

# PRESERVATION AND ACCESS TO MANUSCRIPT HERITAGE IN INDIA

**Ramesh C. Gaur**

Librarian & Head of Division-Kala Nidhi, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi, India.

*"It is not some secret doctrine or esoteric knowledge that has kept India vital and going through the ages but a tender humanity, a varied and tolerant culture, and a deep understanding of life and its mysterious ways. Her abundant vitality flows from age to age in her magnificent literature and art."* -Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in Discovery of India.

## ABSTRACT

*The glorious past of Indian culture lies in more than five million ancient manuscripts, making India the largest repository of manuscript wealth in the world. These manuscripts are the historical evidence and have both great research and heritage value. Though our ancestors had tried to preserve these manuscripts by using various traditional methods of preservation, thousands of such valued unpublished Indian manuscripts on varied subjects are still laying scattered, some of these no longer accessible to research scholars and are under threat. The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), established in 1987. Kala Nidhi, a National Information system and Data bank, consists of the Reference Library of print collections, a large library of Microfilms/Microfiches, collection of slides, Cultural Archives and photo documentation in the disciplines of Arts and Archaeology. In this paper the efforts have been made to present various initiatives under taken by IGNCA and NMM for preservation and access of manuscript heritage of India, and also various other institutional and individual efforts in the fields of preservation and access of manuscripts in India. The emerging scenario in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and a proposal for setting up National Manuscripts Library at IGNCA have also been discussed.*

**KEYWORDS:** National Mission for Manuscript (NMM), Manuscript-India, National Manuscript Library, Digital Preservation, Copyright Act

## Introduction

The term Cultural Heritage denotes all kind of archival material related with cultural traditions of various civilizations of the world. It refers to knowledge created by the people associated with Art, Culture and allied areas. Cultural Heritage may be classified as Tangible Cultural Heritage and Intangible Cultural Heritage. Tangible Cultural Heritage may be further divided as moveable, immoveable and natural heritage. Moveable Heritage includes work of arts, books, manuscripts, artifacts, art objects, artworks etc. Immoveable Heritage refers architecture, monuments, archeological sites and buildings of historical significance. Natural Heritage may include the record of the countryside, natural environment, flora and fauna, forests, etc.

## Manuscript

The glorious past of Indian culture lies in ancient manuscripts. These are the basic historical evidence and have great research value, which led to recognize its need and importance internationally. It is estimated that India possesses more than five million manuscripts, making her the largest repository of manuscript wealth in the world. They are written in over 400 scripts on different kinds of material like birch bark, palm leaf, cloth and paper. These manuscripts are in the custody of different institutions like libraries, museum, mutts and individuals.

Etymologically, manuscript means something that is hand written. Here the term manuscript is related to antiquity not necessarily means the write up submitted by an author to a publisher. The Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972 lays down the legal framework for custody of manuscripts. Antiquities, defined under the Act include, "any manuscript, record or other document which is of scientific, historical, literary or aesthetic value and which has been in existence for not less than seventy-five years (Gaur & Chakraborty, 2009)." If this definition is taken into consideration in phase value, a manuscript means: 1) a hand written document; 2) which has scientific, historical, literary or aesthetic value; and 3) which is at least seventy-five year old.

## Survey of Manuscripts

In one of the surveys made by Dr. S.C. Biswas and Mr. M.K. Prajapati on behalf of INTACH during 1988-90 and on the basis of scrutiny of about 1100 printed catalogues and hand lists belonging to 70 libraries, institutions and individuals, the following estimates were made:

1.	Total number of manuscripts in India	5,000,000
2.	Indian manuscripts available in European countries	60,000
3.	Indian manuscripts in South Asia and Asian Countries	150,000
4.	Number of manuscripts recorded in catalogues	1,000,000
5.	Percentage of manuscripts languages wise	
	Sanskrit	67%
	Other Indian Languages	25%
	Arabic/Persian/Tibetan	8%

(Source: [Project Document, NMM, 2003](#))

Though our ancestors had tried to preserve these manuscripts, thousands of such valued unpublished Indian manuscripts on varied subjects are lying scattered or fragmented in India and foreign collections and some of these are no longer accessible to research scholars. This invaluable and unique pool of knowledge is under threat and manuscripts are disappearing at an alarming rate.

## Initiatives at Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA)

Recognizing the need to encompass and preserve this knowledge resource and to make these accessible to scholars and researchers, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), [Gaur \(2010\)](#) initiated the most important manuscript-microfilming programme in 1989. It has approached many of the private and public institutions and individuals who are in possession of valuable manuscripts preferably in Sanskrit Language and has signed Memorandum of Understanding with each of them for microfilming of their manuscripts. IGNCA has, so far, microfilmed over 2.5 lakh manuscripts. Out of the total

of over 20,600 microfilm rolls, 17087 rolls have been digitized and 13803 rolls duplicated. Some of the reprographic material of various primary and secondary texts has also been obtained from many foreign institutions including Bibliotheque Nationale (Paris), Cambridge University Library (Cambridge, UK), Staatsbibliothek (Berlin), INION (Russia), Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine (London), and India Office Library & Records (London). The details of the repository collection are as in Appendix.

### **Access to IGNC A Manuscripts Collection**

Scholars and researchers can access this microfilm/microfiche collection at the IGNC A. They can also obtain copies, subject to copyright restrictions, and indeed the conditions spelt out in the MOUs signed between IGNC A and concerned manuscript Library. As a general practice, one needs to seek permission of concerned library to obtain a copy of the manuscript from IGNC A Collection. Copies are being made available in digital/microfilm/print formats on charge basis. The consultation to all above manuscripts at IGNC A Reference Library is open to all without any charges.

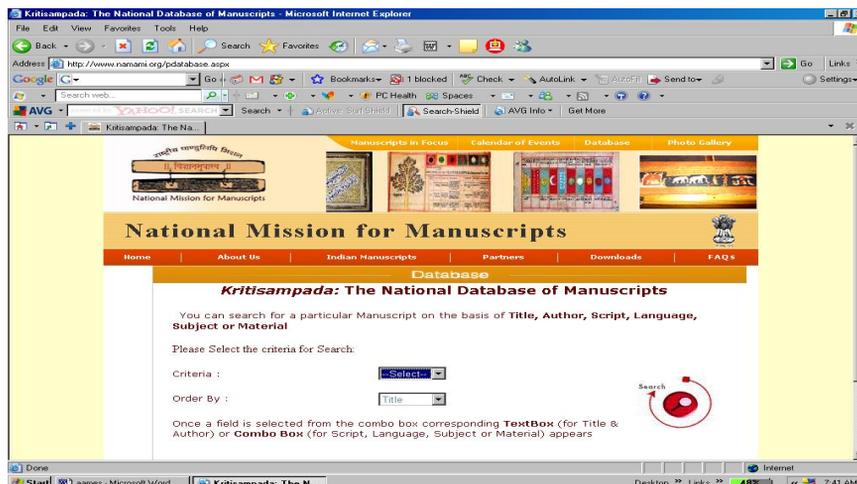
### **National Mission for Manuscripts, IGNC A, New Delhi**

The National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM) is the first consolidated national effort for reclaiming India's inheritance of knowledge contained in the vast treasure of manuscripts. The Mission was established in 2003 by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture with Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts as its nodal agency. The major objectives of the Mission are: survey, document and catalogue Indian manuscripts, in India and abroad, and compile a national database; facilitate conservation and preservation of manuscripts through training, awareness building and financial support; Provide ready access to these manuscripts through digitization and publication; promote scholarship and research in the study of Indian languages and Manuscriptology; and set up a National Manuscripts Library at the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi ([Project Document, National Mission for Manuscripts, 2002](#)). The Mission functions through different types of centres, established throughout the country to materialize these objectives. There are 46 Manuscript Resource Centres (MRC-s), 33 Manuscript Conservation Centres (MCC-s), 42 Manuscript Partner Centres (MPC-s) and 300 Manuscript Conservation Partner Centres (MCPC-s).

Digitization of manuscripts is the means of protecting and documenting textual heritage. So far NMM has digitized more than 30000 manuscripts from different manuscripts repositories in India. The Mission, in collaboration with University of Madras, Chennai is currently digitizing the existing volumes of New Catalogues Catalogorum (NCC). It has already digitized 5 books. The Mission plans to digitize 500 manuscripts each in 50 important repositories across the country. The Mission also plans to digitize 45 most valuable and rare manuscripts in the country.

### **Kritisampada: The National Database of Manuscripts**

The aim of the mission is to create an electronic database of manuscripts. The database contains information of various kinds on India's manuscripts-titles, themes, authors, commentaries, scripts, languages, conservation status and much more. The database contains all information on existing catalogues. The Mission endeavors to provide complete and valid information about each manuscript. This database can be searched at <http://www.namami.org/pdatabase.aspx>



A number of other programmes are designed to promote manuscript conservation, manuscript digitization and scholarship through manuscript studies workshops. More details regarding NMM activities can be had at [www.namami.org](http://www.namami.org).

### Museums and Libraries under Department of Culture

The Manuscripts (Mukhopadhyaya, 2006) available with some of following organizations under Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India are as indicated below:

Organization	Number of Manuscripts
Rampur Raza Library	15,000
Khuda Baksh Oriental Public Library, Patna	20,060
Asiatic Society, Kolkata	32,000
National Library, Kolkata	3,258
Central Institute of Buddhist Studies, Leh	10,000
Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath	1,028
Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad	10,000

### State Archives, State Libraries and State Museums

According to information compiled by IGNC, the holdings of some of the major state-administered institutions are as follows:

Organization	Number of Manuscripts
Adyar Library and Research Centre, Chennai	40,000
Andhra Pradesh Oriental Manuscripts Library and Research Institute' (Shifted to Osmania University Campus)	23,115
Delhi Archives	171
Goa Central Library	50
Government Manuscript Library, Allahabad	11,000
Manipur State Archives	334
Manipur State Kala Academy	1636
Oriental Institute and Manuscript Library, Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala)	56,000
Orissa State Archives	5,000

Orissa State Museum	37,000
Rajasthan State Archives, Bikaner	14,000
Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute (Jodhpur with 8 branches)	1,16,123
State Archives, J & K	1,000
State – Central Library, Hyderabad	17,000
The State Archives of Andhra Pradesh	6,209
TMSSM Library, Thanjavur (Tamil Nadu)	47,625

Manuscript holdings with State Government run institutions are widely distributed. However, information is not readily available regarding the extent to which these manuscripts are catalogued, scientifically preserved and made accessible to scholars.

### Universities

Some of the major universities with substantial collections of manuscripts are listed below. These universities receive limited funding and are unable to commit the regular funds required for cataloguing, preservation and dissemination. Equally, potential readers from a non-university environment are often unaware of the nature and accessibility of universities collections for research ([Mukhopadhyaya, 2006](#)).

Organization	Number of Manuscripts
Aligarh Muslim University (UP)	12,000
Andhra University Library (AP)	3,000
Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi (UP)	10,500
Bhandekar Oriental Research Institute (Pune)	20,000
Gauwhati University (Assam)	3,248
Kameshwr Singh Darbhanga Sanskrit University (Bihar)	13,000
Kurukshetra University (Haryana)	5,500
GOML, University of Madras (Tamil Nadu)	72,620
Osmania University Library (Andhra Pradesh)	6,428
Patan University (Gujarat)	3,700
Poona University (Maharashtra)	4,416
Punjab University (Punjab)	18,395
Sampurnanda Sanskrit University, Varanasi (UP)	1,40,000
Sanskrit Academy, Osmania University (Andhra Pradesh)	3,000
Shivaji University Library, Kolhapur (Maharashtra)	5,673
Tamil University, Thanjavur (Tamil Nadu)	3,365
University of Calcutt (West Bengal)	42,000
Utkal University (Orissa)	3,053
Vishwabharati University (West Bengal)	15,354

### Voluntary Bodies, Trusts, Temples and Individuals

Hundreds of societies, trusts and voluntary bodies throughout the country, often with no permanent staff or premises, have a substantial number of manuscripts in their possession. While many of them, are relatively well organized, many more are, unaware of the basic needs for record management and professional care.

### **The Copyright Act 1957 and Cultural Heritage**

The ownership rights of copyright holders in case of tangible cultural heritage materials except Indian ancient manuscripts are well covered in Indian copyright act 1957 as amended in 1995 ([Universal's Encyclopedia of Important Central Acts and Rules, 2011](#); [Gaur, 2010](#)). The explanations for such works given in above act are given below:

- Work of architecture means any building of structure having an artistic character or design, or any model for such building or structure;
- Artistic work: a painting, a sculpture, drawing (including a diagram, map, chart or plan), an engraving or a photograph, whether or not any such work possesses artistic quality
- A work of architecture and any other work of artistic craftsmanship.
- Cinematograph film means any work of visual recording on any medium produced through a process from which a moving image may be produced by any means and includes a sound recording accompanying such visual recording. Cinematograph shall be construed as including any work produced by any process analogous to cinematography including video films.
- Engravings include etchings, lithographs, woodcuts, prints and other similar works, not being photographs.
- Musical work means a work consisting of music and includes any graphical notation of such work but does not include any words or any action intended to be sung, spoken or performed with the music.
- Photograph includes photolithograph and any work produced by any process analogous to photography but does not include any part of a cinematograph film.
- Plate includes any stereotype or other plate, stone, block, mould, matrix, transfer, negative duplicating equipment or other device used or intended to be used for printing or reproducing copies of any work, and any matrix or other appliance by which sound recording for the acoustic presentation of the work are or are intended to be made.
- Sound recording means a recording of sounds from which such sounds may be reproduced regardless of the medium. Such recording is the method by which the sounds are produced.

### **Ownership of Copyright as given in Copyright Act, 1957**

First owner of copyright: subject to the provisions of the Act, the author of a work shall be the first owner of the copyright therein; In the case of a photograph taken, or a painting or portrait drawn or an engraving or a cinematograph film made, for valuable consideration at the instance of any person such person shall, in the absence of any agreement to the contrary, be the first owner of the copyright therein.

### **Terms of Copyright as per Copyright Act, 1957**

Term of copyright in published literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works: Except as otherwise hereinafter provided, copyright shall subsist in any literary, dramatic, musical or artistic work( other than a photograph) published within the lifetime of the author until sixty years from the beginning of the calendar year next following the year in which the author dies.

- The making of sound recordings in respect of any literary, dramatic or musical work, if Sound recordings of that work have been made by or with the license or consent of the owner of the right in the work.

- The person making the sound recordings has been given a notice of his intention to make the sound recordings, has provided copies of all covers or labels with which the sound recordings are to be sold, and has paid in the prescribed manner to the owner of right in the work royalties in respect of all such sound recordings to be made by him, at the rate fixed by the copyright Board in this behalf.
- The making or publishing of a painting, drawing, engraving or photographs of a work of architecture or the display of a work of architecture.
- The making or publishing of a painting, drawing, engraving or photograph of a sculpture, or other artistic work falling under sub-clause (iii) of clause (c) of section 2 if such work is permanently situated in the public place or any premises to which the public has access.
- The inclusion in a cinematograph film of any artistic work permanently situated in a public place or any premises to which the public has access; or Any other artistic work, if such inclusion is only by way of background or is otherwise incidental to the principal matters represented in the film;
- The reconstruction of a building or structure in accordance with the architectural drawings or plans by reference to which the building or structure was originally constructed. Provided that the original construction was made with the consent or license of the owner of the copyright in such drawings and plans.

### **Information Technology Act 2000 Vis-À-Vis Digital Preservation and Access to Digital Indian Cultural Heritage**

Indian IT Act 2000 does not cover issues concerning digital preservation and access to Indian cultural heritage. There is a brief mention about “access”, “information”, “electronic record” etc but all in different contexts and connotations (Gaur, 2010). Some of the terms as defined in above act are given below:

(1) In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires:

(a) "Access" with its grammatical variations and cognate expressions means gaining entry into, instructing or communicating with the logical, arithmetical, or memory function resources of a computer, computer system or computer network;

(r) "Electronic form" with reference to information means any information generated, sent, received or stored in media, magnetic, optical, computer memory, microfilm, computer generated microfiche or similar device;

(t) "Electronic record" means data, record or data generated, image or sound stored, received or sent in an electronic form or microfilm or computer generated microfiche;

(v) "Information" includes data, text, images, sound, voice, codes, and computer programmes, Software and databases or microfilm or computer generated microfiche.

### **Digital Preservation: Legal Issues**

Copyright protects the rights of copyright owner. There is a relationship between preservation and access in both the traditional and digital forms. Copyright provides safeguard to protect the original work from copying and reproduction. Digitization deals with conversion of material from print or non-print to digital form. So, it may be termed as reproduction of the original work. Digital preservation deals with issues concerning “refreshing”, “migration” and “emulation” of contents from one form to other or one media to other. This copying process has raised many legal issues. Both copyright Act 1957 and Indian IT act 2000 are silent on these emerging issues. It needs to have a

fresh look and strategy to deal with issues concerning digital preservation. Many countries have legal deposit acts for digital material. Books Delivery Act, which has provisions of deposition of books at National Library of Kolkata and Delhi Public Library, New Delhi also, needs a revision. A new act as per present demands, which may cover both the provisions of Books and Digital Deposits, is required soon. It is understood that DB act is being revised by the Government of India. It may demand a fresh look at Indian Copyright Act and IT Act also. The legislation for deposit of digital material may help in protection of IPR and related rights.

### **Barriers to Access to Cultural Heritage**

Cultural Heritage in India is unique, vulnerable and voluminous. The benefits of Cultural Heritage, traditional knowledge and monuments etc are not shared equally amongst all (Gorman, 2007). Our Cultural Heritage should be accessible not only to eminent class of scholars but also to everyone whomsoever wants to use it. Some of the key issues regarding access to Cultural Heritage are as given below:

1. Collect, store and organize for long term preservation
2. Select, digitize, organize and validate content to create an effective archiving system for users.
3. It should be accessible to all users, irrespective of the technology they use or their disabilities, including navigation, content, and interactive elements.
4. Access systems should be user-centered, as per the needs of the users, relevance and ease of use.
5. It should take care of multi-linguality. Access in more than one language should be provided.
6. It should use interoperable systems within cultural networks to enable users to easily locate the content and services that meet their needs.
7. Copyright, ownership rights and other legal issues should be clearly defined and protected (Gaur, 2009).

The Museums and other Cultural Institutions in India are in a dilemma of dissemination and access to the Cultural material available with them. Many of these institutions even do not have proper storage space for the material available with them. The majority of cultural heritage material available with them is still not catalogued. Digitization has been started by some of these Institutions; however access to digitized material is still a dream. There are many barriers in free and fair access of Indian Cultural Heritage not only to common people but also to the scholarly community. Some of such barriers to access to Indian Cultural Heritage are discussed below:

### **Technological Barriers**

Technology acts both as a barrier as well as a catalyst in enhancement of access to information and knowledge. It also helps in the preservation of Cultural Heritage. The lack of basic infrastructure with many cultural institutions in India is well known fact. Infrastructure such as telephone, computers, Internet, Intranet, digital technology, availability of trained IT manpower is still beyond the reach of many Cultural Institutions in India. Hence the digital divided is increasing. In recent years a number of initiatives have been taken up for introduction of IT applications at various cultural institutions. A number of digitization projects initiated with financial support from Ministry of Information and Communication technologies and Ministry of Culture have resulted in digitization of manuscripts and other various cultural knowledge resources such as

manuscripts, photographs, paintings, and audio video material at various institutions. Some of the digitization work has also been undertaken by Institutes themselves for example IGNCA etc. Some institutes have digitized the material with the help of National Informatics Centre, C-DAC etc and with the funding support from Ministry of Information and Communication Technology and other funding agencies. However, most of this digitized material is lying in form of CD/DVDs or file server. There is no technological vision for access to this material. There is no comprehensive plan or guidelines prepared by any institution in relation to following objectives: digital preservation, digital archiving, digital repository, Meta data standard.

### **Economic Barriers**

Unlike resources in science and technology, it is expected that access to resources in the field of Cultural Heritage should be made free of charges. However, there is cost involved in it. This cost need to be taken care of by Government or other stakeholders. Therefore, appropriate funds are required for making provisions for faster access to cultural heritage resources. But situation is otherwise as Art and Humanities is not a priority sector and is not having sufficient budget available for preservation and access to cultural resources.

### **Language Barriers**

India is a country with many languages and scripts. The cultural heritage material particularly manuscripts are available in different languages and scripts. There are 18 officially recognized languages in India. There are more than 400 different languages exist in India. About 50 different languages are being taught in schools in India. India has Newspapers in 87 different languages, Radio programmes in 71, and films in 15 languages. The scholars are not available to read and translate many ancient languages and scripts. So language is a barrier to access to Indian Cultural Heritage material. Many inscriptions available in India are still not being translated.

### **Technological Obsolescence**

Many of the audiovisual cultural heritage material are still not integrated into traditional library activities. Old gramophones, spool tapes, VHS & many more old form of audio visual material is facing problem of technological obsolescence as players for many of these equipments are not available. Conversion of these materials into new form of multimedia technologies is very expensive. The digital version of such material also requires large storage space. Multimedia technologies are also facing problem of current technological obsolescence as technologies are changing at very faster pace.

### **Tradition of Preservation and Access in India**

In order to meet the twin objectives of preservation and access, Indians resorted to a comprehensive policy of preparing manuscript, starting with seasoning and processing of the material and treating the material with eco-friendly insecticides to careful storage. It may be followed that the life of a palm leaf manuscript is far longer than a modern day device like CD or microfilm. The tradition of manuscript preparation, preservation and coping continued in full strength till the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The downfall started to be settled since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century when printed books started to gain popularity. After independence, that in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the old tradition ceased to be practiced and it took a long time to adopt and utilize a new practice to preserve manuscripts. It is primarily because of this vacuum or otherwise in this transitory

period after independence that the half of the manuscripts reserved in the country was lost.

### **Modern Concept of Preservation and Access**

Libraries, museums, archives and communities are knowledge hubs of the society and primary information providers. Here resource materials are available in printed books, manuscripts, still images (slides, photographs and negatives), art objects, festivals, rituals documented in audio and video etc. Most of this analogue information can not be accessed without the proper equipment. Also, the accessing of the same information simultaneously by many users requires multiple physical copies and equipment. With the frequent use of the original material, the material gets deteriorated every day. Digital technology opens up a total new perspective (Gaur & Chakraborty, 2009). The World Wide Web holds millions of websites and the Internet is the market place for research, teaching, expression, publication and communication of information. Besides preserving and providing access to digital material a great number of archives and libraries nowadays have also turned to creating digital surrogates from their existing resources.

The concept of Communication and Information Technology has been changed during last few decades worldwide. Maximum research went in these areas, which resulted in faster phasing out of the hardware and software platforms, applications (online as well as products) and format of data etc. At the same time, one level backward compatibility support was always extended by the industry with every development. Today, majority of the data is being generated digital (borne digital) and we have left with no other option left to plan for its long term availability. This is mainly because the electronic equipments are easy to handle, quality checking of data generated is mostly in real time and storage is cheaper and condensed. Also, digital conversion is the only means to integrate the traditional form of data (converted digital) with borne digital data and with its metadata. The reasons for implementing a digitization project, or more precisely a digital preservation project, are mainly to:

- **To increase access:** this is the most obvious and primary reason, where there is thought to be a high demand from users and the library or archive has the desire to improve access to a specific collection.
- **To improve services** to an expanding user's group by providing enhanced access to the institution's resources with respect to education, long life learning.
- **To reduce the handling** and use of fragile or heavily used original material and to create a "back up" copy for endangered material such as Brittle books or documents.
- From a desire to **develop collaborative resources**, sharing partnerships with other institutions to create virtual collections and increase worldwide access and to seek partnership with other institutions to capitalize on the economic **advantages of a shared approach**

Digital technologies offer a new preservation paradigm and the opportunity of preserving the original by providing access to the digital surrogate; of separating the informational content from the degradation of the physical medium. In addition, digital technologies liberate preservation management from the constraints of poor storage environments typical of the tropical and sub-tropical climates of the area, where the repositories are located.

### **Emerging Scenario in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Prospects and Challenges**

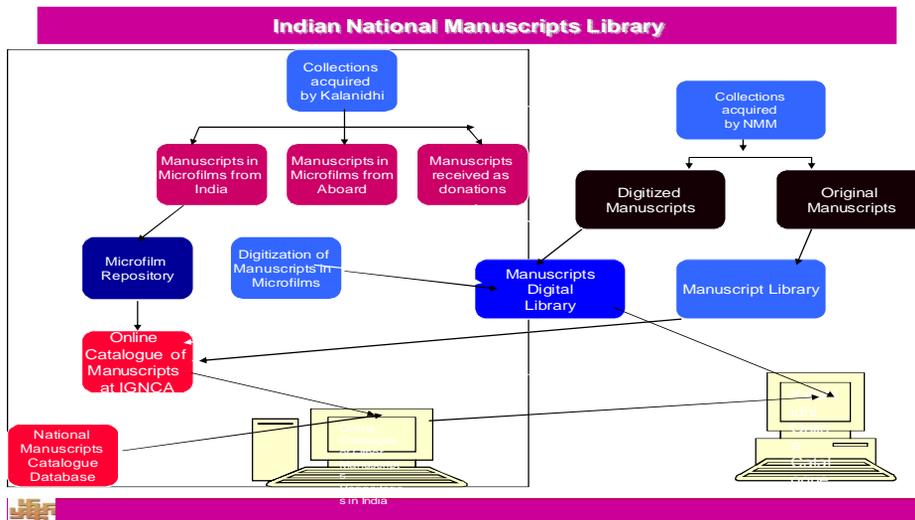
Manuscripts, which contain centuries of accrued knowledge in such areas as philosophy, sciences, literature, arts and the pluralistic faith systems of India are more than just historical records. They represent the collective wisdom and experience of generations of thinkers. In fact the entire gamut of history is left unexplored or partially explored in manuscripts. So what is badly needed is that

1. The information about the Indian manuscripts available at institutions and libraries must be made available in India along with digital copies and microfilms of the content
2. Conservation treatment should be given on par footing to the manuscripts available in the custody of the individuals and institutions in remote areas.
3. To speed up digitization of manuscripts
4. To give emphasis on the publication of unpublished manuscripts and launch effective research projects and bring the knowledge content of the manuscripts in the knowledge cycle
5. Find out the way and explore the knowledge available in manuscripts to utilize the same for sustainable development of the mankind.
6. Indian manuscript Libraries/Archives both those in public and those in private domain contain very valuable knowledge base, it is unique, irreplaceable and superior in quantity and quality to any other archival source. The recently developed technologies of digitization, if wisely combined with scholarship are offering cheap and efficient methods of preservation, which would permit India to collect this documentation in a central database and provide this material to the interested scholars worldwide in an easily accessible format.
7. In India a large number of digitization of manuscript projects undertaken by various institutions such as Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), Khuda Baksh Oriental Public Library, Patna etc have not delivered desired results because of lack of appropriate archiving system. Digital data are vulnerable, much more so than the originals. Digitization Projects often start with temporary grants and focus upon collecting the maximum data possible. However, at the end of the project, when a great quantity of precious data are collected often there is no institution to properly care for these data and look after the post-collection activities. This is why, for any digitization project a background institution that can take responsibility for archiving the data and preserving them for at least 50, if not 100, years is a necessary condition.
8. A general pitfall for digitizing projects is an attempt to maximize the quantity of the collected data without providing the appropriate metadata and the resulting catalogues. Metadata collection and cataloguing are essentially scholarly activities and need excellent skills. So no digitized images without appropriate metadata and catalogues should be produced during the project.

### **Indian National Manuscripts Library at IGNCA: A Proposal**

To achieve various challenges as mentioned above the established of Indian National Manuscripts Library at IGNCA has been proposed. With all manuscript resources compiled at IGNCA under Kala Nidhi and NMM projects, a centralized repository of manuscripts will be available to the users worldwide. This is going to be the first such library in the world, and of course the foremost, to among all other institutions to fulfill the twin objectives of preservation and access to Indian manuscripts. The National

Manuscript Library is being designed to inspire research on and ensure recycling of the knowledge content in the manuscripts. Indeed a revolutionary concept.



## Conclusion

In India a large number of digitization of manuscript projects undertaken by various institutions such as Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), Khuda Baksh Oriental Public Library, Patna etc have not delivered desired results because of lack of appropriate archiving system. Digital data are vulnerable, much more so than the originals. Digitization Projects often start with temporary grants and focus upon collecting the maximum data possible. However, at the end of the project, when a great quantity of precious data are collected often there is no institution to properly care for these data and look after the post-collection activities. This is why, for any digitization project a background institution that can take responsibility for archiving the data and preserving them for at least 50, if not 100, years is a necessary condition. Therefore, National Programme on Digital Preservation and Access to Indian Cultural Heritage under the umbrella of National Digital Preservation Programme of India should be formed at the earliest.

## NOTES

**The National Archives of India** (Weblink: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.in/>) is the repository of the non-current records of the Government of India and is holding them in trust for the use of administrators and scholars. It is an Attached Office of the Ministry of Culture. It was set up in March 1891 in Calcutta (Kolkata) as the Imperial Record Department and subsequent to the transfer of the National Capital from Calcutta to New Delhi in 1911.

**The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA)** (Weblink: <http://www.ignca.nic.in/>) was established in 1987 as an autonomous institution under the Ministry of Culture, as a centre for research, academic pursuit and dissemination in the field of the arts. The Arts' encompass a wide range of subjects - from archaeology and

anthropology to the visual and performing arts, enveloping them in a complementary and non-demarcated vision. In its functioning, the IGNCAs has met its mandate and continues to work in this direction.

**The National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM)** (Weblink: <http://www.namami.org/>) was established in February 2003, by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, Government of India. A unique project in its programme and mandate, the Mission seeks to unearth and preserve the vast manuscript wealth of India. India possesses an estimate of five million manuscripts, probably the largest collection in the world. These cover a variety of themes, textures and aesthetics, scripts, languages, calligraphies, illuminations and illustrations. Together, they constitute the 'memory' of India's history, heritage and thought. These manuscripts lie scattered across the country and beyond, in numerous institutions as well as private collections, often unattended and undocumented. The National Mission for Manuscripts aims to locate, document, preserve and render these accessible- to connect India's past with its future, its memory with its aspirations.

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**Appendix: Repositories Collection in India**

<b>Name of the Projects</b>	<b>Total Mss.</b>	<b>Total Folios</b>	<b>Micro film Rolls</b>	<b>Digitization</b>
Advaita Ashram Mayavati, Pithoragarh	91	21820	36	36
Anand Ashram Samsthan, Pune	949	61912	101	101
Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad Arabic & Persian Research Institute, Tonk	988	169282	225	225
Asiatic Society of Mumbai, Mumbai	7	257	1	1
Atomba Research Centre, Imphal	33	2510	6	6
Bharat Kala Bhawan, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi	72	3400	5	5
Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune	18572	1360592	2254	2253
Bharat Itihas Samsodhak Mandal, Pune	881	27610	47	47
Bombay University, Mumbai	9	596	1	1
Dhinachandra Singh Memorial Mss. Library, Imphal	273	7800	13	13
Dr. U.V. Swaminathan Iyer Library, Chennai	3294	322069	477	477
Government Museum, Alwar	1	96	1	1
Government Oriental Mss. Library & Research Centre, Chennai	46806	2113435	3330	2312
Guru Sangolsem Kalidaman Singh Collection, Imphal	67	4410	7	7
Hijam Romani Singh Collection, Imphal	2	1740	2	2
Juma Masjid Of Bombay Trust, Mumbai	141	11970	19	19
Kamrupa Anusandhan Samiti, Guwahati	82	4288	8	8
Keladi Museum and Historical Research Bureau, Keladi	111	9680	15	15
Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, Patna	800	165775	263	263
L.D.Institute. of Indology, Ahmedabad	1987	71698	124	124
Maharaja Sawai Man Singh-II Museum, Jaipur	38	4000	7	7
Manipur State Archives, Imphal	110	11235	13	13
Manipur State Kala Academy, Imphal	556	34050	55	55
Manipur State Museum, Imphal	52	6597	9	9
Mutua Museum, Imphal	15	640	1	1
Nagpur University, Nagpur	22	882	2	2
Natuam Sangeeta Academy, Imphal	38	2520	4	4
Oriental Research Instt. & Manuscripts Library, Thiruvananthapuram	5426	650592	1071	54
Oriental Research Institute, Mysore	10249	792440	1368	5
People's Museum, Kakching, Imphal	516	28500	28	28
Pt. Chandra Singh Memorial Library, Imphal	204	7293	11	10
Padamshree N. Khelchandra Singh Collection, Imphal	599	28316	59	59
Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute, Alwar	3237	248837	433	433
Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute, Jodhpur	2466	108139	180	180

Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute, Udaipur	633	25467	44	44
Rama Krishan Mission, Chennai	70	15725	27	26
Rampur Raza Library, Rampur	142	34153	51	51
Sahitya Sanstha Rajasthan Vidyapeeth, Udaipur	93	4112	7	7
Sankara Mutt, Kancheepuram	3232	458890	803	803
Saraswati Bhawan Library, Varanasi	111339	3758518	5638	5638
Scindhia Oriental Research Institute, Ujjain	4190	227356	350	350
Shri Chaitanya Research Institute, Calcutta	170	71500	110	110
Shri Ranbir Sanskrit Research Institute, Jammu	5437	507278	918	918
Sree Jagadguru Mooru Savira Math, Hubli	442	83200	75	75
Sri Rama Verma Government Sanskrit College, Tripunithura	3661	296300	467	467
Thanjavur Maharaja Sarfoji Saraswati Mahal Library, Thanjavur	13042	496166	821	821
Vaidika Samsodhana Mandala, Pune	14393	633039	991	991
Vrindaban Research Institute, Vrindaban	142	4773	10	10
Yumnam Dhananjai Singh Collection, Imphal	42	2529	4	-
<b>External Collection</b>	<b>255722</b>	<b>12903987</b>	<b>21296</b>	<b>17087</b>
<b>In-house Projects</b>				
Suniti Kumar Chatterjee Collection	182	30600	53	-
Hari Katha Collection	160	19800	33	-
Jai Dev Singh Collection	177	15000	25	-
Heera Manik Collection	13	9000	14	-
Charar-e-sharif	7	2400	4	-
Lokesh Chandra	6	1800	3	-
Tibbatan Mss.	37	1200	2	-
K.D.R. Pandey Collection	21	2400	4	-
Special Rare Collection	16	9600	19	-
C.V. Pandey	1	210	1	-
Rare Collection	132	23400	40	-
Palm Leaves	31	3000	6	-
National Museum	3	1800	3	-
Central Council for Research in Ayurveda & Siddha	2	1200	2	-
Miscellaneous	7		7	-
Internal Collection	795	121410	216	-
Total Collection	256517	13025397	21512	17087