</sup>

Fig. 4 represents the static and the schematic model of the ‘dynamic equilibrium between subsystem networks of a single sociocultural system and its total environment system where “all the components... oscillate randomly along inter correlated trending trajectories.”<sup>14</sup>

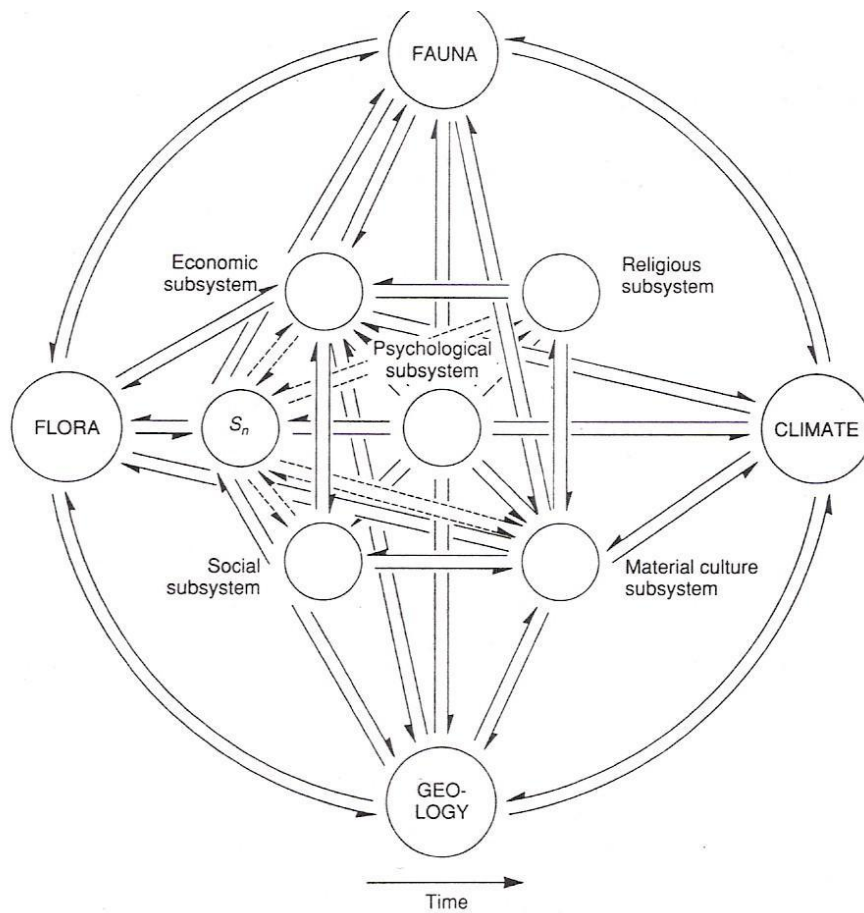


Fig. 4

These sociocultural systems as five component subsystems are coupled in a moving equilibrium with a five-component environmental system.

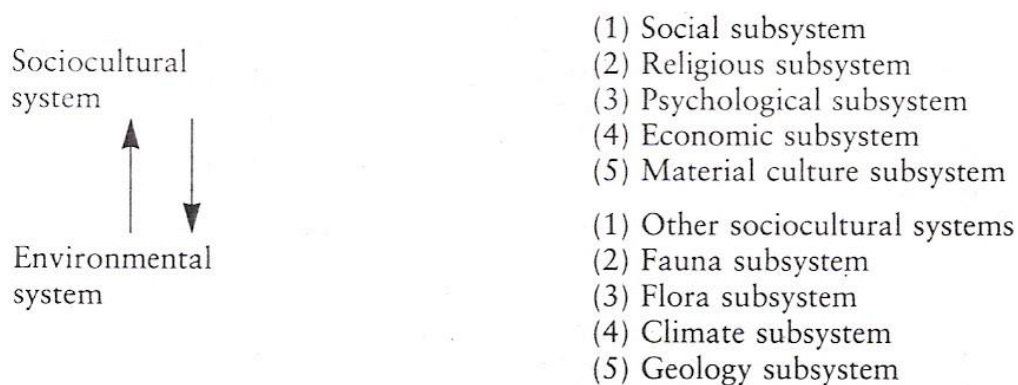


Fig. 5

### 2.3 The changing meaning of “Cultural Heritage”

In the recent decades, the term ‘cultural heritage’ has seen a change in the understanding and notion of the term. It is safe to owe this change in the meaning to the instruments developed by the UNESCO. Now, ‘cultural heritage’ does not only mean monuments, museums and collections of tangible objects. It encompasses living expressions and traditions “inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts.”<sup>15</sup> In simpler words, Intangible Heritage is the counterpart of culture which is tangible or touchable. It includes song, music, drama, skills, cuisine, annual festivals, crafts, and the other parts of culture that can be recorded but cannot be touched and interacted with, without a vehicle for the culture. These cultural vehicles have been termed as "Human Treasures" by the United Nations. Tangible or Intangible is man-made and is in a relationship to man and his society. Both have an external reality and so it should be possible to view the whole diversity of artefact<sup>16</sup> types and to distinguish properties possessed by every artifact. They are accessible to the appropriate modes of analysis and interpretation, and which together offer us a perception of the role of the artefact in social organisation. To put it another way, it should be possible to ask the questions how, what, when, where, by whom and why about every artefact, and to



achieve interesting answers. In spite of the concept being very delicate and “fragile” (since it deals with emotions and sentiments of individuals and communities as a whole, “Intangible Cultural Heritage is an important factor in maintaining cultural diversity in the face of growing globalization.”<sup>17</sup>

It is crucial to understand that the “importance of intangible cultural heritage is not the cultural manifestation itself but rather the wealth of knowledge and skills that is transmitted through it from one generation to the next.”<sup>18</sup> An understanding of the intangible cultural heritage of different communities enables intercultural dialogue within a nation and internationally.

“In the light of globalisation's increased mobility of ideas, goods, images and people, 'culture' has become”, means of distinction for various social agents, groups and individuals, with differing intentions. Rituals, ritualised performances and other ritually informed performative events lay the foundations for what is defined, and contested, as a particular group's past, heritage and cultural identity. Rituals, thus, must be understood as a means of claiming and getting access to different kinds of resources.”<sup>19</sup>

#### **2.4 Intangible Heritage: An Introduction**

In 2003 UNESCO adopted the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions in 2005. This went into effect on April 20, 2006.<sup>20</sup> The Convention recommends that countries and scholars develop inventories of ICH in their territory, as well as work with the groups who maintain this ICH to ensure their continued existences; it also provides for funds to be voluntarily collected among UNESCO members and then disbursed to support the maintenance of recognized ICH.<sup>21</sup> With the adoption of two international normative instruments, new platforms for informed and responsible policymaking have been created. “According to the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, the intangible cultural heritage (ICH) – or living heritage – is the mainspring of humanity's “cultural diversity” and its maintenance a guarantee for

continuing creativity. UNESCO redefines the meaning and lays out the components of Intangible Cultural Heritage as:<sup>22</sup>

- **Traditional, contemporary and living at the same time:** intangible cultural heritage does not only represent inherited traditions from the past but also contemporary rural and urban practices in which diverse cultural groups take part;
- **Inclusive:** we may share expressions of intangible cultural heritage that are similar to those practiced by others. Whether they are from the neighbouring village, from a city on the opposite side of the world, or have been adapted by peoples who have migrated and settled in a different region, they all are intangible cultural heritage: they have been passed from one generation to another, have evolved in response to their environments and they contribute to giving us a sense of identity and continuity, providing a link from our past, through the present, and into our future. Intangible cultural heritage does not give rise to questions of whether or not certain practices are specific to a culture. It contributes to social cohesion, encouraging a sense of identity and responsibility which helps individuals to feel part of one or different communities and to feel part of society at large;
- **Representative:** intangible cultural heritage is not merely valued as a cultural good, on a comparative basis, for its exclusivity or its exceptional value. It thrives on its basis in communities and depends on those whose knowledge of traditions, skills and customs are passed on to the rest of the community, from generation to generation, or to other communities;
- **Community-based:** intangible cultural heritage can only be heritage when it is recognized as such by the communities, groups or individuals that create, maintain and transmit it – without their recognition, nobody else can decide for them that a given expression or practice is their heritage<sup>23</sup>

In the light of our discussion, we could summarise the vast repository of “Intangible Cultural Heritage [as referring to] the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge,

skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.”<sup>24</sup> It further states, “...for the purposes of this Convention, consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development.”<sup>25</sup>

As Christine M. Merkel observes,

“For the first time in the history of international relations, there is a major and comprehensive international treaty on cultural policy, on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions, negotiated through the United Nations system. This new treaty has a strong potential to influence the state of play in the globalisation process by reaffirming culture as an essential global public good. Cultural diversity is understood here as both a development strategy, and leverage for democratic participation.”<sup>26</sup>

She further writes,

“...explicit policies for inclusion and participation, for the management of diversity, have increasingly been introduced around the globe over the last decade. The 2005 UNESCO Convention is a new element in the international global governance structure that can, should, and will play a major role as a catalyst for international cooperation in the field of culture. However, this cannot happen on its own. It will largely depend on the political will, skills and resolve of the state parties, and on the sustained action of civil society and other public and private stakeholders, including their tangible symbolic communication about cultural diversity in the public space.”<sup>27</sup>

“The UNESCO meeting of 2003 promulgated the ‘Paris Convention’ on intangible heritages brought out the significance to the use of ritual as heritage was underlined by the stress upon the idea of ‘living heritage’, and upon the widespread, if uncritical, use of the metaphor of biodiversity drawn from biology and the mantra of sustainability.”<sup>28</sup>The importance of rituals were included alongside other practices such as oral traditions, languages, performing arts, social customs and traditional crafts; and these were viewed as being endangered by the homogenising forces of an economic and social globalisation. ‘Outstanding examples’ of existing rituals were, therefore, to be recognised and safeguarded. (UNESCO)

Ashworth says that “the safeguarding of a ritual would seem to offer quite different challenges than preserving or restoring a physical structure, and it is not at all clear how this could have been achieved. Certainly rituals can be recorded, resurrected if defunct, and taught to new participants.”<sup>29</sup>

**Preservation Paradox:** Ashworth had argued that “heritage is an individual experience, then the participants or observers of these ‘safeguarded’ rituals would just experience them differently from the original participants.”<sup>30</sup>He brought out a very important factor that is “the notion of a ritual practice being endangered also raises the question that the existence of such endangerment is itself a clear indication that the ritual no longer fulfils the purposes for which it was created, for if it were still relevant and meaningful, it would not be endangered and in need of protection. The protected ritual is now quite different in its purpose and meaning - survival as a form, not significant as meaning - has become the objective.”<sup>31</sup> The same occurs, of course, with physical structures, which, once designated as a monument, change their character and meaning through the course of time and history just like the Red Fort or the Agra Fort which were forts and palaces where rulers lived and operated from. But once they were declared, “protected monuments” they became dead structures, without any life beyond similar to the case of the museum artefacts displayed on pedestals, out of context. He says that what could be called the ‘preservation paradox’ is even more evident with intangible heritages. The attempt to resist change through the inscription of objects as preserved monuments, whether tangible or intangible, actually causes

fundamental change. Not only do we view and experience it differently as a consequence of that designation, it as a different phenomenon also.

In spite of all the efforts made at the international level about safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage, in India no effort was visible in envisaging or preparing any guideline or promulgating any act or rule at the Government level. More precisely, the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, has only “The Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972 and 1973” which are primarily for the protection and preservation of antiquities and art treasures. According to the Act, an antiquity includes coins, sculptures, paintings and works of art and craftsmanship that are not less than one hundred years old. It just seeks to regulate the trade in such objects rather than imposing a total prohibition on such activity. There is no mention of ‘Safeguarding the Tangible or the Intangible Heritage’ in the Act. (Please see Fig. 7)

If we click either on Tangible or Intangible Cultural Heritage tab, it leads us to a list of institutions (Please see Figs. 8 and 9)

The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi is largely responsible for the recording on India’s diverse ‘Folk’ culture. In absence of such any guidelines, it becomes almost impossible for any individual or organization to understand what comes under the purview of preservation and its need/s. The IGNCA website does have a list of videos recorded as an “Inventory on the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) of India.” (Please see Fig. 10)

In absence of any working framework or paradigm, it not only is difficult but is impossible to try and safeguard the Intangible Heritage in a concrete manner. The Govt. Agencies in this case the IGNCA or the Sangeet Natak Akademi, the National Academy of Music, Dance and Drama, would do their level best, but would not come out of the paradigm of their respective frameworks. More would be discussed in Chapter 4.

Mostly, intangible cultural heritage is passed orally within a community, and while there may be individuals who are known ‘tradition bearers’, ICH is always broader than one individual’s own knowledge or skills as it form a part of the greater whole. Intangible cultural heritage is slightly different from the discipline of oral history, the recording, preservation and interpretation of historical information (specifically, oral tradition),

based on the personal experiences and opinions of the speaker. ICH attempts to preserve cultural heritage ‘with’ the people or community by protecting the processes that allow traditions and shared knowledge to be passed on while oral history seeks to collect and preserve historical information obtained from individuals and groups.

“Heritage being simultaneously personal and collective, private and public, cannot be other than polysemic, inherently dissonant, and both supportive and undermining of place-bound and non-place-bound multiple identities. Ritual, as intangible heritage, plays a prominent role in this process ... [and] the implications of all heritage and all identity being liable to be contested are considered.”<sup>32</sup> This process becomes a further challenge in the “light of globalisation’s increased mobility of ideas, goods, images and people. ‘Culture’ is a means of distinction for various social agents, groups and individuals, with differing intentions. Rituals, ritualized performances and other ritually informed performative events lay the foundations for what is defined and contested as a particular group’s past, heritage and cultural identity. Rituals, thus, must be understood as a means of claiming and getting access to different kinds of resources.”<sup>33</sup>

### **2.5 The Triad of Heritage, Ritual and Identity by Gregory J. Ashworth)**

It is almost necessary to define the three entities which are related to each other since the understanding of these terms is affected by “vagueness, ambiguity and even on occasion contradiction in definition”<sup>34</sup> The confusions caused by overlapping definitions leads to “unhelpful delusions”. Ritual is understood to either form a component of heritage or as its vehicle for its transmission “inter-generationally”. Likewise, identity is colloquially understood to be a “resultant of heritage”. We can come to a deduction in our observation that Heritage is a more significant a component amidst these three. But, “it is through the heritagisation of ritual that it is ascribed contemporary value, and heritage is a major instrument in the process of identification, that is the way people create their individual, group and place identities.”<sup>35</sup>

Gregory J. Ashworth lays down and explanations based on their functions:

- Heritage as resource, process and outcome

- Ritual as resource and communication
- Identity as outcome

### **2.5.1 Heritage as a Resource, Process and Outcome**

In this study's context, heritage as a process wholly refers to the intangible as it is the "product of the creative imagination"<sup>36</sup> of an individual and entire community conveying collective meanings.

In Gregory Ashworth's idea of 'Triad', heritage as a process refers to "completely intangible being" which is a product of imagination of the individual or the group conveying intangible meanings. The dichotomies of cultural/natural and tangible/intangible seem unhelpful if the paradigms of preservation or the recognition and expression of "imposed authenticity" is enforced upon the field of study.

Ashworth argues,

"...heritage is used here with a single, quite specific meaning. Heritage is not a relic artefact or building or a site associated by someone with past times, conditions, events or personalities. It is not a result of the work of historians, archaeologists or antiquarians concerned with the descriptive recreation of selected pasts. Nor is it what remains in fallible human memory. As a process, it uses sites, objects, and human traits and patterns of behaviour as vehicles for the transmission of ideas in order to satisfy various contemporary needs (Ashworth 1993). Heritage is a product of the present that draws upon an assumed imaginary past, and justifies itself by reference to an equally assumed imaginary future. As such, 'it is a medium of communication, a means of transmission of ideas and values and a knowledge that includes the material, the intangible and the virtual.'<sup>37</sup>

Through the passage of time and a change of space, the outcomes of such a process necessarily changes, "...as new presents supersede the old, which then is imagined and identified with new pasts and new futures."<sup>38</sup> Ashworth says, "Heritage and identity are thus driven by current needs, fashions and tastes, and there can be no universal, eternal and inalienable heritage values. Our current sacralised artefacts, monuments, inscriptions, collections and icons are just the fashions of the recent past fossilised into a different present. They are the attempts - fortunately, largely futile - to colonise an imagined future with our values as we clutter it with our preserved artefacts."<sup>39</sup>

### **2.5.2 Ritual as Resource and Communication**

Social anthropologists have given multiple definitions of the word 'ritual'. Ashworth in his essay, 'Heritage in Ritual and Identity' *Ritual Heritage and Identity: The Politics of Culture and Performance in a Globalised World*, brings out the relevant definitions or characteristics for the argument. He says,

"There is broad agreement that it is an established and prescribed pattern of actions, which raise the questions of who is prescribing and for what purposes. Second, the repetitive and ritualised patterns of behaviour relate fundamentally to groups rather than individuals, and have social significance to groups. Third, it is a set form of communication conveying a meaning beyond the immediate actions. In this sense, ritual has many of the characteristics of a language in which ideas are encoded and subsequently decoded. Thus, it contains three intrinsic characteristics, which relate it to heritage as described earlier, namely formal prescription, some social purpose relating to group homogeneity or cohesion, and, finally, a conveying of meanings between people."<sup>40</sup>

He mentions another function of the 'ritual as a liminal process' given by van Cennep (1960) which mentions, "facilitating or communicating transition from one condition or state to another, frequently as 'rites of passage', which can be given a spatial dimension."<sup>41</sup> One can say that "ritual actions are not automatically heritage anymore than are natural phenomena or man-made structures, but they



may be made so.”<sup>42</sup> Ashworth mentions three ways of viewing heritage:

- Heritage as resource can provide the materials from which rituals are constructed.
- Heritage as a process of transformation may function as a medium of communication whereby ritual is the medium through which values, norms or ideas from an imagined past are transmitted to a present or to an imagined future generation.
- Third, ritual may be an outcome as part of a heritage package, often combined with other non-ritualised heritage experiences. (Ashworth)

The familiar stylised performances that are the archetypical heritage experiences for tourists and residents alike, provide numerous well-known examples of rituals [such as the ‘changing of the guard’ performances at the India-Pakistan border] commodified within heritage packages, though precisely which meanings are being conveyed to these different consumers could be questioned. In each of these respects, ritual not only mirrors heritage closely, it may become inextricably entwined with it.

### **2.5.3 Identity as an Outcome**

Ashworth says, “the noun identity has two contradictory meanings. It is that which makes something or somebody uniquely different, as in identity documents, and it is also that which makes somebody or something the same as, or identical with, something or somebody else.”<sup>43</sup> Both meanings are often used interchangeably, which can be a source of confusion not least in social policy. Ashworth, in this discussion opines,

“identity is treated as an outcome, a condition created largely through heritage, which may or may not be conveyed through ritual as the vehicle of transmission. Like heritage, it is a product of the imagination, and like heritage, there is an uneasy co-existence of individual and collective identities. Also, like heritage, it is almost always plural, as both groups and individuals can, and generally do, possess multiple co-existing identities. If identity is the outcome, a condition or

state of mind, then identification is the process by which this is created. The condition identity is shaped by an active verb, 'identity', which describes the process, and by an identifier who plays the critical role in such a process."<sup>44</sup>

Along with the three above factors which engage, alter and affect the meaning of heritage, there are two more factors which are responsible for the inevitable changes in the cultural heritages are Time and Place. The significance in the change in time has been discussed earlier while explaining David Clarke's models for analysing cultural ecology. However, a little explanation on the 'place' is needed with context to this research work.

#### **2.5.4 Place**

Ashworth also observes that "along with the above three points there is a very significant fourth dimension, which so far has been implicitly rather than explicitly present in the descriptions and discussions - place."<sup>45</sup> He further says, "much but not all heritage is place-bound; much but not all identity is place identity. Place can be more than a locus or an arena on which heritage, identity or ritual occurs; it can be an inherent and integral component of all three."<sup>46</sup> However he brings out the complication,

"... that identity and place identity are not the same, although they are often elided in policy statements. People may identify with specific physical locations, as they may be associated with specific social and cultural groups, and places may be used to articulate or manifest such group identities to the extent that the location becomes an expression of the group. The real or perceived qualities of the place are transferred to the people. We are what we are because of where we are."<sup>47</sup>

It can be however argued that, "the identity of people may have little or nothing to do with places. Much social and even political identification has no particular need to be rooted in space."<sup>48</sup> Arguing further he says,

"... it may be said that local place identification, far from being - as is often implied - a universal basic human need, is a

preoccupation of an unusually place-bound minority. Much local place identity is a marginal concern of local political and governmental jurisdictions augmenting their legitimacy, or is an instrument of tourism or real estate promoters enhancing place-products through branding places. This place is distinctive; therefore, we or our product, our service or just our right to govern, are distinctive. Much human behaviour may even favour the absence of place or even a 'placeless' place, functioning effectively in a deliberately created sense of 'placelessness', in which an instant familiarity and recognition is more important for functional efficiency than the creation of a distinctive, and therefore unfamiliar, place."

## **2.6 Sacred-Profane Dichotomy by Emile Durkheim**

The sacred-profane dichotomy was posited by the French sociologist Emile Durkheim, who in his study of the Australian-Aborigines considered the aforesaid 'dichotomy' to be the central character of the very construction of religion. He says, "All known religious beliefs, whether simple or complex, present one common characteristic: they presuppose a classification of all the things, real and ideal, of which men think, into two classes or opposed groups, generally designated by two distinct terms which are translated well enough by the words 'profane' and 'sacred' (*profane, sacré*)."<sup>49</sup> He explains that beliefs, myths, dogmas, legends etc and the powers and virtues attributed to them, all of which help in representing a religion or a religious system refers to the sacred things. "...by sacred things one must not understand simply those personal beings which are called gods or spirits; a rock, a tree, a spring, a pebble, a piece of wood, a house, in a word, anything can be sacred."<sup>50</sup> He opines that the rites and rituals have this character as well. A rite would not be considered a rite if it did not bear this characteristic. "There are words, expressions and formulæ which can be pronounced only by the mouths of consecrated persons; there are gestures and movements which everybody cannot perform."<sup>51</sup> It means that the periphery of the 'sacred' is not universal i.e. its extent would vary depending on the respective religion.

### 2.6.1 Explaining Hierarchy in a Community

Another very important aspect of the 'sacred' is its definition "by the place they are generally assigned by the hierarchy of things."<sup>52</sup> They, in his opinion exuberate a certain superiority and power over the 'profane'. "One thinks of himself as occupying an inferior and dependent position in relation to them..."<sup>53</sup> He equates this inferiority relationship to that of slaves and their masters, subjects to their king, miser to his gold and says,

"...but if a purely hierarchic distinction is a criterium at once too general and too imprecise, there is nothing left with which to characterize the sacred in its relation to the profane except their heterogeneity. However, this heterogeneity is sufficient to characterize this classification of things and to distinguish it from all others, because it is very particular: *it is absolute*."<sup>54</sup>

It is not the same difference as good-bad as good and bad are two sides of the same class, morals just like 'sickness and health' are two aspects of the same order of understanding of life. It is important to understand the forces which play in distinguishing these two classes. He observes that even the practitioners of these rites and rituals have to go through a passage which is an

"... initiation [that ] is a long series of ceremonies with the object of introducing the ... man into the religious life: for the first time, he leaves the purely profane world where he passed his first infancy, and enters into the world of sacred things." This initiation rite in a community is practiced by multitude of people to identify their position in the hierarchy of matters. He refers to it as "veritable metamorphosis" as "rites are the rules of conduct which prescribe how a man should comport himself in the presence of these sacred objects."<sup>55</sup>

### 2.6.2 On Monasticism

Durkheim opines,

"Since men cannot fully belong to one exception condition of leaving the other completely, they are exhorted to withdraw

themselves completely from the profane world, in order to lead an exclusively religious life. Hence comes the monasticism which is artificially organized outside of and apart from the natural environment in which the ordinary man leads the life of this world, in a different one, closed to the first, and nearly its contrary.”

He says that a man chooses “mystic asceticism” to be able to leave all his attachment towards the ‘profane’ which is a part of the world that he belonged to before he surrenders to his religious belief. He opines that “...the logical working-out of this asceticism; for the only manner of fully escaping the profane life is, after all, to forsake all life.”<sup>56</sup>

Durkheim spoke of the essential separation of the ideas of sacred and profane. He says, “The sacred thing is *par excellence* that which the profane should not touch, and cannot touch with impunity... in addition to the fact that this establishment of relations is always a delicate operation in itself, demanding great precautions and a more or less complicated initiation...”<sup>57</sup>

To summarise aspects taken from Durkheim’s monumental work, relevant to this research, we can say in the parameter of religious beliefs ‘sacred’ could be referred to things/beliefs/actions/rituals which while protecting and guarding itself, isolates its existence from a common man’s reach. This isolation helps in exercising social control over things. Social control could be defined as norms and values exercised on individuals or groups to control their “conformity” and “compliance”. As sociologist Edward A. Ross argues that “belief systems exert a greater control on human behavior than laws imposed by the government no matter what form the belief takes.”<sup>58</sup>

## **2.7 The Invention of Traditions by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger**

Hobsbawm and Ranger, argue in their introductory note of *The Invention of Tradition*, ‘Traditions’ which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented.’ He further says,

“The term ‘invented tradition’ is used in a broad, but not imprecise sense. It includes both ‘traditions’ actually invented, constructed

and formally instituted and those emerging in a less easily traceable manner within a brief and dateable period – a matter of a few years perhaps – and establishing themselves with great rapidity... Invented tradition’ is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.’<sup>59</sup>

The past, real or invented, to which he and Terence Ranger refer imposes “fixed (normally formalized) practices, such as repetition”<sup>60</sup>He differentiates the ‘Traditions’ and ‘Custom’ in characters. He says,

“Custom’ in traditional societies has the double function of motor and fly-wheel.’ And it ‘cannot afford to be invariant... So it sustains common law and its flexibility in a traditional society. While the inventing tradition ‘is the wig, robe and other formal paraphernalia and ritualized practices surrounding their substantial action. The decline of ‘custom; inevitably changes the ‘tradition’ with which it is habitually intertwined.’<sup>61</sup>

Secondly, ‘tradition’ in ‘popular’ sense or understanding is “convention or routine, which has no significant ritual or symbolic function as such, though it may acquire it incidentally.”<sup>62</sup>“Inventing traditions, it is assumed here, is essentially a process of formalization and ritualization, characterized by reference to the past, if only, by imposing repetition. The actual process of creating such ritual and symbolic complexes has not been adequately studied by historians.”<sup>63</sup>Hobsbawm and Ranger opine,

“...there is probably no time and place with which historians are concerned and that which has not seen the ‘invention’ of tradition in this sense. However, we should expect it to occur more frequently when a rapid transformation of society weakens or destroys the social patterns for which ‘old’ traditions has been

designed, producing new ones to which they were not applicable, or when such old traditions and their institutional carriers and promulgators no longer prove sufficiently adaptable and flexible, or are otherwise eliminated'.<sup>64</sup>

He argues, "...adaptation took place for old uses in new conditions and by using old models for new purposes. Old institutions with established functions, references to the past and ritual idioms and practices might need to adapt in this way..."<sup>65</sup> they further say,

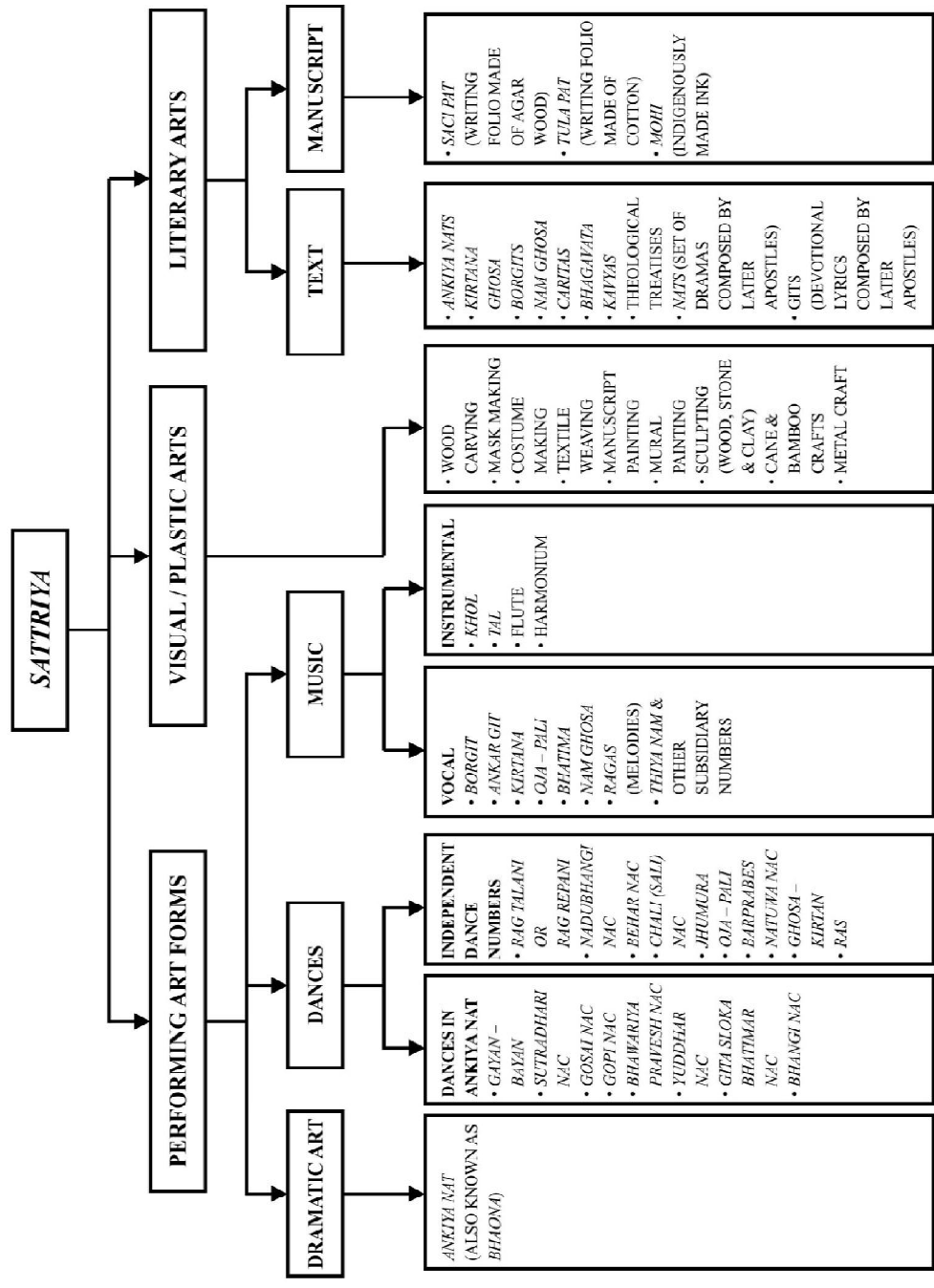
"More interesting, from our point of view, is the use of ancient materials to construct invented traditions of a novel type for quite novel purposes. A large store of such materials is accumulated in the past of any society, and an elaborate language of symbolic practice and communication is always available. Sometimes new traditions could be readily grafted on old ones, sometimes they could be devised by borrowing from the well-supplied warehouse of official ritual, symbolism and moral exhortation—religion and princely pomp, folklore and freemasonry... Existing customary traditional practices—folksong, physical contests, marksmanship—were modified, ritualized and institutionalized for the new national proposes."<sup>66</sup>

Indeed, the very appearance of [romantic] movements for the defence or revival of traditions 'traditionalist' or otherwise, indicates such a break. Such movements, common among intellectuals ... can never develop or even preserve a living past, but must become 'invented tradition'. On the other hand the strength and adaptability of genuine traditions is not to be confused with the 'invention of tradition'. They further say, "where the old ways are alive, traditions need be neither revived nor invented... but because they are deliberately not used or adapted."<sup>67</sup> Hobsbawm and Ranger observe one marked difference between old and invented practices- "the former were specific and strongly binding social practices, the latter tended to be quite unspecific and vague as to the nature of the values, rights and obligations of the group membership they inculcate: 'patriotism', 'loyalty', 'duty', 'playing the game', 'the school spirit' and the like."<sup>68</sup>

## **2.8 Introducing the Living Intangible Heritage: Sattriya and Its Genesis**

*Sattriya Nritya* as recognised and understood today, is one among the eight principal classical Indian dance traditions having a history and continuity over a period of more than five centuries. The Sattriya Dance of Assam was officially recognized by Sangeet Natak Akademi being the National Academy of Music, Dance and Drama in India, as one of the eight classical dance forms of India on 15 November 2000 vide its resolution of the General Council held in Guwahati on 14 November 2000. Unlike some dance forms such as Bhatanatyam, Kuchipudi which had to be revived and resurrected in pre independence years to evoke the ‘nationalist’ fervor or Odissi which was designed and created from *Mahari*, *Nartaki*, and *Gotipua* traditions post independence years under one re-christened umbrella, *Sattriya* has remained a living tradition since its creation by the “fountainhead” of Vaishnavism in Assam, Srimanta Sankaradeva in the later part of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. These were and still continue to be performed in the Vaishnava monasteries of Assam known as Sattras. Fig. 6 gives an insight into the vastness of the “Sattriya” art forms.





DIAGRAMATIC REPRESENTATION OF THE SATTRIYA ART FORMS

Fig . 6

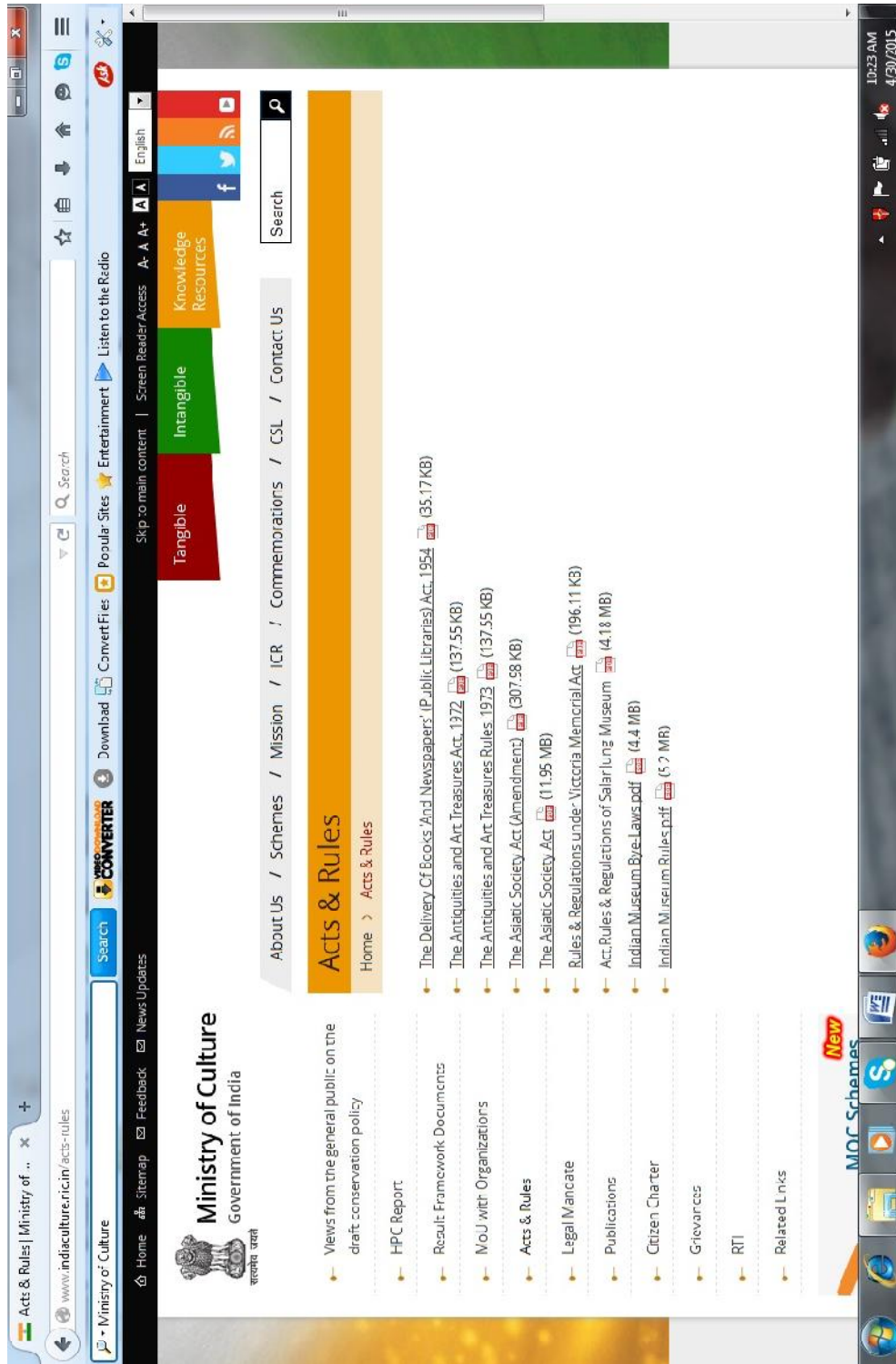


Fig. 7 WEB PAGE OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA WITH DETAILS OF THE LAWS AND ACTS DEVISED BY IT

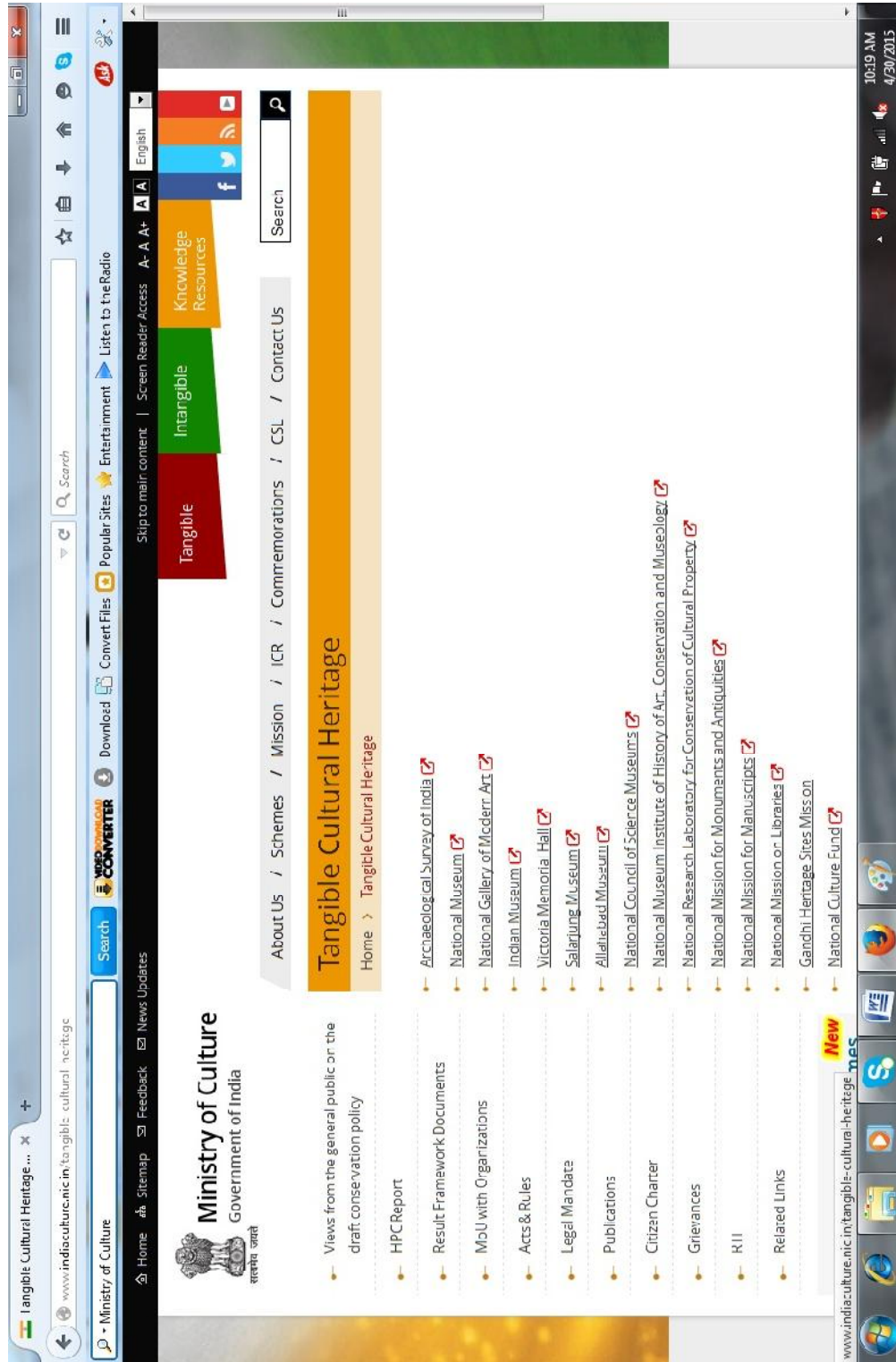


Fig . 8 WEB PAGE FOR ‘TANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE’ OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

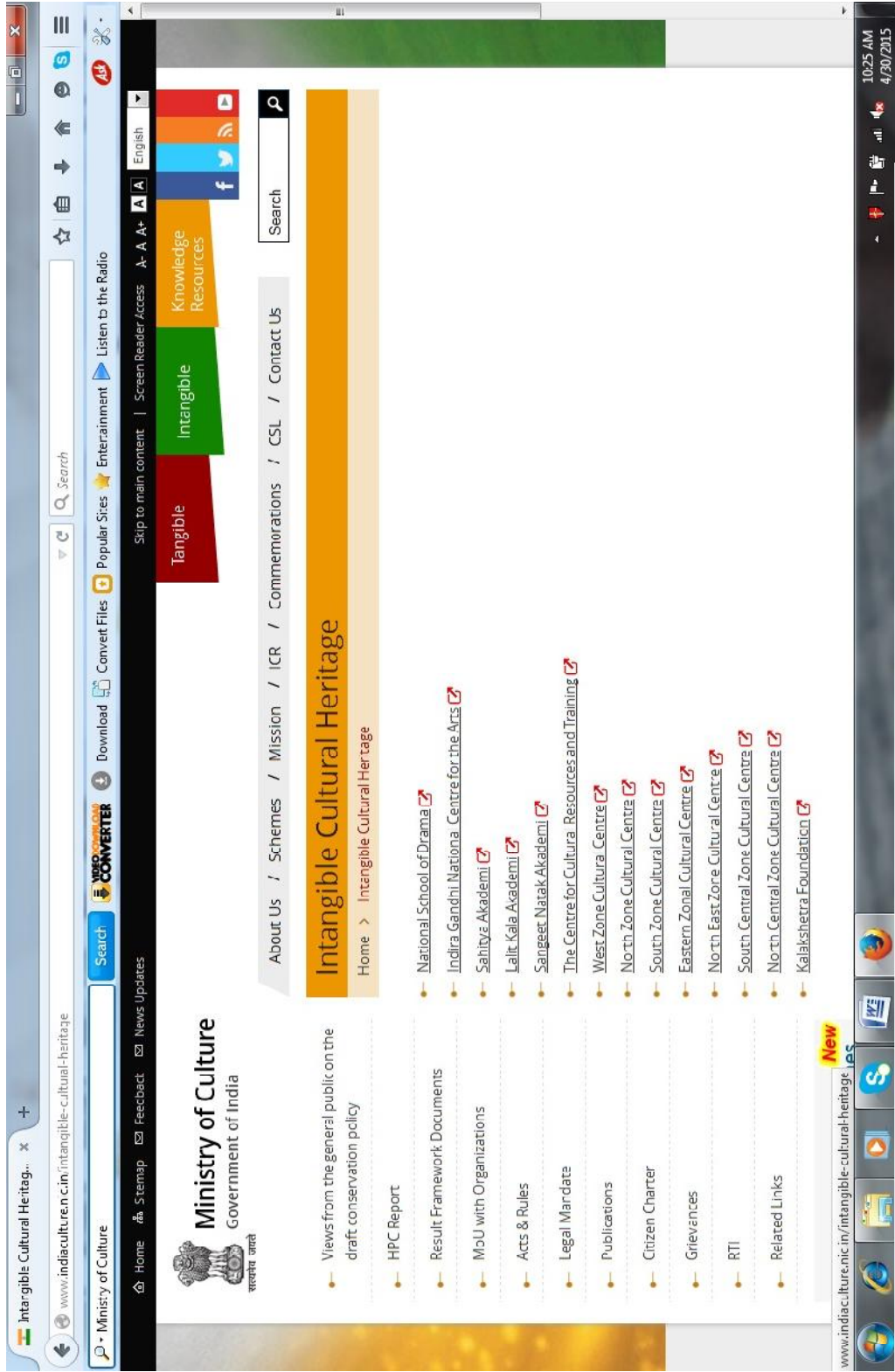


Fig.9 WEB PAGE FOR 'INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE' OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA



Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts

Visual Arts

### INVENTORY ON THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE (ICH) OF INDIA

Home > Janapada Sampada > Inventory on the Intangible Cultural Heritage of India > Inventory

Edited and Maintained by Prof. Mally Kausha

No.	Name of Element	Detail (PDF)	Consent (PDF)	View	Video
1	Buddhis: Chanting of Ladakh: Recitation of Sacred Buddhist Texts in the Trans-Himalayan Ladakh Region, Jammu and Kashmir, India.	Descriptor	Consent	Images	Video
2	Chaar Bayt: A Muslim tradition in lyrical oral poetry, Uttar Pradesh, Medhiye Pradesh and Rajasthan, India	Descriptor	Consent	Images	Video
3	Dashavatar: Traditional folk theatre form, Maharashtra and Goa, India.	Descriptor	Consent	Images	Video
4	The Festival of Salhesh, Bihar, India	Descriptor	Consent	Images	Video
5	Hirgan: Votive Terracotta Painted Plaque of Molela, Rajasthan, India.	Descriptor	Consent	Images	Video
6	Kabeira: Folk Songs and Dances, Rajasthan, India	Descriptor	Consent	Images	Video
7	Chhau Dance	Descriptor	Consent	Images	Video
8	Koam: Ritualistic Threshold Drawings and Designs of Tamil Nadu, India	Descriptor	Consent	Images	Video
9	Lama Dances of Sikkim: Buddhist Monastic Dances, Sikkim, India.	Descriptor	Consent	Images	Video
10	Mudiyettu: Ritual Theatre and Dance Drama: Kerala, India	Descriptor	Consent	Images	Video
11	Nacha: Folk Theatre, Chhattisgarh, India	Descriptor	Consent	Images	Video
12	Parola: Double Ikat Silk Textiles of Patan, Gujarat, India.	Descriptor	Consent	Images	Video

Fig. 10 WEB PAGE OF THE 'INVENTORY OF THE INTANGIBLE HERITAGE (ICH) OF INDIA ON THE WEBSITE OF INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE ARTS (IGNCA), MINISTRY OF CULTURE, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

## References for Chapter 2

1. Brosius, Christiane and Karin M. Polit, eds. *Ritual, Theatre and Identity: The Politics of culture and Performance in a Globalised World*. New Delhi: Routledge, 2011. Print.
2. Durkheim, Emile. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. New York: Free Press, 1912. 37-42 Web. 29 May 2015  
<<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/41360/41360-h/41360-h.htm>>
3. Hobsbawm, Eric., and Terence Ranger, eds. *The Invention of Tradition*. UK: Cambridge UP, 1983. Print.
4. Goswami, Kreeti. “*Parsis and the History of Modern Socialisation in the Late Nineteenth Century and Early Twentieth Century Bombay*.” M. Phil Thesis. Jamia Milia Islamia University. 2013. Print.
5. Goswami, Shilpi. “Material Culture Interpretation: A Communication Plan for The Bishnupur Terracotta Temples of Bengal.” M.A. Thesis. National Museum Institute. 2007. Print.
6. Pearce, Susan M, ed. *Interpreting Objects and Collections*. London: Routledge, 1994. Print.

## Endnotes for Chapter 2

1. UNESCO website: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/about/> Seen as on 29 April 2015
2. Goswami, Shilpi. “Material Culture Interpretation: A Communication Plan for the Bishnupur Terracotta Temples of Bengal.” M.A. Thesis. National Museum Institute. 2007. Print.
3. UNESCO website: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/convention/#Brief-History> Seen as on 29 April 2015
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Material Culture refers to the physical evidence of a culture in the objects and architecture they make, or have made. This term originated from archeological studies. But today it constitutes an interdisciplinary field of study encompassing theories from preservation and interpretation of objects to art history, archeology, folklore, museum studies, anthropology, history, amongst other fields of research in social sciences and humanities.

8. Pearce, Susan M. 1994. 'Museum Objects'. *Interpreting Objects and Collections*. London. Routledge. 9-11
9. Ibid. 44-45
10. Ibid. 45
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid. 46.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. UNESCO website:  
<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00002> Seen as on 23 April 2015
16. In the case of this thesis, artifact refers to the whole area of the Intangible Cultural Heritage i.e. the Sattriya Dance as a living ritual as well as a "classical dance" of India.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. Brosius, Christiane and Karin M. Polit, eds. *Ritual, Theatre and Identity: The Politics of culture and Performance in a Globalised World*. New Delhi: Routledge, 2011. 1. Print.
20. Prior to the UNESCO Convention, efforts had already been made by a number of states to safeguard their intangible heritage. Japan, with its 1950 Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties, was the first to introduce legislation to preserve and promote intangible as well as tangible culture: Important Intangible Cultural Properties are designated and "holders" recognized of these craft and performance traditions, known informally as Living National Treasures. Other countries, including South Korea (Important Intangible Cultural Properties of Korea), the Philippines, the United States, Thailand, France, Romania, the Czech Republic, and Poland, have since created similar programs.
21. UNESCO has also created other intangible culture programs, such as a list called Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. This list began in 2001 with 19 items and a further 28 were listed in 2003 and another 43 in 2005. In part, the original list was seen as a way to correct the imbalance in the World Heritage List, since it excluded many Southern Hemisphere cultures which did not produce monuments or other physical cultural

manifestations. It was superseded in 2008 by the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Lists.

22. UNESCO website: <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?pg=00002> Seen as on 29 April 2015
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. Brosius, Christiane and Karin M. Polit, eds. *Ritual, Theatre and Identity: The Politics of culture and Performance in a Globalised World*. New Delhi: Routledge, 2011. 56. Print.
27. Brosius, Christiane and Karin M. Polit, eds. *Ritual, Theatre and Identity: The Politics of culture and Performance in a Globalised World*. New Delhi: Routledge, 2011. 57. Print.
28. Brosius, Christiane and Karin M. Polit, eds. *Ritual, Theatre and Identity: The Politics of culture and Performance in a Globalised World*. New Delhi: Routledge, 2011. 32. Print.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Brosius, Christiane and Karin M. Polit, eds. *Ritual, Theatre and Identity: The Politics of culture and Performance in a Globalised World*. New Delhi: Routledge, 2011. 19. Print.
33. Brosius, Christiane and Karin M. Polit, eds. *Ritual, Theatre and Identity: The Politics of culture and Performance in a Globalised World*. New Delhi: Routledge, 2011. 1. Print.
34. Brosius, Christiane and Karin M. Polit, eds. *Ritual, Theatre and Identity: The Politics of culture and Performance in a Globalised World*. New Delhi: Routledge, 2011. 20. Print.
35. Ibid
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid. 21-22
38. Ibid. 22
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.



41. Ibid.
42. Ibid. 23
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid. 24
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
49. Durkheim, Emile. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. New York: Free Press, 1912. 37-42 Web. 29 May 2015  
<<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/41360/41360-h/41360-h.htm>>
50. Ibid.
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid. 38
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid.
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid.
58. Goswami, Kreeti. "*Parsis and the History of Modern Socialisation in the Late Nineteenth Century and Early Twentieth Century Bombay.*" M. Phil Thesis. Jamia Milia Islamia University. 2013. Print.
59. Hobsbawm, Eric., and Terence Ranger, eds. *The Invention of Tradition*. UK: Cambridge UP, 1983. 1. Print.
60. Ibid. 2
61. Ibid. 2-3
62. Ibid. 3
63. Ibid. 4
64. Ibid. 4-5
65. Ibid. p. 5
66. Ibid. p. 6
67. Ibid. 7-8
68. Ibid. 10