



Preservation of cultural heritage through video documentation: A contemporary paradigm for preserving the socio-cultural tradition of the Kandyan dress

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Abstract

Aim: The probability of preserving the Kandyan dress through video documentation is analyzed in this study. The research aims to shed light on the video documentation method as a practical means of preserving cultural heritage by discussing its benefits, challenges, hands-on approaches, and transcending methodology.

Method: The data from this study will be analyzed qualitatively with the help of the literature review and theoretical frameworks.

Findings: The Kandyan dress is created using a technique similar to sculpting, in which the fabric is shaped by pressure applied to the wearer's body. This clothing is significant for anthropology and history because it reflects various social and economic factors and has a unique design.

Implications/Novel Contribution: To better understand the potential and limitations of this practice and methodology, social scientists can use this application and overview.

Keywords: Kandyan dress, Video documentary, Cultural heritage preservation

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INTRODUCTION

Curatorial experts at institutions with extensive artifact collections have historically served as the arbiters of cultural principles in the heritage field. However, the development of new digital technologies has enabled active bidirectional involvement in heritage and an expansion of heritage and its accessibility through the co-production of the exhibition, oral stories, and other display and archive forms based on personal recollection, interactivity, and memory. Since the late 1990s, academic and cultural production has focused on how the contemporary world can forge new ways of connecting with the past (De Silva, 2005). The importance of the Internet as a "store window" for the industry and as a means of attracting customers was frequently emphasized. The literature then investigates how the digital realm can be used to create a rich setting for two-way interaction with the past, to provide an experience on par with a physical visit but enhanced across a range of phenomena (online communities). This study will focus on preserving the traditional dress-wearing technique of Sri Lanka by placing it in its cultural context (Prompayuk & Chairattananon, 2016; Verhelst, 1990).

Essentially, the Kandyan dress-forming process is a unique modeling technique in which the material is shaped to the body to create a three-dimensional structure. One of Sri Lanka's thriving cultural legacies is the elaborate Kandyan dress, which combines significant visual and cultural expression with a distinctive craft. Although the traditional Kandyan dress has become the most widely recognized symbol of Sri Lanka and its people, the continued existence of the heritage is being called into question and endangered by the impact of free market powers at varying rates. However, as Kandyan culture becomes increasingly secularized, the danger, visual, and functional features of this distinctive clothing type are exacerbated as it is carried into the next century.

The primary goal of this research is to examine the potential for video documentation to aid in the maintenance and dissemination of cultural traditions. An overview of videography's role in ethnographic research

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is provided, as is a description of how video ethnographic methodology can be used to protect cultural artifacts for future generations. The study aims to create video documentation of Kandyan traditional dress in Sri Lanka, including its various forms, production methods, wearer customs, and contextual applications. When viewed through the lens of cultural anthropology, clothing serves as a microcosm of society, with its associated rituals and events reflecting the more significant, nuanced meanings of the surrounding culture.

Therefore, a new paradigm for the preservation of cultural heritage (tangible and intangible) and scholarly interpretation should be established: the video documentation of cultural traditions or anthropological aspects.

The video production process is a huge undertaking with far-reaching consequences, so it's crucial to put in the time and effort required to find the sweet spot between satisfying the aesthetic needs of the medium and respecting cultural norms and expectations. Researchers in the social sciences can use this application and overview to better comprehend the possibilities and limitations of this approach.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Kandy World Cultural Heritage Site

Kandy was the last authoritative Kingdom of Sri Lanka from the fourteenth Century AD to 1815 (De Silva, 2005). The city of Kandy was avowed a world social legacy site by UNESCO in 1988. Kandy is an important center for organization, business and culture developed from history. The city is situated in the focal good country area in Sri Lanka. There were 20 area secretariats and 2987 towns in Kandy district. According to the branch of Census and Statistics, 2012 is expressed that the all out area populace is 1,279,028 and 80 percent of the populace is provincial, 12 percent urban and 8 percent live in the ranch division (Daskon & Binns, 2009). Kandyan period was the last and the main time of history during both Western and Eastern remote impacts spread over the Kingdom. Toward the start from the development of Kandyan Kingdom, South Indian impacts were bit by bit entered from the Gampola Kingdom (Daskon & Binns, 2009). The Portuguese took over for 130 a long time, the Dutch for 163 years and last the British assumed control over the country for right around 150 years. The Nayakkar impacts brought solid social absorptions since they administered right around 76 years. Because of that local culture society has quick turning out to be westernization in standpoint. By the 16th Century onward the eminence grasped western social values. Ultimately illustrious and world class dress significantly show western impacts (Kabas, 2017; Ranathunga, 2018; Suharti & Pramono, 2016; Yazici, 2016). Most of the network of Kandyan culture said to have been dropped from South Indian and its structure was altered by later turn of events (Coomaraswamy, 1956). Subsequently rustic Kandyan people group are viewed as regular and their poise created through genetic associations, aptitudes and conventional craftsmanship (Dewaraja, 1988; Subiyantoro, Sulistyono, Yulianto, & Prameswari, 2017). Culture is a muddled concept which has exceptional highlights. The UNESCO characterizes culture as an interesting arrangement of example of life (World Cultural Report, 2001). Nowotny (2008) alludes to culture as the entire segments of life including scientific information, conventions of nourishment and dress, images, indigenous act of taking choices what's more, power use. Culture deciphers as a complex of highlights that includes spiritual, material, scholarly and passionate angles that distinguish a social gathering or a general public by the UNESCOs the Commonwealth Foundation. Verhelst (1990) further expresses that culture includes methods of life, esteem frameworks and conventions and convictions. It is understood that culture in this sense is characterized in the broadest sense of tangible and elusive factions incorporate conventional values, knowledge and customs. These characteristics can be safeguarded and contributed across socially to improve openings and maintainability of people groups lives.

Power of Dress: Thuppottiya

Kandyan elites recognized as amazing and recognize group in the social layers who were worn out from a high rank status at the Kings administration and who had riches and used influence (Dewaraja, 1988; Yazici, 2016). Their indulgent thuppottiya sumptuous dress implied pride, force and high economic wellbeing. The ensemble was worn at the regal court and stately events, for example, New Year celebration, yearly parade at the Tooth Relic what's more, yearly show at the Kings court where the high status showed. During the Kandyan period it was carefully precluded to mimic illustrious and first class dress behaviors by the remainder of the ordinary citizens. Dewaraja (1988) clarifies that it is seen that a large number of the world class were highborn by birth

whose family had cut off Kandyan sovereignty for a long period. They had direct relationship with the sovereignty. Thuppottiya dress was the stylized dress of first class appear mixed blend of numerous social impacts. The outfit is comprised of an unrestrained long lower hung material what's more, a coat. The dress is a mixture structure which involves western highlights joined with Siamese dress highlights. Coomaraswamy (1956) expressed that things of the coat are like the Western coat with a neckline, sleeves, catches what's more, silver catch chains. As Ranathunga (2018) states that the Thuppottidress was brought from the Kingdom of Siam during the Kandyan time when the two nations had social trade as far as foundation of higher appointment (Uppasampada a Buddhist custom) in Sri Lanka. The dress was motivated by Javanese imperial court dress. So as to the Siamese convention, a Buddhist fledgling (disciple) must wear regal formal attire and thuppotti with white free pant before he makes vows. It is comprehended that the technique for wearing world class ensemble developed gradually during the Kandyan time frame. The thuppotti is comprised of three garments. Every fabric is long 12 cubits. Once in a while thuppotti is made by connecting two 6 cubits in length pieces fabric together. Verifiable confirmations show that during the Dutch word related period, there were particularly imported fine materials to Kandyan tip top and for the imperial family from nations like Surat and Bengol (Chou, Wu, & Chou, 2017; Dewaraja, 1988). A British essayist of the nineteenth Century Davy (1821) additionally clarifies that the amount of fabrics wrapped round their midriff to accomplish exceptional size, considered as a symbol of respect. Christopher Schwitzer, a German (1676 A.D) who served for the Dutch East India Company recorded about early nearby chieftains dress as they wear bit of material about their center, from the navel down to their knees yet they make an incredible differentiation of their attire, as per their pride and quality. Concurring Knox (1966) records world class wore white thuppottiyadress including bravely engraved short knife which was cut out silver and a painted stick. During the hour of Kirthi Sri Rajasimha (17047-1782) wall painting of the Madawala sanctuary speaks to a central who wears white muslin creased coat with short sleeves, tied down the front, thuppotticloth and belt.

METHODOLOGY

This study reviews the ways in which cultural heritage preservation can be done with video ethnographic method. The Kandyan dress and its long-established dress related practices have been selected for this study to preserve and analyse it through video documentation.

The study begins with a look at the Kandyan dress through accumulating primary data to identify existing dress forms in its context across cultural, religious, and socio-economic aspects. This phase of the study will be conducted as field visits and observations, interviews and discussions with folks to identify the highly endangered Kandyan dress forms that need to be preserved as a matter of urgency.

Then, video record the ritual processes and events where traditional dress forms are engaged and happening and make standard (or alternative) video documentaries on selected dress forms. The agenda for these events were not set or controlled by the researcher. These events and procedures are a part of the participants (folks) everyday life and, during the video recording most of the participants are impassive on the presence of a video camera.

A qualitative analysis of data of this study will be performed using the literature review and theoretical models.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Kandyan Dress

This study is based in the region of Kandy which is the last kingdom of Sri Lanka heralds a history of long and preserved traditions that date back to the times of the last King of Sri Lanka. The city and its arts and traditions have been recognized as a UNESCO cultural heritage. One of the most important living cultural heritages in this area is the Kandyan traditional dress and, long-established dress-related practices which have not been studied or preserved in a pedagogical or hypothetical manner. Anthropologically and historically this dress is most imperative as it is diverse, original and responded to a well formed socio-economic structure.

The Kandyan Dress is an elaborate tradition blended with an important visual and cultural expressions and a distinctive craftsmanship. The formation of Kandyan dress can be considered as a unique sculpting technique where fabric molds on the body defining its three dimensional form. The formation of Kandyan dress is based on draping techniques that works with fabrics basically on the body by wrapping, folding, knotting and taking the best

benefit of the draping characteristic of the material and the function of the dress. The Kandyan dress is therefore a unique mix of movements, gestures, postures, and rhythms and craftsmanship for decor and adornment of the body.

Kandyan dress has been up to now preserved and carried ahead by traditional Kandyan elites and dancers and drummers of the commoners or lower service castes who were bound for the traditional professions under the feudal system that ended with the colonial rule. The changing socio-economic forces in the country bring about the rapid disappearance of these caste-based professions and this transformation affects the prevalence of traditional families and rajakarya system (compulsory service or duty to the King based on feudal tenure system) that transmit the Kandyan traditional dress from generation to generation. The table illustrates below the current situation or the threat of the Kandyan traditional dress is faced with.

Table 1: The current situation of the kandyan traditional dress

Dress	Place of Execution	Nature of functioning	Fulfillment of the traditional process
Ceremonial/ official dresses of Nilapangu Temple of Tooth. Dresses of external officials (Pitatha kattalaya) of the outer relic shrine Dresses of internal officials (Athulatha Kattalaya) for of inner relic shrine	Rajakariya duty and ritual (daily routine) at Temple of Tooth, Kandy	Obligation habitual, convention	Diluted, or misrepresented
Dresses of Dancers, Drummers (Kandyan Dancers, Singers of Kavikara Maduwa, Pannikki Mura or the percussion ensemble of Temple of Tooth)	Dalada Perahera (Procession) -August Kaarthika Mangalya /Perahera - November Temple of Tooth Kandy	Ritual	Full (satisfactory)
Dresses of Elite Families	Traditional Dance rituals and folks Kohomba Kankariya Traditional elites/families Male/Female Casual and ceremonial dresses	Ritual, entertainment Habitual, convention	Shortened, disappeared, transformed or modernised diluted, or misrepresented Shortened, disappeared omitted due to ignorance transformed or modernised

The all forms of Kandyan dresses can be considered as cultural heritage artifacts which belong to an ancient tradition. There are at least fifteen different dress forms belong to different traditions of Kandyan period, some of which are elite dresses, official or service dresses, ritual and ceremonial dresses, commoners, male and female dresses etc. Each is different in shape, length of materials used, wearing methods, usage and function. The uniqueness of commoners dress - official dress in Temple of Tooth is that it is devotional and ritualistic in content. Much of the knowledge about the Kandyan dress or its traditions is not in written form or not laid out in ancient literature. However, many of them can be found from temple murals, sculptures as in the visual form.

This situation is a clear indication that the existence of these dress forms is at high risk after the present generation of wearers and practitioners. Besides the alarming, lack of young professional traditional dress makers, there is also a marked of the loss of traditional dress making knowledge of the present generation. On the contrary, some dress forms have now been either shortened or filled with innovations since the traditional forms have been wholly disappeared there are no any initiatives for preservation from both, museum and visual documentation intervention in the country.

In this context, preservation of traditional Kandyan dress has to undertake very soon as the present generation is undoubtedly the last generation of practitioners. The need for preservation of this traditional dress in video format is necessary for future generations and its visual exploration is very much critical before the tradition and contexts fade away along with the immense treasure of the cultural heritage. This type of video documentation can be considered as a practice of visual ethnography to construct understanding of the world based on visuals,

processes and experiences rather than on abstract knowledge thought induced or language-based (MacDougall, 2006). As highlighted by Kalay, preservation of cultural heritage through video documentation is a new approach for the pedagogical attributes in documentation and management, representation techniques, dissemination of knowledge and awareness generation (Kalay, Kvan, & Affleck, 2007). In this study these attributes are tested and accomplished through gaining an understanding of the problems and concerns associated with planning and conducting of such an ethnographic video documentation as this hands-on approach always creates unpredictable conditions and situations.



Figure 1. A drummer is wearing his headdress for kohomba kankariyaa Kandyan folk ritual

Video Ethnography for Preservation of Cultural Heritage

Preservation of cultural heritage of Kandyan dress is more complex, intricate and requires a knowledge intensive approach. It is a kind of living heritage lies with a community, who are the custodians of this heritage by practicing and passing on its inheritance often in an unwritten form. It is important to keep this heritage vigorous and preserve in straight connection with the people/ community of its origin. Thus, the elements in cultural heritage are not credible and its preservation needs capturing of the contextual knowledge that lies with the exponents and also the communities at large. In so doing, the study converges both video documentary and ethnographic field work methodologies in attempt to preservation of Kandyan dress - in video ethnographic or visual form. This is therefore a new paradigm for preservation of cultural heritage unbound by conventional techniques of conservation and preservation. Both methodologies - video documentary and ethnographic field work - are to document and analyse the human nature and thus, highly appreciate the willing participation of subjects. The use of video documentary method in ethnographic research has become very important in this sense. However, this study describes specific situations and anecdotes recounting the background information needed to understand the situations and concerns as well as advocates certain methods to handle these restrictions and situations.

Another main purpose of this study is to use this video footage as a visual archive or a database for permanent preservation with relevant textual records. For this purpose, the video data should be fact-based, scientific, in an artistic quality and high resolution for exploration of the dress with its intricate details craftsmanship and decorative motifs. The video data is a record by taking into account its direct relationship with the referential that is present at the moment that the visual is recorded. Therefore the visual materials should gain significant importance within broadened scope of archival collection and raises questions regarding the subsequent visual property and visual treatment. As a research methodology and a method of preservation of cultural heritage, video ethnography could be more consistent and coherent in a way that has not been possible with any other method. In fact, it allows more accurate judgment to be made on the correctness of material and procedure.

This study makes use of video material taken during the field research in order to interlink the research with

scholarly interpretation on dress as well. This material then serves as interpretative frame or filter of this research study and it can only be determined by means of an active engagement of the researchers and video makers with the participants of the video and is bound to involve some measure of subjectivity. This study therefore focuses on studying the Kandyan dress in its natural occurring, ongoing settings, while they participate in day-to-day routine.

Ceremonial dresses of Nilapangu - the dresses of external (Pitatha kattalaya) and internal officials or servicemen (Athulatha Kattalaya) of Temple of Tooth are worn at the sacred rituals at Thevava conducted daily at regular times in the morning, noon and evening. Only limited number of people - monks and official laymen - is allowed to take part in this ritual. While conducting the preparatory services before admitting to the ritual (pujava) or during the ritual no one can intervene in the process and it is restricted the admittance of worshipers or other outsiders only to the front vestibule. All ways the important part is happened behind the scene. The dress, the way of drapery, its usage and behaviors cannot be seen or recorded in its original context in which they are interpreted and explained in terms of their relationship to the whole system of which they are a part.

There are several religious rituals occurred daily, weekly and annually in Temple of Tooth. Both commoners as servicemen and elites as high-ranking superior participate in these events in their ceremonial or official dresses. Thevava is daily ritual for arms offerings for the Buddha. At a determined time monks and two or three servicemen enter the shrine in a special official dress, bringing with them the triple robe, flame, cowrie, bell, sandalwood casket, camphor spray, water vessel, towel, beetle tray, spittoon and flower trays. These are offering for the Buddha during the arms offerings. The offering of foods (Buddha Puja) is carried in a pingo (hemakada) from the Temple kitchen (Muluthenge) to the Relic Shrine. Prior to bringing the offerings, the chief service monk brings the key to the shrine and the doors are opened by the serviceman (Vattorulala). Different grades of officers or servicemen are take part in the Thevava and during this time all servicemen who allocated this are very much devoted and rushed to execute their duty.

Naanumura Mangalle - The tradition of washing the image icon is a weekly service at Temple of Tooth. The shadow of a small silver casket which symbolizes the Relic casket is made to fall on mirror and bathed it with herbal ointment. This ritual is done by two service women (Aalaththi Amma) while poets (Kavikara Maduwa) recite verses of praising the Buddha.

Karthika Mangalle, the Oil distribution ceremony is held annually on full moon poya day in November. A procession is held in mini scale during the day and all officials participate in the parade in their ceremonial dresses.

As all these are male dress forms, female researchers participation is highly forbidden at locations either at sacred ritual or at the preparatory services where dresses are arranged and worn. It is compulsory to involve prolonged and intensive fieldwork which allows the researcher/s to socialize into the community and familiarize with its context to build reliance with participants. During the rituals, most of the servicemen are reluctant to appear in the video as they are performing an ostensible devotional task. Sometimes the video recording is very difficult but it is not because of the intervention of outsiders or recording process making inconvenience and cause disruptions to the occurrence. Even if every task of video recording is pre-planned, it may be failed or unsuccessful finally due to some personal matters of the participants. There are many concealed and deep causes for that which should be analysed in a separate study. Video-recording of these rituals associated with official dresses was done by a special video team on a special permission of Diyawadana Nilame - the chief lay custodian of the Tooth Relic - who has being appointed to handle routine administrative matters in Temple of Tooth.



Figure 2. Drummers and Kandyan dancers are getting ready for karthika perahera (procession)

Thus, the researcher should know what culturally significant and carefully select the events and participants to portray the appropriate dress to represent the whole context and to expose the reality as much as possible. Apart from the video recording, some data was gathered using many other techniques, from many sources and tested with various members of the same community and outsiders from other communities who have a thorough knowledge or involvement with these phenomenon in order to obtain multiple perspectives on a particular dress, event or human behavior, to test credibility or validity of gathered information. It can be elaborate critically and analytically through another study on the socio-cultural aspects of the Kandyan dress. It is therefore very much complex and critical to preserve intangible cultural heritage than the tangible material of it through video documentation.

Moreover, the strategies of collecting, sorting, categorizing, analyzing, retrieving and presenting information through ethnographic video method is very much complex. The whole process of the research cannot be undertaken by a single person. It is time consuming and expensive more than any other content medium or method, but it is often the most effective. The cost however depends on the type of video, the location, subject to be videographed, production crew, equipment, post production etc. This method always requires complex technology and expert crew to produce artistic and archival video documentation. Final outcome - the rendered work of video documentary - should be in an artifact form to create a lasting presence of cultural heritage for what would otherwise be ephemeral. It will become central in visual cultures investigation of memory and history.

CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

As discussed in this study, video ethnography for preservation of cultural heritage is indeed a necessary and a powerful method. Through this study, the video archives will conserve records the full process and the paraphernalia involved in the Kandyan traditional dress forms such as accompanying rituals, accessories and decor used, the process of making and wearing the dress. It is then become a mode of a portrayal of peoples lives in a historical perspective for preservation of facts and artifacts of a cultural heritage. This is a tremendous task of situation oriented and ethically challenging. The outcome of this can be entirely depended on the researchers knowledge and perception but affects the whole subjects of the study.

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