

1 ICCROM-CHA
Conservation Forum Series

International Centre for the Study of
the Preservation and Restoration of
Cultural Property

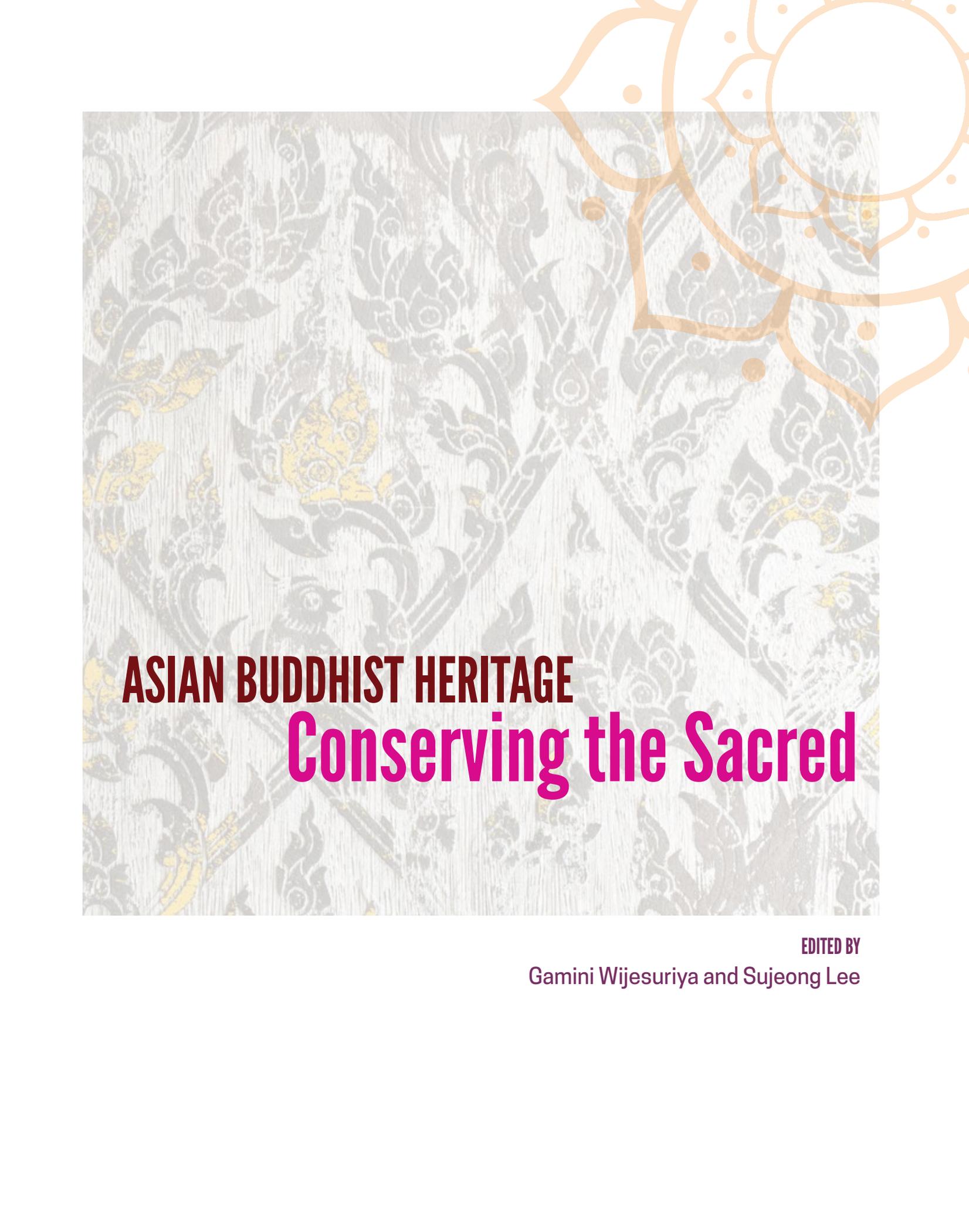


Asian Buddhist Heritage

Conserving the Sacred



Cultural Heritage
Administration



ASIAN BUDDHIST HERITAGE
Conserving the Sacred

EDITED BY
Gamini Wijesuriya and Sujeong Lee



First ICCROM-CHA International Forum on Conservation
Asian Buddhist Heritage: Conserving the Sacred
4-6 December 2013, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Organized by
Gamini Wijesuriya, Sites Unit, ICCROM
Sujeong Lee, National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage, Republic of Korea

Project Advisors
Stefano De Caro, Director-General, ICCROM
Rha Sun-hwa, Administrator, Cultural Heritage Administration (CHA), Republic of Korea
Joseph King, Director, Sites Unit, ICCROM
Kim Yeonsoo, Director, International Cooperation Division, Cultural Heritage Administration (CHA), Republic of Korea

Asian Buddhist Heritage: Conserving the Sacred
Edited by Gamini Wijesuriya and Sujeong Lee

ISBN 978-92-9077-240-8
© 2017 ICCROM
International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property
Via di San Michele, 13
00153 Rome, Italy

www.iccrom.org

Designed by Maxtudio, Rome
Printed on eco-friendly paper by Ograro srl, Rome

Cover photo: Buddhist monk exploring courtyards of Angkor Wat, Siem Reap. © efired / Fotolia
This volume was produced thanks to the generosity of the Cultural Heritage Administration (CHA), Republic of Korea.

CONTENTS

Foreword

1 Introduction

Gamini Wijesuriya

v

1

2 Religious heritage and tolerance

Stefano De Caro

11

3 Let the sites of Buddhism be living icons of a liberated people

Roland Silva

20

4 Finding a Middle Path for saving the contradictory values of living Buddhist temples in Korea

Sujeong Lee

34

5 An illusion of permanence: heritage conservation within the Buddhist world view in Ladakh

Tara Sharma

44

6 Perception and management of heritage in the Buddhist context: observations from Nepal

Neel Kamal Chapagain

53

7 The relevance of authenticity in conserving Buddhist heritage

Jagath Weerasinghe

63

8 Importance of philosophical and traditional approaches to conservation of Buddhist heritage in Thailand

Pinraj Khanjanusthiti

70

9 Making conservation decisions in Bhutan, especially in the context of heritage sites

Karma Tenzin

77

10 The status, conservation and management of Buddhist heritage in Pakistan

Muhammad Zahir

85

11 Conservation and management of Buddhist heritage in Japan

Katsuhisa Ueno

91

12 Empowering monks for conservation: lessons from the UNESCO project “Cultural Revival and Survival in the Buddhist Sangha”

Montira Unakul

97

13 Challenges of managing a living Buddhist site: Mahabodhi Temple, Bodh Gaya, India

Abha Narain Lambah and Nangzey Dorje

103

14 Cultural heritage of Buddhism in contemporary Vietnamese society

Dang Van Bai

112

15 Buddhist heritage conservation and management in Myanmar (with special reference to the Buddhist Centre of Bagan)

Nyein Lwin

119

16 The conservation and management of Chinese Buddhist heritage and the case of Daming Temple

Guang Xiaoxia and Xie Qingtong

129

17 Summary of the discussions of the ICCROM/CHA Forum on Asian Buddhist heritage: Conserving the Sacred

Joseph King

136

Biographies

139





Foreword

This volume contains the collection of papers presented at the First Annual Forum - Asian Buddhist Heritage: Conserving the Sacred held in Seoul, Republic of Korea in December 2013. The Forum was a result of a collaborative effort between the Cultural Heritage Administration (CHA) of Korea and ICCROM. It is a new thematic programme for developing contextual heritage policy guidance and/or principles for the Asian region. While focusing on Asia in particular and contributing to regional capacity building processes, the programme aimed at providing benefits on a global scale.

The goals of the thematic programme were:

1. to explore, research and debate key themes emerging from the Asian region that have implications for effective conservation and management of heritage;
2. to formulate policy guidance notes and/or principles related to the above themes for improved and effective conservation and management of heritage; and
3. to contribute to capacity building efforts in the region.

The programme was launched in 2013 and will run for five years. The theme of the first Forum 'Asian Buddhist Heritage: Conserving the Sacred'. Buddhist heritage constitutes one of the most widespread heritage categories in the Asian region. The nature of this heritage varies from archaeological sites to living temples, including large collections of objects and numerous associated traditions, practices and festivals. Some of these continue to function after

many centuries as places of spiritual significance and pilgrimage for various societies. They are indeed great sources of knowledge, an integral part of life for many and they mirror Asian culture and civilization.

Increasing numbers of these places are being designated as national heritage and some are even being elevated to World Heritage status due to their Outstanding Universal Value. Heritage designations on different levels bring a variety of new challenges and issues to the guardians, users, heritage authorities and governments. While current heritage management frameworks have attempted to address such challenges, there is still more to be done.

Most of these places (including some archaeological sites) fall into the category of living heritage as defined by the continuity of religious practices and festivals by community groups. The physical manifestations and spatial arrangements of these places continue to change or grow and so do their related religious practices and festivals. Such changes are in part due

to the increasing demand for more facilities (including new construction, infrastructure, etc.) to cope with increases in population and visitor numbers. Continuity of care is ensured through traditional or established conservation and management practices, although they may not necessarily comply with accepted international heritage management concepts. For instance, constant renewal of heritage places is a well-established phenomenon in these places and it also helps the community to gain merit.

Visitor numbers are rising due to the publicity given to religious places designated as heritage, increasing numbers of which are being upgraded to World Heritage status. Although visitors and tourism may bring much needed financial resources to local economies, as well as to the temples themselves, they also bring conflicting issues that need attention. For instance the religious atmosphere of living temples is being impacted by increasing numbers of

visitors, while some aspects of pilgrimages are being compromised or even threatened.

It is within this context that locally relevant conservation and management approaches for these places need to be considered, rather than directly imposing international conservation policies. These are often in conflict with some of the above concerns, liturgical aspects and even conventional approaches adopted by Buddhist communities and guardians.

This particular Forum was considered as a natural extension to the ICCROM Forum held in 2003 on 'Conserving the Sacred'. This addressed some of the issues that are common to all types of religious heritage, but there is a growing demand in the Asian region for greater debate. The Forum, with participants mainly from the Asian region, brought these concerns to the fore and went on to discuss and debate them, working collectively, before developing a summary.

Stefano De Caro
Director-General of ICCROM

Rha Sun-hwa
Administrator of the
Cultural Heritage Administration of
the Republic of Korea



Introduction

Gamini Wijesuriya

The purpose of this paper prepared for the ‘Forum on Asian Buddhist heritage: Conserving the Sacred’ was to reflect on the theme with a view to facilitating the deliberations and highlighting questions for the participants to consider when preparing their papers.

Why focus on Asian Buddhist Heritage? When its Korean partner, the Cultural Heritage Administration (CHA) proposed this particular theme as the first activity of a five-year programme, ICCROM had no hesitation in accepting it for several reasons. Religious places in general dominate the heritage lists in many countries of the world. Similarly, Buddhist sites form a substantial proportion of heritage in Asia. These sites pose many challenges to the conservation community. But the main reason why ICCROM accepted the theme was that it had a strong link to one of its earlier programmes, namely the Living Heritage Sites

programme (2003-2008) and the ICCROM Forum on the theme ‘Living Religious Heritage: conserving the sacred’, held in 2003.

The rationale behind the Living Heritage Sites programme was to emphasize the living dimensions of heritage sites: their recognition and relevance to contemporary life, including benefits and interest for peoples and their capacity to engage in continuous care as true and long-term custodians of these sites. The programme focused primarily on Asia but ‘living heritage’ has now become a popular theme globally.

It aimed to revisit the defining or characterising (of at least certain types of) heritage and approaches to their conservation. This can be attributed to certain gaps that existed within the currently dominant heritage discourse, which I have elsewhere (Wijesuriya, 2010) called the Conventional Conservation Approach (CCA).

In the conclusions of the Living Heritage Sites programme, living heritage is characterised as those places that maintain the continuity of use (original function) or the purpose for which they were originally established. This in turn maintains a continuity of certain community connections, an evolution of expressions both in terms of tangible and intangible heritage, and care by the community through traditional or established means. A living heritage approach emerged from this programme for the conservation and management of heritage which is summarised as follows:

- As a philosophy: It emphasizes continuity as the primary driver for the definition, conservation and management of heritage.
- As a process: It facilitates a community led (bottom-up), interactive approach to conservation, emphasising core community values (recognizing, however, a hierarchy of values and stakeholders), recognizing changes and utilising traditional or established management systems (in terms of practices, materials, knowledge) in order to deliver benefits to the community (e.g. spiritual, social, economic, developmental, etc.) while taking care of the fabric.
- As a product: The community is empowered (a strong role in decision-making) to safeguard heritage with new decision-making mechanisms.

Based on the lessons learned and the experience of the Living Heritage Sites programme, ICCROM has now added a programme for 'promoting a People-Centred Approach to Conservation - Living Heritage' in its biannual programme and budget for the period 2013-2018. Asian Buddhist heritage can itself be characterised as living heritage, and so the

present Forum was able to draw upon the experience of the Living Heritage Sites programme.

One of its early activities was the ICCROM Forum on Living Religious Heritage held in 2003 (Stovel et al., 2005). It started by raising the question whether, living religious heritage is different to other forms of heritage and whether it deserves different approaches in conservation. The present Forum on Asian Buddhist Heritage: Conserving the Sacred is a natural extension to the Forum of 2003 and this paper draws heavily on its introduction and concluding remarks. It also draws on the experience of the author related to Buddhist heritage in Sri Lanka and elsewhere in Asia over many years (Wijesuriya, 1993, 2001 a & b, 2005, 2007 a & c, 2008).

Consequently the participants of this Forum were asked to develop their papers addressing one or more of the following themes:

1. Understanding Asian Buddhist heritage
2. Conservation
3. Management and long-term care

Understanding Asian Buddhist heritage

The ICCROM Forum concluded that, "living religious heritage is of particular importance, given its vital role in conveying, expressing, and sustaining the faiths which give spiritual identity, meaning and purpose to human life" (Stovel, Stanley-Price & Killick, 2005). This is true of Buddhist heritage as well. Buddhist heritage can be considered as the intellectual, tangible, intangible, movable and immovable embodiment of Buddhism which is a formally organised religion that has sustained human life in the Asian region for more than 2 500 years. Throughout this period, Buddhism has been and is the inspiration that shaped and continues to shape many lives and societies in the Asian region. Therefore the religion, as well as all forms of its expression, deserves special attention by society. It has also to be recognised that the societies

of this region demand that special attention be given to Buddhist heritage.

This observation highlights the need to understand Buddhist heritage beyond its material manifestations. The second conclusion of the ICCROM 2003 Forum provides some guidance in this direction that is valid for Buddhist heritage too:

“Understanding living religious heritage requires recognizing that the intangible significance of tangible religious objects, structures and places is the key to their meaning. The tangible and intangible cannot be separated since all cultural material has intangible value life” (Stovel et al., 2005).

This idea was further elaborated in the Conclusions:

“Living religious heritage is expressed in cultural material: the tangible structures, objects and works of art created to support forms of worship within particular faiths and in associated intangible rituals, celebrations and devotional activities. In all cases, the tangible and intangible manifestations of the heritage carry intangible values, expressing the significance of the heritage for the communities who consider it important” (Stovel et al., 2005).

The material manifestations of these are the temples still being used, archaeological sites and the objects of worship and paintings that are in temples or museums or being discovered through excavations. In addition there are various forms of rituals and practices and their associated knowledge systems. It is important to understand that some of the archaeological sites are living entities that have been worshipped for centuries as part of a continuous tradition. The giant *stupas* in Sri Lanka, for instance, established in the pre-Christian era, are still being worshipped and are subject to continuous use and renewal. On the other hand, relics found in Buddhist archaeological sites in Pakistan and India are being allowed to be displayed

and worshipped by Buddhists. The nature of these manifestations and their linkages to society are different from place to place, depending on the various schools of thought of Buddhism that are spread all over the region. These differences and similarities will be reflected in the following papers representing different countries.

Some of the concepts that influence how Buddhist heritage is characterised have been discussed elsewhere. For instance, the perception of time as a cyclical process in Buddhism, rather than a linear process, requires a different understanding of the past which has implications for heritage and its conservation and management (Wijesuriya, 2008). Related to this is the way of perceiving heritage, Ananda Coomaraswamy has argued that, “Art is nothing tangible...” which diverges from fundamental consideration of ‘works of art’ as being only purely tangible.

Buddhist concepts such as impermanence are critically important in understanding and characterising Buddhist heritage, as they have implications for conservation. A colleague from Bhutan has argued, “that the ancient Buddhist doctrine of impermanence and change of all things in existence and the natural acceptance of decay forms a confrontation with the International approach of conservation” (Dukpa, 2002).

It is also important to understand how the function and meaning of Buddhist heritage will have implications for conservation. We deal with sacred sites and objects that are being used for worship. They contain functional aspects, symbolic meanings and different layers of significance. One of the most respected senior monks from Sri Lanka suggests that “A *cetiya* (*stupa*) should be treated as a living Buddha. All the respect and honour that one pays to the Buddha should be paid to the *cetiya* as well.” (Rahula, 1956, p. 284). This has profound implications for the restoration of *stupas*. Restoration and renewal of objects of worship and structures to regain their symbolic form and meaning, and the need to appreciate them in their completeness, are among the most significant value systems attached



FIGURE 1. Avalokiteśvara bodhisattva sculpture from Sri Lanka, dated to 6 CE.

to Buddhist heritage. This is also related to the Buddhist concept of merit-making whereby people engage in and contribute to repair work. To facilitate this process, there is a vast knowledge system in the form of literature, inscriptions and practices which is needed for a better understanding of Buddhist heritage and its long-term preservation or to guarantee its continuity.

Participants were therefore asked to deliberate on understanding Buddhist heritage in a session allocated to the topic, focusing on, but not being limited, to some of the questions listed below:

- How far should Buddhist philosophy shape the definition of Buddhist heritage (views about the past, heritage, etc.)?
- How to capture tangible and intangible intellectual aspects when defining Buddhist heritage (in traditions, rituals, festivals, etc.)?
- What is the role of Buddhist heritage in defining Asian society?
- What is the role of Buddhist heritage in the contemporary life of Asian society?
- How far should we go in designating Buddhist heritage at national/international levels?
- What should be preserved: living temples, archaeological sites, objects of worship?
- Who should be involved in defining and interpreting Buddhist heritage?

It was pointed out that the understanding of Buddhist heritage may well currently be in the hands of heritage professionals, but it should be a collective effort with the monks and the connected communities.

Conservation

Some challenges

Like any other type of heritage, Buddhist heritage is facing numerous challenges for its survival and continuity. Among the many challenges, one that was recognised by the ICCROM 2003 Forum is related to religion itself, namely the fluctuating commitment by religious communities. It is a well-known fact that more and more church buildings in the West are being abandoned because of lack of participation or a diminishing connection to communities. Whether this is true for Buddhist heritage too is a subject that needs to be debated.

The fact that religious heritage is strongly linked to identities makes it vulnerable in the fast growing tensions among groups of societies. The World Heritage site of the Temple of the Tooth Relic in Sri Lanka, which is one of the most sacred places for Buddhists, was bombed by the terrorist group LTTE, with a view to escalating violence among communities. Buddhist



FIGURES 2 AND 3. Stone bodhisattva in ruined condition (left) and after restoration (right), Sri Lanka.

heritage was specifically targeted in Bangladesh and the Maldives in the recent past. The ICCROM 2003 Forum commented, “In societies where the paths of faith and secular development have diverged over time, the risks may be external, and religious heritage becomes threatened by secular visions or frameworks” (Stovel et al., 2005).

Another factor is the growing number of multicultural communities that maintain different faiths within Asian societies. The ICCROM 2003 Forum concluded that, “Respect for religious values in a multicultural context (or of particular orientations within a single religion) is essential for promoting peace and a tolerant society, and is best promoted through strengthening interfaith dialogues on conservation issues”. This task may go beyond the role of the conservation community and require the involvement of a greater range of stakeholders, as the ICCROM 2003 Forum pointed out:

“Of course, strengthening dialogue between conservationists and the religious community is not sufficient if the religious community does not speak with one voice. The dialogue must bring together all those involved within both



the conservation field and also all interests within the religious community. Dialogue must be organized to build understanding and, better, sympathy for the different points of view which may exist in various multicultural contexts, and which may need to be reconciled as a part of efforts to protect religious heritage” (Stovel et al., 2005).

The removal of objects of worship from sites for their better protection or display in museums is a concern in

this part of the world, as is the excavation of Buddhist sites for scientific reasons or for conservation.

The demand for more space to cater for growing populations, pilgrims and visitors is increasingly impacting the conventional layout and atmosphere at many Buddhist sites. We cannot ignore the effects, both positive and negative, that modernisation of society brings.

For example, mass tourism has both positive and negative impacts on heritage, generally disturbing the sacred atmosphere for those who wish to perform religious acts. In this regard, it is a well-established fact that pilgrimage has been overshadowed by modern tourism.

As conservators we always aim to reconcile faith and the demands of modern conservation but are often confronted with a lack of proper understanding or respect for religious heritage. Today's professionals often ignore or disregard the continuation of traditional practices or techniques of conservation, maintenance, renewal or restoration.

Emerging requirements also need to be taken into account, at least at some sites. For instance, if a Buddhist heritage site is inscribed on the World Heritage List, there are certain rules and regulations governing the property, mostly focusing on the fabric (e.g. World Heritage Convention and its Operational Guidelines, World Heritage Committee decisions, nationally established rules and procedures for the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value for which sites have been inscribed).

The ICCROM 2003 Forum believed in reconciling religious demands and conservation needs. However, the application of modern conservation principles in the form of 'one size fits all' has created dissenting views and, in turn, conservation practitioners have faced challenges (Wijesuriya, 2010). The ICCROM Forum was itself evidence of a need to expand the conservation discourse. It is well known that it is

necessary to respect cultural context and different approaches to conservation and management.

We have a tendency to look to the international community for guidance on conservation and management of heritage while overlooking that which has already been developed and tested over time by individual countries. One example from Sri Lanka in relation to restoration is worth quoting:

“restoration of ancient shrines [...] has to be carried out without hurting the religious susceptibilities of the people [...] that intervention by the Department does not affect their vested interests and traditional rights” (Paranavitana, 1945).

Outlining the principles for restoration, the Department of Archaeology of the Government of Sri Lanka (established in 1890) has suggested:

“it has to be kept in mind that the proper restoration of an ancient monument is a work of a highly specialized nature, requiring in the person who carries it out a thorough knowledge of the evolution of art, architecture and the culture that produced it and a feeling therefore, often to be required by a lifetime devoted to it” (Paranavitana, 1947).

The sacred area planning schemes that place sacredness at the top of the agenda of the physical planning process is another such example, and has been practiced in Sri Lanka for the last 50 years (Wijesuriya 1993, 2005).

Participants at the present Forum were asked to address some of the questions below:

- What are the increasing demands of the religious community, e.g., more space for liturgical needs?
- What is the impact of increased visitors on the religious/sacred atmosphere?

- Are there problems of a decrease in faith by the community and the abandonment of heritage?
- Should Buddhist heritage contribute to various aspects of societal development?

Approaches

Ongoing approaches and current principles were part of the discussions during the Forum. As it began it was emphasized that conservation should not only guarantee continuity but also enhance the benefits to society, in addition to addressing the challenges outlined above. Recognizing that Buddhist heritage plays an important role in conveying, expressing, and sustaining the faiths “which give spiritual identity, meaning and purpose to human life” (Stovel, et al., 2005), it can be seen that conservation has a role to play. One of the fundamental principles to follow in any approach to conservation of religious heritage is to recognise its living nature and that heritage cannot be frozen in time and space. The concluding remarks of the ICCROM 2003 Forum make points that are true for Buddhist heritage as well:

“The forms of expression of faith have always evolved over time, as a result of interplay within faiths, and also as a result of changing external circumstances. In other words, faith and its outward expression – the associated religious heritage – are living. Hence, it is important that conservation efforts do not attempt to freeze either forms or traditions at a moment in time, but rather guide the inevitable changes in ways which are sympathetic to the survival of past expressions” (Stovel et al., 2005).

The ICCROM Forum further recognised that

“The evolution and adaptation of religious practices, rituals, or festivals to contemporary circumstances should be understood as a normal part of the continuity of living religious heritage and should be respected in

conservation decision-making. Lay authorities uniquely responsible for conserving heritage may impose limits on the degree of change to be tolerated in living religious heritage” (Stovel et al., 2005).

It is in this context that the conservation community is of the view that there is a conflict between the goals of the religious community and the goals of the conservation community. The 2003 Forum discussed the need for reconciliation between the two and came up with some points to be considered by the present Forum:

- “Recognize and promote the important custodial role that has been played by the religious community over time in maintaining and caring for religious heritage;
- Generate mutual understanding and trust in positive dialogues about conservation decisions;
- Reflect the living character of this heritage, retaining objects of religious value in their context of faith;
- Challenge those involved to reach choices based on the fullest respect for the practices and values which sustain faith in the religious community;
- Recognize that respect for the faith may involve restrictions, rules and exclusions regarding what conservation treatment may be appropriate and who may be involved with such treatments” (Stovel et al., 2005).

Participants were asked to provide examples where conflicts between conservation community and religious authorities had resulted in reconciliations. As an example, the restoration of the Temple of the Tooth Relic in Sri Lanka after being bombed by terrorists was presented. The President of the country who chaired the Task Force for the Restoration of the Temple gave a directive to the experienced group of conservators that, “all final decisions were to be taken by the two monks and the lay guardian in charge of the Temple”. This was a moment for the conservation professionals to set aside their popular ‘bibles’ such as

the Venice Charter and Brandi's theory, and to listen to the Buddhist monks. This indeed was challenging but the results were revealing (Wijesuriya, 2001a, 2005)

There was also a need to discuss some of the ongoing issues such as restoration of objects, paintings and structures of Buddhist heritage, and issues such as authenticity in relation to living religious heritage.

Reconciling faith and modern conservation needs may not be an easy task. Requirements for faith may supersede the needs of conservation. In the session devoted to conservation, participants were asked to make presentations focusing on some of the questions below:

- Is conservation the primary purpose of Buddhist heritage sites?
- How do we confront western conservation ideals based on contemporary secular values with traditional approaches/values (impermanence etc.)?
- Who should be involved in defining and interpreting Buddhist heritage?
- Should there be different approaches to assessing values; recognizing hierarchy of values; recognizing the continuity of use as a key determinant; determining the rights of the present generation to use?
- How far should we recognize traditional approaches (renewal, etc., as work towards merit-making)?
- What are the limits of change?
- How do we judge authenticity, e.g., what criteria?
- How sensitive should the conservation community be towards cultural practices and protocols?
- What role can be played by the religious community in conserving Buddhist heritage?

Management/long-term care

The ICCROM 2003 Forum concluded that, “The care of this heritage is primarily the responsibility of the religious community for whom this heritage

has importance, at local and/or global levels”. This was the emphasis embodied in the living heritage approach, in which the connected communities are empowered to take due care of their heritage. The communities are interested in and can act as custodians of long-term care. At present, there are diverse approaches to long-term care of Buddhist heritage in the region. In most cases, they are being protected under government sponsored legislation. In some countries many Buddhist heritage sites are still under the care of traditional custodians while certain types of protection are provided by the state. Some countries have protected Buddhist heritage that does not focus on religious values. A further complication is the rush for World Heritage listing.

In Asia there are 36 sites connected with the Buddhist faith which are inscribed as World Heritage sites, but they are recognised mostly for their material manifestations. On the other hand, World Heritage listing imposes certain rules, regulations and obligations upon the countries and these may have repercussions on their survival and continuity as religious places. There needs to be a major debate on the responsibilities of different stakeholders for the long-term care of heritage. The ICCROM 2003 Forum commented that



FIGURE 4. First century BCE *stupa* being restored by the people, Sri Lanka.

“Where religious authorities share responsibility for living religious heritage with secular heritage authorities, it is reasonable to accept that the latter may establish guidelines limiting change that are respectful of the goals of both” (Stovel et al., 2005).

Institutional and governmental policies to conserve heritage must recognize the special nature of living religious heritage and pay due attention to it. Such policies need to be developed following a dialogue with the religious community and the secular authorities. On the other hand, utilising the knowledge of monastic communities and their surrounding communities is a necessity for sustainability and long-term care of these places.

Some of the important questions are:

- What are the existing rules, procedures, and legislation available for managing Buddhist heritage?
- What should be the role of the custodians/religious community?
- What should be the role of the community?
- What should be the role of the government, and what are its limitations?
- How far we should recognise traditional management systems/protocols?
- How do we use modern legal and institutional support?
- How do we comply with larger and international obligations (e.g., pilgrimages, WH requirements)?
- What are the implications of World Heritage Listing?

Conclusion: need for new guidance

Modern conservation principles have evolved in which the secular values of society are dominant but confrontations result when dealing with religious or traditional values.

We also make fundamental mistakes when trying to characterize Buddhist heritage (or, for that matter, any

religious heritage) by isolating it from its custodians and regular users.

However, custodians too are keen to have their sites registered on national lists and even on the World Heritage List.

We need to recognize that faith inspires creativity and must continue to do so since it forms part of the heritage.

All these observations suggest that a forum like this is important provided we approach it with an open mind not with pre-conceived ideas.

References

- Coomaraswamy, A. K.** 2008. (available at <http://www.artlex.com/ArtLex/a/artquotations.html>). Accessed 9.2008.
- Dupka, P.** 2002. Presentation made at the course on ‘Preservation and restoration of wooden structures’ held in Nara.
- Paranavitana, S.** 1945. *Administrative Report of the Archaeological Department (1940-45)*. Colombo: Department of Archaeology, Government of Sri Lanka.
- Paranavitana, S.** 1947. *Protection of Ancient Monuments other than those on Crown Land*. Colombo: Government Publication Bureau.
- Rahula, W.** 1956. *History of Buddhism in Ceylon. The Anuradhapura Period, 3rd century BCE-10th century CE*. Colombo: M.D Gunasena.
- Stovel, H., Stanley-Price, N. & Killick, R.** eds. 2007. *Conservation of Living Religious Heritage, ICCROM Conservation Studies 3*. Rome: ICCROM.
- Wijesuriya, G.** 1993. *Restoration of Buddhist monuments in Sri Lanka: The case for an archaeological heritage management strategy*. Colombo: ICOMOS.

Wijesuriya, G. 2001a. Conserving the Sacred Temple of the Tooth Relic (a World Heritage Site), Sri Lanka. *Public Archaeology*, 2000, 1(2): 99-108.

Wijesuriya, G. 2001b. Pious Vandals-Restoration vs. Destruction. In R. Layton, P. G. Stone & J. Thomas, eds. *Destruction and Conservation of Cultural Property*: London: Routledge, pp. 256-263.

Wijesuriya, G. 2001c. Protection of Sacred Mountains-Towards a New Paradigm in Conservation. *Final Report of UNESCO Thematic Expert Meeting on Asia-Pacific Sacred Mountains*, Japan: UNESCO, pp. 47-62.

Wijesuriya, G. 2005. Past is in the Present: Perspectives in Caring for Buddhist Heritage. In H. Stovel, N. Stanley-Price, & R. Killick, eds. *Conservation of Living Religious Heritage*. Rome: ICCROM Conservation Studies 3, pp. 31-43.

Wijesuriya, G. 2007a. Conserving Living Taonga: The Concept of Continuity. In D. Sully, ed. *Decolonising Conservation-Caring for Maori Meeting Houses outside New Zealand*. Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press, pp. 59-69.

Wijesuriya, G. 2007b. Complimentary and Contradictory Aspects of International Doctrines and their Impact at National Level. In R. Varoli-Piazza, ed. *Sharing Conservation Decisions- Lessons learnt from an ICCROM course*. Rome: ICCROM, pp. 59-63.

Wijesuriya, G. 2007c. The Restoration of the Temple of the Tooth Relic in Sri Lanka: a Post-conflict Cultural Response to Loss of Identity. In N. Stanley-Price & R. Killick, eds. *Post war recovery and Conservation*. Rome: ICCROM Conservation Studies 7, pp. 87-98.

Wijesuriya, G. 2008. The values of heritage in the religious and cultural traditions of Southern Asia. In Proceedings of the conference of the ICS on theory and philosophy. *Values and criteria in heritage conservation*. Florence: ICS, pp. 73-79.

Wijesuriya, G. 2010. Conservation in Context. In M.S. Falser, W. Lipp & A. Tomaszewski, eds. *Conservation and Preservation: Interaction between theory and practice in memorium Alois Riegal (1859-1905)*. Florence: Edizioni Polistampa, pp. 233-248.



Religious heritage and tolerance

Stefano De Caro

In this paper about the value of tolerance in the conservation of religious heritage, although not an expert in the history of religions, I will give my opinions as an archaeologist who has worked on Greek and Roman cultures. To this I will add the perspective of ICCROM as an intergovernmental organization that serves a community of 135 Member States with different religious beliefs and political systems, in a world in which religious heritage is often targeted or used as a weapon in political, ethnical or social conflicts.

The first thing to remember in this period of suspicious fear about religion is that, since the earliest phases of human history, it has been the most powerful motivation for the creation of heritage. There are almost countless examples from any period or any part of the world area that could support this statement: architecture such as the Abu Simbel temple in Egypt, the Yalizikaya Hittite rock sanctuary in Turkey, the Parthenon in Athens, the Songgwangsa temple

on Sunch'on, the Gothic Cathedral of Reims, the Step-Pyramids of the Sun and Moon in Teotihuacan in pre-Hispanic Mexico, Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome, the Temple of Heaven in Beijing, Omar's Mosque in Jerusalem, the Fire-temple of Baku, the Hindu Shiva Temple of Brihadesvara, and the Sagrada Familia by Gaudi in Barcelona. There are other examples among artifacts, for instance sculptures such as the Great Bronze Buddha in the Kotoku temple in Kamakura,

the reliefs in the Elephanta Caves near Mumbai, the Aztec carving of Templo Mayor in Mexico City, the statue of the goddess in the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus, or paintings such as the Italian Renaissance Madonnas or indigenous Australian rock art, not to mention the manuscripts, the musical instruments, or the immaterial heritage of rites, dances, food and so on.

Approximately 20 percent of the properties inscribed on the World Heritage List have some sort of religious or spiritual connection. These properties are to be found in most countries around the world and constitute the largest single category on the List. Specific and significant spiritual meanings are mentioned to justify the Outstanding Universal Value of a large number of the World Heritage properties. Numerous historic cities on the List possess components of religious significance and are recognized as holy cities by different communities.

The examples given earlier show in their size and wealth that religion has always had a great political relevance and for this reason embraces - in addition to the sphere of the divinity - the one of human power, either of single men or of groups.

In line with social complexity, the divinity becomes the god of the family, of the tribe, of the city, of the nation - as shown for instance by religious themes on coins - and follows the political and military history of the peoples in exporting the religious cultural heritage to other territories inhabited by other communities, by means of migration, commerce and, more often, wars of conquest. It then either simply joins the local gods, or overlaps with them while converting their sacred sites. To take examples, the Christian conversion of pagan temples into churches, the Muslim conversion of the great Christian basilica of Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, the Buddhist conversion of the Hindu temples in Angkor, and the destruction of the Aztec temples in Mexico City and the building of the Spanish Cathedral near their ruins. The common main principle behind these events is always the one affirmed by the Peace of Augsburg (1555) at the end

of the bloody wars in Europe between Catholics and Protestants: "*Cuius regio, eius religio*" (your ruler will give you his religion), according to which the subjects would have to embrace the faith of their king.

Sometimes the newcomers had an interest in developing a new theology. A famous case in the Greek-Roman world is the new religion founded in Alexandria in Egypt by the successor of Alexander the Great, Ptolemy the First, who formed a commission bringing together a Greek philosopher and an Egyptian priest and asked them to shape a new theology capable of melding the religious beliefs of the local Egyptian population with the Greek-style beliefs of the Macedonian conquerors. A new god, Serapis, was invented, accompanied by the old Egyptian goddess Isis with a baby god, Arpocrates. For Isis a Greek identity was created, identifying her as the nymph Io, the beloved of Zeus the father of the Greek gods. The success of this new Trinity was enormous all over the Mediterranean, even after the Christian religion had prevailed in a large part of it. The character of Isis as the mother breastfeeding her son, existing as a universal value in many other cultures, was passed on in the image of the Christian Virgin Mary with the baby Jesus. Religious heritage frequently shows similar answers to other human issues, such as mourning the death of sons or the desire to know the future.

The Romans in building their empire developed a very practical attitude towards religious affairs over the centuries. They built a political community based on any national god (their early religion was a kind of spiritism), and their expansion was accompanied by the absorption of the more sophisticated deities of the peoples they conquered. One of the most famous rites in Roman war procedures was the so-called '*evocatio*' or 'call out', when the Roman priest invited the patron deities of the enemy towns to leave their temples and to migrate to Rome where they would receive new, larger temples and more sumptuous rites. Thus, in line with the Greek and Etruscan gods in Italian cities, the Phoenician goddess Tanit was 'called out' from Carthage and adopted under the name of *Juno Caelestis*. While the Romans imposed the worship

of the Capitoline Trinity (Jupiter, Juno and Minerva) in the main squares of the cities in their territory as a political sign of Romanization, they also gradually enlarged their pantheon. They allowed the worship of all the gods of the peoples they included in their Empire: the Iranian Mithras, the Anatolian Magna Mater Cybele, an Anatolian Ma/Artemis from Ephesus, Isis from Egypt, the Nabatean Dusares, all the Baals from Syrian cities, and so on. This polytheism was for the most part very tolerant, but sometimes led to persecutions when worship was felt to put at risk the established order of Rome: for example, from time to time the persecution of the followers of Dionysus or of the Egyptian gods or, finally, the Christians.

As a monotheistic religion derived from Judaism, Christianity evolved rapidly from its original tolerance. Starting from its initial separation from political power in the name of the principle “*give to Caesar [i.e. the secular/political order] what is of Caesar and to God what pertains to God*”, followed by its first recognition as an ‘admitted religion’ along with Judaism in the Edict of Milan in 313 CE, after two centuries of persecutions it came to be adopted as the state religion of the Roman Empire in 380 when the Council of Nicaea extended civil powers to the leaders of the Christian Church. In 391 Theodosius I began to outlaw Rome’s traditional religious rituals. As a consequence, in the same year, Theophilus, the Patriarch of Alexandria, provoked the destruction of the Great Serapis Temple in the city, and had a Church to John the Baptist erected on its ruins. In the same period, a famous philosopher, Ypatia, was executed by the Christians under the accusation of impiety.

I can cite other examples of this wave of destruction that spread from Constantinople all over the Empire. The little town of Cumae, north of Naples, had been sacred since early Roman history because it had adopted some of the Greek cults. In an Egyptian sanctuary I excavated three statues of Egyptian gods that had been beheaded and buried in a pool. I felt sorry for these relics, thinking that the authors of this deed had undoubtedly been the Christians of Cumae

who at the same time had converted old Greek and Roman temples into churches. We know that other Egyptian statues elsewhere in the Roman world show the same evidence. In another sense, 1 500 years later, a new belief in the secular goddess Reason during the French Revolution transformed the famous Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris into a temple of Reason. Many statues of saints were destroyed and beheaded (some survive in the Museum of Cluny in Paris) and other parts of the building were used as a storehouse for food. The same happened later to many Orthodox churches in the aftermath of the Communist Revolution in the Soviet Union. The most famous case is probably the Neoclassical Cathedral of the Christ the Saviour in Moscow, built in 1839 and destroyed at Stalin’s orders. It was recently reconstructed (1997) after the site had been occupied for more than 50 years by the largest swimming pool in the world.

Fortunately, history does not consist only of stories of religious abuse or conflict. One of the most interesting cases of tolerance is the acceptance by the Tang Chinese Emperors of Nestorianism, a Christian creed of the fifth century which took its name from the Constantinople patriarch who died in exile in the Great Oasis of Kharga, and which then spread from Sassanian Persia/Iran along the Silk Road. The famous stele of Si-ngan-fu, written in Chinese and Syriac and erected in 781 CE in a monastery founded at the order of the Tang emperor, contains an exposition of Nestorian doctrine and a history of the Nestorian presence in China from 631 to 781. We know of a later Mongol Nestorian patriarch, Yahbhallaha III, born and educated in China and consecrated in 1281 in Seleucia, under whom the Nestorian church had 30 provinces and many bishops in China. Other inscriptions from the cemetery of Semiriecicé (1249 - 1345) testify to the free adoption of this doctrine by many of the Turkish-Mongol peoples of the Silk Road.

Another interesting example is provided by a funerary inscription (now in the museum at the La Zisa Palace in Palermo) which originally belonged to a tomb in a



FIGURE 1. The stele of Si-ngan-fu, or Nestorian Stele describing the presence of Christian communities in China.

church in Palermo, Sicily, during the Norman period (thirteenth century). The dead person was a woman, the mother of a Christian priest, but the interesting thing is that the inscription is written not only in Latin, the official language of the Roman Catholic church at that time, but is repeated also in Greek, the language of the Orthodox Church, in Arabic and in Hebrew, and in every one of these versions the date is expressed differently and consistently with the appropriate religious system. This means that at this period in Sicily, always a crossroads of cultures in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, it was possible for people of four different religions to have access to a Christian Church, and that a priest of one of them cared to communicate his grief to all the other sections of the communities. The Arabic-Persian style of the ceiling of the Royal Chapel of Palermo is further evidence of this tolerant cultural atmosphere.

We can cite a much more recent example of religious tolerance and the use of religious dialogue as a tool for strengthening the ties in a community that embraces different cultural identities. The Kremlin of Kazan in the Republic of Tatarstan (Russian Federation) was restored in the 1990s and inscribed in 2000 on the UNESCO World Heritage List under criteria ii, iii and iv. Kazan is a very special place both for Islam as the northernmost site reached by Islam, which arrived here in the eighth century CE from the Caspian Sea following the Volga River, and for Orthodox Christianity because of the heavy Russification practiced after the conquest by Czar Ivan the Terrible. The UNESCO inscription recognized the long-term efforts initiated by the President of Tatarstan, Mr. Mintimer Shaimiev, a Muslim politician governing a community of more than 50 percent Islamic Tatars, with the remainder mostly Orthodox Russians, in the critical period after the end of the Soviet Union. The evaluation report of ICOMOS as an Advisory Body is explicit in describing the rehabilitation of heritage as having a deep impact on community cohesion with the aim of avoiding another Chechnya type situation.



FIGURE 2. Tombstone in four languages.

“On 22 September 1994 the Kremlin was established as the Historical, Architectural, and Artistic Museum “Kazan Kremlin,” opening a new era for the historic ensemble. The garrison was removed and a museum function was introduced. The rehabilitation has emphasized the former fortress appearance and the commemorative and religious functions, which had been lost for a time. The renovation of the Cadets’ School has been started and a project has been launched to rebuild the historic mosque of Kul-Sharif on the site of the destroyed main mosque of the Khanate period Kazan. The building should rehabilitate the lost town-planning integrity of the Kremlin ensemble, enrich the townscape, and symbolize the peaceful coexistence of the two main religions of Tatarstan, Islam and Christianity” (ICOMOS, 1999).

Another symbolic site is the archaeological area of Bulgar, where the first Bulgar Islamic settlement was located.

Religion is not in itself pacific or conflictive. In every religion elements for dialogue or for conflict can be found. It is up to community leaders to enhance the elements of cohesion.

Thus in Islam there is not only Sacred War but also tolerance. Thus Prophet Muhammad can speak in the Sura (109) words of tolerance to the pagans of Mecca: “Unbelievers! I do not worship what you worship/ Nor will you worship what I worship./ I am not worshipping that which you worshipped/ Nor are you

worshipping that which I worship. / To you be your religion, to me mine”.

Often quoted too is the *Risalat al-Huquq*, the book on ‘the Reciprocal Rights’, one of the best known works of the fourth Imam, Ali Zaynu’l-Abidin, written between the end of the seventh and the beginning of the eighth century CE. His Imamate was 61 – 94 or 95 (680 - 712 or 713). His mother was the daughter of King Yazdeger, the last pre-Islamic ruler of Persia.

“..Then there is the right of the people of your creed [Muslims], then the right of the people [non-Muslims] under the protection [of Islam] (*ahlu l-dh-dhimmah*)... Therefore blessed is he whom God aids to fulfil the rights”.

“50. As for the right of the people [non-Muslims] under the protection [of Islam], the rule about them, is that you should accept what God has accepted from them and should give them the rights which God has granted them; and refer to the shari`ah of God about the responsibilities which they have. And if there is any matter between them and you, then decide according to the commands of God even if it is against your interest. And there must be a barrier keeping you from any injustice to them, from depriving them of the protection of God, and from flaunting the commitments of God and His Messenger, peace be upon him and his progeny, concerning them, because it has reached us that he [the Holy Prophet] said: “Whosoever does injustice to a protected non-Muslim, I will be his enemy [on the Day of Judgement].”

In a letter that Imam Ali, the fourth and final imam for Sunnis and the first for Shias, wrote to his governor in Egypt, he stated, “You must be a loving and compassionate and love your subjects. Do not behave with them like a beast of prey that considers them an easy prey, for they are of two types: either your brothers in religion, or human beings like you in creation”.

In Hindu culture, right from its earliest stages, the Rigveda, the ancient sacred collection of Vedic Sanskrit hymns, says: “The truth is One, but sages call it by different Names”. The Anekāntavāda, one of the most important and fundamental doctrines of Jainism has reminded us, since the sixth century BCE, that any

religion or philosophy - even Jainism itself - which clings too dogmatically to its own tenets is committing an error based on its limited point of view. This principle also influenced Mahatma Gandhi to adopt principles of religious tolerance. In response to a friend’s query on religious tolerance, he responded in the journal *Young India* of 21 January 1926, “... I cannot engage in a debate with them [the followers of the Syādvāda doctrine he too embraced]. It has been my experience that I am always true from my point of view, and am often wrong from the point of view of my honest critics. I know that we are both right from our respective points of view. And this knowledge saves me from attributing motives to my opponents or critics. The seven blind men who gave seven different descriptions of the elephant were all right from their respective points of view, and wrong from the point of view of one another, and right and wrong from the point of view of the man who knew the elephant. I very much like this doctrine of the manyness (sic!) of reality. It is this doctrine that has taught me to judge a Muslim (sic!) from his standpoint and a Christian from his. Formerly I used to resent the ignorance of my opponents. Today I can love them because I am gifted with the eye to see myself as others see me and vice versa. I want to take the whole world in the embrace of my love”.

For their part, Buddhists have always shown significant tolerance towards other religions. Let us recall the Edicts of the Buddhist King Ashoka the Great (269 - 231 BCE), declaring ethnic and religious tolerance. Those laws that we know of from inscriptions carved on rocks in India, Nepal, Pakistan and Afghanistan could be considered true World Heritage monuments to tolerance. Thus Edict XII stated, “The faiths of others all deserve to be honoured for one reason or another. By honouring them, one exalts one’s own faith and at the same time performs a service to the faith of others”. Other edicts state, “All religions should reside everywhere, for all of them desire self-control and purity of heart” (Rock Edict Nb7), “Contact (between religions) is good. One should listen to and respect the doctrines professed by others. Beloved-of-the-Gods, King Piyadasi, desires that all should be well-learned in the good doctrines of other religions” (Rock Edict Nb12).

In Europe the idea of religious tolerance was first introduced in the sixteenth century by humanist

intellectuals in an attempt to react to the bloody atmosphere of the Wars of Religion between Catholics and Protestants. Erasmus of Rotterdam and Thomas More were the first to indicate the need for tolerance of religious belief: this should be the result of free choice and belonged to a sphere, that of the individual moral conscience, in which the state should not intrude. Erasmus addressed the problem of tolerance within a broader discussion related to peace. If a religion wanted to enlarge its following of believers, it must achieve this by persuasion, by words rather than by force.

As for Thomas More, in his imaginary island of *Utopia* (1516), the greatest freedom of religion was admitted, subject nevertheless to the obligation to believe in God's providence and in the immortality of the soul.

A very important step in the development of the idea of tolerance in the Western world was John Locke's *A Letter Concerning Toleration* (1689), followed in 1690 by *A Second Letter Concerning Toleration* and in 1692 by *A Third Letter for Toleration*. Not by chance were these in line with the political steps towards a constitutional rule by the *Bill of Rights* (1689). Locke declared that the state should be secular because religious imposition by the state would only cause religious struggles, provoking serious political consequences. Thus it was best to leave religious issues to religion and secular matters to the state. He was thus returning to the very wording of Jesus Christ ("*Give to Caesar what is of Caesar and to God what is of God*"). But, like Thomas More before him, Locke nevertheless excluded atheists from his idea of the state since they would be ethically unreliable. The issue of atheism as a possible choice has long been condemned, at first as a product of Enlightened Rationalism and later of Marxist doctrines. Only today has atheism been admitted by Christians as a possibly acceptable way of thinking. Pope Francis, in a famous interview last year with the Italian journalist Eugenio Scalfari, stated - probably for the first time by a Pope - that for the Christian God there is mercy for non-believers if they live according to their conscience of Good and Bad.

Other steps were taken by thinkers such as Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), David Hume (1711-1778) and Voltaire (1694-1778) in the French Enlightenment who, in his *Treatise on Tolerance* calling for tolerance between religions, targeted religious fanaticism: "*It does not require great art, or magnificently trained eloquence, to prove that Christians should tolerate each other. I, however, am going further: I say that we should regard all men as our brothers. What? The Turk my brother? The Chinaman my brother? The Jew? The Siam? Yes, without doubt; are we not all children of the same father and creatures of the same God?*".

These principles of freedom of religion were fully ratified in the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen* (1789), adopted by the National Constituent Assembly during the French Revolution. In Article 10 it states "*No-one shall be interfered with for his opinions, even religious ones, provided that their practice doesn't disturb public order as established by the law*" ("*Nul ne doit être inquiété pour ses opinions, mêmes religieuses, pourvu que leur manifestation ne trouble pas l'ordre public établi par la loi*"). Two years later, the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, ratified along with the rest of the Bill of Rights on 15 December 1791, included the following words "*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof ...*".

Despite the enormous destruction that also affected religious heritage in the world wars of the last century, this centuries-long progress in declaring religious freedom a human right has in general been consolidated. The principle has been adopted both by single nations and by international organizations since the League of Nations started a worldwide mission to maintain world peace. This was a philosophical change representing a fundamental shift from the preceding hundred years. The project was re-started by the United Nations, founded in 1945 after World War II, and by all the organizations generated by the UN. One of them is UNESCO, and another is ICCROM which was created by UNESCO.

In our UN family vision, diversity of religious beliefs, like any other cultural diversity, is a richness which must be preserved and shared. We have the same idea

as the Native American Indian Traditional Code of Ethics (Inter-Tribal Times, Oct. 1994). “*All the races and tribes in the world are like the different colored flowers of one meadow. All are beautiful. As children of the Creator they must all be respected*”.

Religious heritage must be protected, but to do this we have to know, study and understand the spiritual values of the monuments and artifacts, going beyond the appreciation of artistic values and adopting Goethe’s thought in *Maxims and Reflections*: “*Toleration ought in reality to be merely a transitory mood. It must lead to recognition*”. For every site or artifact we need to recognize the spiritual value embedded in it and respect it during restoration. Nowadays in the restoration or conservation of religious heritage, economic aspects are deemed highly relevant and religious tourism is an important source of income. It is also relevant spiritually because it includes both the religious rite of the pilgrimage (such as the *Camino* of Saint James of Compostela, the Hajj or the pilgrimage to Mecca, or the Buddhist ones) and the visits inspired by the desire to know the culture of others. To know is the keyword that leads to the respect and awareness which are necessary to form a basis for the phenomenon to be sustainable. The basis lies in the need for knowledge combined with the safeguarding of the spirit of every particular place and every particular monument or artifact, together with the rights of the local communities.

References

Anthony, F. V. & Ziebertz, H. G., eds. 2010. *Religious Identity and national heritage: empirical-theological perspectives*. Leiden: Brill.

Avery Hunt, L., Jacob, M. C. & Mijnhardt, W. 2010. *The Book that Changed Europe: Picart & Bernard’s Religious Ceremonies of the World*. Cambridge, USA: Harvard University Press.

Bevan, R. 2006. *The Destruction of Memory, Architecture at War*. London: Reaktion Books.

Bhūṣaṇa Mīśra, V. 1973. *Religious Beliefs and Practices of North India during the Early Mediaeval Period*. Leiden: Brill.

Denny, F. & Smart, N. 2007. *Atlas of the world’s religions*, 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press USA.

Ferrari, S. & Benzo, A. 2014. *Between Cultural Diversity and Common Heritage: Legal and Religious Perspectives on the Sacred Places of the Mediterranean*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd.

Garnsey, P. 1984. Religious Toleration in Classical Antiquity. In WJ. Shiels, ed. *Persecution and Toleration*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, Studies in Church History, vol. 21, pp.1-27.

Guidetti, M. 2009. The Byzantine Heritage in the Dar al-Islam: Churches and Mosques in al-Ruha. In G. Necipoğlu, & K. A. Leal, eds. *Muqarnas, An annual on the visual cultures of the Islamic World*. Leiden: Brill, pp.1-36.

ICOMOS. 1999. Kazan Kremlin (Russian Federation), Advisory Body Evaluation, 29 June 1999. http://whc.unesco.org/archive/advisory_body_evaluation/980.pdf

Kamal-ud-Din, K. 2011. *The Ideal Prophet*. eBookIt.com. [Accessed on 18 august 2011].

Kaplan, B. J. 2009. *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge, USA: Harvard University Press.

- Killick, R. G.** ed. 2005. *Conservation of living religious heritage: papers from the ICCROM 2003 Forum on Living Religious Heritage: conserving the sacred*. Rome: ICCROM.
- Laursen, J.Ch. & Nederman, C. J.** 2011. *Beyond the Persecuting Society: Religious Toleration before the Enlightenment*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Laursen, J.Ch.** 1999. *Religious Toleration: 'the Variety of Rites' from Cyrus to Defoe*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Lowenthal, D.** 1998. *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Marshall, J.** 2006. *John Locke, Toleration and Early Enlightenment Culture*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- McKinnon, C. & Castiglione, D., eds.** 2003. *The Culture of Toleration in Diverse Societies: Reasonable Tolerance*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.
- Mose, G. M.** 1996. The destruction of Churches and Mosques in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Seeking a Rights-Based Approach to the Protection of Religious Cultural property. *Buffalo Journal of International Law*, 180, 185.
- Neusner, J. & Chilton, B.** 2008. *Religious Tolerance in World Religions*. West Conshohocken, PA: Templeton Foundation Press.
- Nikam, N.A & McKeon, R.P., eds.** 1958. *Edicts of Asoka*, in *Philosophy and world community*, vol. 2. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Orlin, E.** 2010. *Foreign Cults in Rome: Creating a Roman Empire*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ott, M. R., ed.** 2007. *The Future of Religion: Toward a Reconciled Society*, *Studies in Critical Social Sciences*, 9, Leiden: Brill.
- Rüpke, J.** 2011. *A Companion to Roman Religion*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.
- Scalfari, E.** 2013. *Dialogo tra credenti e non credenti (interview with Pope Francis)*. Milano, Einaudi, la Repubblica newspaper.
- Seshagiri Rao, K.L.** 1990. *Mahatma Gandhi And Comparative Religion*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publ.
- Silverman, H.** 2010. *Contested Cultural Heritage: Religion, Nationalism, Erasure, and Exclusion in a Global World*. Springer Science & Business Media.
- Singh, R. P.B.** 2008. The Contestation of Heritage: The Enduring Importance of Religion. In B. J. Graham, & P. Howard, eds. *The Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd. pp. 125-141.
- Stanton, G. N. & Stroumsa, G. G., eds.** 1998. *Tolerance and Intolerance in Early Judaism and Christianity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Stefano, M. L., Davis, P. & Corsane, G., eds.** 2012. *Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage*. Woolbridge, UK: Boydell Press.
- Thimothy D. J. & Ashworth, G.J.** 1996. *Dissonant Heritage: The Management of the Past as a Resource in Conflict*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.
- Thimothy, D. J. & Olsen, D. H., eds.** 2006. *Tourism, Religion, and Spiritual Journeys*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Tripolitis, A.** 2002. *Religions of the Hellenistic-Roman Age*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing.
- Tuan, Yi-fu & Singh, R.P.B.** 1994. *The Spirit and Power of Place. Human Environment and Sacrality: Essays Dedicated to Yi-Fu Tuan*, National Geographical Society India Research Publication ser., 41. Varanasi, India: National Geographical Society of India.
- Vernon, R.** 2010. *Locke on Toleration*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Warikoo, K., ed.** 2004. *Bamiyan: Challenge to World Heritage*. Delhi: Third Eye Bhavana Books and Prints.
- Zagorin, P.** 2013. *How the Idea of Religious Toleration Came to the West*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.



Let the sites of Buddhism be living icons of a liberated people

Roland Silva

One hardly needs to look far to discover the most important palliative to resuscitate the family ideals of Buddhism today. We believe the secret pill is to “Let the sites of Buddhism be living icons of a liberated people”. This is an eternal desire and more so now than ever before. We trust and hope that these papers will contribute generously to this vital desire, by tracing the paths of wisdom as set out by its leader over 2 600 years previously.

If we look back three-quarters of a century, to World War II and before, nearly all of us would have had a rude shock of surprise if anyone had ever raised the question of a holiday for the family. For this was not the way of life of our parents in this part of the world. On the other hand, the order of the day was a gentler form of travel at the pace

of a peaceful pilgrimage. This was the style of the time, and how welcome it all was, and how holy, sacred and relaxing such journeys were. It is this mode of family life that we wish to develop in this paper; for this was the way that for generation after generation, we discovered the precepts of Buddhism from time immemorial.

The truth of this thought was inscribed on the stone railing at Bodh Gaya by the earliest pilgrims from Sri Lanka, as far back as the second or third century BCE. Today, we may have graduated in the science of dating these travels on palaeographic grounds instead of using other sophisticated techniques. But, in the meanwhile, we may have glossed over some other vibrations. We need no answer, but a simple flutter in our heart, to ‘read through this scribbling on stone’ the piety of ancient innocence in the wear and tear of such pedestrian travel.

We are about to see whether this rhythm of a time that ended perhaps seventy-five years ago can be regained, perhaps with modern synergy and a sense of spiritual uplift. It is our wish to get the Buddhist leaders of Asia to extend their wisdom to the mass of the people, to act wisely and sensitively according to their conscience, and thereby to retain their free will to voice a view within themselves. We believe that such a situation can be achieved, if people are provided with regular breaks for annual colloquia or pilgrimages, where they will be able, either individually or collectively, to think of their distant goals and farsighted objectives with proper balance and focused vision.

It is with these types of forgotten ground rules that we need to re-tread and re-discover traditional wisdom within our true selves, so that we who now live in this ancient world, and are more advanced than the rest of humanity of past ages, can thereby continue to move forward with outstanding, civic and spiritual responsibilities as of old.

It will not be out of context to state here that the Master, even after his enlightenment in the thirty-fifth year of his life, still performed his retreats for spiritual quiet.¹ If this was the Master’s example, how much more should we today indulge in such moments of quiet, away from our day-to-day routines, to refresh our inner selves, away from the discoveries of our colleagues and undistracted by their unique interpretations?

These exercises need not be the thirty-two spiritual *Kasinas* listed by Buddhaghosha in his *Visudhimagha* of the fifth century, but modest courses of action appropriate to our times and to the rhythm of today.² This is why we have picked pilgrimages that are still very attractive, to see if this activity cannot be suitably adapted into a type of modern-day ‘meditation-retreats-on-wheels’. Such a spiritual revival through re-thinking and re-structuring of one’s self can discover a path towards self-purification that is both useful for achieving these objectives, and for re-discovering the vital stepping stones of humanism, even if such spiritual goals should be achieved through down-to-earth material activities.

Where can such meditation-retreats best be carried out, except at the spiritually elevated grounds of discovery at the old sites of Buddhist pilgrimage? For example, if some enterprising leaders were to identify the old pilgrim routes of Asia together with the story of their evolution, then these could be the stepping stones to Buddhist entrepreneurship and lead to the clearance of the paths to the mini-havens of spiritual travel in the region. Such routes are listed below, with themes culled from the journeys made by the Master, the sites of shrines that have been discovered, the religious routes followed in the spread of Buddhism, the restful shrines of the well-known pilgrim fathers and the many productive journeys undertaken by the early disciples:

- (a) The Paths trodden by the Master:
Lumbini – Bodh Gaya – Sarnath –Kusinara.
- (b) Sites of Buddha relics:
Rajagriha, Vesali, Kapilavatthu, Allakappa, Ramagama, Vethadipaka, Pava, Kusinara and Pippalavana.
- (c) The Way of Elder Mahinda:
Pataliputra – Sanchi – Mihintale – Anuradhapura.
- (d) The Way of Theri Sangamitta:
Pataliputra – Bodh Gaya - Tamralipti - Dambakolapatuna – Tivaka Bamuna – Anuradhapura.



FIGURE 1. Bodhi Gaya, a pilgrimage site in India, where the Lord Buddha attained enlightenment.

- Maniyakala (Pakistan), Udayana (Swat, Pakistan), Taxila, Jalandhara, Kanyakubja (Kanauj), Ayodhya, Sravasti, Kapilavastu, Kusinagara, Varanasi, Vaisali, Pataliputra, Bodhi Gaya, Rajagriha, Nalanda, Samatata [probably Assam], Tamralipti, Kanchipuram (collected data on Sri Lanka there), Konkanapura (east coast of the Deccan), Maharashtra, Malwa, crossing the Indus, reaching the frontiers of Persia, back to Nalanda, tracing the way back to China via Taxila, Udayana, Kapisa, the Hindu Kush, Kustana kingdom beyond the old Indian frontiers, across the Oxus and the Pamirs Valleys, Kashgarh (Chinese Central Asia), Tukhara kingdom, Lo-yang and Chang-an.
- At one of Xuangzeng's Resting Places
- (g) Mon journeys to southeast Asia:
Following the footsteps of the Mons in southeast Asia.
- Burma, south Thailand, north Thailand and central Thailand.
- A route along the coasts and old harbours, beginning with Burma: Pegu (ancient Hamsavati), then Thaton (ancient Sudhammavati), Martaban, Moulmain, Tavoy down to Tenassarim, then either:
1. By land crossing the Three Pagoda Pass (Thailand) into central Thailand, to the old centres of Dvaravati kingdom in lower Chao Phraya river valley, i.e. at Nakon Pathom, Suphanburi, Ayutthaya, Lopburi, Ratburi, to end up with Nonthaburi and Bangkok itself where there still are Mon communities; or
 2. Further south by boat, then crossing at the Isthmus Kra in the peninsula, into the Bay of Bangkok, and further up the river to the above-listed sites by boat.
- (e) The Fa Hsien Way:
Chang-an [Xian], Dunhuang, Karashahr (Russian Central Asia), Khotan (Xinjiang, China), Udyana (Swat, Pakistan), Peshawar, Nagarahara (Hadda), Panjab, Mathura, Sankissa (Kapittha), Sravasti, Kapilavastu, Vaisali (Besarh), Magadha, Rajagriha, Bodhi Gaya, Varanasi, Pataliputra, Tamralipti, Sri Lanka (Anuradhapura), Kiao-chou (Chinese coast), Nanking, Chang-an.
- (f) The Hsuan Tsang Route:
Chang-an (China), Kucha, Samarkand, crossing the Hindu Kush, Kapisa (old Begram), Balkh (old Bactria), Bamiyan, Hadda (Nagarahara),
- (h) The cave caravans of the Western Ghats:
Kanheri, Karla, Bhaja, Nasik, Ajanta, Ellora, Aurangabad.



FIGURE 2. Kusinara, a pilgrimage site in India, the place of the Lord Buddha's demise.

Also going to join some important trading ports on the west coast of India, such as Barukaccha (Broach), etc., or following the course of the Godavari down to the ports on the southeast coast in the Andhra/Pallava areas, e.g. Kaveripattinam, Mahabalipuram, Nagapattinam.

(i) An Irrawaddy voyage:

Beginning with Rangoon/Yangon near the delta, then northwards to Prome (old Sri Ksetra), Pagan (Arimaddanapura), Ava (Ratnapura), Sagaing, Mandalay, Halin and Tagaung.

(j) The Mekong journey:

Sites in Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam.

Perhaps beginning at Nong Khai and Nakon Phanom, Mukdahan and U Bon in Thailand then proceeding northwards to Laos: Suwannakhet (opposite Mukdahan in Thailand), Pak-se, Champasak, Xieng Ngoen, Vientiane, Luang Phrabang, then sailing along the many small rivers near Luang Phrabang, such as Nam Ou and Nam

Kham, to visit many interesting caves turned into Buddhist shrines. Many places along the banks of the river, both in Thailand and Laos, are locally believed to have been visited by the Buddha who left his footmarks there. This will be very interesting and quite new to Buddhist pilgrims and sightseers.

(k) Chao Praya river, and tributaries:

Beginning from the delta, from near Bangkok, then to Bang Pa-in, Ayutthaya, Uthai Thani, Nakon Sawan, Kamphaengphet, Phitsanulok, Sukhothai, Si Satchanalai, Prae, Nan, Payao, Lamphun, Lampang, Chiangmai, Chiengsaen, Lampang, Chiengrai.

(l) Brahmaputra tours:

Paharpur, Mainamati, Mahasthan, then possibly following its course further north into Tibet, to Lhasa and even beyond.

(m) A Chi and Mun rivers tour:

There are two important rivers in northeast

Thailand. A tour in this region will lead through a number of archaeological sites, pre-Buddhist and Buddhist, such as Phimai, Buriram, Roi Et, U Bon, Udonthani and Mahasarakham, characterized by megalithic-like *sima* stones raised by the Buddhists at presumably pre-Buddhist sites.

(n) Routes of important religious missions of southeast Asia to Bodh Gaya and Sri Lanka:

1. There are a few important and quite detailed records from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, e.g., a royal monk from Sukhothai, Thailand, in the late thirteenth century, received a new ordination in Sri Lanka, and also the title of Mahasami Sri Sraddhara-Jaculamani. He left an important inscription recording his itinerary of pilgrimage and his search for sacred relics in Cholamandala and various places in Sri Lanka.
2. Royal monk emissaries sent from Dhammazeti, King of Hamsavati (Pegu), at the end of the fifteenth century, visited many places and brought back new rules of ordination from Kalyani to establish these in Burma.

(o) On the trail of the Sihinga Buddha (Sihalapatima) of Thailand:

The Sihinga Buddha is said to have been made in Sri Lanka. It has a long history and became one of the most highly venerated Buddha images in Thailand. It is reputed to have been brought by ship from Sri Lanka to Nakon Si Thammarat in south Thailand and then brought to Sukhothai. Coveted by powerful kings, it changed hands many times. There is one 'Sihinga' image in the Chapel of the Palace of the Second King of Bangkok (now the National Museum). This used to be brought out for special veneration every New Year. There is another one in Wat Phra Singh (Sihinga) in Chiangmai, and another in Nakon Si Thammarat in the south, all highly venerated by the locals as being the genuine one. This is not to evoke disputes among the various regions, but to show how all can be 'united' in a common faith.

(p) Nissankamalla route to Sri Pada (Sacred Footprint) in Sri Lanka:

Polonnaruva, Giritale, Mahelanagara (near Ritigala), Ulpona, Valigampola, Ambagamuva, Kehelgamuva, Samantakuta.

(q) Solosmasthanana or the Sixteen Places of worship in Sri Lanka:

Mahiyangana, Nagadipa, Kalyani, Padalanchana, Divaguhava, Digavapi, Mutiyangana, Tissamahavihara, Sri Mahabodhi, Mirissavetiya, Suvarnamaliceitya, Thuparama, Abhaygiriya, Jetavana, Selaceitya and Kajaragama.

The aims of this paper are twofold since the proposal is a pragmatic one related to both religious-economic and cultural-touristic exercises. (The latter two aspects, cultural-touristic, are currently on a high growth trend.)

A 'UNESCO Asian Pilgrim Unit', if properly established at a commercial level with South Korean initiatives, could result in a non-profit action-oriented enterprise. The religious-cultural values of such a move should be pre-eminent, and this would be the dynamo of operations that will get the initiative moving. If appropriate, institutions can be encouraged to provide for 'Buddhist Pilgrimages' with the above attitudes in mind. The deeper precepts of religion can be instilled into the community, resulting in a future generation of sensitised people. Thus the establishment of such a venture could be a practical proposal that may be considered as a follow-up to this timely initiative of ICCROM and South Korea.

UNESCO as the guardian of World Culture has set out the standards and goals of heritage growth. One is the concept of World Monuments and Sites. The Buddhist monuments of Asia should take their rightful place in this regard. If such a philosophical ideal is linked with such pragmatic objectives such as those set out here, the project can surely quickly succeed as there is an untapped potential for entrepreneurship under the umbrella of cultural tourism.

Many countries of south and southeast Asia already have Buddhist monuments and sites of significance listed as World Heritage Sites.

This initiative of UNESCO should be followed up by the entrepreneurial unit that is proposed to be set up as the 'UNESCO Asian Pilgrim Unit', which should continue to campaign with ICOMOS and ICCROM for more World Heritage Listings among the newly discovered Buddhist sites in these regions. Some of the important Buddhist sites worthy of further attention are the following:

Afghanistan

The Buddhas of Bamiyan³ were two sixth century statues carved into the side of a cliff. The statues represented the classic blended style of Gandhara art. The main bodies were hewn directly from the sandstone cliffs, but details were modelled in mud mixed with straw, coated with stucco. This coating, practically all of which wore away long ago, was painted to enhance the expressions of the faces, hands and folds of the robes; the larger one was painted carmine red and the smaller one was painted in multiple colours. Rows of holes can be seen in photographs where spaces held wooden pegs that stabilized the outer stucco. These were destroyed in March 2001 after the Taliban government declared that they were idols. International opinion strongly condemned the destruction of the Buddhas, which was viewed as an example of the intolerance of the Taliban. Bamiyan lies on the Silk Road, which runs through the Hindu Kush mountain region in the Bamiyan Valley. The Silk Road was an old caravan route linking the markets of China with those of the Western world. It was the site of several Buddhist monasteries and a thriving centre for religion, philosophy and art. Monks at the monasteries lived as hermits in small caves carved into the side of the Bamiyan cliffs. Most of these monks embellished their caves with religious statuary and elaborate brightly coloured frescoes. It was a Buddhist religious site from the second century up to the time of the Islamic invasion in the latter half of the seventh century.

Bangladesh

Chittagong, Mahasthan, Mainamati, Paharpur (World Heritage Site),⁴ Vikramasila Buddha Dhatu Jadi, Somapura Mahavihara, Shita Coat Bihar Buddha Dhatu Jadi, Somapura Mahavihara, Shita Coat Bihar.

Ruins of the Buddhist Vihara at Paharpur.

Bhutan

Paro Taktsang (*Tiger's Nest*), perched on a 1 200 metre high cliff, is one of Bhutan's most spectacular monasteries; Bumthang Kurjey Lhakhang – one of Bhutan's most sacred temples – an image of Guru Rinopche is enshrined in the rock; Paro Rinpung Dzong, Punakha Dzong constructed by Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal in 1638, it is the head monastery of the Southern Drukpa Kagyu school; Phobjika Gangteng Monastery; Thimphu Chagri Monastery; Bumthang, Paro, Punakha, Thimpu, Tongsa.

Brunei-Darussalam

Chinese Buddhist temple, Bandar Seri Begawan.

Cambodia

The city of Angkor⁵ was the home of the Khmer kings who ruled an empire that flourished from the ninth to the fifteenth century. Although the majority of the Khmer rulers were *chakravartins*, a few adopted Mahayana Buddhism. The most important of these was Jayavarman VII who constructed the walled city known as Angkor Thom, in the middle of which was the mountain-like temple of the Bayon. It was built on three levels and intended to resemble a *mandala* with the mythical Mount Meru at the centre. This was surrounded by a forest of pyramidal towers that were decorated on each side with huge faces of the bodhisattva Avalokitesvara. See also Prasat, Angkor Wat, Bayon, Krol Ko, Neak Pean, Preah Khan, Preah Palilay, Ta Prohm, Ta Som, Wat Preah Keo Morokot, Kampong Thom, Prasat Kuh Nokor, Phnom Penh, Wat Botum, Wat Ounalom, Wat Phnom, Wat Preah Keo (Silver Pagoda), Pursat, Wat Bakan Angkor - Bayon

(World Heritage Site), Angkor Borei, Battambang, Lovek, Phnom Penh, Porsat, Oudong.

China and Mongolia

Mural painting from Cave 61 at Mogao Caves, Dunhuang, Gansu Province, China, dated to the tenth century, Wutaishan in Shanxi Province are the four sacred mountains in Chinese Buddhism. According to Avatamsaka Sutra, the Bodhisattva of Wisdom Manjusri, or Wenshu, lived on a cold mountain. By the mid-seventeenth century, Wutaishan had become a sacred Buddhist site revolving around the cult of Manjusri. The pilgrimages of some foreign monks have been recorded. Tang wooden buildings still exist in China, and their wooden sculptures are representative examples of the Buddhist art of the late Tang period. Yungang Cave statue, China. In 460 CE the Northern Wei emperor Wen Cheng began the construction of the cave temples at Yungang, a site located near the ancient capital Pingcheng. The complex includes 53 main caves. The caves contain colossal figures of Buddha and Bodhisattva, between 12 and 17 m high. Tianning Pagoda in Beijing, built around 1120. The Putuo Zongcheng Temple in Hebei represents a fusion of Chinese and Tibetan architectural styles, Chi Lin Nunnery in Kowloon, Hong Kong, Tianning Temple (Changzhou) in Jiangsu – the tallest pagoda and the tallest wooden structure in the world, Giant Wild Goose Pagoda, Xi'an, Shaanxi province, Donglin Temple (Shanghai), Golden Temple (Chinese Buddhist) at the summit of Emei Shan, in Sichuan.

Emei Shan is one of the Four Sacred Mountains of Chinese Buddhism, The Three Pagodas of Chong Sheng Temple, Dali City, Yunnan, Anhui Huacheng Temple, Beijing Big Bell Temple (*Juesheng Temple*), Fayuan Temple, Guanghua Temple, Guangji Temple, Jietai Temple, Miaoying Temple, Tanzhe Temple, Temple of Azure Clouds, Tianning Temple, Wanshou Temple, Yonghe Temple, Yunju Temple, Zhenjue Temple, Zhihua Temple, Fujian Cao'an, originally, a Manichaean temple, Guanghua Temple, Kaiyuan Temple, Wanfu Temple Guangdong Nanhua Temple, Temple of Bright Filial Piety (*Guangxiao Si*), Temple

of the Six Banyan Trees, Hainan Nanshan Temple (Sanya) Hebei Kaishan Temple, Longxing Monastery, Puning Temple, Putuo Zongcheng Temple, Henan Daxiangguo Temple, Iron Pagoda, Shaolin Monastery, Songyue Pagoda, White Horse Temple, Youguo Temple, Hohhot Five Pagoda Temple Hubei, Guiyuan Temple, Hong Kong Chi Lin Nunnery, Kwan Kung Pavilion, Po Lin Monastery, Tsing Shan Monastery, Tsz Shan Monastery, Yuen Yuen Institute, Jiangsu Hanshan Temple, Huqiu Tower, Jiming Temple, Linggu Temple, Qixia Temple, Jiangxi Donglin Temple, Ningxia, Baisigou Square Pagoda, Quanzhou Kaiyuan Temple, Shaanxi Famen Temple, Giant Wild Goose Pagoda, Small Wild Goose Pagoda, Xingjiao Temple, Shandong, Four Gates Pagoda, Lingyan Temple, Jade Buddha Temple, Jing'an Temple, Longhua Temple, Shanxi, Foguang Temple, Nanchan Temple, Pagoda of Fogong Temple, Sichuan Bao'en Temple Yunnan Three Pagodas, Yuantong Temple, Zhejiang Baoguo Temple, Guoqing Temple, Jingci Temple, Lingyin Temple, Liuhe Pagoda, Puji Temple, Fayu Temple.

India

Andhra Pradesh Bavikonda *stupas*, *stupas* at Bojjannakonda, Ramatheertham, Amaravati, Bavikonda, Bojjannakonda, Nagarjunakonda, Pavurallakonda, Ramatheertham, Salihundam, Thotlakonda, Karnataka Namdroling Monastery, Arunachal Pradesh Tawang Monastery, Bihar Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodhi Gaya, Nalanda, Rajgir, Goa Arambol (*Harahara*), Bandora (*Bandivataka*), Kudne (*Kundivataka*), Margao (*Mathagrama*), Rivona (*Rishivana*) Himachal Pradesh Gandhola Monastery, Lahaul, Key Monastery, Spiti, Tabo Monastery, Spiti, Dhankar Gompa, Gandhola Monastery, Gemur Monastery, Gozzangwa Monastery, Kardang Monastery, Key Monastery, Kibber, Kungri Monastery, Lhalung Monastery, Namgyal Monastery, Rewalsar, Shashur Monastery, Tabo Monastery, Tangyud Monastery, Tayul Monastery, Jammu and Kashmir Dzungkhul Monastery, Ladakh Alchi Monastery, Bardan Monastery, Basgo Monastery, Chemrey Monastery, Diskit Monastery, Hanle Monastery, Hemis

Monastery, Hundur Monastery, Korzok Monastery, Kursha Monastery, Lamayuru Monastery, Likir Monastery, Lingshed Monastery, Mashro Monastery, Matho Monastery, Mulbekh Monastery, Namgyal Tsemo Monastery, Phugtal Monastery, Phyang Monastery, Rangdum Monastery, Rizong Monastery, Sani Monastery, Sankar Monastery, Shey Monastery, Spituk Monastery, Stakna Monastery, Stok Monastery, Stongdey Monastery, Sumda Chun, Takthok Monastery, Thikse Monastery, Zangla Monastery, Ajanta Caves,⁶ Deur Kothar, Dharmrajeshwar, Maharashtra Ellora Caves,⁷ Aurangabad Caves, Bedse Caves, Bhaja Caves, Deekshabhoomi, Madhya Pradesh Sanchi,⁸ Ghorawadi Caves, Jogeshwari Caves, Kanheri Caves, Karla Caves, Mahakali Caves, Pandavleni Caves, Orissa Dhauli, Ratnagiri, Brahmani temple, Dhauli, Lalitgiri, Marichi temple, Puspagiri Mahavihara, Ratnagiri, Udayagiri and Khandagiri Caves, Sikkim Rumtek Monastery, Dubdi Monastery, Enchey Monastery, Pemayangtse Monastery, Phensang Monastery, Phodang Monastery, Ralang Monastery, Rumtek Monastery, Tashiding Monastery, Tsuklakhang Palace, Tamil Nadu Chudamani Vihara, Uttar Pradesh Chaukhandi Stupa, Dhamek Stupa, Jetavana, Sravasti, Kushinagar, Sarnath, Varanasi, West Bengal Darjeeling, Bhutia Busty Monastery, Ghum Monastery, Mag-Dhog Yolmowa Monastery, Tharpa Choling Monastery, Kalimpong, Zang Dhok Palri Phodang.

Indonesia

Borobudur (World Heritage Site),⁹ Chandi Jago (East Java), Chandi Kalasan, Pawon, Plaosan, Sari, Sewu, all in the Prambanan Valley, Chandi Singhasari, Goa Gadjah (Bali), Jambi (Sumatra), Kota Cina (north coast of Sumatra), Lampung (Sumatra), Mt. Seguntang (Sumatra), Padang Lawas (Central Sumatra), Palembang (Sumatra).

Japan

According to *Nihon Shoki* (the Chronicles of Japan), Buddhism was introduced to Japan in 552 CE by Korean monks. During the eighth century there were six schools of Buddhism based in Nara: Ritsu

(Vinaya), Jijitsu (Satyasiddhi), Kusha (Abhidharma), Sanron (Madhyamika), Hosso (Yogacara), and Kegon (Huayen). Esoteric Buddhism was then introduced from China by Kukai and Saicho who founded the Shingon and Tendai schools. The Kamakura period (1185-1333) saw the emergence of the extremely popular Pure Land Buddhism (the worship of Amida) and Zen Buddhism. Fukui Eihei-ji, Fukuoka Shōfuku-ji, Gifu Eihō-ji, Shōgen-ji, Shōhō-ji, Hiroshima Buttsū-ji, Ankoku-ji, Myōō-in, Hyōgo Antai-ji, Chōkō-ji, Engyō-ji, Hōrin-ji, Hōun-ji, Ichijō-ji, Jōdo-ji in Ono, Kakurin-ji in Kakogawa, Sagami-ji, Taisan-ji in Kobe, Iwate Chūson-ji, Mōtsū-ji, Kagawa Zentsū-ji (Kūkai's birthplace), Motoyama-ji, Zentsū-ji, Kanagawa Engaku-ji, Hōkoku-ji, Kenchō-ji, Kōtoku-in, Sōji-ji, Kyoto Kinkaku-ji (Rinzai-Shōkoku-ji sect), the Temple of the Golden Pavilion, located in Kyoto. It was built in the Muromachi period. Kiyomizu-dera in Kyoto, Adashino Nembutsu-ji, Byōdō-in, Chion-in (main temple of the Jodo Shu Buddhist sect), Daigo-ji, Daikaku-ji, Daitoku-ji, Eikan-dō Zenrin-ji, Ginkaku-ji (Temple of the Silver Pavilion), Higashi-Honganji (one of two main temples of the Jōdo Shinshū Buddhist sect), Kinkaku-ji (Rokuonji, Deer Garden Temple, Temple of the Golden Pavilion), Kiyomizu-dera, Kōdai-ji, Kōzan-ji, Manpuku-ji (Ōbaku temple at Uji), Myōshin-ji, Nishi-Honganji (one of two main temples of the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist sect), Nanzen-ji, Ninna-ji, Ryōan-ji, Saihō-ji, Sanjūsangen-dō, Tenryū-ji (major temple of the Rinzai school), Tōfuku-ji, Manju-ji, Tō-ji, Miyagi Zuigan-ji, Nagano Zenkō-ji, Nagasaki Fukusai-ji, Sōfuku-ji in Nagasaki, Nara Todaiji's Daibutsu, Hōryū-ji in Ikaruga, Asuka-dera, Daian-ji, Gangō-ji, Hase-dera, Hokke-ji, Hōki-ji, Hōryū-ji, Kimpusen-ji, Kōfuku-ji, Ōminesan-ji, Saidai-ji, Murō-ji, Shin-Yakushi-ji, Taima-dera, Tōdai-ji, Tōshōdai-ji, Yakushi-ji, Osaka Shitennō-ji, Saitama Heirin-ji, Shiga Konpon Chū-dō of Enryakuji in Ōtsu, Shiga, Eigen-ji, Enryaku-ji (temple complex on a mountain northeast of the city), Ishiyama-dera, Mii-dera, Shizuoka Ryūtaku-ji, Shōgen-ji, Taiseki-ji, Tochigi Rinnō-ji, Tokyo Kan'ei-ji, Sengaku-ji, Sensō-ji, Shōfuku-ji in Higashimurayama, Toyama Kokutai-ji, Wakayama Danjogaran of Mount Kōya, Chōhō-ji, Fudarakusan-ji, Jison-in, Mount Kōya, Kongōbu-ji,

Negoro-ji, Seiganto-ji, Yamagata Yama-dera, Yamaguchi Kōzan-ji in Shimonoseki, Yamanashi Kōgaku-ji, Kuon-ji.

Korea

Haeinsa Temple-Janggyeong Panjeon, the depositories of the *Tripitaka Koreana* woodblocks. The Temple of Haeinsa, on Mount Gaya, is home to the *Tripitaka Koreana*, the most complete collection of Buddhist texts, engraved on 80 000 woodblocks between 1237 and 1248. The buildings of Janggyeong Panjeon, which date from the fifteenth century, were constructed to house the woodblocks, which are also revered as exceptional works of art. As the oldest depository of the *Tripitaka*, they reveal an astonishing mastery of the invention and implementation of the conservation techniques used to preserve these woodblocks. Seokguram Grotto and Bulguksa Temple. Established in the eighth century on the slopes of Mount Toham, the Seokguram Grotto contains a monumental statue of the Buddha looking out to sea in the *bhumisparsha mudra* position. With the surrounding portrayals of gods, Bodhisattvas and disciples, all realistically and delicately sculpted in high and low relief, it is considered a masterpiece of Buddhist art in the Far East.

The Temple of Bulguksa (built in 774) and the Seokguram Grotto form a religious architectural complex of exceptional significance. Gyeongju Historic Areas contain a remarkable concentration of outstanding examples of Korean Buddhist art in the form of sculptures, reliefs, pagodas, and the remains of temples and palaces from the flowering of this form of unique artistic expression, in particular between the seventh and tenth centuries. Seoul Bongeunsa Bongwonsa, Jogyesa, Gyeonggi, Bongseonsa, Silleuksa, Yongjusa, Gangwon Naksansa, Sinheungsa, Oseam, Woljeongsa, Naksansa, Chungcheong Beopjusa, Guinsa, Magoksa, Sudeoksa, Gyeongsang Bunhwangsa, Donghwasa, Bulguksa (including Seokguram), Hwangnyongsa, Jikjisa, Haeinsa, Ssanggyesa, Tongdosa (one of the Three Jewel Temples), Haeinsa (one of the Three Jewel Temples),

Busan, Beomeosa, Jeolla Geumsansa, Miruk-sa, Seonunsa, Pyeongan Pohyonsa, Jeolla, Songgwangsa (one of the Three Jewel Temples), Hwaeomsa, Daejeon Musangsa.

Laos

Today there are more than 60 monasteries, temples and shrines, set in secluded courtyards with chapels and pagodas. Wat Mai Suwannaphumaham built in the eighteenth century. The Wat also contains an emerald Buddha statue. Wat Xieng Thong, Pha That Luang Vientiane Pha That Luang, Vientiane, Wat Si Saket, Vientiane, That Dam, Vientiane Luang Phrabang, Wat Xieng Thong, Luang Prabang was both a royal capital and a religious centre of the Kingdom of Laos from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries and is a World Heritage Site,¹⁰ Sai Fong, Suwannakhet, Vientiane, Xieng Khong.

Malaysia

Bidor and the old tin mines in Perak, Bujang valley, Kedah province, Johor Lama (in Johore), Kota Tinggi (in Johore), Kuala Selinsing (in Perak), Saba Island (Gold Hord), Mt. Seguntang (Sumatra), Dhamma Resource Centre.

Maldives

Seenu (Addu) Atol, Gyaviyani Atol, Laamu (Haddummati) Atol, Faafu Atol.

Myanmar

Dhammayangyi Temple, Shwenandaw Monastery in Mandalay, Shwezigon Pagoda in Bagan.¹¹ Yangon (Rangoon), Botahtaung Pagoda, Kaba Aye Pagoda (World Peace Pagoda), Shwedagon Pagoda, Sule Pagoda, Mandalay, Bagan (Pagan) Ananda Temple, Bupaya Pagoda, Dhammayangyi Temple, Dhammayazika Pagoda, Gawdawpalin Temple, Htilominlo Temple, Lawkananda Pagoda, Mahabodhi Temple, Manuha Temple, Mingalazedi Pagoda, Payathonzu Temple, Shwegugyi Temple, Shwesandaw Pagoda, Shwezigon Pagoda, Sulamani Temple, Tharabha Gate, Thatbyinnyu Temple, Mandalay Atumashi Monastery, Kuthodaw Pagoda,

Rakhine Shite-thaung Temple, Htukkanthein Temple, Koe-thaung Temple, Andaw-thein Ordination Hall, Le-myet-hna Temple, Bago Shwethalyaung Buddha (Reclining Buddha), Shwemawdaw Paya, Shwesandaw Pagoda, Shan State, Hpaung Daw U Pagoda, Pindaya Caves. Amarapura, Ava, Beikthano (near Prome), Bhamo, Mandalay, Mrauk U, Pagan Pegu (Sittang river valley), Rangoon or Yangon, Sagaing, Taung, Taguang.

Nepal

Bodhinath (World Heritage Site),¹² Kathmandu Valley (World Heritage Site),¹³ Lumbini (World Heritage Site),¹⁴ Svayambhunath (World Heritage Site).¹⁵

Pakistan

Charsada, Gilgit, Jalalabad, Jamalgarhi, Kandahar, Manikyala, Mirpur Khas, Mohenjadaro (World Heritage Site),¹⁶ Peshawar (o.a. Shahji-ki Dheri), *Sabri Bahlol*, Swat (ancient Udyana), Takhti Bahi (World Heritage Site),¹⁷ Taxila (World Heritage Site).¹⁸

Philippines

Cebu Island

Sri Lanka

Anuradhapura (World Heritage Site),¹⁹ Dambulla (World Heritage Site),²⁰ Kandy (World Heritage Site),²¹ Polonnaruwa (World Heritage Site),²² Sigiriya (World Heritage Site),²³ Ritigala and other Forest Monasteries, Tissamaharama.

Thailand

Ayutthaya (World Heritage Site),²⁴ Chaiya, Chiangmai, Kamphaengphet, Lamphun, Lopburi, Nakon Pathom, Nakon Si Thammarat, Phimai, Phitsanulok, Phu Phrabat, Saraburi (Footprint Shrine), Si Satchanalai (World Heritage Site),²⁵ Si Thep, Sukhothai (World Heritage Site),²⁶ U Thong.

Vietnam

Danang, Dong Duong (Indrapura), Hanoi (recent Buddhist temples), Ho Chi Minh City (recent), Hue, Phan Rang, Tra Vinh.

If the proposals submitted above are accepted, many of these places will probably become World Heritage Sites of Buddhist activity in the future; many of them are still waiting for appropriate listing. However, even if listed, they will not automatically become *per se* sites of veneration for Buddhists.

For these sites to achieve World Heritage Listing, national and international organizations need to organize campaigns to promote them. The steps to be taken need not be totally socioreligious in nature, but can have a major economic component as well. The financial side has to be carefully thought out lest the sites decline into mundane tourist enterprises, often lacking any spiritual component.

On the question of injecting vitality and religious and humanistic elements into such religious sites, we recall the preparation of a Sacred City Plan for the Ancient City of Anuradhapura in Sri Lanka in 1983.²⁷ As the then head of the Department of Antiquities, I analysed the social units of the 1 400 year old ancient capital of the island from around 400 BCE to 1 000 CE. There, in an area of 4.5 miles north-south and 3.5 miles east-west, we identified seventeen outstanding Buddhist religious units.

In preparing the land use distribution of this World Heritage City for future protection, we set apart seventeen small plots as modern religious centres adjacent to the ruins. The new units were meant to be physical focal points to stimulate revived veneration on such holy ground, while the sites were scientifically excavated and conserved and the religious heritage laid bare for pilgrims and visitors. Our idealistic objective was to establish a simple ground floor residence for a caretaker monk at each of these seventeen religious units to live in a traditional architectural *panasala* or leaf hut. Thus we would establish a practice of veneration at these sites on a daily, weekly, monthly and annual basis.

We even visualised a situation in which each of the seventeen Buddhist shrines of old could be persuaded to share the twelve or thirteen full moon days of the

year, for their annual religious processions covering, possibly, every month of the year. With such an arrangement the Holy City of Anuradhapura, the political and religious capital during 1 400 years of Sri Lankan history, could once more come alive and return to its original glory. We also believed that 1983 was the right moment to revive the dead city with a show of enthusiasm, as it had just been declared a World Heritage Site.

A second similar effort was attempted with the UNESCO-Sri Lanka Project of the Cultural Triangle of Sri Lanka, and this time with the Second Capital of the country, Polonnaruwa, which is also a World Heritage Site.²⁸ It is known that this city had sixteen religious sites in ancient times, of which only about a dozen are identified today. During the excavation, conservation and landscaping of the sites of the Cultural Triangle at Polonnaruwa, we not only planned to display the site for visitors but attempted to inject an element of religious life into each of these sixteen places by organizing some spiritual activity on each full moon. This was done with the help of the venerable *thero* in charge of the World Heritage city of Polonnaruwa, the project officials and the local people.

These activities included a modest offering being made to the shrine at a given time, followed by a short sermon and a moment of meditation at each of these places.

It was also a regular practice to programme these activities at the monthly site meetings, with the resident *theros* of these sites participating in the discussions. A flower altar and other ritual amenities were made available at the main shrines of veneration. It was the custom for the labourers working at such sites to terminate their work half-an-hour early every pre-full moon day, and the resident *thero* would then address the workers and the devotees, ending the activity with their offerings, and no doubt, with a moment for private meditation.

These acts of religious piety by the workers provided a sense of deep commitment to the tasks assigned

to them, which resulted in substantial benefits to the organization as well. Thus, the quality and the quantity of work of the workers was invariably assured, due to the spiritual attachment they had towards the work.

The third and most effective instrument of strategy was the establishment of an appropriate organization to marshal resources for cultural activity. On this count, we accepted the premise that even a Prime Minister of a country had some 'soft spot' for culture, but it was undoubtedly risky to test the truth of this, due to the heavy burdens of work associated with such an office. However, a serious proposal was submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers that Sri Lanka should set up a Central Cultural Fund, and that the Prime Minister of the country be made the statutory Chairman of this Government Organization.²⁹

The gamble paid off, and consequently a whole host of Cabinet Ministers were sympathetic to the proposal and welcomed the invitation to become members of this prestigious governing body. The Finance Minister, who also agreed to be a participant, provided all the financial incentives that one could dream of towards resource generation and relaxed all taxes. The outcome of this major breakthrough was success followed by success, as the right messages were transmitted to all concerned from the very highest in the land.

An independent view of this masterly achievement after fourteen years of pressured activity was seen in the statement of the Director General of UNESCO in 1994, when he addressed the Member States in his Third Appeal on behalf of the UNESCO-Sri Lanka Project of the Cultural Triangle:

“The Government of Sri Lanka has demonstrated its support for the campaign by creating the Board of Governors of the Central Cultural Fund which is composed of the Prime Minister as Chairman together with six ministers and several other high level officials to co-ordinate and manage the campaign activities. Campaign organization is a model of efficiency with clear lines of authority, rapid decision-making mechanisms and excellent coordination

of field work at all six sites. The highly committed staff is by now well experienced in all aspects of campaign management.”

It is as well to record that a similar organization has now been established in India after seeing the success in Sri Lanka. Thus we believe that even if heritage and religion are the hardest sectors for fundraising, an approach of this nature can find fertile ground and culture can be enabled to stand on its own financial feet, as it is at present with the Central Cultural Fund of Sri Lanka.

These examples of initiatives in Sri Lanka spell out a few practical propositions or some stepping-stones towards work at rediscovered ancient religious sites.

What we have tried with these Buddhist monuments can equally well be applied to the monuments of other religions, and we should encourage such enterprise.

If we wish to extend the analogy even further, it is applicable to secular cultural sites of even the recent past. In this regard we may reflect on the words of Sri Pandit Nehru who expressed his innermost feelings at the Samadhi of Mahatma Gandhi just before it was set ablaze. The words were later inscribed on the memorial marking the site and as he spoke with so much emotion they still move the millions that read them.

“Where he walked was hallowed ground,
And where he sat was a temple.”³⁰

If the ideas expressed above are achieved (and we still need to further the concepts of care and development of Buddhist Sites in the region) then there are other needs for the pilgrims such as accommodation and visitor facilities. Residential complexes in harmony with the sites need to be provided that do not in any way compete with the monuments, both aesthetically and in scale. As an example, we wish to quote the principles that we enunciated in a proposal to UNESCO with regard to the Buddhist Monastery at Paharpur in Bangladesh in 1975 as follows:

“The area set apart for the ‘Tourist Village’...should be developed in the style of a ‘Bangla Village’ with low rise cottages of straw and wattle-and-daub, as with the villages in the vicinity of Paharpur today”.³¹

In a similar manner, for a UNESCO report in 1975, we suggested a comparable proposal for Ayuthiya but in terms of providing the right decorum to the sacred shrines. We requested that the subdued classical melodies pervading the cultural park during the floodlit evenings be totally suppressed within the inner chamber of the ‘holy of holies’ of every shrine, and to consider ‘silence’ to be the loudest sound in the assimilation of the true spirit within such a ‘sanctum sanctorum’.³²

The principle of respect and understanding at sacred shrines is no different for other religions. For example in the Maldives, where the country is 100 percent Islamic, we indicated in 1984 that the required attitude of visitors within mosques should be as follows:

“...visitors will have to be forewarned of the deep sensitivity of the people in this regard and their customs, behaviour and physical movements should be highly disciplined and be in keeping with the spirit of these sanctuaries. Such visitors to the Maldives may themselves be from Muslim countries and adherents of the Islamic faith, but even these persons may not always be as sensitive to the seriousness with which the Maldivians accept their faith, and therefore a point of caution needs to be drawn even with these special guests. If such an arrangement is possible the religious and cultural monuments of the Mini Mogul Mosques in the Maldives can be an attraction of international standing, and most delicately presented to the world, as Architectural Pearls of the Indian Ocean”.³³

In extending the concept at a World Bank Seminar in 1999, on “Preserving the Architecture of Historic Cities and Sacred Places”, the author, as chairman of the session, stated:

“The new state of affairs will signal a fresher tune to the Monuments and Sites of Historic Cities and Sacred

Places'. The days of leisure will crowd the sites of Ancient Monuments and the greens of Natural Beauty. Monuments will have meaningful dialogues with Man. The prophetic thoughts of the French Minister of Fine Arts of 1881 will read anew the true meaning of the ramparts of Carcassonne and Avignon as when he said, "Better than all books...the ramparts...instruct us about the power of the feudal regime...In these books of stone we find what Augustin Thierry had called the 'soul of history'.³⁴ We believe, that by the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, the 'style of the spars' of Industrial Europe will begin to emerge, but in a new garb of 'Residential Universities for Leisure Studies'. These will be positioned at a distance from the monuments and hidden in the woods and thickets, but within walking distance of those highlights of the 'Cultural Playgrounds' of the 21st century".³⁵

The 'Residential Universities for Leisure Studies' could well be the 'Fortresses of Modern Meditation' located beside the 'Sites of Pilgrimage' identified above as 'Cultural Playgrounds'. The 'Books of Stone' could well be the ruins of the 'Shelters of Hermits' or the '*Padhanagharas* or *Chakamanas*' of forest monks. Or they might be as the painted walls of the Image Houses were, with didactic paintings of the religious history of the Master's life and of events in his previous births as narrated in the *Jatakas*. For these are the Eastern 'books of stone' and the 'soul of Buddhist history', that the French Minister of Fine Arts of 1881 would refer to today, if he were to visit this region in his continuing cycle of *samsara*, or in his many rebirths.

The bricks and plaster of the *stupas* too, by their association with the relics of the Master or his disciples through countless years, have assimilated the spirit of reverence and so acquired the standing of a '*paribogha* relic', much as the sapling of the Sacred Bo tree is considered today. The tangible fabric of ruined religious sites or the living monuments of Buddhist veneration, including the less tangible seasonal religious festivals of processions and *peraheras* enacted throughout a year's calendar of events, are all timely reminders of one's adherence to an inner voice of subdued silence. The question is how consciously one

recognizes these as part of one's life's philosophy and acceptance.

I have not only attempted to identify rediscovered sites of historical significance to the Buddhists of Asia, but have traced this subject to other items of relevance in a sociocultural ambience, having assimilated the true spirit of the rediscovered monuments of old. I have attempted further to translate the concept into a revived and palatable practice in the form of 'Buddhist Pilgrimages', that could be moulded into shape by a dynamic 'UNESCO Asian Pilgrim Unit' possibly to be appointed. We trust and hope that the wisdom that identified this desire will also achieve a pragmatism that gives substance to the vision.

Notes

1. "At one time the Enlightened One, the Lord, was staying at Vesali in the pavilion of the Gabled Hall in the Great Wood. At that time the Lord talked in many ways to the monks on the subject of impure, he spoke in praise of the impure, he spoke in praise of developing (contemplation of) the impure, he spoke thus and thus in praise of taking the impure as a stage in meditation. Then the Lord addressed the monks thus: I wish, monks, to go into solitary retreat for a half-month; I do not wish any one to come up to me except the one who brings my alms-food" (Dialogues of the Buddha, *Sacred Books of the Buddhist*, pt 3, tr T.W. Rhys Davids. London, p. 47).
2. Buddhaghosha, B., *Visuddhimagga (The Path of Purification)*, tr. Nanamoli Bhikkhu, Colombo, 1956, 4. 21-24.
3. The Monuments of the Bamiyan Valley, *ICOMOS Recommendation to UNESCO*, No.209, Paris, 1982.
4. Ruins of Buddhist Vihara at Paharpur, *ICOMOS Recommendation to UNESCO*, No. 322, Paris, 1983.
5. The Archaeological Parks, Angkor, Roluos and Banteay Srei, *ICOMOS Recommendation to UNESCO*, No. 667, Paris, 1992.
6. Ajanta Caves, *ICOMOS Recommendation to UNESCO*, No. 242, Paris, 1982.

7. Ellora Caves, *ICOMOS Recommendation to UNESCO*, No. 243, Paris, 1982.
8. Buddhist Monuments at Sanchi, *ICOMOS Recommendation to UNESCO*, No. 528, Paris, 1989.
9. Borobudur Temple Compound, *ICOMOS Recommendation to UNESCO*, No. 592, Paris, 1990.
10. The Town of Luang Prabang, *ICOMOS Recommendation to UNESCO*, No. 735, Paris, 1994.
11. Bagan (Pagan), Archaeological area and Monuments, *ICOMOS Recommendation to UNESCO*, No. 796, Paris, 1995.
12. *Properties Inscribed on the World Heritage List*, UNESCO, Paris, p. 9.
13. *Ibid*, (en. 12), p.9.
14. Lumbini Zone, Rupandehi District, Western Terai, *ICOMOS Recommendation to UNESCO*, No. 666, Paris, 1996.
15. *Ibid*, (en. 12), p.9.
16. Mohenjo Daro, *ICOMOS Recommendation to UNESCO*, No. 138, Paris, 1979.
17. The Buddhist Ruins of Takht-I-Bahi, *ICOMOS Recommendation to UNESCO*, No. 1140, Paris, 1979.
18. Taxila, *ICOMOS Recommendation to UNESCO*, No. 139, Paris, 1979.
19. *Properties Inscribed on the World Heritage List*, UNESCO, Paris, p.12.
20. *Ibid*, (en. 19) p. 12.
21. *Ibid*, (en. 19) p. 12.
22. *Ibid*, (en. 19) p. 12.
23. *Ibid*, (en. 19) p. 12.
24. The Historic City of Ayutthaya, *ICOMOS Recommendation to UNESCO*, No. 576, Paris, 1990
25. Sukhothai and Associated Towns, *ICOMOS Recommendation to UNESCO*, No.574, Paris, 1990.
26. *Ibid*, en. 25.
27. The original effort to restore the sacred city of Anuradhapura was initiated in 1941 when money was requested from the State Council to obtain the services of a town planner from England. This move resulted in the setting up of a Department of Town Planning in Sri Lanka in 1947. Subsequently many sacred cities were planned and developed by this department. The presently Gazetted Plan of Anuradhapura is the one that was prepared with the help of the Department of Archaeology, and formally accepted in 1983.
28. *Properties Inscribed on the World Heritage List*, UNESCO, Paris, p.12.
29. *Central Cultural Fund Act*, No. 57 of 1980.
30. This extract from the text of Sri Pandit Nehru's funeral oration at the passing of Mahatma Gandhi was placed on the memorial where he was cremated, but unfortunately the inscription is now no more.
31. Silva, R., *The Development of Cultural Tourism Paharpur and Environs*, UNESCO, Paris, 1976, p. 9.
32. Silva, R., *Thailand – The Development of Cultural Tourism*, UNESCO, Paris, 1975.
33. Silva, R., *Conservation of the Mogul Mosques and the Excavation of the Maldivian Mounds*, UNESCO, Paris, 1984, pp. 6-7.
34. Brown, G.B., *Care of Ancient Monuments*, Cambridge, 1905, p. 75.
35. Silva, R., Preserving the Architecture of Historic Cities and Sacred Places, *International Perspectives in Conservation*, ed. G. Wijesuriya, ICOMOS Sri Lanka, Colombo. 1999, pp 84-100.

References

Brown, G.B. 1905. *Care of Ancient Monuments*. Cambridge: University Press.

Buddhaghosha, B. 1956. *Visuddhimagga (The Path of Purification)*, tr. Nanamoli Bhikkhu, Colombo.

Silva, R. 1999. Preserving the Architecture of Historic Cities and Sacred Places. In G. Wijesuriya, ed. *International Perspectives in Conservation*. Colombo, Sri Lanka: ICOMOS.

Silva, R. 1984. *Conservation of the Mogul Mosques and the Excavation of the Maldivian Mounds*. Paris: UNESCO.

Silva, R. 1976. *The Development of Cultural Tourism Paharpur and Environs*. Paris: UNESCO.

Silva, R. 1975. *Thailand – The Development of Cultural Tourism*. Paris: UNESCO.

Note: This paper is an adaptation of a keynote speech presented by the author at the SAARC International Conference on 'Archeology of Buddhism: Recent Discoveries in South Asia' in 2012. This modified version has been republished with permission from the SAARC. The original can be found at: http://saarcculture.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/book-of-abstract_archaeology.pdf



Finding a Middle Path for saving the contradictory values of living Buddhist temples in Korea

Sujeong Lee

Buddhist heritage, past and present, is the outcome of an exceptional investment of time and resources that characterises cultural legacy and marks the traces of the life of a society. Buddhist temples in contemporary use are living places that differ from archaeological sites or museums in that they preserve their original functions and spiritual significance. Such a characteristic of functioning religious buildings is a critical factor in their conservation since it generates the challenge of pursuing two contradictory goals: keeping to their original use while preserving material remains: in other words, to preserve their religious and historical values at the same time.

From a religious perspective, Buddhist temples are physical manifestations of theological principles. They are also containers which accommodate contemporary ritual. The ways in which their duties are discharged are varied and continue to change over time.

Circumambulation of the main altar in the main hall of Korean Buddhist temples had been a major practice in the Unified Shilla Period (668-935), whereas preaching in the main hall became common practice in later periods such as the Joseon Period (1392s-1910) and the present. This is why most main halls in use at present have the main altar right at the back of the hall, whereas archaeological surveys of foundations have revealed that some main halls used to have the altar at the centre before they were rebuilt. In order for Buddhist communities to preserve religious value, it is necessary to reflect the continuous theological change in the buildings and architectural elements. Material change is a necessary *karma* that they have to accumulate.

Unlike those in the religious community, heritage professionals and government officials value Buddhist temples as an important medium to confirm national identity and to pass it on to the next generation. The information and historical evidence of the material remains play an important role in making this possible. Therefore, changes to the material aspects and historical values should not be compromised in order for temples to accommodate liturgical change. Such paradoxical aspects of change and conservation in religious buildings that are in use have been exacerbated by the fact that those in use tend to be given more freedom from secular controls than those that are no longer used. The Traditional Temple Preservation Act in Korea provides special privileges to religious communities to focus on the original use for spiritual purposes, and allow them more freedom to make their own decisions about their buildings. Decision-making tends to lose objective perspective when weighing up various values, resulting in the demands of religious communities being favoured.

Is it therefore impossible to catch two birds at once: conserving historical value and adapting in order to retain religious values? Or is it rational to accept the claim of Buddhist philosophy in conservation that everything is changing, and therefore attachment to the material substance should be removed? This paper argues that the contradictory values of Buddhist temples be conserved by devising improved systems of value assessment, legal frameworks and collaboration between state and religious authorities. Taking the case of the conservation of Haeinsa temple in the 1980s and 1990s, it addresses the dilemmas and problems of the present system and provides a set of recommendations for finding a middle path. Because the ICCROM-CHA Forum in 2013 focused on addressing problems of conservation of Buddhist temples, this paper will leave detailed discussion of value frameworks (and issues of authenticity in the local context) and legal aspects to later volumes.

Lack of balance between religious and secular values in conservation

The religious value of living Buddhist temples is a key aspect for deciding on their significance as living heritage. Therefore, its importance tends to be emphasised in the conservation decision-making process, but the substance and entity of religious value needs to be re-defined before it is privileged over that of other values. From a narrow perspective, religious value is confined to the religious role for the community that worships regularly in the building. From a wider perspective, its role includes an extended spiritual influence on the non-religious community; an influence that this paper argues should be assured during decision-making, as it is a core foundation for preserving both religious and secular values of Buddhist heritage.

Haeinsa temple (Fig. 1) is not an ideal example but it is sufficient for illustrating the challenging task of catching the two birds together: accommodating present religious needs while also conserving secular

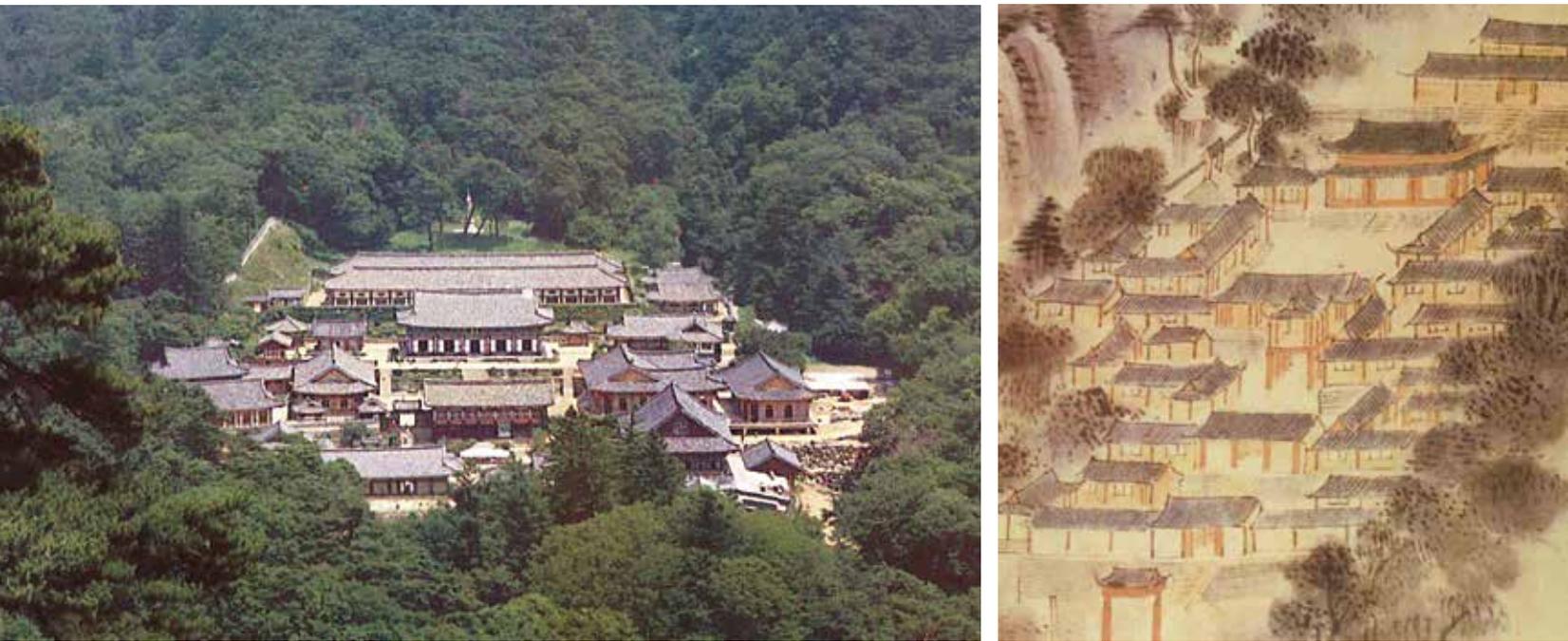


FIGURE 1. Aerial view of Haeinsa (present) (left) and the 18th century painting of Haeinsa by Yun-gyeom Kim (right).

values, such as historical and aesthetic values. Yet the middle path that it has taken still leaves problems. First built in the ninth century, Haeinsa temple is one of the Three Jewels Temples which represent the Buddha (Tongdosa Temple), the Dharma (the teaching, Haeinsa temple) and the Shanga (monks and laity, Songgwangsa temple). Each temple preserves symbolic objects or an institute: Tongdosa temple has a *stupa* which contains one of many Sakyamuni (historical) Buddhas; Haeinsa preserves a complete set of Buddhist scriptures; and Songgwangsa temple has the biggest training centre for monks. Extensive reconstruction of the buildings was undertaken after the 1817 fire which burnt down the rest of the buildings in the temple except for two depositories of Buddhist scriptures. Fortunately many of the reconstructed buildings survived the Korean War (1950-1953). The temple was one of the hiding places for communist soldiers but it escaped total destruction when a pilot disobeyed orders to bomb the temple. The layout of the buildings expresses a physical embodiment of a temple's history, of the theological philosophy of contemporary Buddhism

and of the temple life of monks and lay people at a typical Korean Buddhist temple.

The temple was designed as a group of buildings at each of four different levels based on the symbolic meaning and importance of each group (Fig. 2). At the lowest level, there are three gates, one pillar, four guardians and non-duality gates. At the next level there is a small courtyard surrounded by a lecture hall in the north, a bell pavilion in the west, a temple office in the south and an assembly hall in the east. Staircases on the left and right of the lecture hall, called Gugwangru pavilion, lead to the central courtyard where the main hall of Virocana Buddha is located in front with a school on the left and living quarters of the monks on the right. At the highest level of the temple, there are four repositories: two are in a long row, the Sudarajeon hall at the front and Beopbojeon hall behind, both built in the fifteenth century; and two small repositories between the two long ones (the Dongseosagango repository). All four buildings are registered as a National Treasure and house the thirteenth century

Major buildings

- 1,2,3,4. Depository buildings
- 10. Seonyeoldang
- 12. Dokseongak
- 13. Eungjinjeon
- 14. Myeongbujeon
- 15. Birojeon
- 18. Jeongsudang
- 19. Gwaneumjeon
- 25. Gyeonghakwon
- 26. Jeokmukdang
- 29. Gunghyeondang
- 30. Gugwangru
- 31. Kitchen
- 32. Bogyeongdang
- 33. Cheonghwadang
- 34. Beomjongak
- 35. Saundang
- 36. Haetalmun
- 37. Guksadan
- 38. Uhwadang
- 39. Bonghwangmun

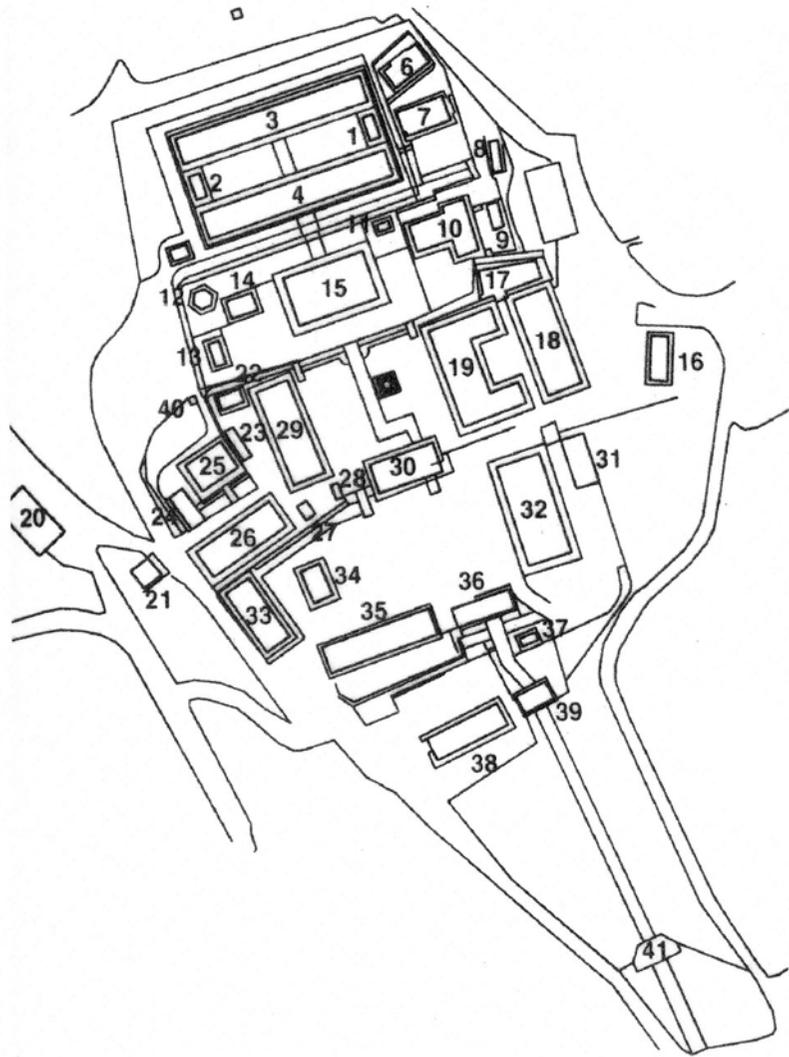


FIGURE 2. Plan of Haeinsa

woodblocks of the Tripitaka Koreana, the Buddhist scriptures. The woodblocks together with the four repository buildings are designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The interventions to the fabric of the temple during the last 100 years can be divided into three categories: repair of original buildings, construction of new buildings in empty spaces and new buildings replacing existing buildings (Fig. 3).

As marked in green in Figure 3, repository buildings at the top level and the main hall area were repaired

without any attempt at reconstruction and change because an intervention to a designated building is strictly controlled. Work was confined to minor repairs with minimum intervention in principle. However, buildings marked in red, which are not designated, have been replaced by new ones. While in many cases in Korea reconstruction has preserved the arrangement of buildings because one individual building replaces another, respecting the significance of the location of each building, it has often ignored both the geological interaction and the detailed setting of the buildings. In addition, the informational and historical values embodied in the chronological development of each

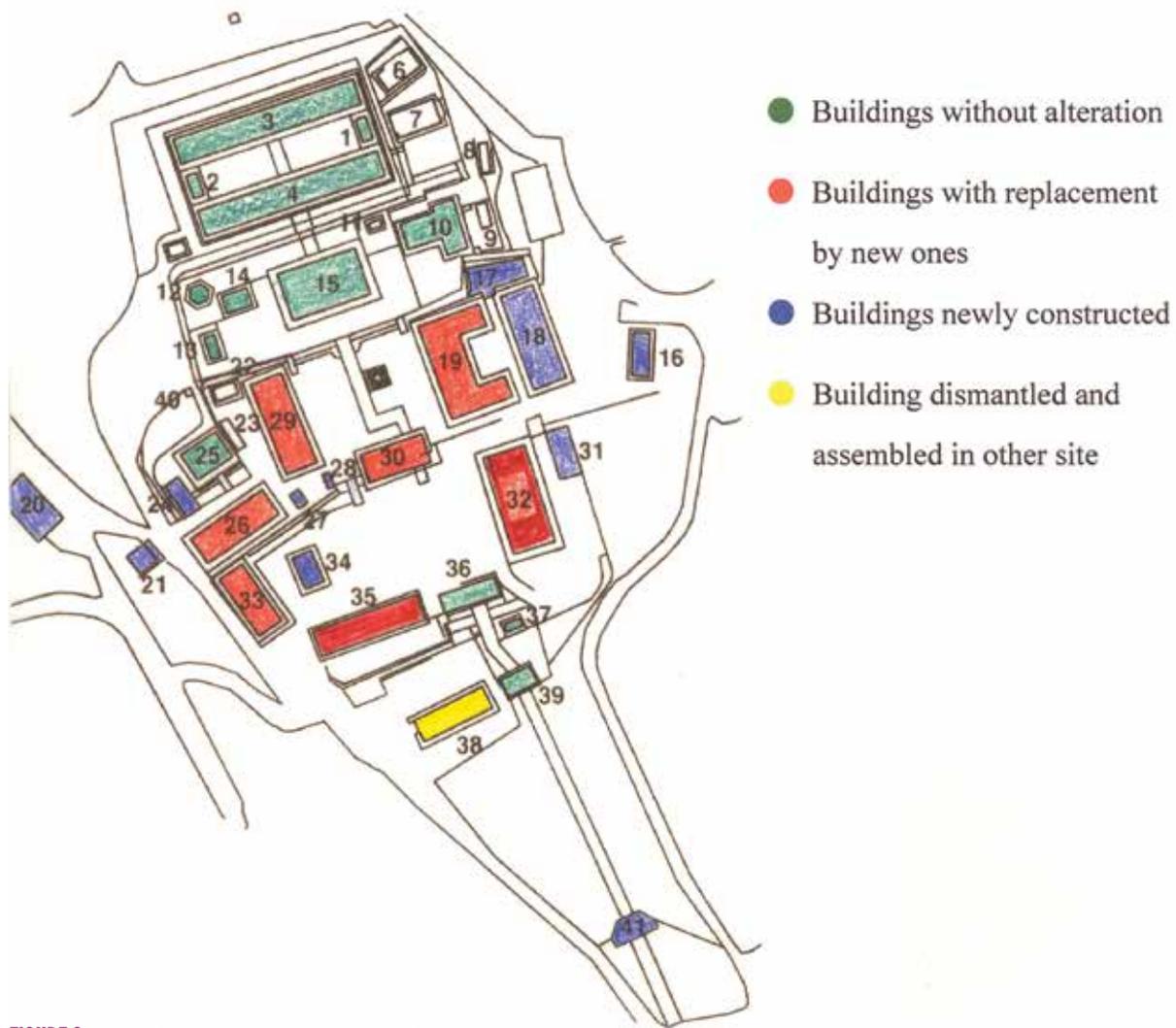


FIGURE 3. Plan of Haeinsa with marking of reconstruction

building has given way to the functional need of religious activity with new buildings of contemporary form, material and size. The desire to increase the religious population and activities of the temple for financial reasons and reputation has resulted in the so-called ‘bigger-building syndrome’. In some cases a change of function has led to the alteration of the original form and design of the building during reconstruction.

One example is the reconstruction of the undesignated buildings of the 1980s and the 1990s in the temple. Six undesignated buildings in the first

and second courtyards were replaced by new ones, four in the 1980s and two in the 1990s. Only one of them was preserved in another location without being destroyed. Bogyongdang (Assembly Hall, no. 32 in Figure 2) replaced the Myeongwoldang (Shrine of Bright Moon, used for lectures and large congregations) of 1817 which was moved to the left of the Bonghwangmun (no. 38 in Figure 2) and changed its name to Uhwadang in 1982 (Lee & Jeong, 2002: 23). The new bigger building was built of cement to resemble a timber structure. The present temple office, Saundang (no. 35 in Figure 2), replaced the 1939 building in 1984. Jeokmukdang

(Shrine of Silence, no. 26 in Figure 2), the abbot's living quarters, was constructed in 1989 replacing several buildings used for rice cleaning, warehousing and living quarters for trainee monks. Located to the left and right of the main courtyard, Gunghyeondang (no. 29 in Figure 2), which is the lecture hall for the monks' school, replaced the 1908 building in 1988 and Gwaneumjeon (Hall of Avalokitesvara, no. 19 in Figure 2), the living quarters for monks, replaced the 1908 building in 1991 with a new building in steel and concrete. Gugwangru (no. 30 in Figure 2), a pavilion for lectures and congregations, was built in 1818 but was replaced by a new building in 1993.

Bigger in size than the previous buildings, the new buildings have failed to preserve the aesthetic beauty relating to the surrounding buildings. For example, Bogyongdang, seemingly a single storey at the front but actually two storeys at the back, has failed to preserve the aesthetic beauty relating to the surrounding buildings because of its size (Wontaek, 1986: p. 9). Before the works were executed, Hyangjeok, who was a monk in the temple, expressed his concern about the preference of the contemporary temple authority for bigger buildings:

“It is a kind of commercialism if we construct a huge building with over-decoration in the name of religion...It would be a proper rationale if we restore a historical building properly and add a functional building for practical and missionary purposes making a harmony with the existing context...Furthermore, it would be destructive construction if an abbot plans a new construction for the sake of his ambitious achievement” (Hyangjeok, 1987: 5).

However, his concern was ignored in the decision-making. After the work, a leading Buddhist art historian, Ubang Gang (1999), criticized the ‘bigger-building syndrome’ in his article Regarding reconstruction: a plea to monks, stating:

“The beautiful and secluded atmosphere of our Buddhist temples has disappeared because of

ignorant construction. Buddhist temples are building a main hall and a lecture hall bigger and bigger like a modern theatre, so they do not harmonize with existing buildings” (Gang, 1999: 17).

Being two storeys at the front but one at the back, the 1818 Gugwangru played an important role in leading visitors into the main courtyard. Originally every bay of the first floor of the building had neither exterior walls nor windows so that it could be used to accommodate people in a special ceremony held in the main courtyard, as shown in the photo taken during the Japanese colonial period. The photo published in the book *Haeinsa* (Lee, J., et al. 1993: 66) shows that a window was added to each bay of the first floor in order to use the building as a museum and for exhibitions. It had a gate in the second bay from the right of the ground floor so that visitors had to enter at the right side of the courtyard. It was intentionally designed for them to pay respect to the *stupa* on that side before moving on to the central pavement leading to the main hall, the Hall of Virocana (Lee, S., 2001: 32-33).

The new Gugwangru changed the original route. The second bay from the right of the previous building had no doors nor closed space but provided instead a pathway to enter the main courtyard through the building. The new building closed the second bay from the right so visitors have to enter the main courtyard passing by the right and left side of the building. The building, built in 1818 after the fire of the previous year, respected the location of the door which preserved the original route (Lee, S., 2001: 33). The painting by Yunkyeom Kim (1711-1775) shows that the building before the fire had the same route (Figure 1 photo on the right).

However, the reconstruction in 1993 ignored the authenticity of material, setting and function, affecting not only its informational but also, ironically, its religious values. By removing a sound building, original material of historic value demonstrating early construction techniques was lost; by changing

the original route, the original setting for the intended religious experience of visitors was altered; and by changing the use of the building, its original function of accommodating the congregation participating in outdoor rituals in the courtyard in front of the main hall disappeared. This lack of understanding of the relationship between building and courtyard has been criticized (Lee, S., 2001: 32; Kim, B., 2002: 7); and the failure of the compromise between the preservation of the original setting and present day functional needs has been pointed out (Woncheol, 1993: 5).

Due to the absence of detailed documents, it is difficult to understand the rationale of the replacement, the process of decision-making and the source of funding of the reconstruction. By examining a retrospective article by a Buddhist monk of the temple, Wontaek, who took on an important role as chief administrator during the period of reconstruction, and later as director of the temple museum, it can be assumed that it was part of a long-term development plan to regain important status as a Dharma temple for a small group of administrative monks of the temple. An effort to restore religious dignity, as a result, has erased other aspects of religious value. He stated that:

“When I was appointed to be a chief administrator, I was full of thoughts to achieve the so-called second foundation by developing the site of the previous primary school. But soon I concluded that it is not possible to dream of an extravagant plan with such a poor financial status, as with much difficulty, it could barely manage the daily expenses. There were many buildings which had deteriorated, so I was busy repairing them. Thus my ambition disappeared as an impossible dream to raise enough money to accomplish the twelve-year development plan (the construction of a religious and cultural complex on the site of the primary school which was commenced in 1990 for the commemoration of the 1 200th anniversary of the first foundation of the temple)” (Wontaek, 1996: 19).

In such a difficult financial situation, the temple managed the reconstruction of six buildings. There are no details of the source of the funding, which exemplifies the problem of the secretive attitude toward financial sources and the status of the religious authority. Reviewing the list of grants by central and local governments in *The annual statistic of conservation of cultural properties* published by the Cultural Heritage Administration between 1981 and 1989, it is clear that no government funds had been allocated to the temple for the work. They depended for the full amount of the cost on public donations which probably resulted in the reconstruction being strongly influenced by the wishes of rich donors. Hyeongong, a Buddhist monk from Baekyangsa, particularly criticized the implications of private donations by politicians for reconstruction. He noted:

“...We need to review reconstructions which were executed in Buddhist temples. Surely, there were many reconstructions from sincere and devoted donors. However, we have seen many works that have been donated by the relatives and friends of politicians (who expected political support from the Buddhist community) providing unethical money to the temple administrators and local officers. We have seen that many Buddhist monks who are acquainted with relatives or friends of politicians who have been recognized as a highly respected monk or a capable administrator” (Hyeongong, 1988: 7).

After the reconstruction of six buildings at Haeinsa in 1993, a Buddhist monk in the temple, Woncheol, criticized the work. By comparing two contrasting attitudes toward a building, namely ‘restoration to as it was’ and ‘alteration based on functional needs’, his discerning arguments suggested that both attitudes could be compromised by a logical rationale reflecting the practical and aesthetic needs of present day religious practice (Woncheol, 1993: 5). He noted that alteration of an existing building for modern convenience should be executed only where the rationale of the work is strongly convincing and reasonable. However, the

desire to expand the temple with many huge buildings has developed into building separate complexes for religious and secular activities adjacent to the temple without providing any evidence that the work was necessary. The plan for the construction of a religious and cultural complex in a separate area shows that the temple authority ignored the original function of the existing building.

Craving against Buddha's teaching

In 1996, the temple authority announced 'A project for a religious and cultural complex' (Wontaek, 1996: 18). The main purpose of the project was to expand the temple with a long-term development plan to celebrate the 1200th anniversary of its foundation and to separate the religious space for monks from the secular one for lay communities. The project foresaw three phases of construction: (1) a training centre, an assembly hall and a museum for lay people; (2) a new school for the monks and an international meditation centre for foreign monks; and (3) various accommodation facilities for pilgrims and a holiday resort (Wontaek, 1996:18). Mugwan, a chief administrator monk of the temple in 1997, explained the aim of the work as follows:

“As the form or trend of the faith is changing with the passage of time, Korean Buddhism of the twenty-first century needs to renew the temple and its cultural space in order to accept the contemporary demands of our times. Haeinsa should build a ‘Haeinsa Religious and Cultural Complex’ as the second foundation of the monastery in order to meet the contemporary religious demand, separating it from the existing compound which needs to be preserved as a monastery for religious activities and meditation of the ordained monks” (Mugwan, 1997: 12-13).

As part of the first step, the temple authority planned to build the world's largest Buddha, 43 metres high and 41 metres wide, on the site of the primary school to satisfy the request in 2001 of a rich anonymous

donor, widely presumed to be a leading politician. As soon as the temple announced the plan, strong criticism came from both religious and secular groups. It was criticized as an unnecessary project “to destroy originality and traditional religious practice” (Anon, 2001a), “a violent abuse” and “a greedy thought for the sake of monetary profit by transforming the temple into a tourist site” (Seong, N., 2001: 8-9), and “not worthy of its cost, both artistically and technologically” (Anon, 2001b). An instant survey by the Korean Buddhism Information Centre, carried out on 4 June 2001, showed that the public supported the criticism of the plan (<http://www.budgate.net/Scripts/poll/polllist.asp?page=6>). Out of 563 voters, 91.12 percent responded that the project should be reconsidered. In response, the temple authority explained that “Haeinsa temple has played a central role in providing a space for monks but the space for the lay community was insufficient, so the project for the Buddha and other buildings has been planned to solve the problem” (Anon, 2001a).

The debate between the temple authority and a group of religious and lay people opposed to the plan became a serious conflict when Sugyeong, a Buddhist monk in Silsang temple, suggested reconsidering the project, using strong and harsh language against the Buddhist monks of Haeinsa. Two of his four arguments are worth quoting here:

“Firstly, if Haeinsa would like to make itself the best temple, I wish they would change their interest from the biggest Buddha, which symbolizes secularization of Buddhism, to a proper recognition of the value, and creative conservation of, the wooden blocks of the Tripitaka Koreana which are a unique heritage in the whole world. Secondly, if they are sincerely devoted to transform the temple to the best temple for Buddhist practice, the temple authority should concentrate on building the place by practicing Buddhist teachings, not by constructing the best or largest Buddha image which encourages materialism” (Sugyeong, 2001).

In 2002, faced with strong opposition, the temple authority announced a reduction in size of the Buddha to 33 m high and finally cancelled the project at the end of the year (Anon, 2002). On the other hand, a museum was completed in the same year in front of the site proposed for the Buddha. The temple authority then announced that they would continue to build a religious and cultural complex, as well as a Naewon hermitage as living quarters for the abbot, on a site 100 metres away from the repository buildings at the top of the temple (Anon, 2004a). In 2004, following strong opposition by sixteen institutions, including the central lay community of the Jogye order and environmental groups, the temple authority cancelled the plan for the Naewon hermitage (Anon, 2004b). In addition, the plan for a cultural and religious complex had been tackled during the public meeting held in Haeinsa in December of 2004. Participants from both religious and lay communities agreed on the need to improve the space for religious practice by the monks in Haeinsa, but recommended solving the problem in different ways without new construction (Anon, 2005).

Plans by Haeinsa over several years show that new construction has been problematic for religious and secular communities. The religious community has been concerned by the invasion of religious space for the monks by secular activities and tourists. They intended to solve the problem by separating the former from the latter by creating a new compound adjacent to the original monastery. However, this ignores the original and traditional function of the temple which had been designed to combine religious and secular activities in a single monastery. Arguments raised by opposition groups during the debates show that the temple misunderstood the real “contemporary demand of our times” which Mugwan stated above (Mugwan, 1997: 12).

Moving forward to finding a middle path

The issues raised at Haeinsa temple are typical of those found at many other temples in Korea over

the last 100 years. Different from other religious buildings of stone and brick, Buddhist temples of timber require more frequent physical interventions, with the result that rather than a “full richness of authenticity”, Buddhist temples will hand down a partial one to the next generations. In order for the present generation to avoid such things, it is necessary to find a middle path.

First, the present value framework should be re-examined and the various types of values should be weighed fairly by both religious and secular communities. For that, state and religious authorities must include a systematic value assessment within a decision-making process of conservation before physical intervention. Various aspects of religious values from both secular and sacred perspectives should be carefully examined, acknowledging their spiritual role for the non-religious community. It should not be compromised in favour of religious requirements and demand alone. Various values ascribed to heritage should not be quantified by numbers but should be subjectively assessed with due appraisal by society. Considering that authenticity is an important resource to convey the values and significance of heritage, the concept of authenticity should be thoroughly examined in the local context.

Second, both religious and state authorities should participate in the decision-making process no matter whether the buildings within a temple compound are designated or undesignated, so that the integrity of a temple can be preserved. A joint responsibility can be undertaken when the legal framework backs it up, so the present legal aspects of state and religious authority need to be re-examined.

The 2013 Forum was the first step in a long journey to find a middle path in the conservation of Buddhist temples. The practical and theoretical problems and dilemmas in this paper will guide the next forum in taking the next steps.

References

- Anon.** 2005. A discussion of the development of Dioceses of Haeinsa. *Manbul-sinmun* Newspaper, 6 January 2005.
- Anon.** 2004a. Another plan for a huge construction by Haeinsa in the National Park. *Hangyeore* Newspaper, 9 June 2004, p. 3.
- Anon.** 2004b. Cancelled plan for Naewon hermitage of Haeinsa, a problematic project to damage the natural environment. *Hangyeore*, 17 July 2004, p. 7.
- Anon.** 2002. Cancelled plan for the world's largest bronze Buddha of Haeinsa. *Dong-a-ilbo* Newspaper, 24 December 2002, p. 6.
- Anon.** 2001a. Much criticism about the plan for constructing huge Buddha in Haeinsa. *Dong-a-ilbo* Newspaper, 5 June 2001, p. 8.
- Anon.** 2001b. World's largest Buddha image. *The Korea Herald*, 23 June 2001, p. 12.
- Gang, U.** 1999. Regarding reconstruction: a plea to the Buddhist monks. *Haein*, September 1999: 16-17.
- Hyangjeok.** 1987. For ethical construction. *Haein*, 62(4): 5.
- Hyeongong.** 1988. Introspection of our reality and sincere reconstruction. *Haein*, 63(6): 6-7.
- Kim, B.** 2002. A lesson from 1 200 years of architectural history. *Haein*, October 2002: 6-7.
- Lee, J., Jang, G. & Jang, C.** 1993. *Haeinss*. Seoul: Daewonsa.
- Lee, S.** 2001. Precinct of Gukwangru. *Haein*, July 2001: 30-33.
- Lee, S. & Jeong, G.**, eds. 2002. *The planning report for the construction of the religious and cultural complex in Haeinsa*. Seoul: Haeinsa.
- Mugwan.** 1997. The purpose and background of the huge scale of a construction project. *Haein*, April 1997: 12-13.
- Seong, N.** 2001. Destroy Tripitaka Koreana first. *Chamyeobulgyo*, 2: 6-18.
- Sugyeong.** 2001. Bewailing the death of Jawun and Seongchol. *Hyundaebul-gyo* Newspaper, 20 June 2001.
- Woncheol.** 1993. Restoration and alteration. *Haein*, September 1993: 5.
- Wontaek.** 1996. For the second foundation of Haeinsa. *Haein*, January 1996: 18-19.
- Wontaek.** 1986. Buildings of Haeinsa. *Haein*, October 1986: 8-9.



An illusion of permanence: heritage conservation within the Buddhist world view in Ladakh

Tara Sharma

For over two and a half millennia, Buddhist art and architecture have been created, maintained, restored and built anew as physical manifestations of a way of life practised by millions of people across the world. This heritage continues to be created today, addressing the spiritual needs of an expanding global community. Contemporary interventions on living religious heritage in recent years have generated much debate in heritage conservation discussions. Gilding the face of a sixteenth century wall painting of the Buddha or commissioning colossal concrete statues of the Buddha, seen as acts of merit, are often perceived by heritage professionals as being detrimental to the original historic fabric of the heritage site/work of art.

To understand how 'heritage' is perceived one must understand the larger worldview within which heritage is created, preserved or allowed to decay. Buddhist cosmology views the phenomenal universe to be without perceptible limits in space or perceptible beginning in time. Here 'perceptible' is the operative word. The fact that the universe is not finite, either in space or in time, does not mean it is infinite, or even that it is either or both or neither. Space and time are not objective realities external to consciousness but part of the conditions under which it (consciousness) perceives things. Therefore, no matter how far in space one may go, in any direction, it is always possible to go still further, for wherever one goes, the mind goes too (Sangharakshita, 2006).

Whereas the universe of science exists only in space and time, that of Buddhism exists also in spiritual depth. The phenomenal universe as distinct from the physical universe is divided into various planes of existence (*loka*). Corresponding to each *loka* is a state of consciousness (*dhyana*). A practitioner can attain states of higher consciousness (*dhyana*) moving from one *loka* to another. There is thus a correspondence between *dhyanas* and *lokas*, the one representing the psychological, the other the cosmological aspect of existence. As the first verse of the Pāli *Dhammapada* teaches, **consciousness precedes and determines being** (Sangharakshita, 2006).

Schools of Buddhism recognize that all phenomena and events exist only in the present. "Ordinarily, we suppose that there is an independently existing entity which we call time. We speak of time past, present and future. However, when we look more closely, we see that again this concept is merely a convention. We find that the term 'present moment' is just a label denoting the interface between the tenses 'past' and 'future'. We cannot actually pinpoint the present. Just a fraction of a second before the supposed present moment lies the past, just a fraction of a second after lies the future. Indeed, when we begin to analyse our experience of time, we find that here the past disappears and the future is yet to come. We experience only the present"

(H.H. Dalai Lama, 2000). The notion of rebirth itself is seen as a continuity of consciousness.

In contrast, in the contemporary global discourse, the term heritage is perceived as a legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations. The material remains of the past have a value of their own stemming from their antiquity.

Within this worldview, however, heritage has survived and indeed thrived. In the trans-Himalayan region of Ladakh early Buddhist remains in the form of colossal mountain-cut Buddhas dating from the turn of the second millennium, eleventh century village temples and post-fifteenth century large monastic complexes still continue to be venerated by communities living in one of the world's harshest environments. Buddhism reached Ladakh before the eighth century as evidenced from numerous rock-cut depictions of *stupas* across Ladakh. Its main resurgence, commonly referred to as the Second Buddhist renaissance, occurred in the tenth and eleventh centuries when monks travelled to leading Buddhist universities such as Vikramshila, bringing back scriptures in Pāli and Sanskrit that were translated into the newly derived Tibetan script. From the fifteenth century, the tide turned and monks from Ladakh made their way to Tibet where great monastic centres of learning had been established. Ritual art and temple architecture now drew inspiration from this connection, which continued till the mid-twentieth century. For art historians, archaeologists and conservators, the pre-fifteenth century temples, famous for their embellishments in the form of wall paintings and stucco sculptures, are of immense significance. They shed light on an early period of the diffusion of Buddhism in the region when inspiration was derived from Kashmiri art traditions. Interestingly, several temples associated with the second Buddhist Renaissance (e.g. temples at Mangyu, Sumda Chun, etc.) were adopted by later sects and survive today with their original paintings and sculptures intact and continue to be used in worship. Others such as the *chos khor* at Nyarma and temple ruins at Basgo were abandoned and left to the elements.

With growing global interest in Tibetan Buddhist culture, the conservation and preservation of this heritage has elicited great interest in the past few decades. Traditional systems of maintenance, repair and renewal by lay village and monastic communities are being supplemented with contemporary conservation science and practice. The dichotomy between these two ends of the spectrum often arises from a fundamental difference in the values recognized in the site or object. For sites/objects in use by the community the value comes from the merit derived from renewal and maintenance and new construction. For conservators the value is often linked to issues of antiquity deriving from its historic/artistic/archaeological significance. The different perceptions influence the methodology followed in the conservation/restoration of a living Buddhist heritage site. This paper will discuss various approaches being followed in Ladakh that try to bridge these sometimes seemingly vast differences.

The fundamental issue of determining the value of a Buddhist heritage site/object requires a broader understanding when creating inventories of heritage. In Ladakh, while developing a community based approach to cultural mapping of heritage sites, the focus was placed on the function/usage and significance of the site to the community rather than its antiquity or material value.¹ Resource persons were drawn from the community itself, involving monks, school teachers, students and pilgrims who were familiar with their own culture and its manifestations. While developing the criteria for recognizing heritage to be listed, discussions were held with a range of scholars including archaeologists, senior monks, community leaders and historians. The criteria had to be constantly changed/upgraded. For example, while listing features of the sacred landscape it emerged that the discovery of sacred mountains, lakes, etc. continues to this day as mountain deities flee from neighbouring regions and seek refuge in Ladakh. Thus, the list expanded to include newly discovered sacred landscape features.

For the first time the listing also widened the types of sites being listed, as the village was taken as a basic

unit for listing rather than the region as a whole. This people-led approach led to a whole range of smaller structures which, while perhaps of no material or historic value, held great significance for the community. Thus the list included altars to the village protector deities (*lha to*), altars to the underworld serpent deities who governed the flow of water in this cold desert (*lubang*), *stupas* (*chorten*), *mane* walls, in addition to the more obvious vernacular architecture of mosques, forts/palaces, village temples and large monastic complexes.

The listing format was also amended to include more information on the intangible heritage associated with the site. Thus the listing of the famous Sakya monastery at Matho included the story of the oracles associated with two altars (*lhato*) up in the pastures above the village. The legend as recorded in the inventory states that "... two *Rongtsan* accompanied Lama Dungpa Dorjey from Kham (Tibet) to Ladakh and finding this place suitable decided to settle here. The *Rongtsan* reside here the entire year and only come down to the *gonpa* during the *Matho Nagrang*. On the eighth day of the second month of the Tibetan calendar, at the end of the festival they return here. At the time of the festival, the *Rongtsan* possess two monks from the monastery who enter into a trance. The monks have to undergo rigorous meditation two months prior to the *Nagrang*. The ritual offerings of juniper branches are renewed at the time of the festival. Four people are appointed by the oracles to bring the juniper from Hemis Shukpachan" (NIRLAC, 2008: Vol.1, 202). The *lha* (deities) appear every year as oracles in the *Matho Nagrang* festival held in the monastery, providing guidance to the community and making predictions for the coming year. The renewal of the *lhato* forms part of its mandate for creation. The 600-year old structures are renewed annually by the villagers through an elaborate ceremony. The inventory programme covered over 4 500 sites across 450 hamlets in the two districts of Leh and Kargil that constitute Ladakh.

The identification of heritage based on the values recognized by both the community and scholars is the first step in the process. These values may sometimes

have little to do with materiality or antiquity but rather with a contemporary continuity of a community's linkages.

The conservation of this heritage follows from the values recognized in these heritage sites. The dilemma arises when conflicting values are recognized in a singular site. The restoration of *stupa* (Tibetan *chorten*) has raised some interesting questions about authenticity. There are thousands of *chorten* scattered across Ladakh's landscape, some of them dating back to the ninth century, while others such as the Deshag Gyad (row of eight *chorten*) constructed at Zhiwestal, the residence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, are of more recent vintage. The *stupa* as an architectural form can be dated to the formative period of Buddhism. Through the ages, eight principal forms of *stupa* were recognized, symbolising various major events in the Buddha's life and in the *sangha*. The forms while adhering to basic tenets were not, however, formalised in the Tibetan world till the fourteenth century when they were codified by Buston and other learned sages (Dorjee, 2001). The codification itself was modified over the centuries and today there are many texts followed by the four major sects, written in different periods with minor differences in proportions while retaining the essential form and symbolism. As a result, many pre-fourteenth century *stupas* in Ladakh do not follow the code but instead remain of high archaeological and architectural significance in understanding the evolution of the *stupa* form in the trans-Himalayas.

What approach should then be followed in restoring a historic living religious structure not built according to the formal codes? While restoring one such *stupa* in Leh, a discussion ensued between the expert monk, Gelong Paldan from Lehdo,² versed in the codes of *stupa* construction, and the conservators on the approach to be followed. The monk's view was that a *stupa* not constructed according to correct proportions as per the texts cannot be worshipped as it is imperfect. The exact proportions and measurements are sometimes not seen in old *chorten* for several reasons, the most common explanation being that if the *chorten*

was built on the orders of a king in the past to atone for a crime, it often does not conform to formal codes and may have, for example, an irregular base or incorrect elements. Ritual relics placed inside these *chorten* may also be missing. Should the proportions then be corrected and ritual relics be placed within? Or should its original form be retained?

Commissioning the construction of a *chorten* is viewed as an act of merit. The spirit with which a patron or craftsman undertakes the construction is paramount. When asked if there is any difference in the merit accumulated by building a new *chorten* or repairing an old *chorten*, Gelong Paldan observes that both garner merit as long as they are carried out with the correct spirit or intent, i.e. for the benefit of all sentient beings. Citing the example of a house owner who wishes to relocate a *chorten* in a grander style away from the path leading to his house so as to lay a road to his house, Gelong Paldan says that such an act, where one is acting for one's own benefit and not for the benefit of all sentient beings, does not bring merit.

A second issue for discussion arose when decayed *chorten* are partially excavated prior to restoration. The interiors of the collapsed *chorten* often contain a multitude of votive offerings (*tsa tsa*) placed at the time of its construction, as well as decayed *thangkas* (painted scrolls), damaged scriptures and other ritual objects that are placed inside the decayed *chorten* by people when the ritual object is damaged. The ritual object is expected to decay with the *chorten*. As it is a sacred object in its own right, it can only be permitted to decay by the action of natural elements such as water, air and earth. Often these objects are thrown in the river or left exposed to deteriorate. While excavating collapsed *chorten* in the village of Gya³ several such objects were discovered and the natural reaction of the community was to place them in the river or up in the mountains where they will decay. The votive tablets and other ritual objects are often of immense archaeological value. In this instance, votive tablets inscribed in the *Sarada* script (an early Kashmiri script no longer used in the region) were unearthed, indicating an early period of Buddhist dissemination.



FIGURE 1. Damaged Buddhist texts and ritual headpiece placed by the devout inside a collapsed *chorten* and recovered by villagers during the restoration of a group of *chorten* in Gya, India.

Similarly, damaged handwritten manuscripts of sacred scriptures were also found while removing debris. In this situation, a series of discussions were held with the village community to explore other options to preserve these ritual objects. The damaged object could not be returned to a restored *chorten* as they would sully its perfection. The suggestion to house them in the museum elicited an interesting reaction whereby the community felt that, by placing them on display and ascribing a monetary value to the object, the original intent of the offering would be destroyed and there was a fear that people would start selling their texts in the growing antiques market. The dynamics of peoples' relation to the sacred objects would be altered. In the discussion that ensued, we were asked why it was important to keep these offerings if they were damaged. It was explained that these tablets and manuscripts shed important light on the evolution of Buddhism

in the region besides being of archaeological value. After much discussion, consensus was reached that the objects would all be carefully documented and placed inside a new structure (*tsadkhang* – traditionally built to house the *tsa tsa* or votive tablets) which would not be consecrated, thus separating them from the 'perfect' offerings re-interred in the newly restored *stupa*. The conservation approach therefore developed only after much deliberation and respected the informed choices that the community wished to make concerning the future of their heritage.

The restoration of *chorten* has to be accompanied by sacred rituals which transform the structure into a sacred site ready for worship. Before the restoration process can begin, the sacred spirit (*ishes pa*) housed within a sacred object needs to be removed. This *arga chog* ceremony involves the recitation of specific

scriptures and the removal of the *ishespa* which is stored in a *melong* (mirror). The central column or *srog shing* made from rare juniper wood is inserted ensuring that the grain runs from the trunk to the top. Sacred *mantras* are brought and each *mantra* rubbed with saffron water before it is carefully rolled up and tied at specific places on the *srog shing*.

After the insertion of the *srog shing*, the final mud plastering and lime washing is carried out. While physically the *chorten* is complete, it still needs a final consecration before it is ready for worship. The *rab nas* ceremony is carried out and the *ishespa* reinstated in the *chorten*. Only with the completion of the physical and spiritual process is the *chorten* complete.

The intangible knowledge that governs the creation and preservation of the built heritage is as valuable as the physical restoration process. The traditional transmission of the intangible knowledge associated with the creation and conservation of sacred heritage from senior monks to novices is equally crucial.

In restoring Buddhist temples different approaches have evolved over the past few decades, combining community concerns with the concerns of the scientific conservation community. The issue becomes particularly relevant in the case of wall paintings which embellish all major Buddhist temples, depicting the range of deities and lineages from the Buddhist pantheon. In living temples, the tradition of repainting damaged murals has been gaining momentum over the past several decades. Artists trained in the complex Buddhist iconography are commissioned to repaint damaged murals as damaged images are considered imperfect and therefore unworthy of worship. The question is a complex one for many reasons – today’s artists are trained in contemporary artistic styles whereas several significant temples (particularly those belonging to the phase of the second Buddhist renaissance in Ladakh from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries) have a completely distinct style combining Central Asian and Kashmiri artistic traditions.

Rare regional variations imported from Tibet are also distinct and cannot be easily replicated today. Moreover, traditional mineral pigments used in historic wall paintings are no longer easily available to contemporary artists. Finally, there are the complexities arising from historic repainting when temples changed hands between sects and where the original painting lay beneath the later painted layers with a totally different iconography. The debate therefore looked at the extent of recovery, retouching or repainting that should be permitted on historic wall paintings. Different approaches have been explored. In some instances where major portions of a significant figure are missing (e.g. the face or limbs of a Bodhisattva) and the temple is still used in worship, then conservators have worked with local artists repainting missing portions to ensure the figure is whole and worthy of worship.⁴ In the case of abandoned temples no longer used in worship, neutral fills are used to consolidate and neutralize the visual impact of deteriorated areas.⁵ The discussions held with monastic and village communities reveal that decisions on these issues often arise from the temple’s present function or importance in the life of the community and rarely from its historic/archaeological importance. If the temple has been abandoned and is preserved today as a work of art visited largely by tourists, then it is not necessary to present ‘complete’ images. In its transition from a living heritage site to an archaeological site, conservation approaches can always be revisited.

The perception of sacred art and architecture is deeply rooted in Buddhist teaching. As explained by Dzongsar Ngari Rimpoche in the context of sacred scrolls or *thangkas*: “Generally, while being consecrated, all sacred objects/*thangkas* are given a ‘mandate’ to fulfil their purpose of existence. This ‘mandate’ has an impact on the well-being, help and spiritual development of all living beings, and runs from the time the object/*thangka* is made and consecrated until it dies from the effects of the four elements, earth, water, fire, wind. The power and energy evoked in *thangkas* by a powerful spiritual personality is visible; one can sense it. Such *thangkas* may be partly damaged but they should be kept as



FIGURE 2. Sacred Buddhist texts carried in procession across village fields during the annual Bumskor festival, India.

they are and should not be restored. This is because the ‘mandate’ that has been given is valid until the last small piece of the *thangka* remains. Touching a *thangka* with one of the four elements (paint, for example, can contain water or earthen products, and sometimes is heated with fire) in order to change the *thangka*’s structure, would end the ‘mandate’. At some point the *thangka* will succumb to one of the four elements (Rimpoche, personal communication, 2007).

During interviews with monks, nuns, artists and laity in Ladakh, it was interesting to note how sacred art is perceived. The mandate for creation of sacred art

is to serve as a tool for inner realization. Both historic and contemporary sacred art perform this role. Thus to a question whether a historic wall painting of Shakyamuni Buddha is considered more sacred than a new one, the general response was that, for the viewer or worshipper, both are sacred as they perform a similar function, i.e., as a tool for inner realization. It depends on the intent with which the image is perceived by the viewer or worshipper. For the creator or artist, the act of creation was complex. The artist, traditionally a scholar of some learning, would be well versed in the qualities of the deity which he would depict, often residing in the chamber and meditating there till the

painting was complete. The intent of the artist while creating the image is equally significant. Good intent accumulates merit in both the viewer and the artist.

The value of old temples, paintings or *stupas*, it was pointed out, stems from the energy imbued in them by high *lamas* while performing consecration (*rab nas*). Where the intent of the creator is known, as in the case of Nyarma or Alchi associated with the great tenth century translator Rinchen Zangpo, the significance of the temples and art derives from his association with these sites and the fact that these structures and paintings were commissioned with the intent of promoting Buddha's teachings. The value, therefore, stems from its association and not primarily from its physical materiality in terms of art, historical style, pigments, etc.

Conservation can prolong the life of a heritage site/object – it cannot immortalize it in its original form. In the case of Buddhist heritage, because the physical form serves a profound purpose, it should be conserved, recognizing however, that every intervention itself transforms the original. The Buddhist view holds that all things created must eventually change. “Our perception of impermanent things like mountain ranges and houses does not conform to their actual mode of existence. Some of these things have existed for many centuries, even thousands of years and our minds perceive them in just that way – as lasting and permanent, impervious to momentary change. Yet when we examine these objects on an atomic level, they disintegrate every moment; they undergo momentary change. Science also describes a similar pattern of change. These objects appear solid, stable, and lasting, but in their true nature, they constantly change, not keeping still even for a moment” (H.H. Dalai Lama, 2003).

Recommendations

- The identification of heritage based on the values recognized by the community is the first step in the process. These values may sometimes have little to do with materiality or antiquity but rather with

a contemporary continuity of the community's linkages based on beliefs and traditions.

- The conservation approach stems from the values recognized in the heritage site. Discussions and mediations between multiple stakeholders, particularly the primary community associated with the site, should inform the conservation decision-making process.
- The intangible heritage associated with the creation/renewal/restoration of sacred heritage is as crucial as its tangible manifestations. The transmission of this knowledge, stemming from earlier traditions of monastic learning from senior monks to novices, is disrupted in some cases and needs to be revived within the monastic community.

Notes

1. The inventory programme was undertaken by the Namgyal Institute for Research on Ladakhi Art and Culture (NIRLAC) with a grant from the Ford Foundation, New Delhi. The Ford Foundation is presently funding a second phase of the community based approach in Ladakh which is being implemented by the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH).
2. Personal communication during a discussion with Gelong Paldan (Lehdo), Leh, 2011.
3. The project to restore *chorten* in the villages of Gya and Meeru, damaged by the flash floods of 2010, was undertaken by INTACH and the village bodies through a grant from the Prince Claus Fund.
4. The conservation of wall paintings at the Chamba Lhakhang in Basgo (undertaken by NIRLAC in partnership with the village body, Basgo Welfare Committee, and funded by the World Monuments Fund) adopted this approach, working closely with contemporary artists in repainting missing elements.
5. Conservation of wall paintings in the Karugma lhakhang at Igu implemented by INTACH under the Community Conservation Grant programme funded by the Ford Foundation.

References

Dorjee, P. 2001 (reprint). *Stupa and its technology – A Tibeto-Buddhist Perspective*. New Delhi, India: IGNCA.

H.H. Dalai Lama. 2000. *Ancient Wisdom Modern World-Ethics for the New Millennium*. London: Abacus.

H.H. Dalai Lama. 2003. *Stages of Meditation – The Dalai Lama* (translated by Ven Geshe Lobsang Jordhen, Losang Choephel Ganchenpa and Jeremy Russell). Ithaca New York: Snow Lion Publications.

Namgyal Institute for Research on Ladakhi Art and Culture (NIRLAC). 2008. *Legacy of a Mountain People: an inventory of cultural resources of Ladakh*, Vols 1 and 2. New Delhi, India.

Petech, L. 1939, reprinted 1999. *A study of the chronicles of Ladakh (Indian Tibet)*. New Delhi, India: Low Price Publications.

Sangharakshita. 2006 reprint. *The Three Jewels: The Central Ideals of Buddhism*. Delhi, India: Motilal Banarsidas Publishers.

Sharma, T. 2013. A community based approach to heritage management from Ladakh, India. In D.S, Kapila, & N.K. Chapagain eds. *Asian Heritage Management-Contexts, concerns and prospects*. London and New York: Routledge.



Perception and management of heritage in the Buddhist context: observations from Nepal

Neel Kamal Chapagain

Nepal, the birthplace of Buddha, has diverse Buddhist traditions and heritage. While the archaeological site marking the birth place of Buddha – Lumbini – does not have any active Buddhist community living around it, Kathmandu valley and other northern regions have active Buddhist communities. This paper will focus primarily on the walled settlement of Lomanthang and its region, Upper Mustang in north-western Nepal, in order to discuss some heritage, conservation and management issues in the context of Buddhist heritage. It will also refer briefly and reflect on the Buddhist heritage in the Kathmandu valley and at Lumbini.

Lomanthang is a small walled settlement in a high valley at about 12 000 feet (4 000 m.) in the Nepali trans-Himalayan region near the Nepal-Tibet border. The region is part of a larger Tibetan plateau that is located north of the Himalayan mountain range, one of the youngest geological formations on Earth.

For various reasons, the Upper Mustang region was a restricted area until 1992 when it was opened up for limited trekking tourism, for which Lomanthang is the ultimate destination. As a result of such geographical and political remoteness much of its cultural heritage has been well preserved even without any strong

conservation policies as such. After the political conflicts and later developments in Tibet, this region has been popularized by scholars, the media and the travel industry as one of the best places for showcasing Tibetan culture and heritage. Lomanthang was placed on UNESCO's tentative world heritage list in 2008, citing cultural criteria (ii), (v) and (vi). Currently its full nomination dossier is under preparation by the Government of Nepal.

The Buddhist cultural context of Upper Mustang, including the walled settlement of Lomanthang

There is one popular oral cultural history of the region that connects various religious sites with the story of the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet and into Lo.

Upper Mustang is still referred to as Lo (full form, Lho-Tsho-dyun) its historic name reflecting more or less the early kingdom. People of Lo regard the Lo Gekar *Gompa*¹ (also called Ghar *Gompa*) as the first or oldest *Gompa* in the region. According to this story, Lo Gekhar *Gompa* was built in the eighth century by the Indian Buddhist Guru Padmasambhava who built it before the successful completion of the Samye *Gompa* in Tibet (people generally do not recall the date, but say only “in ancient times”; however, historians ascribe it to events in the seventh century CE).

During construction of the Samye *Gompa* (monastery) in Tibet, a female demon was causing trouble; every night she would come and destroy all the construction completed the preceding day. Hence, to control the demon – called *dakini* by local people – Padmasambhava had to kill her while she was hiding



FIGURE 1. Lomanthang: a fifteenth century walled settlement of a Tibetan Buddhist community, Nepal.

in the region of Lo. After killing her, Padmasambhava buried her head in a big *chhorten* and her intestines under the long prayer wall near Ghami. The *dakini*'s heart and blood is believed to have been thrown over the cliffs of Dhakmar, thus causing the cliff to be red coloured. According to the popular story, Padmasambhava then built the Lo Gekhar *Gompa* to house many important religious objects. However, Sharma and Gurung (2000) acknowledge that there is no archaeological evidence to support this oral history and belief which is popular in Lo as well as in Tibet.² Yet the cultural importance and sacredness of these sites are on a par with other archaeologically important sites.

Dhungel (2002) suggests that the legend of Padmasambhava visiting Lo region in the eighth century and his "subjugation of the local demoness, may be linked to the fall of Zhang-zhung's Bon influence and the advent of Tibetan Buddhism in the upper Lo region" since "the annexations of Zhang-zhung (the then most popular centre of Bon religion in Tibet) and areas adjacent to Tibet, had largely been completed by the eighth century CE" (Dhungel, 2002: 45; citing Jackson, 1976: 39-41).

In political history, when the Tibetan Kingdom could not efficiently manage its larger area, one of its provincial rulers, Ame-Pal, decided to declare an independent kingdom, known later as the kingdom of Lo. Ame-Pal first set up his seat of power at a hilltop fort and, later on, established his capital city nearby by building a fortified settlement that still exists today and is known as Lomanthang. In chronological order, the boundary wall, the two *gompas* and the royal palace are the major structures that are believed to have been there since the fifteenth century in more or less their original material form.

The walled town of Lomanthang is still primarily defined by its grand wall which completely surrounds the L-shaped settlement. However, the L-shape, as historians and archaeologist agree, was not the original

shape of the settlement. It used to be a square, with the main gate towards the centre of the northern side. However, in the seventeenth century when the *Dakar Thekchen Choeling Tsuklak Khang (gompa)* needed to be relocated from its original site (now only the ruins of it remain to the north-east of Lomanthang), an entire monastic wing was added to the northwest corner, thus making the present-day L-shape. The shifting of the *gompa* within the walled town added the religious quarters to the settlement. However the ruins of the old *gompa* still exist but are not used for worship today. In other words, the significance of the *gompa* moved to the new site, leaving the old site – the archaeological ruins that still exist today – without any cultural importance. (This has important implications for how Buddhists may perceive a site as heritage, not because of its originality or archaeologically dated origin, but because of its functionality and spiritual importance).

The walled settlement of Lomanthang has clearly defined red and white painted segments on its fortification wall, with red denoting the monastic quarters and white denoting the general residential part. Accordingly, the traditional administration would be carried out jointly by the *khempo* (the religious leader) and the *gyalpo* (the king ruling the kingdom). Although the kingdom of Lo voluntarily merged with the then Kingdom of Nepal in the eighteenth century, the local kings of Lo were the *de facto* local rulers of the region until the mid-twentieth century. In the post-1950s political scenario in Nepal, while many such local principalities and kingships were dissolved politically, a total of four, including the king of Lo (part of Mustang district since then), retained their honorary title of King. As the modern administrative rules set up by the Nepal government in the capital Kathmandu, began gradually to administer the whole region, the local traditions of administration and management were superseded by the central governmental system. This broader understanding of the gradual shift of administrative systems is important when we start to analyse some of the recent conflicts experienced in the heritage sector.

Problems with contemporary ‘discovery’ and perception of heritage

In 2007, major news portals across the world, including the BBC, ran a report that an ancient cave temple had been found in Upper Mustang by a team of researchers and explorers, and that plans were underway for ‘preservation’ of the site and the ancient texts contained within it. In 2009 the USA based PBS channel aired a documentary about the ‘discovery’ and efforts at preservation. The documentary also featured a conflict between the experts and the local youth club about the authority and preservation measures. While both sides may have their own versions of the story, to me there appeared to be a fundamental misunderstanding of the notion of heritage in such contexts. Many Buddhist and (for that matter, even pre-Buddhist sites) contain objects or texts that are not supposed to be taken out of their respective places. Sometimes these are buried under *chhortens* or *stupas*; sometimes they are placed inside shrines and so on. In attempting to ‘discover’ and claim our ‘authority’ over this heritage through documentation and preservation efforts, we may be crossing cultural boundaries of respect for the underlying concepts behind the materiality and spirituality contained therein.

I encountered another instance when reviewing a project document that recommended measures for ‘preserving’ the wonderful arts created through the traditional sand *mandala* ritual practiced by monks in Upper Mustang. Apparently, the expert preparing the report missed the essence of the sand *mandala* ritual: the fundamental reasoning underlying the tedious process of creating the sand *mandala*, followed by elaborate rituals that eventually conclude with its destruction and the ceremonial disposal of the sand (material remains) in water. This is to remind the devotees of the ‘world’ represented through the *mandala*, and the process of life and death and a cyclic continuity.

These are just two instances in which our expert education may fundamentally be responsible for us lacking the understanding of the ways and essence of

the notion of heritage, and what it means when used in the Buddhist context. On the other hand, despite its modern philosophical underpinning, another major conservation project that ran from the late 1990s until a few years ago paid reasonable attention to the local Buddhist traditions.

Buddhist heritage in Kathmandu Valley

Kathmandu valley is a unique case of living heritage where Buddhism and Hinduism, with its various offshoots, live in harmony to the extent that it is often not possible to draw a line between them. Yet there are a few sites that are primarily known as Buddhist heritage sites, for example the World Heritage Sites of Boudhanath and Swayambhu which are both Buddhist *stupas*. There are also many other *stupas* as well as *viharas* in Kathmandu valley, along with Hindu temple complexes. Moreover, in the periphery of the Swayambhunath *stupa* site (around the hill), many contemporary *stupas* are being built, many of them by Buddhist communities in diaspora. Similarly, many active Buddhist monasteries are located in the vicinity of Boudhanath *stupa* and on surrounding hills. Different monasteries and *stupas* may relate to different Buddhist traditions, yet there are common features that can be identified. A monastery does follow a typical layout of prayer hall and entrance vestibule, both of them often containing life-size wall paintings depicting various stories of Buddha. Various metal statues are also commonly found in all these contemporary *gompas*. Most of them are constructed of brick, cement and concrete. Yet one can observe the periodic renewal of wall surfaces, prayer flags, etc. as regular rituals that resemble those found in the oldest monasteries in Mustang and elsewhere.

In terms of conservation of major historic *stupas* like that of Dhando *chaitya* (*stupa*) in Chabahil, dismantling the old structure and replacing the decayed parts is often the only option, whether carried out by a user community or by the government Department of Archaeology.

Lumbini - the birth place of Buddha: a case deserving an international policy framework

Unlike Kathmandu valley and Mustang, Lumbini is primarily an archaeological site with no existing communities located on or around the site. However, it has become a site associated with Buddhists all over the world, with the presence of different national and international Buddhist communities within the World Heritage site of Lumbini. Describing the various perspectives on Lumbini would be beyond the scope of this paper, but I will use the case of Lumbini to draw attention to an important policy imperative. A recent publication by UNESCO Kathmandu is worth pursuing with regard to various perceptions attached to the site of Lumbini (UNESCO, 2003).

Lumbini is more than an important archaeological site: it is a place where both Buddhists and non-Buddhists across the world find refuge. Although the site is located in Nepal, its spirit and engagement is truly international. Therefore, in its management process several layers of peoples' association are increasingly recognized, for local (i.e. nearby) as well as national and international visitors. One of the strong aspects recognized by all is its pilgrimage value, followed by a reverence shown by those who are not pilgrims as such but people dedicated to common peace and well-being for humanity. It must be noted here that the development, conservation and promotion of Lumbini has in fact taken its momentum from the initiatives of the United Nations, particularly following former Secretary General U Thant's visit. The case of Lumbini as a multilayered heritage site with multinational engagement reminds us to consider policies for Buddhist heritage that go beyond national boundaries in order to forge an international cooperative policy. To some extent, the management of Lumbini has already adopted this approach, but recognizing it as a strategy in relevant policy may be worth pursuing for other sites such as Bodhgaya, Sarnath, Kushinagar (all three of them in India, related respectively to the site of Buddha's enlightenment, first teaching and

mahaparinirwana). This would allow the promotion, preservation and promotion of major Buddhist sites in holistic ways while moving beyond competitive national promotional campaigns.

Conservation practices among Buddhist communities: some observations

One summer morning in 1998, inside the fifteenth-century Thubchen *gompa* (also called *gomba* or *gumba* locally, to signify a Buddhist temple) in the walled settlement of Lomanthang in north-western Nepal, a group of monks performed the *archog puja* – a ritual asking forgiveness for the workers who would physically intervene on the *gompa* structure and wall paintings as part of a conservation project. The conservation team involved in the project was advised by the *khempo* (chief abbot of the local Choede monastery) to seek permission from the divinities residing in the *gompa* (both in the structure and in the wall paintings) before starting the conservation work. At the end of the ritual, the *khempo* performed a ritual of collecting all the spirits residing within the *gompa* in a brass mirror and securing it to a relatively sound timber post that would not be touched by the renovation work (see also Coburn, 1998 and Sanday, 1999 for their accounts of the event). This would ensure that the spirits would not be disturbed during the physical work at the *gompa* structures.

In 2001, as the conservation team was about to start their intervention in the nearby Champa *gompa*, the oldest *gompa* in Lomanthang which is dedicated to the future Buddha *Champa* (or *Jhyampa*), I witnessed a similar ceremony where again the living spirits were respectfully collected in a mirror to facilitate interventions on the structure and wall paintings. In 2002 I observed a similar ritual at Bumthang, Bhutan, allowing restoration activities to take place in a *Lhakang* (abode of gods). This ritual is called '*arga*' (see Gyatsho, 1979: 75 for further discussion of the meaning and symbolism of this ritual). The logic behind such rituals performed before the beginning of any renovation work comes from the belief that the physical structure

of the *Lhakhang* is inhabited by living spirits (*Lha* = god, *khang* = house). The living spirits are believed to be residing in the walls, the columns and everywhere. It is the presence of such spirits that makes the images of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas (Buddhas to be) on wall paintings and sculptures come alive.

Such a belief surfaced prominently and challenged the conservation work when the age-old wall paintings were being restored during the *gompa* restoration programme in Lomanthang in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Chapagain, 2007). The locals and the professional conservators had conflicting ideas on the extent to which the crumbling wall paintings should be restored. On the one hand, the wall painting conservators were following their professional ethics by mostly consolidating the base layer of the wall paintings and cleaning the paint layers while leaving the missing parts blank (see Figure 2). On the other hand, the local people argued that an incomplete restoration would not make sense because they could not worship the ‘amputated’ images of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas. As a solution, the wall painting conservation team proposed a compromise to draw in outline the larger missing sections so that people could see the wholeness of the image being represented, but without (re)-painting them entirely. Some smaller missing fragments were drawn and then painted with soluble watercolours, with a defined boundary between the original and new work. This strategy of compromise was accepted by the local community, bearing in mind the fact that there were neither competent painters nor material resources available to paint any image of that high a quality.

In Bhutan, as in Nepal and Tibet, I have observed that the senior monks of a monastery would wish to replace or upgrade the existing (considered ‘old’) roof with a new roof in order to accumulate religious merit. Similarly, if there were any wall paintings affected by wall repairs, they would wish to repaint the entire paintings instead of restoring the surviving segments of them. Furthermore, there are traditions in Nepal of renewing the physical fabric of *gompas* and *stupas* (also called *chaityas* and *chortens*) by pouring white or

red paint (traditionally, a slurry of colourful clay or white lime) over the structures without much regard for their historical authenticity. This forms part of an annual ritual (of contributing material substance – the colourful clay – as well as participating in the process) that contributes towards the regular renewal of the structures. More than an act of physical repair, these practices have a symbolic meaning of acquiring religious merit, an act that the faithful devotedly practise. This is particularly evident within Tibetan Buddhism. Gyatsho (1979: 44) discusses several of these traditions.

These beliefs and practices indicate how the conservation of cultural heritage is viewed within the Buddhist context. In conventional conservation ideology, such practices may seem disruptive of the historic patina accumulated on the fabric of the monuments; but these traditions contribute towards the regular upkeep of monuments. They certainly contribute towards prolonging the material existence of monuments; they are therefore a form of preservation practice. When a structure is damaged or deteriorated for any reason, people would rather opt for an entire reconstruction, often aiming to give it a better shape, stability and appearance. The deterioration of a particular form is not lamented, nor is the deteriorated form assigned any aesthetic, historical, or economic value. Other traditions, such as Hinduism, also consider deterioration as inevitable, but the Buddhist practice has an explicit philosophical explanation for such stages of deterioration and re-construction: the cyclical notion of existence and the emphasis on the impermanence and insubstantiality of the world.

As previously discussed (Chapagain, 2013), the fundamental concern in the Buddhist context is the continuation and preservation of Buddhist values and ideals as outlined in the teachings of Buddha, key monks or of Buddhist gurus. As religious structures, objects and places embody these ideals, the basic concern for their conservation lies in the continuation of these ideals rather than in safeguarding any historic, artistic or economic value associated with them. This comes naturally to Buddhists, as their ideals accept the



FIGURE 2. Wall paintings inside Thubchen Gumpa, Nepal.

eventual demise of the material form (*anicca*) and the lack of any substantial essence in material form (*anatta*).

In spite of these philosophical differences between conventional conservation thinking and Buddhism, we can identify the potential accommodation that Buddhist philosophy may offer for the practice of heritage conservation. Despite the fundamental differences in the way material existence is perceived, we can still seek a middle ground between the ideals of Buddhist traditions and the practice of conservation.

Finding the middle ground

Even though the Buddha himself did not support making images and material possessions, the Buddha's

followers have pursued rich traditions of art and architecture that manifest Buddha and his teaching as well as other associated stories (Fisher, 1993). Referring to personal observations and fieldwork in Vientiane (in Laos in Southeast Asia), Karlström (2005), notes the existence of non-materiality as well as materiality in Buddhism at two distinct levels of conceptualisation.

In canonical Buddhism, which is more or less institutionalised, materiality is a matter of no concern, whereas in popular Buddhism materiality becomes extremely significant as people gain merit and tangible benefits through constantly performing 'material' acts, such as offerings (Karlström, 2005: 341).

It is in such a context that Karlström recognizes the materiality associated with Buddhism as 'spiritual materiality'. This tradition of 'spiritual materiality' needs to be understood, not as a conflict with the key ideas of Buddhism, but as a means of facilitating the followers (the *upashaka* – one who strives to follow) to achieve the ultimate goal of formless *nirvana*. Hence, we see that materiality is not necessarily discarded but is conceived as a vehicle for transmitting the wisdom and spiritual essence that is intangible or non-material. Moreover, such material objects are only illustrations of an abstract idea in some concrete form for those who need such didactic facilitation.

Another related aspect is that some traditions of Buddhism offer its teachings and practices at two levels, one for the stern religious practitioners such as monks, and the other for the laity. Conceptualization of these two levels is not to be confused with any hierarchy or distinctly different paths, but it is a way of facilitating achievement of the ultimate goal of *nirvana* (*nibbana*) for both monks and the laity. To facilitate the laity's progress towards the ultimate goal, the 'proximate' goal of a better rebirth can be achieved by performing good deeds (*karma* or *kamma*) (Swearer, 1995). It is in accordance with "the first public teaching attributed to the Buddha (the discourse known as Setting the Wheel of the Law in Motion) [which] includes advice appropriate to monks, such as meditation, and also the laity, such as right moral action" (Swearer, 1995: 6).

The *Lotus Sutra* regards construction and maintenance of sites and artefacts associated with Buddhism as meritorious acts of the transmission of Buddha's words (Peleggi, 2012: 58; citing Abe, 2005: 304).

Conservation of material cultural heritage is, therefore, pertinent to Buddhist communities. However, what is important in the conservation activity is safeguarding this 'spiritual materiality' of heritage forms, and not necessarily their 'physical materiality'. Heritage elements, as the embodiment of spiritual essence, facilitate the continuance of the Buddha's teachings into the future and serve didactic purposes for learning Buddhist ideals. Hence participation in the maintenance of such 'spiritual materiality' becomes a moral responsibility and a merit-creating opportunity for Buddhist followers.

Conclusion: implications for practice and policy

This paper has briefly referred to the author's experience and observations of some Buddhist heritage sites in Nepal, along with arguments by other scholars, in order to highlight some areas in need of attention as regards to heritage management and conservation policies pertaining to Buddhist heritage. In conclusion, the following major points can be made about the perception/definition of heritage, policy implications and a community based approach for heritage conservation.

Defining Buddhist heritage

The primary incongruence between Buddhism and conservation ideology comes from the way that the materiality of heritage is perceived. In the Buddhist view, physical materiality is subject to universal laws of impermanence and the cyclical nature of existence, and, therefore, is devoid of any inherent essence in itself. These notions recognize death or decay not as an end in itself but as part of the natural cyclical process. They implicitly emphasize the interconnectivity of material being within a broader ecological and spiritual context. As discussed above, Buddhism has not

discarded materiality in its entirety, but conceives it as a vehicle for the transmission of abstract non-material concepts. The definition or description of Buddhist heritage and its conservation should, therefore, be guided by the idea of 'spiritual materiality' (Karlström, 2005) rather than absolute materiality. Attention given to the protection of physical and historical authenticity of cultural heritage, as per contemporary conservation objectives, should not be the primary nor ultimate goal. This encourages us to see heritage in its larger and interconnected social, cultural, ecological, spiritual, and temporal context rather than something frozen in a particular space and time. This view certainly concurs with the increasing attention currently being given to the intangible cultural heritage discourse, and with similar discussions in some non-Buddhist contexts (see Sully, 2007, for example).

Policy implications

The fact that the Buddha's teachings were contextualized for different circumstances and that different Buddhist traditions have developed in diverse regional contexts offers important methodological insights for cultural heritage management. These localized variations in belief systems, heritage forms, and cultural practices demand a greater flexibility in conservation thinking in terms of having a deep respect for local knowledge and traditions and incorporating them within conservation activity. Rituals and beliefs associated with the construction, restoration, or reconstruction of religious buildings are an essential part of this view, and therefore should be duly acknowledged in conservation policies. Since people gain spiritual merit by participating in or contributing towards such acts of prolonging the sacred significance and symbolism of the material heritage, policies can tap into such practices as a way of ensuring and promoting public participation in heritage management.

Another important collective policy approach in the case of Buddhist heritage in Asia draws on the fact that some key Buddhist sites such as Lumbini deserve to be treated collectively through multinational policy frameworks. This could be achieved by incorporating a clause for international consensus even when the site is

within a specific country's jurisdiction for preservation and presentation. Such explicit recognition through policy may also assist in ensuring collaboration for effective management. Hence, in terms of specific policy implications, the following points could be considered:

1. defining heritage as an integrated whole of the place and/or physical being, the belief and the followers' perceptions;
2. contextualizing importance according to the specific site, thus emphasizing context-based regulations rather than conventional 'material-authenticity' oriented regulations;
3. recognizing the role and relevance of cultural practices such as merit-making rituals, as they are the key for maintenance and community participation;
4. recognizing the diversity within Buddhist traditions, while also recognizing that many heritage sites do bring these different traditions to a common meeting point; and hence accommodating specific site based approaches as well as fostering a collective platform to work on common heritage;
5. allowing opportunities for finding the middle ground between core Buddhist philosophy and conventional conservation philosophy, so that the conservation process itself evolves as various Buddhist traditions have evolved; and more importantly
6. formalizing the long tradition of community engagement with Buddhist heritage as an important policy strategy for heritage conservation and management.

Notes

1. *Gompa* is a Buddhist Temple, which usually contains idols and paintings of Buddha and other deities and important monks related to Buddhism. Buddhist monasteries are also commonly called *Gompa*.

2. Sharma and Gurung (2000) further point out that the *chhorten* and prayer walls are both built fairly late (see Sharma and Gurung 2000: 2 for detailed discussion).

References

- Abé, R.** 2005. Word. In D.S. Lopez Jr, ed. *Critical Terms for the Study of Buddhism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Chapagain N.K.** 2007. Revisiting conservation charters in context of Lomanthang, Nepal: need to acknowledge local inhabitants and changing contexts. *City & Time*, 3(2): 55-64.
- Chapagain N. K.** 2011. *Rethinking cultural heritage conservation at historic settlements: the case of Lomanthang, Nepal*. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee.
- Chapagain N. K.** 2013. Heritage conservation in the Buddhist context. In K. Silva & N.K. Chapagain, eds. *Asian Heritage Management: Contexts, Concerns and Prospect*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 49-63.
- Coburn, B.** 1998. A new ceiling for the roof of the world. *Ancient Art* (available at www.asianart.com/ahf/index.html). Accessed 10 March 2012.
- Dhungel, R.** 2002. *The kingdom of lo (mustang): A historical study*. Kathmandu: Tashi Gephel Foundation.
- Fisher, R. E.** 1993. *Buddhist Art and Architecture*. New York: Thames and Hudson.
- Gyatsho, T.L.** 1979. *Gateway to the Temple: Manual of Tibetan Monastic Customs, Art, Building and Celebrations*, trans. D. P. Jackson. Kathmandu, Nepal: Ratna Pustak Bhandar.
- Jackson, D.P.** 1976. The Early History of Lo (Mustang) and Ngari. *Contributions to Nepalese Studies* 4(1): 39-56.
- Karlström, A.** 2005. Spiritual materiality: Heritage preservation in a Buddhist world. *Journal of Social Archaeology* 5(3): 338-55.

Peleggi, M. 2012. The Unbearable Impermanence of Things: Reflections on Buddhism, Cultural Memory and Heritage Conservation. In T. Winter & P. Daly, eds. *Routledge Handbook of Heritage in Asia*. London: Routledge, pp. 55-68.

Sanday, J. 1999. The gateway to nirvana - conserving the temples of mustang. *Orientalism* 30(10): 84-89.

Sharma P. & Gurung, J. 2000. *Blo (Mustāna) ko sāmśkṛtika sampadā*. Kāṭhamāḍaṃ, Nepāla ra Eśiyālī Anusandhāna Kendra, Tribhuvana Viśvavidyālaya.

Sully, D., ed. 2007. *Decolonising conservation : Caring for Maori meeting houses outside New Zealand*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Swearer, D. K. 1995. *The Buddhist World of Southeast Asia*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

UNESCO. 2013. *The Sacred Garden of Lumbini: Perceptions of Buddha's Birthplace*. Kathmandu: Hillside Printing Press.



The relevance of authenticity in conserving Buddhist heritage

Jagath Weerasinghe

Authenticity is perhaps the most important conceptual category at the core of the professional heritage discourse. This concept plays a critical role in determining those preservation and restoration procedures that are suitable and acceptable for a given heritage. The main problem, however, in using the concept of authenticity in assessing the archaeological, historical or cultural values of a heritage site is that it is not sufficiently articulated and conceptualized. While it can be firmly suggested that authenticity is an enormously relevant concept in devising conservation procedures, it nevertheless poses a range of issues that need to be thought about. The issues surrounding the concept of authenticity are both philosophical and practical. In this chapter I first present the evasive nature of this important concept, considering it a modern thought. Then I trace its history within the discourse of the heritage profession and conclude by proposing a revised position for translating the concept of authenticity into a set of practical guidelines for conserving Buddhist heritage in a living context.

Authenticity is a highly complex concept. It is as complex as the modern concepts of ‘art’, ‘culture’ and ‘heritage’ – the three most complicated concepts or constructs that modern thought has made for itself. The modern world is deeply attached to these concepts and it can be argued that these four concepts operate at the core of ideological thoughts of modern polity. What is important to note in our discussion is that the concept of ‘authenticity’ has a significant place in all three concepts of ‘art’, ‘culture’ and ‘heritage’. The concept of authenticity actually forms the core of each of these three concepts, making it a difficult notion to extract for analysis. What I am implying is that it is almost impossible to isolate this concept as an object of study since it is deeply embedded within the three concepts of art, culture and heritage. The moment one tries to engage with the concept of authenticity, the other three begin to complicate the discussion.

In countries such as Sri Lanka and India this is even more difficult because the concepts of art, culture and heritage are deeply fashioned and informed by postcolonial politics and social emotions. Because ‘authenticity’ is a modern thought or, to be specific, the way we think about it is a result of modernism and, by implication, of colonialism in Sri Lanka and India, it is inevitably caught up in the politics of identity at regional and national levels. The concept of authenticity becomes entangled with notions of genuineness, truthfulness to tradition and, at times, even with the idea of ‘originality’. I will close, however, by attempting to work through this labyrinth of difficulties to define the relevance of authenticity in the conservation of Buddhist heritage in living contexts. My attention is not directed towards Buddhist heritage in general but to living sacred sites that are Buddhist.

The concept of authenticity and heritage professionalism

The concept of authenticity has attracted much critical attention on the part of heritage professionals over the past several decades. The year 1994 marked a high point in the debate on authenticity, the year in which

world authorities in heritage management gathered to discuss this issue in Bergen and Nara. The papers presented at these conferences and the discussions that ensued clearly showed the highly complex nature of the concept of authenticity when used in the heritage debate. Concerns about defining authenticity and attempting to develop methods to apply this concept as a pragmatic principle in heritage preservation have always occupied a central position in the heritage profession. In short, the debate on authenticity is not a new phenomenon. In fact, it is perhaps as old as the heritage profession itself (Jokilehto, 1994: 9-34; Jokilehto 1995:17-45). However the term came to the forefront of debate after the ‘test of authenticity’ was included in the Operational Guidelines of the World Heritage Convention in the 1970s, in which authenticity was considered in the four areas of design, material, workmanship and setting of the sites considered for inscription in the World Heritage List.

The inclusion of the concept of ‘authenticity’ in the Operational Guidelines of the World Heritage Convention, gave rise to a heightened urgency amongst heritage professionals to engage with the concept of authenticity in its widest sense, especially in Asia, Latin America and Africa where religion and traditional cultural practices are performed and enacted as part of a normal routine of everyday life. The conference held in Seoul was a good case in point.

Modernist universalization of the concept of authenticity

The heritage profession is a global practice governed by several policy documents usually referred to as charters or, at times, simply as ‘documents’. These policy documents are drafted with the belief that heritage is a universally applicable idea, like democracy, and they have the lofty intention of being applied and being useful across cultures and regions. This intention or the desire to be universal endows this concept and the documents that are constructed upon it with political connotations. As such, any discussion about authenticity has to take into consideration the

positions and ideas expressed in the Venice Charter, the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention and the Nara Document on Authenticity. It is with and through these powerful documents that the concept of authenticity is intended to be applied in practice. I shall now briefly consider the salient points in these documents that are relevant to our discussion on authenticity.

The Venice Charter

When critically examining the concept of authenticity and its application to sacred heritage, one has to recognize that the notion as affirmed in the Venice Charter, which is one of the most powerful foundational tools of the western philosophy on conservation, cannot be taken as the essential ‘qualifying factor’ concerning values and meanings pertaining to sacred heritage. Article 9 of the Venice Charter claims that the aim of restoration is to “preserve and reveal the aesthetic and historic value of the monument and is based on respect for original material and authentic documents” (ICOMOS.org/charters.htm). But it does not address religious or ritual aspects or the ‘community’, ‘living’ and ‘continuity’ aspects of ‘monuments’ within the discourse that it establishes, which Smith (2006) has identified as the Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD).

Authenticity and the World Heritage Convention

According to the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, authenticity is manifested in several kinds of attributes. These are given in a hierarchical order: ‘feeling’ and ‘spirit’ are at the bottom of the ladder while ‘form’ and ‘design’ are at the top. The Operational Guidelines also contain a special note on the difficulty of quantifying or objectively measuring attributes such as the ‘feeling’ or ‘spirit’ of a heritage site. While I would make no major issue with this, I would suggest that it inevitably creates an uneasy feeling when dealing with heritage sites that are heavily encumbered or associated with traditional ritual practices and maintenance systems and methods. Privileging the fabric of a heritage

and aspects directly pertaining to the fabric as more open to objective appraisal than intangible aspects may, I would argue, possibly marginalize the living/continuity aspects of heritage and places the appraisers of heritage on an uncomfortable footing.

The Nara Document on Authenticity

The Nara Document on Authenticity marked a major turning point in the way heritage professionals think about authenticity. It affirmed and institutionalized the importance of considering cultural diversity when interpreting authenticity. It broadened the limits of the concept of authenticity. However it remains a ‘fabric’ bound formulation. This is not because of what it mentioned, but because of what it did not mention. It is the voices that have been made silent that make the Nara Document a ‘fabric’ bound text. As the Venice Charter could not mention the revealing and preserving of the religious or functional values of a monument as an aim of restoration, so the Nara Document could not mention the need to consider such aspects as ‘livingness’, ‘continuity’ and ‘original function’ of a heritage when interpreting authenticity. The absence of these terms is of great importance in the current discussion, since ‘livingness’, ‘continuity’ and ‘original function’ constitute the core values of a living heritage site, in particular a sacred one. These attributes make a living sacred site an entity of the present rather than a thing belonging in the past. As such, by implication, heritage in general and living sacred sites specifically are politically charged sites that are readily invested by contending interests and become contested terrain. I shall return to this aspect later in this essay.

Writing about authenticity and the World Heritage Convention, Von Droste and Bertilsson (1994:14) opine that the time has come to reconsider the basic philosophy of the Venice Charter. They also indicate that it may never be possible to establish a single ‘true meaning’ of authenticity. As discussed below, authenticity is very much a contextual idea, since heritage itself is a contextually fashioned entity. Similar ideas and concerns were put forward by many speakers at the Nara Conference: Herb Stovel, Henry Cleere, David Lowenthal and Jukka Jokilehto all expressed

concern over the ambiguous nature of the concept of authenticity, and commented on or questioned at varying levels the limited scope and potential of the accepted criteria on authenticity. They agreed that authenticity has to be understood in relation to the sociocultural context and/or the historical continuity of the 'life' or 'spirit' of a monument or site (Larsen & Marstein 1994; Larsen 1995).

What we see here is the difficulty of defining the concept of authenticity as a universally acceptable and applicable concept. The criterion of authenticity needs to be grounded in the parameters that manifest the living realities of heritage. Since the ground realities of each category of living heritage are bound to differ, particularly in relation to different histories, authenticity must necessarily be processed through a discursive engagement that takes into account these dynamic living realities. Formulas for authenticity that are centrally concocted for universal use may not have much validity.

Crisis and the dissent

Various authors have described the limitations of western standards of heritage management in relation to living heritage sites and cultural landscapes (Sully, 2007; Rangunathan & Sinha, 2006: 490, 500-501; Kato, 2006; Taylor & Altenburg, 2006: 267-282; Miura, 2005; Ndoro and Pwiti, 2001; Wijesuriya, 2005, 2007; Weerasinghe, 2006, 2011; Baig, 2003; Von Droste & Bertilsson, 1994). All these authors have directly or indirectly questioned or commented on the basic premises that constitute the western philosophy of conservation. The latter may be characterized by the following fundamental belief or thesis: heritage belongs in the past and the current generation is the guardian of heritage who must ensure its passage to the future in the full richness of its authenticity in terms of materials, design, and setting (see also Waterton 2005 and Smith 2006: 88-95). This thesis is at the core of the Authorized Heritage Discourse. In contrast, the dissenting discourse argues that heritage does not belong in the past but in the present (Smith, 2006 and Wijesuriya, 2005). Thus the meanings and

values of heritage – in a word the 'authenticity' – reside not merely in the fabric but rather in the way that the heritage functions in relation to various communities that are linked with it.

Location of authenticity in sacred heritage

If, as argued above, meanings and values of heritage are not merely a material manifestation, where do they reside or to what conditions and expressions are they anchored? This question does not deny the fact that meanings and values which constitute the main components of authenticity of a heritage do reside in its fabric, but it points out that they also reside elsewhere. This 'elsewhere' of the heritage, I would suggest, is the intangible aspects of the sacred heritage. Following this line of thinking, I would suggest that the location of authenticity in heritage is necessarily twofold:

Authenticity as content or the intangible aspects, and authenticity as materials and design.

This articulation recalls the age-old debate about the style and content of an artwork that has now been resolved with the understanding that the content of an artwork cannot be separated from its style (where style includes the use of materials). I would extend the same understanding to heritage. The content or the intangible aspects of a heritage cannot be separated from its style – the fabric and design. Authenticity resides and finds its expressions collectively in the tangible and the intangible at the same time. Let me recall classical Marxist theory that ideas necessarily have a material base (Mandel, 1976:18). The fabric and design of a heritage constitute the material base of the content or the intangible aspects of the heritage. The challenging question in front of us is how to define this 'material base'? I return to this question in the concluding section of the essay.

My attempt at defining the location of authenticity is still very incomplete and unsatisfactory since I have not yet dealt with the 'what' question regarding

authenticity. As one can see from the ideas I have quoted from various scholars in the previous section, authenticity can be defined as a belief or an attitude held by communities linked to a heritage. This, of course, is a rather indefinite conclusion lacking specificity and any kind of concreteness – but this is how it is. Authenticity cannot be moulded into a single definition because it dwells in two domains – intangible and tangible – that at the same time push the limits of authenticity in a processual manner.

Buddhist philosophy and the conservation of heritage

Since the main concern of my essay is Buddhist heritage and the relevance of authenticity in conserving it, I now engage with one of the cardinal ideas enshrined in Buddhism: the idea of impermanence. Conservation and heritage preservation as modern thoughts seem to be in total disagreement with the idea of impermanence.

The concept of impermanence (*anittya*) in Buddhism gives philosophical importance to the deterioration processes that are inevitable in the sensuous and material world. But what matters to us in the heritage profession is not the philosophical dimensions of the concept of impermanence but how the philosophy of impermanence has been given tangible and intangible expressions with a stated intention of making them permanent following the aspirations of institutionalized Buddhist practices through the centuries.

Built around the philosophy of Buddhism is the religion that is Buddhism. Religions have practices and rituals that ensure their longevity. I recall that the *Chullawagga*, a section of *Thripitaka*, instructs Buddhist monks to restore and repair their dwellings as a mandatory principle; repairing buildings is considered within the Buddhist order itself (*Vinaya Pitakaya: Chullawaggapali: 128-237*).

There are ample instances of Buddhist heritage in Sri Lanka that reflect this aspiration. Wijesuriya (1993: 10) has described this at length:

“The concept of preservation of the relics of the Buddha as a ‘memory’ and as a respect to a great teacher began soon after his death. The *stupa* thus built to house the relics of the Buddha in ‘memory’ and worship was one of the earliest buildings considered for preservation by followers. Preservation activities related to *stupas* are found in different forms such as repairs, restoration, enlargements and rebuilding. These activities are recorded in chronicles such as *Mahavamsa* and also in numerous inscriptions. The events related to development of the first *stupa* built in the country (circa 3rd century BCE) *Thuparama*, illustrate the various interventions by the rulers”.

This example demonstrates the aspiration of the ancient patrons of Buddhist heritage to build monuments for the permanent memory of the religious and philosophical aspects of Buddhism. I would argue that this is because impermanence is a permanent nature of the world and of life.

Concluding thoughts

The foregoing discussion presents us with several positions to consider when thinking about the conservation of Buddhist heritage and the relevance of the concept of authenticity. I have claimed that authenticity is a relevant concept in the conservation of Buddhist heritage. My argument is that authenticity resides both in the tangible and the intangible domains of a heritage. This is specifically the case of Buddhist heritage in countries such as Korea and Sri Lanka because Buddhism is a living tradition there. Because authenticity dwells in two dimensions and one of them is clearly in the intangible domain of Buddhist heritage, the concept of authenticity acquires processual dimensions within it; by which I mean that what signifies authenticity cannot be moored to a single meaning-making process but to a multitude of meanings and values. This is because the people associating with Buddhist heritage and the heritage itself live in the present and the present, as a temporal dimension, is in flux.

Furthermore, if one looks at the intangible aspects of a Buddhist heritage from the point of view of traditional intentions that designed and fabricated the monument, what becomes clear is that the material expressions were meant to last forever, as was the case in ancient Sri Lanka. The material manifestations themselves too become an expression of the intangible domains of a Buddhist heritage – the idea of impermanence expressed by a permanent material scheme or system. Arguing along these lines, we are confronted with the possibility that heritage is inevitably an expression of process, not a static expression of being; an unchanging phenomenon from the past.

If we, for a moment, agree with this proposition, we are left with a methodological space that affirms the relevance of authenticity of a Buddhist heritage in the form and shape intended by its traditional patrons – not in the ruined form or in the form that confines it to a particular point in the history of the heritage. While this may challenge the modern heritage profession's perceived understanding of a heritage as objectified past, it can actually open up a methodological space for creative interventions with a Buddhist heritage in terms of its authenticity. The basic premise in my argument is that authenticity as a concept cannot reside in the fabric/design aspects of a heritage. It is inevitably an expression in the domain of intangibility, which makes heritage a processual entity.

Freeing authenticity totally from its possible material dimensions may sound like a recipe for chaos and disaster, since it may justify any kind of intervention, such as rebuilding or new additions that could be viewed as vulgarization. On the contrary, such a concern is more one of rhetoric than a practical one of a method and theory grounded in heritage professionalism as demanded by the authenticity of a Buddhist heritage, i.e. authenticity as an expression in the intangible domain. What this revised formulation of authenticity demands from the heritage profession is to engage methodologically with the space, the form, and the sight (vision) of a Buddhist heritage. These three physical or tangible domains of a Buddhist heritage inform the authenticity of the heritage. The space of a Buddhist heritage must

be able to accommodate the Buddhist rituals; the form of a Buddhist heritage must be able to embody the ritual and liturgical values of the heritage; and the sight of a heritage should be able to visually convey the meanings and values of the heritage.

References

Baig, A. 2003. Managing Cultural Significance, *Seminar* 530 (October): 14-17.

Vinaya Pitakaya, Chullavaggapali. Chapter on *Se-nasanakhandaka.* *Buddha Jayanthi Tripitaka Grantha Mala*, pp. 128-237. Nedimala: Baudha Sanskrutika Madyastanya.

ICOMOS.org/charters.htm. Accessed 23 November 2013.

Jokilehto, J. 1994. Questions about “authenticity”. In K. E. Larsen & N. Marstein, eds. *Conference on Authenticity in relation to the World Heritage Convention, Preparatory Workshop, Bergen, Norway, 31 January-2 February 1994*. Oslo: Riksantikvaren, pp. 9-24.

Jokilehto, J. 1995. *Authenticity and World Heritage*. In K. E. Larsen, ed. *Nara Conference on Authenticity in relation to the World Heritage Convention, Nara, Japan, 1-6 November 1994*. Trondheim: Tapir Publications, pp. 17-34.

Kato, K. 2006. Community connection and conservation: Intangible cultural values in natural heritage – the case of Shirakanai-sanchi World Heritage Area. *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 12(5) September: 458-473.

Larsen, K. E. & Marstein, N., eds. 1994. *Nara Conference on Authenticity in relation to the World Heritage Convention, Preparatory Workshop, Bergen, Norway, 31 January-2 February 1994*. Oslo: Rikssantikvaren.

Larsen, K. E. 1995. Changing concept of authenticity in the context of Japanese conservation history. In *Nara Conference on Authenticity in relation to the World Heritage Convention, Nara, Japan, 1-6 November 1994*. Trondheim: Tapir Publications, pp. 175-183.

- Mandel, E.** 1976. Introduction. In *Karl Marx, Capital volume 1*. London: Penguin Books
- Miura, Keiko.** 2005. Conservation of a 'living heritage site', a contradiction in terms, a case study of Angkor World heritage Site, *Conservation and Management of Archaeological Sites* 7: 3-18.
- Ndoro, W. & Pwiti, G.** 2001. Heritage management in Southern Africa: local, national and international discourse. *Public Archaeology* 2: 21-34.
- Ragunathan, A. & Sinha, A.** 2006. Rockfort temple at Tiruchirapalli, India: Conservation of a sacred landscape. *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 12(6) November: 489-504.
- Smith, L.** 2006. *Uses of Heritage*. London: Routledge.
- Sully, D.** ed. 2007. *Decolonizing Conservation*. Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press.
- Taylor, K. & Altenburg, K.** 2006. Cultural landscapes in Asia-Pacific: potential for filling World Heritage gaps. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 12(3) May: 267-282.
- Von Droste, B. & Ulf Bertilsson, U.** 1995. Authenticity and World Heritage. In K. Einar, ed. *Nara Conference on authenticity in relation to the World Heritage Convention: Nara, Japan, 1-6 November 1994*. Trondheim: Tapir Publishers, pp. 3-15.
- Waterton, E.** 2005. Whose sense of place? Reconciling archaeological perspectives with community values: cultural landscapes in England. *International journal of heritage studies*, 11 (4): 309-325.
- Weerasinghe, J.** 2011. Living Sacred Heritage and "Authenticity" in South Asia. In H. Anheier & Y. R. Isar, eds. *Heritage, Memory, and Identity*. London: Sage, pp. 137-147.
- Weerasinghe, J.** 2006. Living sacred sites and the concept of authenticity. *Proceedings of the 14th Seminar on the Conservation of Asian Cultural Heritage: Living with Cultural Heritage*. Tokyo: National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, pp. 179-188.
- Wijesuriya, G.** 2007. Guest editorial. *Conservation and management of archaeological sites*, 8(3): 121-122.
- Wijesuriya, G.** 2005. The past is in the present, perspectives in caring for Buddhist heritage sites in Sri Lanka. In H. Stovel & N. Stanley-Price, eds. *Conservation of living religious heritage*. Rome: ICCROM, pp. 30-43.
- Wijesuriya, G.** 1993. *International Scientific symposiums, 10th General Assembly, Sri Lanka, Archaeological Heritage Management Supplement, The Restoration of Buddhist Monument in Sri Lanka: The Case for an Archaeological Heritage Management Strategy*. Colombo, Sri Lanka: Central Cultural Fund/ ICOMOS, p. 10.



Importance of philosophical and traditional approaches to conservation of Buddhist heritage in Thailand

Pinraj Khanjanusthiti

In Thailand care for religious monuments has always been considered as an act of piety which assured the happiness of believers. However, controversies have arisen over the loss of architectural and aesthetic values as the consequence of repairs and alterations, especially when judged according to international concepts of conservation. This paper will address the traditional approach to the conservation of Buddhist heritage in Thailand, which is derived from the religious context. The Buddhist world view and attitudes towards the built environment and the assimilation of Buddhist principles into conservation philosophy and practice will be explored. Issues concerning the changing role of traditional builders and the breaking of the link between traditional and modern practice will also be presented with some reflections on the recommendations.

Sacredness of Thai Buddhist architecture

Understanding the values and meanings of religious architecture is the basis for determining the appropriate conservation plan. Defining these meanings depends upon many factors such as Buddhists' attitude towards built heritage, their ever-changing existence and socioeconomic environment. Determining what elements signify the identity of a place needs to address not only its physical appearance but also its abstract quality.

If sacredness is the essence of religious architecture, then what is regarded as sacred in that particular religion must be identified in the first place. In Thai Theravada Buddhism, the aspect of sacredness can be divided into several main categories dependent on where the ideas originated. Buddhism, in origin, was considered a system of philosophy characterized by its rationalism and humanity. Buddhism is seen as a way or a path that leads human beings to the state of peace of mind, free from delusion and with a total understanding of ultimate reality or enlightenment (*nibbana*).

Buddhism is considered by many as a system of ethics. Practicing Buddhism can be done without rituals, rites, ceremonies and god worship. The emphasis is upon purifying and controlling inner states of mind so that the person can perceive the transcendent which, in Theravada Buddhism, means the liberation from the impermanent state and cycle of rebirth (*samsara*).

Buddhism gradually embraced the characteristics and expressions of a religion, comprising rites, myths, divine forms, sacred objects, symbols, cosmology, etc. Therefore, in order to grasp the essence of Buddhist architecture, it is necessary to consider both aspects. The essence must exist within both contexts. It is important to point out that religion and philosophy, despite being two different sources of inspiration, are always intertwined and the architectural outcome can be traced back to both concepts.

Characteristics of Thai Buddhist monasteries

Thai monasteries are usually divided into three parts according to their functions. The *Buddhavas* consists of buildings where religious rites and ceremonies conducted by monks are performed. The *Sanghava* is the living quarters of the monks and the public area containing buildings used by the lay community as well as the *Sangha* either for religious functions or other public purposes. The three divisions show clearly the functional meaning of the monastery. The *Buddhavas* represents the idea of the religious; both rites and beliefs. The *Sanghava* includes the area that retains the original concept of an ancient monastery as in the time of the Buddha. It represents the living together of the *Sangha* community with *vinaya* as the law. The public area of the monastery indicates the close relationship between the monastery and the lay community as well as the secular roles of the monastery.

The concept of Thai Buddhist cosmology, usually fused with the idea of *mandala*, is reflected in monastic architecture and its layout. The *Buddhavas*, regarded as the most sacred part of the monastery complex, usually contains the *ubosot*, the *viharn* and a number of *stupas*. The area is more or less symmetrically planned and oriented. In the early period, a *stupa* was placed at the centre of the complex from where other structures radiated. Considering a *stupa* as a representation of the axis mundi connecting the planes of existence, the *Buddhavas* area can be considered not only as the model of cosmology but also the materialisation of a consecrated region. The wall which represents the boundary of the universe is the line that separates the terrestrial from the celestial, the sacred from the profane.

The architecture within the *Buddhavas* area derives from Theravada ideology as well as Mahayana Buddhism, which was amalgamated into Theravada thought. The explanation of the heavens in Thai cosmology and other ancient inscriptions is similar to the description

of the wonderful paradise of Amttaba Buddha mentioned in Mahayana sutra. It is conceivable that the ancient builders attempted to construct a *vihara* or an *ubosot* as the celestial abode for the image of the Buddha.

The idea of celestial abode is clearly reflected in both the interior and exterior architecture. The interior space is usually dominated by images of the Buddha. The walls of the building are usually decorated with murals depicting the scenes illustrating the life of the Buddha as well as images of the universe according to the *Tri Bhumikata*. It is in this created heavenly realm that lay worshippers and monks encounter the spiritual form of the Buddha.

The part of a monastery that still retains the function of the original retreat of the *Sangha* is the *Sanghavas* area. The residential part of a monastery varies in size and character depending on the size, type and status of the monastery. The emphasis of the *Sanghavas* is on living as a community. Here, Buddhism is represented in its philosophical and practical aspects. *Sangha* is the society of virtuous ones who are contemplating the truth, living in the right way and willing to give up personal qualities and needs. Therefore, sacredness exists through the way of living. Practising *Dharmma* and meditation as a path to *nibbana* are considered sacred activities just as much as living life according to the *vinaya*.

In places of religious significance, religious rituals are very much a part of the spirit of the place. The fundamental reason for performing a ritual is devotion. In Buddhism, ritual has grown out of devotion to the Buddha and is the basis of belief. Ritual and architectural form and space are closely related. Ritual requires a space and gives the space meaning. When space and form have been created, they provide the ritual context for spiritual experience. Bhikkhu P.A. Payutto writes in his collection of essays about the levels of experience one can gain from devotion to a *chetiya* as follows:

“It can arouse a calm, joyful and purified state of mind that leads to the development of concentration and other virtues, or faith and spiritual strength...the chetiya reminds one of the law of impermanence that is immanent in life and all component things. It stirs the feeling of urgency, which helps one leading a life of heedfulness and being earnest in doing good and in treading the Noble Path. For a mature practitioner, the reflection on impermanence leads further to the insight into the true nature of things and thus to the final freedom of mind.” (P.A. Payutto, 2007).

The meaning of Buddhist architecture can also be experienced on different levels. It encompasses the philosophy, the physical reflections of this philosophy and aspects of worship. The idea behind its features is far deeper than its mere envelope. Orientation, replication of cosmology and the hierarchy of sacredness form the whole identity of the place and, at the same time, constitute Thai history and culture as a whole. Those dealing with conservation of Buddhist heritage must be sensitive to the fundamental elements of its essence, its values and the religious foundation from which it has grown. Buddhist architecture can be conserved as well as developed, or re-created, and thus maintain its position at the core of Thai culture. Without the realization of this spirit, we will choose to maintain only the physical forms which are the most obvious entities of a much more complex and subtle whole.

Philosophical approaches to the care and conservation of Buddhist monasteries

The concept of merit making

Traditionally, the building and looking after monasteries in Thailand was the duty of the *Sangha* and lay people. Thai kings who are protectors and supporters of Buddhism have granted money and manpower for the care of monasteries under their patronage while small private and village monasteries have been looked after by their communities.

The construction and the care of a monastery are very much related to the concept of merit making. The aim of religious practice is to discover the way of release from the endless cycle of existence. However, this concept is confined to a small group of people whose primary concern is with salvation. The majority of Buddhists in Thailand consider the cycle of rebirth as an inevitable fact of human existence and religion as a means to enhance one's position in the cycle. This group of Buddhists believes that *nibbana* cannot be achieved in a single lifetime and it takes the accumulation of merit done by an individual throughout his existences which will result in rebirth in a better world. Merit is gained by several means. It is generally believed that one of the major meritorious acts a layperson can perform is to give money to the *Sangha* for the construction of a monastery though most people contribute smaller sums which may be needed for building, repairing or restoring monastic fabric.

The concept of impermanence

All forms of life, according to the Buddha possess three common characteristics: impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dhuka*), and an absence of self (no-self or *anatta*). The law of change applies to all things, including man-made objects and ideas. Since everything in the universe continuously changes, resisting this change and desiring permanence where permanence cannot be found leads to undeniable sorrow or suffering. The characteristics of existence according to Buddhism form an important part of a Buddhist's character and his view towards the nature of the world.

Architecture, as other forms of existence, is impermanent. The transient nature of building materials is accepted as a part of the life of a building, together with acts of devotion and merit making. This results in a view of conservation of monastic architecture that emphasises restoration rather than the preservation of architectural fabric and rarely addresses the aspects of authenticity.

There are examples of these practices throughout Thai history. Kings have often heavily restored

monasteries. The nature of the interventions always involved the demolition of old structures and replacing them in the new architectural style of the period. An old *stupa* was usually enclosed within a new larger and taller structure, often of different style. Even in the early twentieth century, when the archaeological value of historic monuments had been realized, the concept based on religious ideology prevailed and was recommended by the *Sangha* Council. It is mentioned in a report of the Council in 1914 that the objective of any intervention was considered the most important factor. If it was done with a pure and moral mind (*kusala*), no matter what degree of intervention was involved, the deed was considered acceptable.

In the present situation, there are a number of factors that make the traditional way of caring for architecture acceptable only to a certain extent. While the Buddhist attitude towards monastic architecture still prevails, there are problems related to the conceptual and technical aspects in conservation such as the lack of traditional craftsmen, the introduction of new building materials and construction methods, and the change within the monastic environment because of economic development. These problems lead to the loss of original historic fabric. The need for conservation of material authenticity which had never been a major concern has become an important criterion in conservation.

Traditional building crafts

Traditional architectural style has gradually changed throughout history. Monasteries have long been the spiritual centre of communities and their design reflects local craftsmanship. In the case of royal monasteries, they express the style preferences of the reign and the creations of court architects. The majority of the monasteries in the country are designed and constructed by local craftsmen with help from the local community and utilized local building materials. In many cases, the monks residing in the monasteries were also skilled craftsmen and were able to design, construct and repair their own building as well as create other art forms required in religious rituals.

The transfer of architectural knowledge was done through a system of apprenticeship. Master craftsmen or builders who were renowned for their crafts and skills would be sought after by apprentices who, after being accepted, would live and work closely with their master. The training process was usually painstakingly long and required much diligent work from the apprentices and meticulous efforts from the masters. Distinguished masters always possessed their own individual style and influenced the works of their apprentices. Local differences and craft schools in many regions of Thailand were developed through this system of knowledge transfer. Regional differences are extremely important and can be seen in architectural features such as roof form, shape and proportion of the building, materials and decorative details.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries many buildings for modern functions were constructed using secular architecture. New industrially produced materials and new construction processes contributed to a uniformity of style all over the country. Traditional builders and craftsmen had to give way to architects and modern builders whose designs and construction techniques were based on western knowledge. Technology transformed building crafts into an industry which needed special machinery and skills unknown to local builders. Soon traditional builders found that they were no longer used in the mainstream building industry. Most of them were restricted to domestic architecture or repair works. Some were forced to learn new building skills and abandon their traditional crafts while some resorted to creating other minor arts. The long and continuous line of building tradition was interrupted. The discontinuity was accentuated by the establishment of architectural schools which based their teaching on the western model emphasising western design theories. Architects who graduated from modern schools, together with western educated clients, have been the leaders of the latest trends in architecture.

Problems for conservation of Buddhist heritage in recent years are that even though the demand for conservation has grown, skilled craftsmen are in short supply. Also, unreasonable time constraints, which is

often the case of government conservation projects, do not enable the craftsmen to carry out their work to the highest standard and authentic materials are often replaced by modern ones for the sake of saving time and costs.

Some reflections on recommendations

The recognition of craftsman and traditional builders

It is unfortunate that traditional craftsmen are not as highly recognized as other professions within Thai society. National cultural agencies should recognize and encouraged skilled craftsmen to take an active role in training apprentices. In 1985, the Office of the National Culture Commission of Thailand started the National Artist scheme to honour notable Thai artists in various fields such as literature, fine and applied arts, music and performing arts. Many architects practising traditional Thai architecture have been honoured as well as traditional craftsmen. Many of them had taken on the role of trainers and mentors for younger generations in the formal education system as well as through traditional knowledge transfer.

The reviving of traditional building knowledge

Teaching of traditional building crafts should be revived. When the first architectural school in Thailand was founded at Chulalongkorn University in 1933, courses on traditional Thai architecture were included in the curriculum. However, the nature of traditional art could not be effectively conveyed within the modern educational system and demand fell. Thai architecture teaching was gradually reduced. In 1995, the Faculty of Architecture, with a grant from the government, started a Bachelors Degree of Thai Architecture programme focusing on traditional design and the application of traditional style to contemporary architecture. The introduction of traditional building techniques and materials into contemporary architectural practice should be encouraged as it is another way to ensure that tradition is practised and maintained in a modern spirit.

The need for research and inventory

As knowledge on traditional architecture is dwindling and traditional builders do not usually keep or record their work, it is necessary to carry out research into aspects related to traditional architecture. Information on architectural style, regional variations, construction technique and traditional building material are important to conservation practice. Lack of the knowledge has often led to the loss of authenticity of architectural fabric.

Most of the monasteries in Thailand own collections of religious art. Many were given as offerings to the Buddha. There are also a large number of art objects that are kept in their original contexts or are still in use or are simply neglected because a lack of interest or understanding of their values. A systematic inventory of art objects in monasteries should be carried out with support from relevant bodies such as the Fine Arts Department or with expertise gained from voluntary academic sectors such as local universities and researchers. In 2009, the UNESCO Museum-to-Museum Partnership Project held a training workshop for monks in Wat Pongsanuk, a historic monastery in Lampang province in northern Thailand. The workshop, led by trainers from Deakin University, Chiang Mai University and the Thai Fine Arts Department, trained the monks in implementing an integrated approach to collection management.

Public awareness and community involvement in conservation

The conservation of Buddhist heritage requires understanding, support and the participation of large parts of society. The traditional role of the community as a caretaker of their monastery must be encouraged. Awareness among the local community of the value of heritage is a necessary step for conservation. The awareness and appreciation of cultural heritage should be developed from an early age. It is essential that teaching at school includes sufficient information about the value of heritage. Public awareness programmes should be created. In Thailand it is fostered by cultural agencies such as ICOMOS

Thailand and the Association of Siamese Architects (ASA) through various publications, exhibitions, lectures and workshops. ASA has also established a recognition programme, ASA Conservation Awards, which acknowledges well implemented conservation projects as well as worthy people in the conservation field. Many of the Award recipients are monasteries and traditional caretakers.

The education of the Sangha

The *Sangha* as the user and the custodian of the monastery has direct responsibility for the care of monastic fabric. To ensure that their monasteries are properly maintained, it is desirable that they should have a basic knowledge of how to do this. The formal education for the *Sangha* in Thailand emphasised the study of *Dharma* and ecclesiastical matters though secular education was added to the curriculum of both monks and novices at the secondary and university levels. The study of Buddhist architecture and its basic maintenance should be added as a part of this secular education. At present, Mahachulalongkorn Buddhist University has already developed a degree programme on Buddhist Art and Building Crafts at one of their campuses in northern Thailand. The curriculum focuses on religious crafts and skills training.

Training workshops can also benefit the *Sangha*. They can be thematic and practical and monasteries could well be the ideal place for holding them. These workshops can be led by experts with collaboration between conservation agencies both at national and local level and academic institutions. There are examples in Thailand of training workshops and short courses for abbots and monks on taking care of their monasteries. These are organised by the Fine Arts Department

Sangha should also be provided with a concise and practical guide to their principal duties in the care of the fabric. The handbook should tell the *Sangha* the necessary care of the building and environs as well as the means to detect signs of problems and deterioration in architecture.

Conclusion

The care of sacred architecture requires a sympathetic and knowledgeable appreciation of the needs of the worshippers as well as a concern for the aesthetic, architectural, and historic values of the architecture. The understanding of Buddhist attitudes towards buildings and their existence help us to understand what actions need to be carried out in order to conserve Buddhist architecture. Furthermore, we can identify and justify the practical norms which should be taken into account when planning conservation projects. The assimilation of ideas between tradition and international value and practice can be achieved by being rooted in ones' own culture and at the same time embracing the positive aspects of other cultures.

References (in English)

- Eliade, M.** 1961. *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Khanjanusthiti, P.** 1996. *Buddhist Architecture: Meaning and Conservation in the Context of Thailand*. D. Phil. Dissertation, University of York.
- Payutto Bhikkhu P.A.** 2007. *Vision of the Dhamma: A Collection of Buddhist Writings in English*. Nakhon Pathom, Wat Nyanavesakavan.
- Suksamran, S.** 1982. *Buddhism and Politics in Thailand: A Study of Socio-Political Change and Political Activism of Thai Sangha*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
- UNESCO.** 2007. *Asia Conserved: Lessons Learned from the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation*. Bangkok.
- UNESCO.** 2009. *Thai Monks Trained in UNESCO Museum-to-Museum Partnership Project*. [Accessed 17 July 2009] available at <http://www.unescobkk.org>

References (in Thai)

- Damrong Rajanuparb, HRH Prince.** 1930. *Patakata Reaung Sa-ngun Kong Boran* (Lecture on the Care of Cultural Heritage). Bangkok.
- Jumsai, S.** 1982. *Nam* (Water). In M.R. Kukrit Pramoj, ed. *Laksana Thai*. Bangkok: Thai Watthanā Phānit.
- Kalayanamitra, C.** 1982. *Sathapattayakum Bab Thai Derm* (Traditional Thai Architecture). In M.R. Kukrit Pramoj, ed. *Laksana Thai*. Bangkok: Thai Watthanā Phānit.
- Pramoj, K.** 1982. *Sangkom Thai* (Thai Society). In M.R. Kukrit Pramoj, ed. *Laksana Thai*. Bangkok: Thai Watthanā Phānit.
- The Fine Arts Department.** 1982. *Jodmaihed Karn Burana Wat Phrasrirattanasasadaram* (The account of the Restoration of the Chapel of the Emerald Buddha). Bangkok.
- The Fine Arts Department.** 1990. *Tissadee Lae Neaw Patibat Karn Anurak Anusornsthan Lae Leng Borankadee* (Theory and Practice in Conservation of Historic Monuments and sites). Bangkok.
- The Fine Arts Department.** 1995. *Chang Silapa Thai* (Thai Craftsmen). Bangkok.
- Vajirayanavaroros, HMH Prince.** 1971. *Phra Maha Sammana Vinitchai* (The Collection of Writings by Prince Vajirayanavaroros). Bangkok.

Translated Pali and Sanskrit Texts

- Buddhist Scriptures.** 1959. Translated by Edward Conze, London.
- Vinaya-Pitaka (the Book of Discipline) Vol. IV (Mahavagga) and Vol. V (Cullavagga).** 1962 & 1952. Translated by I.B. Horner. London.



Making conservation decisions in Bhutan, especially in the context of heritage sites

Karma Tenzin

The cultural (Buddhist) heritage in Bhutan is an integral part of our identity, unity and continuity and forms an indisputable physical record of the historical, artistic and technical achievements of our great past Buddhist masters, leaders and forefathers through many centuries. The cultural heritage consists of both the tangible and intangible heritage that has been passed down in a remarkably uninterrupted manner from generation to generation. The tangible heritage includes the architectural heritage, such as important ancient *dzongs* (fortresses), Buddhist temples and monasteries, *choetens* (*stupas*), and *nyes* (sacred sites) which house the valuable cultural properties such as *Kuten*,¹ *Sungten*² and *Thugten*,³ ritual and religious objects built or established by great Buddhist saints in the past. Whereas the intangible heritage includes Buddhist principles, values, mask dances, rituals, ceremonies, and so on.

Heritage sites form the integral core of our country's rich and ancient cultural heritage and tradition. Bhutan has now over 2 000 ancient Buddhist temples and monasteries and over 10 000 *choetens* with a *dzong* in almost every *dzongkhags* (District). *Dzongs* are one of the most famous and important heritage monuments in Bhutan. They not only served as an effective defence but also became the centres of religious and cultural activities and the seat of the civil authority. The *dzongs* currently house district administrative offices and bodies of monks. The majority of these heritage sites date to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries during the time of *Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel*⁴ but some of them have their roots as far back as the seventh and eighth centuries during the period of *Guru Rinpoche*.⁵ The heritage sites in Bhutan are not only architecture but also treasure houses containing beautiful murals, sculptures, carvings and textiles.

Heritage sites form important links (material, physical or tangible) to our rich history and the past. They are great sources of invaluable information for modern society about our history, culture and traditional knowledge.

The heritage sites in Bhutan are a living heritage and we are fortunate to have them still intact with authentic values. But with the advent of modernisation and development taking place at a very fast pace, changes are inevitable and thus become a challenging issue in the field of conservation of heritage sites in Bhutan.

Conservation decision-making in Bhutan

Existing legislation protecting cultural heritage in Bhutan

To ensure the protection and preservation of valuable cultural properties in the country, the Moveable Cultural Property Act, 2005 was enacted by the National Assembly of Bhutan. The Division for Cultural Properties, under the Department of Culture (DOC), Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs, is the office responsible for the protection and preservation of moveable cultural properties in the country.

However, at present, there is no legislation or act governing the preservation and protection of heritage sites and intangible heritage in Bhutan. Nevertheless, there are administrative rules and regulations in place. Moreover the Division for Conservation of Heritage sites, under the DOC, is currently drafting a bill which will be submitted to Parliament in spring 2014 for endorsement. The draft heritage bill distinguishes between heritage sites as:

1. Heritage buildings
2. Cultural sites
3. Archaeological sites

Based on the value of the heritage site, the sites will be designated as:

1. Registered heritage building
2. National heritage building
3. Important heritage building
4. Important cultural site
5. Important archaeological site

The existing administrative rules and guidelines ensuring the protection and conservation of heritage sites in Bhutan

The Department of Culture under the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs is the central agency for the conservation and development of Bhutan's heritage. The Division for Conservation of Heritage Sites (DCHS) under the Department of Culture, Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs, is the office responsible for the conservation, promotion and development of heritage sites in Bhutan.

The following are the main functions of the DCHS office:

1. The formulation of plans and policies related to conservation of heritage sites in the country.
2. The establishment of guidelines for the conservation of heritage sites.
3. A national inventory of heritage structures and sites.

4. The conservation, development and rehabilitation of cultural and historical structures and sites including the preparation of project proposals for the conservation of architectural heritage.
5. The appraisal and approval of proposals for conservation projects that are made by the *dzongkhags* and other organizations.
6. Provision of technical and administrative help to Districts/organizations/individuals with regard to conservation and rehabilitation of historical and cultural sites.
7. Maintenance of records of architectural conservation projects that have been implemented.
8. Technical assistance to the Districts and other organizations for the preparation of proposals for the construction of new *lhakhangs* and *dzongs*.
9. The appraisal and approval of proposals for the construction of new buildings for religious and cultural purposes.
10. Organization of National Workshops and small-scale training programmes on conservation and restoration techniques.
11. Besides conservation work, the DCHS office is also responsible for the construction of new structures for cultural and religious activities. Some of the current construction projects include the development of master plans for the cultural centre of Bhutan.
12. Provision of technical assistance for the maintenance and repair of all existing buildings under the Department of Culture.

The *dzongkhags* are key players in the protection of our heritage sites; they have the following roles and responsibilities:

1. To enforce all rules and regulations with regard to the protection and promotion of heritage in their district.
2. To establish, operate and encourage facilities for the conservation of cultural and historical structures and sites.
3. To create awareness among the local people of the significance of heritage.

4. To care for and carry out the conservation, maintenance and support of historic and cultural monuments and sites and their respective functions.
5. To identify and select the monuments or sites to be conserved in their respective district.
6. Preparation of project proposals in their district (only after careful selection) for submission for approval and financial support from the *dzongkhags*.
7. They are responsible for the management of the activities of the project.
8. They have the responsibility to ensure that the agreed and approved projects are followed correctly.

The following are works requiring the approval of the Department of Culture for structures more than 80 years old:

1. Demolition or removal of a monument or parts of a monument.
2. Relocation of a monument or parts of a monument.
3. Remodelling, restoration, renovation, or reconstruction, etc. of a monument or parts of a monument.
4. Rehabilitation of a monument for new functions other than religious or cultural functions.
5. Construction, change or removal of facilities/structures affiliated with a monument, which will have an effect on the existence or appearance of the monument/heritage site.
6. Construction or location of any structures including buildings, roads, bridges, telephones or electrical items, drains, cables, etc. around and in a historical or cultural site.
7. Establishment of new structures or sites for cultural and religious activities.

Current conservation practices for heritage sites in Bhutan

The project for renovation is identified and nominated by different individuals/bodies. The application for

approval of the work is processed through the County head office and the district administration office, and goes finally to the Department of Culture for approval. For financial assistance from the government, the application is put to the County Committee and then to the District Council for selection. Projects are selected on the basis of conservation needs and heritage value. Some of the heritage values considered are:

1. Rarity value
2. Identity value
3. Political or historical value
4. Relative artistic or technical value
5. Social value
6. Functional value
7. Educational value
8. Contemporary socioeconomic values

Normally, as per the guidelines, three major projects and five minor projects are to be submitted in a year from each *Dzongkhag* for possible approval and financial support from the Government. However, additional projects may be selected for approval and implementation but only if the project is to be fully financed, managed and implemented by a private individual or organization. In the case of any sudden destruction due to a natural disaster, fire, etc. during a financial year, such emergency cases may also be selected and put forward for approval and possible financial support from the Government. The reason for the selection of three projects per year is to ensure that works on our unique architectural heritage are implemented in an appropriate manner that does not cause any irreplaceable losses to our heritage, and have a secured budget. This allows appropriate plans to be formulated and the projects to be implemented efficiently and effectively with the necessary manpower.

Once the project is submitted for approval, the Department of Culture scrutinizes all the documents including the project proposal submitted by the *dzongkhag*. It may approve the project, specifying the exact scope of work to ensure that reconstruction or alteration is NOT carried out in the name of renovation and conservation. Before issuing the approval notice,

the DOC consults and discusses the project proposal and the scope of work with the *dzongkhags* or the representative of the community or the owner of the site. This is to ensure that the stakeholders involved are well informed about the project. However, larger projects of national importance are managed separately.

The project proposal must include the following basic details:

1. Objectives of the project
2. Name and ownership of the monument, verified by the *dzongkhags*
3. History of the monument
4. Past and present function of the monument
5. Who manages and uses the sites?
6. Location of the site
7. Present condition of the structure, supplemented with drawings and photographs
8. Record of previous restoration or alteration works
9. Estimate of the project
10. Details of community involvement and responsibility
11. Funding (private or Government)

The project proposals should be submitted to the DOC at least six months before the preparation of annual budgets or before the time allocated for the start of the project. Once the project is approved, the *dzongkhag* technical team manages and monitors the project. Regular reports have to be sent to the DOC by the *dzongkhag* for review in order to ensure that the project is running successfully as per the specified and approved scope of work. The *dzongkhag* also has to submit an annual overall summary report of implemented projects to the DOC for the National Inventory file.

A site visit by a DOC team is also made to evaluate the progress of work. However, one of the primary problems is the shortage of human resources in the DCHS office. As a result the office, as the central agency responsible for the conservation, promotion and development of heritage sites in Bhutan, is not

able to assess and monitor conservation works in all parts of the country. The remote and sometimes almost inaccessible locations of monuments lead to many constraints in maintenance, safety and conservation. It is of great concern that many of the ancient and valuable monuments are often ignorantly being dismantled and destroyed instead of being conserved, thus causing whole treasure houses of our heritage to be lost forever. Because of the limited technical capacity for cultural heritage site protection and restoration, many restoration projects in fact become reconstruction works.

Current conservation practices on heritage sites of national importance

For conservation projects of national importance, such as the conservation of *dzongs* and other very important *lhakhangs* and monasteries, the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs is the main agency for executing the project. Before the project starts, a steering committee is formed with representatives from all the relevant stakeholders, such as the Ministries, *dzongkhags*, monks, finance etc., who are responsible for overseeing the administrative, technical, financial and organizational parts of the project. A master plan including all the conservation plans, technical drawings and designs is prepared by the designated project architect and engineer from the DCHS, and is submitted for discussion at the Steering Committee meeting for decision-making and endorsement. Steering Committee meetings are held as and when the project demands and when a critical decision has to be made. The Steering Committee meetings are usually held on-site, taking in all the comments and feedback from the monks, communities and people occupying the heritage site. The decisions are taken once a common understanding and consensus has developed.

With regard to the implementing agency, the current practice is that a team from DCHS is deputed on-site to implement the work, because there is no technical capacity in the field of conservation outside the DCHS. However, this is subject to change in the future.

Issues and challenges in conservation decision-making for heritage sites in Bhutan

- i) Lack of education and awareness of the importance of heritage sites.

One of the challenges is the lack of education and awareness among the local public about the importance of conservation of our precious heritage sites in Bhutan, although the government has increasingly highlighted the importance of their protection and preservation.

Consultations are the backbone for starting conservation works in Bhutan since a variety of custodians and stakeholders are involved and the idea of conservation is new. It is very difficult to reach a consensus for the work to be executed. The public are not aware of the need for conservation and do not understand the value of the old fabric of heritage sites. This makes it difficult for the conservators as the people's wish is always to dismantle valuable old structures and replace them with a new one.

Therefore, awareness programmes about understanding the importance of the heritage value of old fabric need to be strengthened for both new and old generations.

Current practice to address the challenges: The importance of creating awareness and appreciation among the public is one of the top priorities for the government of Bhutan. Workshops, training and awareness campaigns are also conducted at community level. The DCHS office has started to shift from a 'monument-centric' to a cultural landscape approach, thereby ensuring that not only monuments but sites such as villages in their settings are conserved. This develops a greater awareness about the need for conserving heritage sites among people including monks.

- ii) The Buddhist belief of merit and philosophy of impermanence.

It is believed that making offerings to religious sites earns merit, and this encourages many people to 'improve' the heritage site. This usually means either its reconstruction with an improved design and decoration or with a bigger space to live in. It is difficult to restrain people from doing these good deeds, when spiritual belief conflicts with conservation of heritage sites. Another issue that our country faces is the desire to replicate elaborate architectural designs in all heritage sites regardless of their unique architecture. Every individual or local community associated with restoring a particular heritage site wants their own site to look prominent and much more elaborate, thus replicating the design of other sites and so leading to the loss of the unique architecture of individual heritage sites.

The Buddhist philosophy of impermanence contradicts the idea of conservation. The notion of the people is that nothing is permanent and everything is subject to change with time.

Current practice to address the challenges: Educating and creating awareness among all relevant stakeholders and the community about the importance and benefits of preservation and conservation of heritage sites and the values associated with them has proved to be the best solution in making them understand the values and principles of conservation. What we have generally noticed when we involve the monks and the communities in meetings is that at the beginning they are quite adamant and propose new changes and designs, but once we make them understand the importance of preservation, they accept our proposals.

- iii) The challenge of a living heritage.

One of the greatest challenges in conservation decision-making is that most of our heritage sites in

Bhutan are living heritage, where the people are still culturally associated with the heritage sites with daily activities taking place in them.

The result is that during the decision-making and protection and conservation work on heritage sites, the people living there are experiencing modernization and a change of lifestyle, and their needs and wants are modern ones such as sanitary and water facilities inside the heritage sites. Such facilities, if executed mostly without proper monitoring and implementation, tend to make the structures more vulnerable to natural hazards, especially earthquakes, while also contradicting the principles of conservation and authenticity. Repairs and the incorporation of additional facilities are constantly required to meet the needs of users (monks and local communities). Despite campaigns to raise awareness about modern heritage concerns, the community tends to prefer creating 'embellished' works and argue that this part of change needs to be accepted as the contribution of present generation to the field of heritage sites.

Current practice in addressing these challenges: In such cases, the present practice is to develop a mutual understanding and consensus whereby conservation and needs are balanced so as to maintain all authentic values associated with the site while at the same time creating better living conditions for the residents by incorporating facilities appropriate to modern living standards.

- iv) The lack of a Heritage Act or legal document.

As I have already mentioned, at present there is no Heritage Act or any legal document governing the rules and regulations for the protection of heritage sites in Bhutan. This poses a great challenge when defining responsibilities and accountability for the protection and restoration of heritage sites. However, the DCHS office is currently in the process of preparing a draft heritage bill. Once the Heritage Act is enacted and adopted, it will govern

and ensure the protection of cultural heritage sites in Bhutan.

- v) Traditional constructions on heritage sites not being engineered buildings.

Traditional methods of construction in Bhutan use either packed earth or stone masonry with composite timber construction; all without any scientific and engineering calculations being made. It is therefore difficult to prove scientifically the stability of a building when its safety is questioned. Following the recent earthquake disaster, when most heritage buildings suffered damage, people's mindset has changed towards a view that traditionally constructed heritage monuments such as *lhakhangs*, *dzongs* and vernacular traditional farmhouses are not strong enough to withstand a tremor. As a result the people/community want to reconstruct them using modern techniques of steel and concrete construction.

Current practice in addressing the challenges: The DCHS office is currently undertaking research on traditional packed earth construction. It has also conducted several hands-on training sessions for home owners and artisans on good indigenous construction practices of traditional houses which have been neglected.

Conclusion

The cultural heritage, consisting mainly of Buddhist heritage, is an integral part of our identity, unity and continuity, and forms an indisputable physical record of historical, artistic and technical achievements of the Bhutanese through many centuries. The heritage sites form the integral core of our country's rich and ancient cultural heritage and tradition. As culture is one of the main centres of attraction for tourists and tourism is the second source of income for the nation, conservation and protection must be ensured for the future.

Conservation of heritage sites greatly contributes to preservation of our culture, which is one of the four

pillars of Gross National Happiness, the guiding philosophy for development in Bhutan. Heritage sites are the most tangible aspect of Bhutanese culture and make the landscape of Bhutan unique and beautiful.

With the advent of modernization over the last decade and developments that bridge communication gaps, the numbers of heritage sites being renovated or altered have increased tremendously. Therefore, the threat and the negative impact of modernisation on our heritage sites has to be understood by all citizens of Bhutan and requires our joint efforts. As also mentioned, the number of significant natural disasters has become more frequent in recent times, threatening the survival of our heritage sites. The need to protect and preserve our cultural heritage sites has become the utmost priority in the land of the Thunder Dragon.

Notes

1. *Kuten* includes all images of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and other deities made from medicinal clay, *zikhim*, bronze, gold, silver, brass or any other materials and also on items such as *Kuthangs*, wall paintings, *Thongdroels*, *Thangkas*, and needlework or embroidered tapestry.
2. *Sungten* includes manuscripts such as Kanjur, Tenjur, Sungbum, Namthar and Kabum which are written in gold, silver, vermillion, ordinary ink or shell, or engraved on stone. This includes cloth wrappers, wooden plates (*lekshing*), belts (*lekthag*), belt hooks (*chabtse*), *dongdar*, scriptures in book form bound by *gotsem* (stitched hardbound), prayer flags (*dar-par*) and amulets (*sungwa tagdrol*).
3. *Thugten* includes the Eight Buddha stupas (*Decheg Choeten Gyad*) and all other kinds of *stupas* made of any materials.
4. *Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel*: a great Buddhist saint, who lived and unified the country in the seventeenth century.
5. *Guru Rinpoche*: Buddhist master, also known as the second Buddha.

References

Division for Conservation of Heritage Sites.
2006. Architectural Heritage Journal, Volume I.
Bhutan: Department of Culture.

Division for Conservation of Heritage Sites.
2011. Architectural Heritage Journal, Volume II.
Bhutan: Department of Culture.

Division for Conservation of Heritage Sites.
2005. Basic Guidelines for the Conservation of
Heritage Sites in Bhutan. Bhutan: Department of
Culture.



The status, conservation and management of Buddhist heritage in Pakistan

Muhammad Zahir

Pakistan enjoys a unique position in the world as home to distinctive archaeological and religious heritage. Among the many historical traditions of this land, the chronicle of Buddhism, Buddhist monuments and art, stand out and are known throughout the world. Some of the regions that now form part of Pakistan were important in the development and growth of Buddhism in the world. These regions were considered among the holiest places in Buddhism and for hundreds of years attracted travellers, holy men and women, and ordinary pilgrims from everywhere. Research since the first quarter of the nineteenth century in different regions of modern Pakistan has brought to light hundreds of archaeological sites belonging to Buddhism in the region. However, Pakistan's Buddhist heritage is facing multiple challenges and is constantly under threat from antiquity smugglers, religious fanaticism, government ineptitude, public disinheritance, development projects and population growth.

Buddhism and modern Pakistan

Buddhism, though not practiced today by the living population of Pakistan, was one of the major periods in the history of Pakistan. The remains of Buddhist civilization have been discovered throughout the length and breadth of Pakistan, from the foothills of the Himalayas in the north to the shores of the Arabian Sea in the south.

Buddha did not come to any part of Pakistan during his historic existence but he is believed to have visited different regions of Pakistan in the past in his pre-birth or *Jataka* stories, where he performed different acts of kindness, sacrifices and miracles (Cunningham, 2007; Sehrai, 1979). The Buddhists of the region venerated these places and constructed *stupas* and monasteries on those spots (Cunningham, 2007).

Even in the absence of a personal visit by the Buddha, the ancient regions of *Gandhara* (the modern Vale of Peshawar), *Udhiyana* (the modern Swat and Dir Valleys and Bajaur and Mohmand Tribal regions), *Takhsha-shila* (the modern Taxila valley) and *Urasa* (the modern Hazara region) were very well known to Buddhists living both within and outside the modern geographical limits of Pakistan (Cunningham, 2007; Marshall, 1960; Foucher, 1915; Hargreaves, 1930; Tucci, 1977; Zwalf, 1979). In fact, some of the lesser-known regions in the study of Buddhism, for example the deserts and plains of Sindh province of Pakistan (Dutt, 1978), were probably crucial to the progress of Buddhism along the key trade routes and sea routes. These regions are littered with thousands of archaeological sites that contain evidence of Buddhism, making Buddhism and its religious art one of the most remarkable aspects of the history of Pakistan.

Buddhism and the Muslim identity of Pakistan

The chronicle of Buddhism is a wonderful projection of the artistic, religious and political

achievement of the ancient inhabitants of modern day Pakistan. However, this Buddhist identity is in contrast to the more modern Muslim identity of Pakistan. Although the study and preservation of Buddhist remains has been a major field of research and concern for archaeologists and heritage administrators in Pakistan since partition in 1947, these professional concerns have largely failed to reach the modern population of the regions, which happens to be primarily Muslim. This represents a major dilemma for the professionals and has resulted in the creation of an immense sense of alienation and disinheritance from the Buddhist past(s), resulting in the development of a less caring attitude by the wider public towards Buddhist remains *vis-à-vis* the Muslim heritage. This attitude derives from the development of selected narratives of the past that are transmitted through education and are primarily linked to the glory of Muslims and the destruction of non-Muslim heritage, such as the destruction of human sculptures by the invading armies from Afghanistan in the tenth century CE. This has contributed to the destruction/defacement of hundreds of archaeological sites, particularly Buddhist ones, in different regions of Pakistan.

The religious and artistic value of the artefacts, especially of the sculptures, coming from Buddhist archaeological sites has turned out to be a major threat to Buddhist sites. The extensive demand and the existence of international markets for Buddhist artefacts have been instrumental in the development of a community of professional plunderers and smugglers of Buddhist sites in Pakistan. Although there is no official or other research data available on the number of people and money involved in this business, there are large marketplaces, for example dozens of shops in the Sarafa Bazar (or Jewellers' Market) in Peshawar which have been in operation for decades. A large number of antiquity fakers have emerged in different regions of Pakistan, for example in the Taxila Valley. These are people who do not have permission from the Government of Pakistan to carve ancient Buddhist subjects.

Buddhism and the current wave of terrorism

Pakistan has been in a state of war since 2001 as thousands of Pakistanis joined what was portrayed as a religious fight against the foreign forces in Afghanistan and waged war on their perceived Pakistani collaborators (i.e. the Pakistani Government and its army). This has resulted in the death of thousands of innocent Pakistanis and destruction of households, economic breakdown and a general lack of law and order in most parts of Pakistan, particularly in the Tribal regions and in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. In fact, four years ago, the Taliban took over control of the Swat Valley, a centre of Buddhism in the past, an event which triggered the mass migration of millions of people and which forced the Pakistan army to launch a full-fledged military invasion of the Swat to crush this menace.



FIGURE 1. Destruction of the Buddha at Jahanabad, Swat Valley, Pakistan.

The fight with the Taliban has stretched Pakistani law enforcing agencies to their limits as countering terrorism has become their main objective during the last decade. Protection of heritage is very low on their priority list. The continuous deterioration of law and order has increased the risk to the heritage and, without proper policing, the destruction of archaeological heritage, particularly in the terror hit areas, is advancing at an unprecedented rate. For example, in 2007 the Taliban failed in their ambition to repeat their destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas by destroying one of the largest and best preserved rock-cut Buddhas at Jahanabad, in the Swat Valley of Pakistan, but they were successful in severely damaging its face.

Although there is an elaborate, albeit inefficient, judicial mechanism in place (i.e. laws that govern heritage protection and preservation), this system is rarely and selectively employed and the destruction and looting of archaeological sites is going on without much hindrance. The situation is further complicated by the lack of employment opportunities and education and the absolute poverty of the people living around archaeological sites. These factors all contribute to the destruction of these sites, especially Buddhist ones, which are seen as a major source for making a quick fortune.

Population expansion and development projects

The population of Pakistan has increased fivefold from 1950 to 2010 (Bongaarts et. al., 2013); it is now the sixth most populous country of the world. The uncontrolled population explosion has put tremendous strain on the country's economy. Thus, many parts of the countryside, especially in northern and north western Pakistan, with their Buddhist archaeological remains are developed for housing schemes without any proper planning by the government. The encroachment upon ancient landscapes contributes to the destruction of sites. Furthermore, as population has grown, so the need for new agricultural land has also increased and the availability of modern machinery means that all

types of lands, including archaeological mounds, can now be flattened very easily. These processes are going on at an alarming rate without proper government oversight and archaeological sites are destroyed almost every day in different regions of Pakistan. In fact, some antiquity dealers prey on this situation and provide free land flattening machinery and farm alignment support for land designated for agriculture that contains large archaeological mounds or other remains.

As a developing country, major construction projects are regularly initiated in different regions of Pakistan. In general, the government or the contractors carry out no cultural impact assessment studies before launching major development projects. For example, the major motorway that connects cities across the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab provinces, passing through rich archaeological areas such as the Vale of Peshawar and Taxila Valley, was constructed without any such studies. The only example to date of a cultural impact assessment on a large-scale project has been the Ghazi-Barotha Canal Project in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab provinces, funded by the World Bank in the early 1990s. It discovered archaeological sites ranging from Palaeolithic finds to Buddhist sites and to later historic sites that had not been previously recorded (Halim & Khan, n.d.). This shows that if heritage assessment surveys were to be required before the start of large- or small-scale government and privately funded projects, the archaeological knowledge of the regions would improve tremendously and a large number of archaeological sites destined to be destroyed could be saved or properly researched.

Currently the Government of Pakistan is constructing a huge water reservoir, dubbed the 'lifeline' of Pakistan on the ancient Silk Road in northern Pakistan. When filled, the reservoir will engulf a 110 kilometre long stretch of this ancient route with thousands of rock engravings and inscriptions left primarily by Mahayana Buddhist travellers and monks. The Road was instrumental in spreading Mahayana Buddhism to China, Korea and Japan. A conservative estimate puts the number of rock carvings at around 30 000 and the number of inscriptions at more than

5 000, representing what is considered the largest rock carving province of the world. The Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA), which is the Government of Pakistan department responsible for constructing the huge water reservoir, plans to conserve only 125 of these rock carvings (WAPDA, 2009). No proper systematic study of the archaeology of the region has yet been commissioned; once the dam is constructed, the almost unknown past(s) of this region will disappear without trace.

Recent constitutional amendment concerning archaeology

Since its inception, the Federal Government of Pakistan has been the custodian and responsible authority for the heritage of Pakistan, including UNESCO World Heritage sites. Among them are the Buddhist centre of Taxila with many Buddhist sites, now located in the Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces, and the Takht-i-Bahi Buddhist *Stupa* and Buddhist monastic complex in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Provinces have been given little or no share of responsibility. However, a recent (2010) amendment, called the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan, removed responsibility for archaeology from the Government of Pakistan and transferred it to the provinces, making them responsible for all cultural heritage within their area.

This move has severely curtailed the power of the Federal Government and its Archaeology and Museums Department. All archaeological sites, including UNESCO World Heritage Sites and museums and their staff were transferred to the respective provincial governments. However, the distribution of human resources has been based not on the requirements of the provinces but on the domicile or place of birth of the officials concerned. Many of them are still stranded in provinces to which they do not belong and face severe professional obstacles in continuing their service. Furthermore, some provinces, e.g. Baluchistan, received none or less than their proportional share of the Federal Government human resource distribution.

The unequal distribution of assets and staff has meant that there is a lack of professionals in all provinces along with ambiguity about the management and ownership of sites, particularly World Heritage sites. In addition, the staff of almost all the concerned departments are poorly trained, and some of their practices, particularly regarding conservation and authenticity, run contrary to established practices in other parts of the world.

Academic interests in Buddhism

Although much research has taken place within the geographical limits of modern Pakistan during the last two hundred years, its Buddhist archaeology is still largely unknown and the current discipline is primarily based upon the study of Buddhist art and architecture. Hundreds of archaeological sites with Buddhist remains have been discovered in the last two decades. For example, a recent archaeological survey project in the Hazara Division (ancient *Urasa*) has documented more than four hundred sites (Ali et.al., 2009, 2010). These areas have not been part of the mainstream narratives of Buddhism in Pakistan and these new studies are increasingly challenging long held views. Furthermore, new archaeological excavations in different regions are changing our perspectives of Buddhism in Pakistan and are now defying the age-old colonial narratives of Buddhism.

Buddhism and its associated fields is the most popular research subject in archaeology for postgraduate research students at Pakistani universities. However, there is a lack of coordination among different institutions for the study of Buddhism. In fact, most views and research are still based upon art-historical and culture-history paradigms, and a true perspective of Buddhist past and legacy is lacking.

Knowledge of Buddhism and the training of professionals in museum studies and management have not led to an improvement in either the study or display of Buddhist objects in museums. We estimate that museums contain around 22 000 Buddhist religious and art artefacts. Some of them have impressive display and labelling systems for their most valuable

possessions, but most lack proper displays, showcases and labelling systems, and almost all suffer from poor inventory and proper storage facilities. Except for one or two catalogues of some of the Buddhist collections (Ali & Qazi, 2008) most museums' collections remain largely unpublished.

Buddhist living legacy and public outreach

The Buddhist heritage of Pakistan is known throughout the world, particularly in south and southeast Asia and parts of Europe and North America. In fact, some Buddhist religious establishments, especially those associated with the relics of Buddha, are still visited and worshipped by Buddhists. The remains of Buddha's teeth (as attested by an accompanying inscription) from Dharmarajika *Stupa* (Marshall, 1960) were recently sent to Sri Lanka by the Government of Pakistan. These relics instantly became an object of worship for Sri Lankan Buddhists and hundreds of thousands of people took this opportunity to worship these ancient relics. This represents a unique piece of the Buddhist past of Pakistan that had been forgotten and was brought to light through archaeological work and again became an object of worship.

But the importance of this heritage has not been fully appreciated by the majority of the Pakistani population; very few actually visit the archaeological remains. With a view to increasing public awareness of Buddhism and its contribution to the regions that now comprise Pakistan, I teamed up with Pakistan Television (PTV), the largest public sector television network and freely available on air throughout the country, to make a documentary series on the Chronicle of Buddhism in Pakistan. It was broadcast in the Urdu language in order to reach the maximum audience. The main purpose of the documentary was to share with the common people of Pakistan the knowledge of Buddhism as documented and conveyed by professional archaeologists and to raise awareness for its preservation and protection. The documentary series, still on air and being shown three to four times

a week (with repeat telecasts), has been a tremendous success not only as an economic endeavour but also as a public awareness programme. The success of this television documentary series shows that the people of Pakistan want to know about their links with their Buddhist past and that public outreach programmes and literature can bring about a change in people's perceptions of Buddhist heritage.

Conclusions

With the exception of the UNESCO World Heritage sites and some protected monuments and museum collections, most of the Buddhist heritage of Pakistan is under threat. As a result of the current geopolitical, economic and professional environment as well as the lack of human capacity, the Pakistani governmental organizations dealing with archaeology are in urgent need of assistance from the international community to safeguard this human heritage for the next generations.

Acknowledgments

I am extremely indebted to Prof. Dr. Rohit Jigyasu, Mr. Joseph King, Dr. Sujeong Lee, Dr. Gamini Wijesuriya and Ms. Tara Sharma for making all the arrangements and for making it possible to participate in the first conference on Asian Buddhist Heritage: Conserving the Sacred, held at Seoul, Korea. I am very thankful to my friends Ijaz Khan, Subhani Gul and Fawad Khan for allowing me to use their photographs for this paper.

References

- Ali, I. & Qazi, M. N.** 2008. *Gandhara Sculptures in the Peshawar Museum (Life Story of Buddha)*. Mansehra, Pakistan: Hazara University.
- Ali, I., Rehman, A. & Hameed, A.** 2009. Preliminary report on the archaeological survey of District Abbottabad 2006. *Pakistan Heritage* 1: 145-193.
- Ali, I., Shah, I., Hameed, A. & Ashfaq, M.** 2010. Preliminary report on the archaeological survey of District Haripur (2007–2008). *Pakistan Heritage* 2: 161-208.
- Bongaarts, J., Sathar, Z. & Mahmood, A.** 2013. Population trends in Pakistan. In Z. Sathar, R. Royan, & J. Bongaarts, eds. *Capturing the Demographic Dividend in Pakistan*. New York: Population Council.
- Cunningham, A.** 2007 [1871]. *Ancient Geography of India*. New Delhi: Cosmo Publications (reprint).
- Dutt, N.** 1978. *Buddhist Sects in India*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas.
- Foucher, A.** 1915. *Notes on the ancient geography of Gandhara: a commentary on a chapter of Hiuan Tsang*. Archaeological Survey of India: Varnasi, translated by H. Hargreaves.
- Halim, M. A. & Khan, G. M.** (n.d.). *Report on Ghazi-Garhala Hydropower Project: Archaeological Studies*. Government of Pakistan. (available at http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WD-SCContentServer/WDSP/IB/2000/11/10/000009265_3980429110249/Rendered/PDF/multi_page.pdf). Accessed January 29, 2014.
- Hargreaves, H.** 1930. *Handbook to the Sculptures in the Peshawar Museum*, revised edition. Calcutta: Government of India Central Publication Branch.
- Marshall, J.** 1960. *A Guide to Taxila*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Sehrai, F.** 1979. *Hund: The Forgotten City of Gandhara*. Peshawar Museum.
- Tucci, G.** 1977. On Swat: The Dards and Connected Problems. *East and West* 27(1-4): 9-103.
- WAPDA.** 2009. *Diamer Basha Dam Project: Impact of Rock Carvings and Proposed Mitigation* (Water and Power Development Authority, Pakistan). Available at <http://www.wapda.gov.pk/pdf/ImpactRockCarvingsBasha.pdf> (accessed January 28, 2014).
- Zwalf, W.** 1979. *The Shrines of Gandhara*. London: British Museum Publications Limited.



Conservation and management of Buddhist heritage in Japan

Katsuhisa Ueno

Legal framework for cultural property

Legal protection and subsidies for preservation work to historic buildings and art treasures in the possession of Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples started in 1897, when the Law for the Preservation of Ancient Temples and Shrines was enacted. In 1929 this was replaced by the Law for the Preservation of National Treasures. Finally, in 1950, the present Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties was passed.

It is possible for the Japanese to trace the history of architecture over thirteen centuries through surviving buildings such as the remarkable *Horyu-ji* Buddhist temple in Nara, one of the world's oldest timber

buildings, built in the second half of the seventh century. There are many different types and ages of historic buildings from religious buildings such as Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines, to residences and houses such as castles and palaces on a larger scale and Tea Ceremony Rooms on a smaller scale.

The following criteria have been used to designate architectural structures that are representative of their type or period as Important Cultural Property:

- 1) those of excellent design;
- 2) those produced with advanced techniques;
- 3) those of major historic value;

- 4) those prominent in the characteristics of any school of architecture of any province;
- 5) those of high value from an art historical-scientific point of view.

National Treasures are designated from among those Important Cultural Properties that have particularly high cultural and historical significance.

Over a century has passed since legal protection for Architectural Cultural Property began. As of October 2013, 4 607 architectural structures (2 406 titles) have been designated as Important Cultural Property by the Government of Japan; 266 of these (216 titles) have received the designation of National Treasure. About 90 percent of the designated buildings are timber structures, thanks to the rich forest resources made possible by the Japan's climate and location. Almost all Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines are made of timber, which is still used in modern construction in Japan.

Ownership of Buddhist heritage as cultural property

The Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties states that the owners of Important Cultural Property have all the responsibility for its conservation and management (Article 31, Clause 1). It also states that it is necessary for the owners to be given permission by the Commissioner of the Agency for Cultural Affairs for alterations to the existing state of Important Cultural Property that they own, unless their interventions are not related to daily maintenance or emergency action after disasters (Article 43, Clause 1). Thus, the owners are expected to understand fully the limit to alterations of the existing state that the Law allows. It also follows that the owners are much less likely to make alterations without permission.

Proposals for alterations based on scientific investigation of the restoration involved in dismantling buildings must be submitted to the Council for the Protection of Cultural Property (Article 153, Clause 2). If the

investigation of a building's history indicates that it should be restored to its original or a former state, then changes can be made so long as the alterations maintain the outstanding value and authenticity while preventing decay.

Requests by owners in cooperation with a state licensed conservation architect to alter the existing state of properties proposed are examined by Special Councils under the Council for the Protection of Cultural Property. A final permit, for successful applications, is issued by the Commissioner of the Agency for Cultural Affairs. In the process, some parts of a building may be replaced as necessary due to decay but those removed parts also are preserved so as to complete the whole documentation of the work done. All these discussions and decisions are recorded officially. Alteration to a building after its designation as an Important Cultural Property always needs such particular care.

Preservation for Buddhist heritage

The main components of historic timber buildings such as pillars and beams are made of wood. Plant based materials are used for roofs and clay is used for walls. A rich natural environment can supply such materials for buildings but they must be of suitable quality for the appropriate parts. At the same time, negative effects can cause deterioration of the materials and structure of timber buildings, for example rain, wind, pests and even earthquakes. Timber buildings cannot remain in their initial state outdoors unlike works of art inside museums.

To keep timber buildings in an ideal state, it is necessary to repair and maintain them continuously. Up to now this has been done, as the seventh century Horyu-ji temple, mentioned earlier, shows us. Since the modern conservation movement started in the late nineteenth century in Japan, restoration projects at national level have been carried out every year. Nowadays, the number of these is over 100 a year, including Buddhist temples.

On the other hand, such work requires traditional knowledge and a high competence in restoration that



FIGURE 1. Zenkou-ji Temple main hall, Japan.

takes a long time for craftsmen to learn. All wooden parts such as the pillars and beams are reassembled using high-level traditional knowledge with very few iron nails. Restoration projects need such traditional techniques and the necessary materials are expensive. Because of this, the Government of Japan provides grants to owners to help them ensure the quality of their restoration work. The grant can be 50-85 percent of the total required, and should help individual owners, religious groups or local governments who have the economic potential to carry out the restoration.

Periodical interventions in preservation

Japan has a long history of repairing timber buildings. Efforts to preserve such structures have encouraged the repair of decayed wooden parts by inserting new elements or by replacing a whole part while keeping as much of the original material as possible. Periodical interventions on historical timber buildings are carried out after checking their condition of decay or deterioration. The definitions of those interventions are as follows:

A. Complete dismantling (*Kaitai-Shuri*)

It envisages repairing the lower parts of pillars. If the decay or deterioration covers the main structure, all parts of the buildings are reassembled after dismantling the buildings completely, part by part, down to the foundation stones.

B. Half dismantling (*Han-Kaitai-Shuri*)

It is adopted when necessary repairs on decayed or deteriorated parts can be done without dismantling the structures.

C. Maintenance (*Iji-Shuri*)

It is generally regarded as continuous repair to prevent the decay or deterioration of buildings in order to save their functionality.

D. Partial repair (*Sho-Shuri*)

It focuses on the most deteriorated parts of buildings such as the roof, walls or floors which are then partitioned off and dismantled, and the parts repaired.

A continuous intervention on timber buildings is required to preserve them. Complete dismantling should be conducted once every 100-300 years. Maintenance is once every 30-50 years and partial repairs are daily matters. Recovery projects that include these interventions can take place at a time when natural disasters such as typhoons or earthquakes occur. In these cases, the principle is that the same species and grade of timber must be used for replacements. However, other kinds of material can be used as temporary materials in a first-aid situation, in order to prevent the damage from spreading further.

Principles in restoration work

A. Reuse of parts

In order to keep the authenticity of timber buildings, it is necessary to recognize that all parts of the buildings are sources of information, including historical values. Therefore, parts must be reused. Any additional parts, which were added at a later stage, should be respected

and are as important as the original parts. In addition, any parts removed have significance and must also be preserved in restoration work.

B. Decision to alter the existing state

In order to decide whether to alter the existing state of buildings, a detailed proposal must be submitted for approval to the Council, as mentioned previously. In the past, proposals were likely to request keeping the original state in the interests of finding outstanding value; nowadays, proposals also respect the use of cultural property as well as its conservation and restoration, so that it can be accessible to the public even more than before.

C. Study of traditional techniques

In order to preserve the historic structure, it is necessary to study traditional construction techniques, relevant to the age of the building, so as to use them in restoration work. Prevailing imperfect techniques should be complemented with the new technologies of today.

D. Documentation of restoration work

In order to document every aspect and evidence of the restoration projects, the report must provide detailed information about the decision to restore, the extent of the use of traditional techniques, the alteration of the existing state, the materials used and so on. The report is for the benefit of future planning.

Reinforcement for timber buildings

Many timber buildings have survived for a long time, which indicates that their structure can withstand a large-scale earthquake. However, various kinds of structural reinforcement of timber buildings have been developed in order to strengthen the weaker parts of the structures. Moreover, new technology is used when traditional reinforcement techniques are not able to resolve structural problems.

The strictness and precision characteristic of the Japanese approach to preserving timber buildings

should improve as the number of restoration projects increases. For example, larger parts that have been replaced could be reused in other buildings in addition to smaller ones. Previously, decayed or deteriorated parts were sometimes too large to be reused; but nowadays it is possible to reuse much more material thanks to improved technology.

Structural reinforcement against large-scale earthquakes recently became more important after the *Hanshin-Awaji* disaster in 1997. Reinforcement techniques have improved by taking into account the balance between aesthetic value, cultural value and function, to avoid a conflict between values and reinforcement. Reinforcement based on structural analysis tries to apply strength to the structures and materials. New technology using steel segments or carbon fibre has started to be used in buildings to solve the fundamental problems caused by structural imbalance or lack of strong materials.

Preservation of decoration in Buddhist temples

We can find several types of decoration techniques reflecting the taste of each age, both inside and outside historic Buddhist temples, e.g., mural paintings, coatings with lacquer painting, carvings, carved panels, engraved metal ornaments and so on. Buildings are always exposed to rain, wind and sunlight, which obviously cause fading or erosion on its delicate surface, even if this is over a very long time. Even if the owner is concerned about such deterioration and wishes to deal with it as soon as possible, they must consider the right time to carry out the repair within the repetitive cycle based on the restoration principles of Architectural Cultural Property.

Exterior carvings are likely to lose their detail through erosion, unlike interior ones. The decay is treated by inserting new pieces or by replacement with completely new carvings that use the same technique and keep as much of the original carving as possible. Although interior carvings have little deterioration

caused by rain and wind, they also are repaired if they have damage caused by pests or fungi.

Painting and lacquer coating should preserve the existing state as much as possible. However, preservation techniques differ between the interior and exterior of buildings. Interior paintings or coating, even if their colour is fading, should be preserved intact in order to preserve the original pigments and painting techniques. Treatment should be carried out to prevent the surface from peeling off. Exterior painting, however, should be repainted or recoated using the same pigments and techniques, which can be identified by analysis. Repainting or recoating protects the wood and its aesthetic value.

Disaster risk management

The greatest risk to timber buildings is obviously fire. Fires are caused not only by natural factors such as thunderstorms but also by human factors such as accidents in the house or old electric wiring, etc. There are few accidents caused by domestic work in Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines, but the candles used in daily events and any kind of ceremony do increase the risk of fire.

The Government of Japan has granted considerable subsidies for protection of designated historic buildings, including Buddhist temples, against fire and other risks. Fire protection must include the installation of automatic fire alarm systems and initial firefighting equipment. In addition, firefighting drills and other related activities are carried out on site with the stakeholders once a year on Cultural Property Fire Prevention Day.

Global warming might have affected typhoons reaching Japan, as these are now bigger and the heavy rains last longer than before. It may also be the cause of more frequent gale force winds and tornados. As risk factors are increasing, Disaster Risk Preparedness for Cultural Property should include big disasters such as floods, landslides and big fallen trees that could

damage surrounding areas. Nowadays, Disaster Risk Management strategy considers the various types of prevention measures not only to strengthen building stability but also environment sustainability.

Balance between cultural value and management

All Buddhist temples designated as Important Cultural Property are used daily by religious corporations for religious activities, events and ceremonies. The government of Japan has given a guarantee to protect the cultural value that is one of the aspects of Buddhist temples, by providing the owners with technical advice and subsidies to repair them and prevent disasters so that they can sustain these historic buildings in the best possible condition, as the Law requires.

The owner of a designated Important Cultural Property therefore assumes the task of managing not only the religious functions but also its cultural value. Indeed, the Government may instruct the owner to solve problems in a way that reduces their cultural value; however, it is rare to make such recommendations because owners understand that they benefit from both religious functions and cultural value. Thus, owners seek to manage both in a compatible and appropriate way.

Many people visit famous Buddhist temples as a form of entertainment even if they are not a designated Important Cultural Property. Some temples have been taking steps to prevent tourists from entering without permission, as they are living sacred spaces. Others allow tourists to get a taste of such an experience only during an important traditional event. Buddhist temples have their own policies on how to pray or where to pray. It depends on the judgment of the owner who manages their religious functions and the public is not involved in such decisions. Owners are appreciated whenever they enhance both the use of cultural property and its religious functions so that cultural property is made even more accessible to the public.

Promotion of conservation

People must gain a deep understanding of the benefits of protecting cultural property in order to save it appropriately. Cultural sectors must therefore make various efforts to make this notion more transparent to the public. Cultural property, which includes both intangible and tangible heritage, should be opened up to the public more than it has been. This could lead to a universal understanding among all people. There have been recent efforts in Japan to provide public access to Important Cultural Property. For instance, part of the huge scaffolding used in the restoration project at Himeji Castle, a World Heritage Site, was used as an exhibition space to explain the ongoing restoration process to the many visitors to the site.

Such facilities should be installed in many restoration worksites. In particular, large-scale restoration worksites could have a great impact as an effective tool to promote the conservation and restoration of cultural property. At the same time, we should consider access to the sites for disabled people using wheelchairs. For instance, almost all Buddhist temples have an elevated ground floor with steps up a steep slope at the entrance. It is extremely difficult to modify them to provide easy access because that is one of the characteristics of Buddhist temples. It forms part of the cultural value, unlike contemporary architecture.

A possible solution would be to create a gentle slope suitable for everybody, while preserving the character of the temples and respecting their location. This would promote Cultural Property and lead to a better understanding of it by the public.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the owners of Buddhist temples which are Important Cultural Properties must have complete responsibility for their conservation and management and be expected to understand fully the limit to which the existing state can be altered, according to the Law. This should also be the case for the owners of other kinds of Important Cultural Properties. The

government of Japan has given a guarantee to protect the cultural value that is one of the aspects of Buddhist temples, by providing the owners with technical advice and subsidies to repair them and prevent disasters so that they can sustain these historic buildings in the best possible condition, as the Law requires.

Meanwhile, to promote conservation, Important Cultural Property should be opened to the public more than it has been; a move which could lead to a universal understanding among all people.



Empowering monks for conservation: lessons from the UNESCO project

“Cultural Revival and Survival in the Buddhist Sangha”

Montira Unakul

The project on ‘Cultural Survival and Revival in the Buddhist Sangha: Documentation, Education and Training to Revitalize Traditional Decorative Arts and Building Crafts in the Temples of Asia’ was initiated by UNESCO Bangkok in 2000, with primary support from the Government of Norway and supplementary funding from the Government of New Zealand.

The project aimed to build local capacity in the conservation of Buddhist artistic heritage via revitalization of traditional artisan skills among local caretakers of heritage, in particular amongst the Buddhist *sangha* itself. The project was developed in response to requests from Buddhist communities for assistance in maintaining religious cultural heritage.

The project targets reviving traditional decorative arts and building crafts as well as developing preventative conservation skills.

Phase I (2000-3) was implemented in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR.

Phase II (2004-7) saw a regional expansion throughout the Theravada and Vajrayana (Tibetan tradition) Buddhist countries in Asia. A total of twenty sites took part, including seven World Heritage or Tentative List sites, namely:

- Cambodia: Phnom Penh and Siem Riep
- China: Sichuan and Xishuangbanna
- Lao PDR: Bokeo, Champasak, Luang Prabang and Savannakhet
- India: Arunachal Pradesh, Ladakh, Sikkim
- Mongolia: Orkhon Valley
- Nepal: Lalitpur and Mustang
- Sri Lanka: Kandy
- Thailand: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Nan and Nakhon Si Thammarat

By basing all activities in the local Buddhist *sangha*, the project ensured that the monks and temple communities who are the owners and caretakers of the Buddhist heritage were restored to their central role. This has had a particularly high impact in project sites where Buddhist cultural heritage has seen setbacks in recent history, such as in Mongolia or Mustang, Nepal. The project's strategic input during this nascent period of religious-cultural revival in these sites has ensured that this revival has been undertaken in a manner which is as authentic as possible. It has allowed for long-lost or fading traditions of knowledge transmission through the Buddhist monastic order to be resurrected and strengthened, and curtailed the adoption of inappropriate practices such as external construction methods.

Project results

By the end of the project, the following objectives had been met:

- Reinvigoration of traditional Buddhist arts and crafts, especially amongst traditional caretakers;
- Safeguarding Buddhist heritage sites, objects and traditions through the application of the revived crafts; and

- Empowering the bearers of Buddhist heritage, particularly the *sangha*, by consolidating knowledge, building capacity and improving economic opportunities.

Furthermore, many project activities have been mainstreamed into provincial and national policies of governments and Buddhist *sanghas*, thereby ensuring continuity of project results.

The project produced a valuable compendium of knowledge about vulnerable Buddhist arts and rituals, which has been recorded, studied and documented through video, photo, audio, text and graphics. These documents and references have captured the traditional knowledge about these cultural and artistic practices in a format which can now be disseminated to raise awareness or for educational use. Most importantly, these documents have not been produced solely by external experts, but with active participation of local scholars and monks.

'Style books' about Buddhist artistic motifs in each site have been printed to ensure that the unique artistic character of each temple community remain distinctive. 'Cookbooks' and instructional videos have been produced about the production process of building and decorative arts associated with temples. These 'cookbooks' will ensure that contemporary craftspeople will be able to sustain the materials and techniques used by traditional masters in conservation works as well as new building projects. In the case of project sites in India (Arunachal Pradesh and the three Sikkimese sites) and Nepal (Lalitpur and Upper Mustang), documentation and training manuals were produced to revive endangered Buddhist rituals. Preventative conservation manuals provide guidelines that combine scientific recommendations with local safeguarding techniques in order to ensure the protection of temple objects and artefacts. Most of these materials have been produced in the local languages to ensure maximum access for the target groups and populations. Together, these 'style books', 'cookbooks', manuals and videos serve as valuable

teaching materials that have been used during the project, and are now ready for ongoing use in each site. These training materials have been tested and deployed through rigorous training activities and programmes targeting Buddhist monks and local craftspeople.

The project trained over 1 700 artisans and craftspeople who are now equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to maintain Buddhist temples, artefacts and rituals in the long term. Many of these skilled monks or craftspeople are now in a position to teach others, both in their own localities and in other sites that share similar traditions. For instance, through the project, skilled monks from Nan, Thailand have assisted their counterparts in Xishuangbanna, China, to restore damaged temples. Likewise, the project team in Lalitpur (Nepal) undertook a mission to the remote project sites in Upper Mustang to assess endangered Buddhist rituals and crafts and to train local monks in video and photographic documentation.

With a view to institutional stability, the project has focused on developing long-term training platforms rather than ad hoc training activities. By investing in the development of training curricula, the training of teachers and the production of training manuals, the project has provided sites with valuable resources needed to undertake ongoing training in the future. The project has produced training programmes and materials covering the range of Buddhist arts and rituals, from Nepalese stone *chaitya* carving to Cambodian mural painting, from playing ritual instruments in Arunachal Pradesh to sand *mandala* construction in Sikkim in India. Many of the training curricula have been certified by the relevant authorities, including monastic bodies, government training institutions and ministries of education. Some of the training curricula have been adopted by lay and monastic educational institutions as a permanent part of their long-term academic programmes, for instance, the BA in Buddhist Arts at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University. In certain sites, such as in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR, training centres have been established that are now able to function independently, serving

the needs of the local population as well as playing a valuable role in training trainers and craftspeople from other sites as well. Some of the training centres also function as resource centres, providing assistance and services to temples in need of restoration or new construction.

All the documentation and training activities have placed a high priority on ensuring the continuity of Buddhist arts and rituals, in a spiritual, artistic and material sense. The project methodology has required all sites to learn from traditional masters, in order to transmit this knowledge through both traditional and innovative means to the new generation of practitioners. This has resulted not only in the safeguarding of Buddhist material artefacts in their authentic form, but also traditions and processes of scholarship, teaching and applied practice. This has also reified and validated the centrality and high worth of Buddhist traditions, which have been in danger of dying out in some of the sites. For instance in Kandy, Sri Lanka, the tradition of producing *ola* palm leaf manuscripts for Buddhist scriptures has been revived.

The documentation and the artisans that have been created through the project have been mobilized in order to safeguard Buddhist heritage sites, objects and traditions. The project has focused not only on ensuring that craft traditions have been revived, but also that they are applied on-site to restore historic buildings and to construct new buildings as well as conduct ceremonies.

The trainees who have been trained through the project have been deployed on-site to restore temples. For instance, in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR, the monk trainees, under the supervision of master craftsmen, have been engaged in the restoration of Vat Pa Xa, which calls for complete restoration of all decorative works, including carved wood panels, clay decorative figures on the roof ridges and roof tiles. They have also worked with Restaurateurs Sans Frontières in stabilizing the interior mural paintings. Other project sites have adopted this model of hands-on practical

work which has the dual benefit of refining the skills of the trainees while also giving dilapidated buildings a needed uplift. As the monk trainees are responsible for undertaking the work, this ensures that the work is carried out in the traditional monastic context.

Through a locally sensitive approach that balances modern techniques with traditional know-how, the project has resulted in the conservation of objects of both heritage as well as religious value. Preventative conservation activities have been prioritized in both Vajrayana and Theravada sites. In Ladakh, India, the project has resulted in the cataloguing and conservation of wood block manuscripts printed on traditional paper which form the core knowledge resource of the monasteries of the region. In Nakhon Si Thammarat, Thailand, the project has organized a preventative conservation training programme in conjunction with conservation experts and museum curators from the Fine Arts Department. This has increased awareness among monks and temple communities about the proper methods for inventorying, storing and maintaining Buddhist artefacts in temples.

Endangered ritual traditions have also been documented and revived through training activities. This can be clearly seen in teaching how to make traditional votive offerings such as butter sculptures and threadwork which have been revived in the Vajrayana project sites, most notably in Sikkim, India.

The cumulative effect of reviving both the tangible and intangible Buddhist heritage is evident in the overall impact on the community. Monastic bodies have been enriched through these various forms of revival, reinforcing their centrality as the repositories of cultural knowledge in the community. This positive perception is shared by the community as well, which is now able to benefit from the services of the monks in conducting restoration works, new building commissions and rituals. The social fabric of these Buddhist communities has therefore been strengthened, with enhanced ties between the monks and the community in matters relating to Buddhist practices.

Case studies

1. Luang Prabang, Lao PDR: Strengthening Buddhist arts and crafts in a temple based context

The Luang Prabang Training Centre for Laotian Traditional Temple Arts and Building Crafts was set up in the compound of Vat Xieng Mouane during Phase I of the project, through cooperation between the Buddhist *Sangha* of the province and the Department of Information and Culture. This approach mirrors the historic temple based training centres once common in Lao PDR before the advent of Socialism. The Centre and its training activities served as the model for other sites in Lao PDR (as well as for sites in other participating countries) and as a resource base and training centre for monks from monasteries around Lao PDR.

A number of traditional arts and craft skills have been taught through the Centre, using a combination of traditional master craftsmen and fine arts teachers to guide the trainees, who are exclusively monks and novices. Significant achievements have been seen among the trainees, most notably in drawing, painting, wood carving and bronze casting skills. For instance, senior trainees were able to produce high quality woodcarvings, and several of them have moved on from the apprentice level to the level of teacher, which allows them to work on these projects with more independence, but still under the supervision of a master craftsman.

In terms of financial sustainability, the Centre introduced innovative income generating mechanisms. Among them, the most successful so far has been through orders from communities wishing to restore or obtain new temple decorations (such as Buddha images, carved doors, windows, etc.). Work so commissioned is carried out by the Centre on a cost basis topped up by a margin which goes into the Centre's budget to sustain its training and other activities.

The changing context of Luang Prabang during the course of project implementation, with the rapid

growth in tourism which is impacting the artistic, economic and social context of the town and the conservation of its Buddhist heritage, has caused some concern as to the long-term viability of the Centre. For example, at one stage, it was difficult to convince the trainees to continue training when opportunities arose for other, more fashionable types of training such as use of the internet or the English language. However, as it turned out, the increased demands for expertise and skilled craftsmen, both for the conservation of the heritage and for production of decorative items for the tourism industry, has increased the enrolment in and relevance of the Centre and therefore its viability.

2. Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (Thailand): Training monks in Buddhist arts in a modern educational context

As an accredited university established in 1887, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (MCU) plays a central role in educating monks from Thailand and Asia. With 10 000 undergraduate students and 500 graduate students, MCU has a wide network, with a total of 30 campuses, branches and educational centres in Thailand and the region.

Through cooperation with UNESCO, a curriculum for conserving Buddhist Arts was developed, aimed at accrediting monks from Thailand through the formal educational system. It is expected to expand eventually to include monks from the region. The curriculum for a BA in Buddhist Arts was developed with input from conservation professionals, government agencies and international restorers (notably the Restaurateurs Sans Frontières group).

The new BA responds to the lack of knowledge about Buddhist arts and culture among monks and relevant laypersons. It is in keeping both with the urgent need facing monks in terms of temple administration and the restrictions of the *sangha vinaya* (monks' code of conduct).

The curriculum aims to provide:

- an awareness and understanding of Buddhist art forms in Thailand and southeast Asia;
- basic practical skills in various art forms; and
- knowledge and skills in preventative conservation.

The course includes applied Buddhism subjects, required subjects in Buddhist arts (such as basic drawing and art theory and composition) and elective subjects (which include the painting group, sculpture group, architecture group, and the art conservation group).

The curriculum was launched at MCU Chiang Mai campus in the academic year commencing in June 2008. Students include monks from Thailand and neighbouring countries such as Lao PDR, Myanmar and China.

Recommendations for further strengthening the protection of Buddhist cultural heritage

The following recommendations were put forward during the Final Evaluation Workshop held in Thailand in November 2007, where the site representatives shared their project outcomes.

1. Maintain the centrality of the monastic order in conservation efforts

Sangha and *sangha* institutions should have a central role in the conservation of Buddhist cultural heritage in the Asia region. The involvement of the *sangha* has been successfully demonstrated in a traditional context, for example reintroducing temple based training activities as in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR. At the same time, the project also demonstrates a role for modern *sangha* institutions such as educational institutions which are able to reach out to a large body of monks within the context of modern-day *sangha* regulations and governance structures.

2. Enhance cooperation between the *sangha* and other partners

Outside of the *sangha*, it is also necessary to coordinate efforts between *sangha* bodies and local government authorities, invited experts and universities. Such cooperation can provide a means to tackle enduring challenges for Buddhist cultural heritage conservation, most notably the lack of awareness, available raw materials and technical know-how.

For instance, this cooperation can extend to research in reviving the production of lost materials, such as the tin-mercury glass once common in temples in Lao PDR and Thailand, which has so far been impossible to replicate. Such research would require the collaboration of the responsible *sangha* and local knowledge bearers with research centres or advanced educational institutions, with the backing of authorities and community members.

3. Raise awareness about conservation of Buddhist cultural heritage

In addition, in order to draw in society at large and monks in greater numbers, more awareness raising activities need to be undertaken about the challenges and priorities in conserving Buddhist cultural heritage. Within the Buddhist *sangha* itself, awareness raising will help reach out to a greater number of monks who are often overloaded with various responsibilities and may not place enough attention on the issue of cultural heritage. Senior monks should advocate the agenda of conserving Buddhist arts more vigorously in ongoing Buddhist forums, such as *sangha* networks, governing bodies and educational institutions. This will contribute to raising awareness amongst monks themselves and enhancing the role of the Buddhist *sangha*.

In terms of reaching out to other stakeholders, it would be useful if a wider range of public outreach activities were conducted. At the local level, these activities can have a major impact in drawing in support from local government, foundations and other groups.

Note: This paper is adapted from the Final Report of the 'Cultural Survival and Revival in the Buddhist Sangha' Project, which was prepared by the author.

4. Strengthen knowledge transmission systems

The long-term sustainability of Buddhist cultural heritage is based on the sustainability of knowledge transmission systems. There should be a continued focus on the training of teachers and young people (as opposed to the mere production of Buddhist art objects and architecture), in order to strengthen the system of transmission. Learning networks should be established within the Buddhist *sanghas*, perhaps online. Students should be sent out to learn from other sites and the interaction between different sects should continue to be promoted.

5. Consolidate knowledge resources, especially of vulnerable traditions

Facing pressures from globalization and other factors, Buddhist cultural traditions can only be preserved and sustained over the long term in a manner consistent with its historic roots if knowledge resources are strengthened. This is especially the case for highly vulnerable traditions that face disruption. Detailed documentation should be undertaken of various practices, along with training manuals and other materials, which should then be used as the basis for onward transmission to younger generations.

Once produced, these knowledge resources should be housed in stable institutions. To maximize use and sharing of these resources, regional platforms, such as monks' universities and existing monastic networks and associations, should be encouraged to help disseminate and make these materials widely accessible.

Given the great distances involved and the increasing availability of communication technologies, building up online platforms such as web-based archives would be very valuable. These types of initiatives already exist in Buddhist networks (for instance, for Buddhist scriptures) and can therefore be extended to the realm of Buddhist arts and rituals. Institutions which have the capacity and the resources to do this should be encouraged to work together in partnership.



Challenges of managing a living Buddhist site: Mahabodhi Temple, Bodh Gaya, India

Abha Narain Lambah and Nangze Dorje

Bodh Gaya is one of the four holy sites associated with the life of Lord Buddha. This is the very place where Buddha attained enlightenment and thus highly revered by the people of Buddhist faith, both locally and internationally.

The World Heritage Property of Mahabodhi Temple Complex is situated in Bodh Gaya, a town in the Gaya district of Bihar, India. It is situated 115 km south of Patna, the capital of the state of Bihar and 16 km from the district headquarters at Gaya. The Property area is 4.86 hectares. It includes the 50 m high grand Temple, the Vajrasana, the sacred Bodhi Tree and six other sacred sites associated with Lord Buddha's enlightenment, including the Lotus Pond and numerous votive *stupas* that together constitute the World Heritage Property.

The outstanding universal value of the Mahabodhi Temple Complex lies in its direct association with one of the most important moments in the life of the Lord Buddha, the moment when Prince Siddhartha attained Enlightenment and became Buddha. The site provides exceptional records of the life of the Buddha and of subsequent worship from the time of Emperor Asoka who built the first temple in the third century BCE.

The Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Property mentions, "In



FIGURE 1. Bodhi Gaya World Heritage Site, India.

the context of philosophical and cultural history, Mahabodhi Temple Complex is of great relevance as it marks the most important event in the life of Buddha, an event that was to change the shape of human thought and belief. This property is now revered as the holiest place of Buddhist pilgrimage in the world. The Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of Mahabodhi Temple Complex stands and will continue to stand as the cradle of Buddhism in the history of mankind.”

The Mahabodhi Temple is one of the four holiest Buddhist pilgrimage sites in the world.

“There are four places, Ananda, which the believing man should visit with feelings of reverence.

The place, Ananda, at which the believing man can say, ‘Here the Tathagata was born’ (Lumbini)

‘Here the Tathagata attained to the supreme and perfect insight’ (Bodhi Gaya)

‘Here was the kingdom of righteousness set on foot by the Tathagata’ (Sarnath)

‘Here the Tathagata passed away finally in that utter passing away which leaves nothing whatsoever to remain behind” (Kusinagar).⁽⁶⁾

The site is inscribed on the WH List based on criteria (i), (ii), (iii), (iv) and (vi).

The values identified for the site are Associational Value, Spiritual and Religious Value, Historical, Artistic and Archaeological Value, Educational, Research and Sociocultural Value.

The Mahabodhi Temple Complex has a long tradition of worship and is the focus for Buddhist pilgrims from across the world. This hallowed ground has been considered sacred over centuries and has continued in living worship since the time of Buddha. As a site in

active living worship it has also had a history of repair, maintenance and conservation.

The Mahabodhi Temple has represented the Buddhist tradition of philosophical thought, human values and beliefs since the times of the Buddha more than 2 500 years ago and has been part of the sacred geography of Buddhists, with pilgrims such as Fa Hein and Hueng Tsang having recorded their pilgrimage to Bodh Gaya in ancient times. It also has been witness to conservation and repair works over the ages by emissaries of countries such as Burma and Sri Lanka.

Historical and religious texts reveal the historical layering of different periods. The main Temple, the Vajrasana, the seat of Buddha's enlightenment, was preserved by Emperor Asoka. The inscriptions on the Vajrasana Throne at the back of the Temple and on the inner side of the coping indicate that the next temple was built during the rule of the Indo-Scythian princes in northwestern India, to which period the colossal figure of Buddha also belongs. There are records of the erection of several temples and the dedication of statues at various periods from the time of Mahanama, in the fifth or sixth century, down to the flourishing period of the Pala kings in the ninth and tenth centuries. The present temple dates from the fifth to sixth centuries. It is one of the earliest Buddhist temples still standing built entirely in brick. It is from the late Gupta period and it has had a significant influence on the development of brick architecture over the centuries.

Fa Hein first makes a reference to the main temple and the Bodhi tree in 404-05 CE. Hueng Tsang, who visited the site in 637 CE recorded that, "the Bodhi Tree was protected on all sides by strong walls and in the centre of the Bodhi tree enclosure lay the famous Vajrasana. There was the grand Mahabodhi temple, 160 feet high, a large and fine sanctuary. Thus, on account of its association with the signal event in Buddha's life, i.e. his enlightenment or attainment of Supreme Wisdom, Bodh Gaya may be said to be the cradle of Buddhism. To the devout Buddhist there is no place of greater

interest or sanctity. The holy spot of enlightenment attracted pious pilgrims from far and near."

A sandstone railing (dated to the third century BCE and first century BCE) once encircled the spot under the Bodhi Tree. A few original pillars with sculpted human faces, animals and decorative details carved on them still stand at the site. Most of the railing has now been moved into the Archaeological Survey of India Museum. A replica and a few original pillars stand on site.

There are accounts of repairs made by Burmese missions in the eleventh century, ending with the twelfth century inscriptions of the Dharma Rakshita, who erected several buildings financed by Ashokaballa, the great king of Sapadalaksha. The latest Buddhist records are roughly carved on the granite pavement slabs of the Temple, and belong to the fourteenth century. The Burmese restoration of the eleventh century is recorded in two inscriptions. The first of these is engraved on a copper gilt umbrella, which was found by Beglar buried eight feet underground to the west of the Temple. The other Burmese inscription was found by the Burmese Mission under Colonel Burney, inscribed on a stone slab fixed in a wall of the Mahant's residence where Cunningham saw it in January 1862.¹

By the twelfth century, Islamic invasions led to the decline in such grants and, while Mahabodhi is not mentioned, the great monastery at Bihar, or Uddandapura, was completely sacked. The first signs of its returning to life are the records of pilgrims who visited the old Temple in Samvat in 1355 and 1359, or CE 1298 and 1302, and of others in Samvat in 1385 and 1388, or CE 1328 and 1331. By the fifteenth to sixteenth century a Hindu *mahant* established his *math* at Bodh Gaya.²

In 1810, the Burmese rulers of the Alompra dynasty carried out repairs to the main shrine. The Burmese King Mindon Min continued repairs in 1877. Francis Buchanan, a surgeon who surveyed Mysore and Gaya

was among the first to take measurements of the monuments. With the foundation of the Archaeological Survey in 1861, Cunningham visited Bodhgaya.

Alexander Cunningham described the temple as follows, "It is built entirely of dark red brick of a bluish tinge, and has been more than once plastered over. The exterior is still adorned with eight tiers or rows of niches, one above the other, many of which still hold figures of Buddha. The gilding has of course disappeared, but these plaster images were no doubt originally gilded, as it is the custom of the Burmese to gild their plaster statues even at the present day..."

In the Archaeological Survey of India Report of 1871, General Alexander Cunningham records, "I saw the Bodhi tree in December 1861, and again in December 1871. During these ten years, one of principal branches has disappeared, and the rotten stem of the tree must soon follow. The upper part of the platform has been repaired, as the tree is now worshipped by Brahmanical pilgrims....The great temple was once surrounded with a Buddhist railing about 9 feet in height, the whole of which is now buried beneath the accumulated ruins of centuries. This railing was discovered by excavations which were made by Government on my recommendation."³

Cunningham describes the condition of the temple as, "The greater part of the stucco facing had disappeared, and the brick walls, being laid only with clay mortar, had peeled off on all sides, more especially on the west face, where in many places the bricks had fallen away to a depth of nearly 5 feet. But a sufficient number of tolerably well-preserved portions of the mouldings and niches on the other faces still remained to enable the restorer to complete the repair of the whole in the exact pattern of the original."⁴

At the behest of the archaeologist-historian Dr. Rajendra Lal Mitra, the Lt. Governor of Bengal Sir Ashley Eden, appointed Mr. J. D. Melik Beglar to undertake repairs to the Temple. Beglar's second visit was made in the winter of 1879-1880, under the orders of General Sir Alexander Cunningham,

Director-General of the Archaeological Survey of India who directed him to prepare an estimate for the conservation of the ancient Temple. Beglar made extensive measurements and had scaffolding put up, with the permission of the Mahanth.⁵

This work of restoration of the temple was completed in four years between 1880 and 1884 CE at a cost of 200 000 rupees.

In the restoration of the main temple, Beglar used bricks excavated from the site and adjoining archaeological sites to match the Gupta period bricks at the Mahabodhi temple. He writes about the scarcity of bricks to undertake repairs. "When I first came to Buddha-Gaya, there were no bricks ready to execute the repairs with, but I knew plenty of bricks would come out of the excavations I would make. The very first thing to be done, of course, was to get the Mahanth's permission to carry on excavations. He readily gave it. I think Mr. Barton, the Magistrate of Gaya, wrote to him on the subject.... More than this, as the bricks I got from the excavations within the Burmese enclosure were not enough, I asked for and immediately received permission to dig into his land at Bakror across the river, and to utilise the bricks dug out from it in the repair of the Temple. I must have used over a thousand rupees worth of bricks dug out of Bakror, and I was further permitted to dig where I chose, provided I did no injury to his property, and I have from time to time used this privilege given me."⁶

Amongst the most critical aspects of the project, was the installation of the idol of Buddha. Beglar records the selection and installation of the present statue seen in the sanctum sanctorum. "The most delicate part of my work was naturally the repair of the sanctum of the Great Temple, where repair work could not be done without suspending the performance of the daily worship. I represented the matter to your predecessor, and he, after satisfying himself that it was absolutely necessary for the work of repair to remove the phallic emblem from the centre of the sanctum floor of the Great Temple, gave the necessary orders for its removal elsewhere. He also, on the same occasion, and for the

same reason, authorised me to remove, and when subsequently the removal was found impossible, to destroy the brick and mortar gilt figure that occupied the throne on the great pedestal in the sanctum of the Temple. He also formally suspended the daily worship within the sanctum, and made it over to me for the necessary repairs.

“When the repairs were well advanced, I looked out for a figure to take the place of the one destroyed. I represented the matter to the Mahanth, and he and I went round and examined all the figures in the *math* as well as in and about the old Temple grounds to make a suitable selection, I selected the figure which is now in the sanctum. The Mahanth would have preferred another; but on my representing to him that no other figure that could be obtained was large enough to suit the throne, he, with some reluctance, agreed to give me the figure that I wanted. The Lieutenant-Governor and Sir Alexander Cunningham also saw and approved the figure on their visits; and the Mahanth permitted me to remove it. It was a figure which, under the name of Bhairon, was then being worshipped. It had the red vermilion *tilak* on, and, in giving me the statue, the Mahanth insisted that the *tilak* should not be washed off, however much I might clean the rest of the statue. The statue needed very heavy cleaning, owing to the lime mortar in which it had been partly embedded tenaciously sticking to it, and in the process the *tilak* did somehow get washed off. The statue was installed on its throne in the sanctum by the Mahanth himself.”⁷

Beglar records the installation of the image of Buddha in the sanctum and the rituals of gilding as follows, “The statue was installed on its throne in the sanctum by the Mahanth himself. He used to come occasionally and see the progress of the work, and it was arranged that I was to make everything ready for the setting up of the statue and give him information the evening previous to the day it was to be set up. I made every arrangement, and slung the statue on the spot it was to occupy, and having everything in readiness, sent him the information. He came with his principal *Gosains* next morning, and while I superintended the working

of the machinery, his hand, in seeming, guided the movements of the statue till it was safe on its throne in the desired position. I then left the place, not wishing to intrude any further in any ceremony he may have wished to perform. Next morning the Mahanth sent me the usual *dali* of sweets, fruits and eatables, which, as I had discovered during my stay, he made it a custom to send me after each important ceremonial.

I knew by this that he had performed what he regarded as an important ceremony, from which delicacy, as well as some feelings of religious scruple, had induced me to absent myself. When I again saw the statue, it was on its pedestal. It had the vermilion *tilak* on. I believe it was put on by the Mahanth himself; I have still, I believe, a photograph wherein the *tilak* can be seen. The statue was in a few days partially gilt by pilgrims sticking bits of gold leaf on to it as offerings.”⁸

Alexander Cunningham records the criticism he received for the restoration of the Mahabodhi Temple. He justified the approach for the restoration stating, “But the front Pavilion of the Temple was almost a complete ruin; and at first it did not seem likely that any authority could be found for even its partial renewal. My advice was that the ruined walls should be well plastered with cement simply to prevent further decay. This was actually begun, as I see by one of Mr. Beglar’s photographs. But a short time afterwards a small model in stone of the Temple was found amongst the ruins, from which the whole design of the building as it existed in medieval times could be traced with tolerable completeness (See Plate XVI.) From this model, and from the still existing remains of the facade, Mr. Beglar designed the front Pavilion as it now stands. On the same authority he designed the four corner Pavilions which are seen in all the photographs of the restored Temple. This additional work has been much criticised, and I have been roundly abused for it in company with Mr. Beglar, although I had nothing whatever to say to it. At the same time I must confess that, since I have seen it, I think his design of the front Pavilion is a very successful completion of the entrance in the style and spirit of the original work as shown in the model. It is of course a Restoration, which, as it

was based on the double authority of existing remains and an ancient model, I consider as legitimate and justifiable.”⁹

Interestingly, nearly a century before the Burra Charter, Cunningham justifies his restoration on the basis of being in the, “spirit of the original work”. Even well into the twentieth century, this view was upheld by John Marshall who succeeded Cunningham and Burgess as Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India. His Conservation Manual that is today a seminal document for the Archaeological Survey of India recommends the following approach for Living Monuments. “In the case of ‘living’ monuments (by which is meant those monuments which are still in use for the purpose for which they were originally designed) it is sometimes necessary to restore them to a greater extent than would be desirable on purely archaeological grounds.”¹⁰

In the early twentieth century, Marshall earned credit for large-scale conservation of the Buddhist temple at Bodhgaya.

Today, the Mahabodhi Temple is a unique case of a living Buddhist Temple inscribed as a World Heritage Property in India. It is not under the Archaeological Survey of India which is the custodian for most of the cultural properties of India inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, but is administered by the Bodh Gaya Temple Management Committee, which has four Buddhist and four Hindu members in line with the Bodh Gaya Temple Management Act. The World Heritage Property of Mahabodhi Temple Complex, Bodhgaya, enjoys protection under The Bodh Gaya Temple Act, 1949. This protection is afforded only to the Inscribed Property. For the rest of the surroundings, there is currently no statutory protection as regards its status as part of a buffer zone for a World Heritage Site.

There is no separate provision for statutory protection afforded to World Heritage Sites (WHS) in India, nor does a site Management Plan have any legal or statutory jurisdiction under the present policy framework, unless

it is duly notified and adopted within the local planning process. Therefore, it is essential that the buffer be notified through due process by the state government. The Management Plan, however, can be used as an advisory document that proposes the framework and guidelines for formulating future development in and around the core and buffer areas of the WHS. It can also help establish the fundamentals for any future notification or legislation by the State Government to create a statutory protection for the site and its buffer.

The Mahabodhi Temple was inscribed as a World Heritage Site under Cultural Criteria (i), (ii), (iii), (iv) and (vi) at the 26th Session of the World Heritage Committee in 2002. Over the years, various advisory body evaluations and World Heritage Committee sessions have noted the need for implementing a Management Plan for effective management of the World Heritage Site. The Management Plan for the World Heritage Site of Mahabodhi Temple Complex, Bodhgaya, was commissioned by the Bodhgaya Temple Management Committee (BTMC) in consultation with the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), based on the recommendations of the UNESCO mission of 2011. Since June 2013, my team has been working on this project. The project team of the Management Plan aims at a multidisciplinary approach to the management of the site.

The Management Plan team has conducted on-site surveys of the site and buffer zone, generated detailed documentation and an inventory of the cultural resource, and carried out field studies that include primary surveys of visitors, monasteries, buildings and the community. Secondary data has been collated from previous reports and plans, and from government and non-governmental surveys and information held by the Nagar Panchayat, ASI and BTMC. For the duration of the Management Plan preparation, a full-time architect has been stationed at Bodh Gaya, in addition to the survey teams.

The Operational Guidelines for World Heritage Sites lay emphasis on the importance of a Management Plan for efficient administration of the site. The WHS



FIGURE 2. Bodhi Gaya during pilgrimage, India.

of Mahabodhi Temple has many interest groups and agencies involved in various aspects of the site. A successful Management Plan should fully balance the various stages, i.e., planning, implementation, assessment, monitoring and feedback. Therefore the Mahabodhi Temple WHS Management Plan aims to clearly define the roles of the various stakeholders in order to facilitate its successful implementation.

The Mahabodhi Temple site is under pressure not only due to large visitor and pilgrim numbers, combined with the fragility of the temple fabric and the Mahabodhi tree, but also due to many other issues regarding the protection of this cultural resource. Even though the temple is located within a protected complex, it is under constant threat of inconsistent development along the access routes, or in the larger landscape. Hence, now more than ever, the need arises for a well-formulated management plan which

helps protect the values of the cultural resource, and enhance and transmit them, and which helps preserve the character and quality of the WHS and the genuine interests of the stakeholders involved.

The Mahabodhi Temple Shikhara continues to dominate the skyline of the town of Bodhgaya. Glimpses of the shrine can be seen from connecting roads to the temple. However the visual impact on the town's skyline of uncontrolled development in the wider setting can severely impact the values of the historic setting. Height and urban massing need to be controlled in the rest of the town to prevent unsuitable development arising in the buffer area.

Among the largest community of stakeholders, however, are the Buddhists of the world. This is because Bodhi Gaya is the spiritual centre of Buddhism and of international pilgrimage for Buddhists from

across the world. The Mahabodhi temple at Bodhgaya is thus comparable to the sacred sites of Jerusalem and Mecca; the larger community of Buddhists across the world is a stakeholder in the issues concerning Bodh Gaya.

At the same time, the socioeconomic needs of the local community cannot be ignored. The Management Plan needs to respect the obligation to conserve the OUV of the World Heritage Site while at the same time finding a balance between development of tourist related infrastructure, interventions for pilgrims and local residents, and maintaining the values of the WHS.

Consultation with the local community and stakeholders is critical to reverse the misconception that World Heritage is restrictive. The Management Plan process has therefore to be inclusive to introduce a proactive vision of World Heritage.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

While there may be some misgivings about how the Buffer Zone notification or the Management Plan may impact the lives of the local community, there needs to be a perceived value addition to the socioeconomic status of the community through cultural tourism. The infrastructure improvement in and around the site is also something that should be considered beneficial in the long term to improve the quality of life of the local community.

Risk to the cultural site has never been so strongly highlighted as in the recent multiple bomb blasts at Bodh Gaya that aimed to strike the very core of the historic property. Fortunately, the damage to the historic fabric was limited. There was a larger cultural impact that caused a sense of alarm among worshippers and the larger community. However, prompt action by the Bodh Gaya Temple Management Committee, the local administration and Central Government agencies such as the National Investigation Agency and Home Department, has substantially mitigated this cultural impact.

The disaster highlighted another issue requiring immediate attention: efficient mechanisms that protect the monument, its visitors and the local population from future acts of terrorism. It further emphasized the urgency to reinforce and improve existing risk management plans to protect Mahabodhi Temple and Bodh Gaya from future and unpredictable disasters caused by nature and by the hand of man.⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

Extensive involvement of stakeholders and a public consultation process have been carried out with the local community, monasteries, religious groups, government and non-governmental agencies, elected representatives and officials of various departments of the state government and the central ASI. Since the start of the Management Plan process, six Consultation Meetings have taken place with different stakeholders to gain their inputs. Consultative meetings have been held to ensure that there is an open dialogue with stakeholders and the community that informs and guides the management process.

In addition, considering that those pilgrims and visitors who are not part of the local community are also major stakeholders in a site that is World Heritage (and thus part of the shared heritage) and is among the most sacred of all Buddhist sites, the Management Plan team has conducted surveys of pilgrims and visitors to get their inputs on aspects of site management.

The Management Plan is envisaged as a first step in creating a robust framework for the long-term and continuous process of management of the UNESCO World Heritage Property. The team acknowledges that the management plan will not be a document frozen in time but is to be updated every few years to respond to changing requirements and challenges at the site.

Endnotes

1. Cunningham Alexander, *Mahabodhi or The Great Buddhist Temple Under The Bodhi Tree At Buddha-Gaya* London: W. H. Allen & Co., Limited, 1892.
2. Management Plan for Mahabodhi Temple, prepared by Abha Narain Lambah Associates for Bodh Gaya Temple Management Committee.
3. Archaeological Survey of India, Alexander Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey of India Report for the Year 1871-72*, Vol. III. First Edition 1873, Reprint 2000, New Delhi
4. Cunningham Alexander, *Mahabodhi or The Great Buddhist Temple Under The Bodhi Tree At Buddha-Gaya* London: W. H. Allen & Co., Limited, 1892.Pg 3
5. Beglar's testimony recorded in a letter to the Mahant, *Bodh Gaya Temple Case*, before D.J. Macpherson, Magistrate of Gaya, H. Dharmapala vs Jaipal Gir and others, W. Newman & Co, Calcutta, 1895.
6. Ibid
7. Beglar's letter to the Mahant of Gaya dated 14th May 1895, as testimony recorded in the *Bodh Gaya Temple Case*, before D.J. Macpherson, Magistrate of Gaya, H. DharmapalavsJaipalGir and others, W. Newman & Co, Calcutta, 1895
8. Ibid
9. Cunningham Alexander, *Mahabodhi or The Great Buddhist Temple Under The Bodhi Tree At Buddha-Gaya* London: W. H. Allen & Co., Limited, 1892. Preamble.
10. John Marshall, *Conservation Manual: A Handbook for the Use of Archaeological Officers & Others Entrusted with the Care of Ancient Monuments*, First Published in 1923.
 - (i) *Maha-parinibbana- sutanta*, translated in T.W. Rhys Davis, *Buddhist Suttas*, Sacred Books of the East, XI (Oxford, 1881).
 - (ii) Recommendations of Joint UNESCO World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring Mission 2011.
 - (iii) Management Plan for Mahabodhi Temple, prepared by Abha Narain Lambah Associates for Bodh Gaya Temple Management Committee.



Cultural heritage of Buddhism in contemporary Vietnamese society

Dang Van Bai

Over of the course of its history, Buddhism has represented a culture enriched by humanity, benevolence, mercy and goodness. The moral values of Buddhism are to help people relieve their sufferings, to promote affection among people and between people and nature. Throughout its twenty-five centuries of existence, scholars have studied Buddhism which manifests its essentials not only in profound philosophies and tenets but also in everlasting universal humanistic values, clearly demonstrated in its cultural heritage.

In Viet Nam, there are two questions that need thorough and convincing answers, namely:

1. After more than one thousand years under the domination of foreign aggressors, why has Viet Nam not been culturally assimilated but, on the contrary, been able to adopt foreign elements
2. How could an insignificant country with a small population and undeveloped economy defeat the most powerful aggressors in the world, defending

while maintaining its national cultural identity which flourished during the independent Ly-Tran dynasties, from the tenth to the fourteenth centuries? and

its national independence and integrity over a thousand years?

This paper will attempt to explore and interpret what contributions Buddhism might have made to help Viet Nam achieve such extraordinary results; making the impossible possible.

Buddhism as a cultural element to constructing national cultural identity

Professor Tran Quoc Vuong, a late Vietnamese historian, once stated, “at the heart of a major religion, there always rest central philosophy tenets and humanism – the most significant cultural achievement of humanity. Buddhist ‘compassion’, Christian ‘charity’, Confucian ‘righteousness’ are cultural jewels. In my opinion, in the perspective of evolutionary history, religions are both a product and an organic constituent of culture” (Tran Quoc Vuong, 1989).

Along these lines, several characteristics of Vietnamese Buddhism can be sketched as follows:

Firstly, Buddhism is a religion, an ideology and a culture that has intensively exerted influence on Vietnamese social life over some thousand years. According to statistics from the Government Committee for Religious Affairs, in 2006 there were nearly ten million Buddhist followers. According to numbers produced by the Buddhist Sangha of Viet Nam, there are nearly forty-five million Buddhist followers, 839 Buddhist communities, 44 498 monks and nuns, and more than 14 775 pagodas and monasteries (White Book, 1986).

Introduced in the second century CE, Buddhism in Viet Nam in some ways has existed as a psychological and religious culture rather than a dogma of strict disciplines and establishments. The majority of Viet Nam’s population seem to remember by heart nothing more than the prayers *Nam mô A Di Đà Phật*, meaning ‘Homage to the Amitabha Buddha’ (in Sanskrit *Namo Amitabhàya buddhàya*), or *Nam mô Quan Thế Âm Bồ Tát*, meaning ‘Homage to the Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva’.

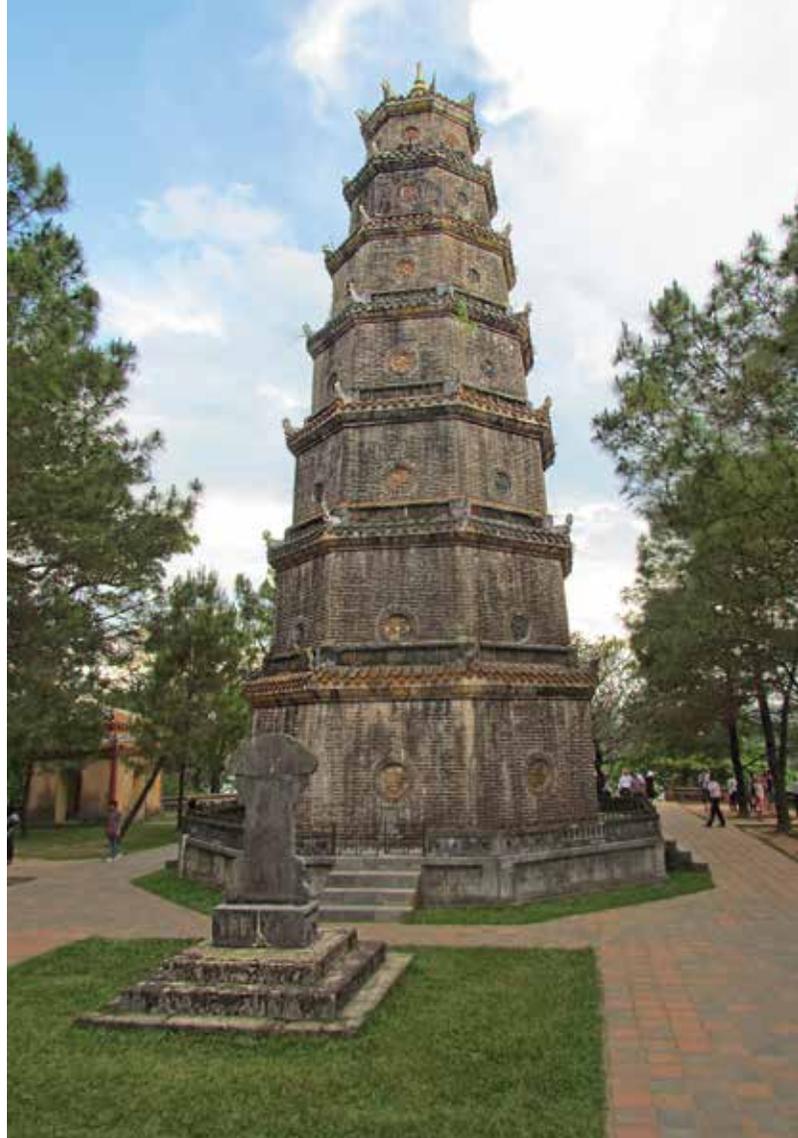


FIGURE 1. Buddhist pagoda at the World Heritage Site of Hue, Viet Nam.

However, they all seem to feel satisfied, praying to the Buddha with a sound belief that all their sufferings and miseries will be alleviated. This has been also confirmed by Professor Tran Van Giau, “Buddhism is popular among the majority of the people. They hardly understand Buddhism’s superb philosophy but necessarily the prayers for fortune, the simple concepts of cause-and-effect and reincarnation. Buddhist philosophies have long become morals of benevolence, charity and relief that serve as the core values, making them more understandable and practicable than being profound and complex as in original Buddhism. To do good and to cultivate virtue for the sake of peace and blessedness in the next life are the people’s way of life” (Tran Van Giau, 1980: 145).

Secondly, entering Viet Nam, Buddhism has been localised and blended with other folk beliefs and religions. Together with the indigenous culture, Buddhism has created a culture with diverse religious practices. The interference of an exogenous religion and native beliefs represents a greater process of exchange and acculturation in which internationality and nationality intertwine.

Thirdly, Buddhism has the tendency to 'live in harmony' with other religions. In Viet Nam, the syncretism of Confucianism – Buddhism – Taoism has been observed as a distinctive feature of culture as a whole and Buddhism in particular. When Christianity and Islam were introduced, they also coexisted in harmony with existing Vietnamese religions, contributing to the common cause and the country's development.

Fourthly, Viet Nam has selectively adopted relevant elements from Buddhist ideals pertaining to the country's particular social and historical contexts for elaboration of its national cultural essences. Studying Mau Tu, Professor Le Manh That commented, "Buddhist philosophy has been considered as a 'way'. At home, one may use it to pay filial piety to parents; one may also use it to administer the country; or to improve oneself as a person alone" (Le Manh That, 1982: 511).

The morals of Buddhism have contributed to evoking and encouraging compassion and respect for human beings, making us more mindful of others' happiness within a family, a social community and in all humanity. Benevolence and intelligence in Buddhism have nurtured peace and happiness among its followers, thus exerting its power of connecting people and strengthening social cohesion.

Faith has been one of the most precious spiritual values that Buddhism has brought about amongst Vietnamese people. According to Professor Minh Chi, "Buddhism is the religion of trust, not that in God but in people, in their reasoning of rights and wrongs, in those hearts that know how to love their fellow human beings, and in their will towards supreme goodness" (Minh

Chi, 2005: 95). Such a belief has strengthened the determination for independence and self-reliance, the willingness to sacrifice for the nation's independence and integrity, without submission to power.

Fifthly, with the mottos 'to link religion to life ways' and 'to accompany the nation', Buddhism in Viet Nam has significantly contributed to the building and protection of the country. Whenever the country was invaded, many monks left their monasteries to join the army and fight against the enemy. In a number of historical periods, Buddhism also exerted its influence as a 'source of energy' which promotes development, even transforming ideals among academics in the field of literature and arts. This was particularly so during the Ly-Tran dynasties in the tenth to fourteenth centuries.

From the above discussion about its distinctive cultural characteristics, it can be said that Buddhism has been deeply rooted in the national culture for over a thousand years after its introduction into Viet Nam. Buddhism has played a significant role in connecting people, consolidating the nation, forming an efficient 'filter' against acculturation while safeguarding Vietnamese cultural identity and diversity. This provides important grounds for answers to the questions posed at the beginning of this paper.

The cultural heritage of Buddhism in Viet Nam

It can be stated that Buddhism has laid profound legacies in the 'material and spiritual cultures' of the Vietnamese people. We can clearly see there is a fusion of the Vietnamese spirit and basic teachings of the Buddha. This harmony has become so deep that Buddhism is practiced not only as a religion but also as a way of life and morals, 'an energy that nurtures people's soul'. In the heart and mind of Vietnamese, the Buddha is seen as a human being but not a god or deity. At the same time, the Buddha is respected as head of the religion, a great spiritual and moral mentor. Buddhism has affirmed the capacity of a person who may reach the truth and enlightenment by

his own will, and thus significantly contributed to the country's rich cultural heritage.

Tangible cultural heritage

Many Buddhist temples deserve recognition as exemplary works of art and architecture with outstanding values and being honoured as 'living museums of arts and sculpture'. Many Vietnamese say, "Under the roof of every Buddhist temple hides the national spirit." In some ways, this reflects the importance and proximity of Buddhism to the Vietnamese people. In each Buddhist temple there is a Buddha Hall with a statue system of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, arranged in a certain order that reflects the history, ideology and teachings of Buddhism. Therefore, standing before a Buddha Hall, a Buddhist follower might show his or her veneration to the Buddhas and receive knowledge of Buddhism at the same time. The cultural space of a Buddhist temple is fairly conventional, systematic and comprehensive, closely connecting elements of architecture, sculpture, fine arts and natural landscape (*tam quan* entrance gate, incense burner, main hall, ancestral house, bell tower, Mother Goddess altar, and so on). For example, the Tay Phuong Pagoda in Thach Xa Commune, Thach That District, Hanoi, is a building complex which includes three parallel chambers: front hall, main hall and back hall. The Buddha Hall, which rests in the main hall, is composed of seventy-two statues that could form a museum of Buddhist artistic sculpture in Viet Nam.

According to 2012 statistics from the Department of Cultural Heritage (MoCST), there are 788 Buddhist temples designated as national heritage sites, out of a total of 3 374 monuments and relics nationwide.

Intangible cultural heritage

We can say that Buddhist morals are a valuable intangible cultural heritage. Loving-kindness (*từ*), compassion (*bì*), sympathetic joy (*hỷ*) and equanimity (*xả*) in Buddhism are the 'remedies' for the mind and spiritual life of those who are suffering from the pressures of the modern age, such as industrialization, modernization and international integration, as

well as the severe competition for profits in the market economy. Professor Hoang Nhu Mai remarked, "Providing all the Buddhist commandments are well understood and practised by humankind, crimes in society would be tremendously reduced and people's life inclined to the good and harmony" (Hoang Nhu Mai, 2001: 79).

Its advocacy for tolerance, peace, goodness, and against evil will contribute to the enlightenment of people's consciences, allowing them to live in peace and harmony and to be able to prevent evils and the risks of war, terrorism and racial and religious conflicts. In a nation, the wish to live in a peaceful country may only be realized when life is built on the moral foundations of 'selflessness and tolerance', in which each individual becomes an active and responsible member of society.

We can see the following as prevailing characteristics in the culture of Vietnamese Buddhism:

- The absence of an almighty entity;
- The absence of dogma and blind belief;
- The encouragement of actions rather than precepts.

Buddhism teaches and encourages a joyful living along the lines of loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity in a flexible way:

- The five Buddhist commandments are against killing, theft, lust, lying and drunkenness;
- To keep the Buddha's precepts is to practise ethics, enabling one to find it possible to obtain freedom and tranquility in achieving *Dyane (thiền) - Samadhi (định) - Prajna (tuệ)* in the quest for psychological balance and peace;
- To silently practise charity and make offerings in the light of 'selflessness and tolerance'.

The implications, objectives and methods in Buddhist teachings ultimately aim to help people reach an important result, so as to live a more "moral, capable and happy" life (Thich Chon Quang, 2001: 216). Buddhist culture thus has shown a power to influence

and guide the actions of its followers, contributing to a healthy social environment and sustainable development.

Buddhist rituals and festivals are important elements of intangible cultural heritage, particularly the Buddha's Birthday Festival, Vu Lan Festival, and spring festivals. These are celebrated at Buddhist temples in the following manner:

- in order that the festival takes place, Vietnamese Buddhists have created and maintained their distinctive cultural space, the pagoda, which plants significant spiritual values among them;
- to sustain the central elements (the Buddha and Bodhisattvas) as well as to reinforce sincere respect to the Buddha, cultural expressions such as rituals, practices and festive events have been created as intangible cultural values;
- conversely, sacred Buddhist rituals, ceremonies and festivals attract followers to visit the temples and to participate in these events, creating opportunities for further learning, practice and enrichment of their own religious life. In Viet Nam, the two most attractive Buddhist festivals are the Perfume Pagoda Festival in Hanoi and the Yen Tu Pagoda Festival in Quang Ninh province (the centre of the Truc Lam Zen Sect). These influential festivals take place for months each year and attract millions of pilgrims and followers from all over the country.

Eminent Zen masters with humanistic ideals and moral examples are invaluable Buddhist cultural heritage of Viet Nam

Firstly, it is necessary to affirm that the Buddha's teachings reflected in the sutras are invaluable intangible cultural heritage that teach people how to alleviate the sources of suffering and to live joyfully and peacefully.

The Vietnamese system of Buddhist training and education has cultivated a great number of devout and venerable patriarchs and monks with profound understanding and vision of many critical issues in

contemporary life. Therefore, their words and writings are influential and provide guidance to followers. The most outstanding is the Buddhist king Tran Nhan Tong, who founded the Vietnamese Truc Lam Zen Sect. The living spirit of 'entering religion without leaving the world' is clearly reflected in his famous poem *Cư trần lạc đạo* (meaning literally 'living in this world while enjoying the paths to enlightenment'). This is believed to have created the Dai Viet strength to defeat aggressors and regain national independence in the thirteenth century. This spirit has inspired the slogans for action among Buddhists in Viet Nam, which are 'Buddhist dharma and the nation' and 'to live a good life and to practice a good religion'. This shows that Buddhism in Viet Nam has been a religion closely connected to nationalism and patriotism.

Zen masters and monks have always played an important role in social life. During the independent feudal periods, "monks were intellectuals who had a strong sense of nationalism and lived close to the working class. They represented the national spirit" (Nguyen Lang, 2000: 185). Zen masters Phap Thuan (914-990); Khuong Viet (933-1011) and Van Hanh (938-1025) were eminent in Vietnamese history: Van Hanh is known for having contributed to the establishment of the Ly Dynasty, one of the greatest reigns in Vietnamese history.

An anecdote has it that when consulted by King Le Dai Hanh (941-1005) on how to protect the country, Phap Thuan advised that if all people of the nation are as bonded and united as woven rattan, the country will sustain peace. This has also been the true value and philosophy of the Vietnamese people. In an insignificant country with a small population, when all the people know how to unite as one, it can create unparalleled power. No matter how powerful the aggressors might be, it would not fail to defend itself. Such a unity must first of all be built upon the pyramid of faith, compassion and intellect which is shaped by Buddhism.

From the above analysis, the intangible cultural heritage of Buddhism encompasses the values of morality,

culture, peace and friendship with the Buddha. Its fundamentals include faith, compassion and intellect. These have been among the most significant intangible cultural values that have been brought to Viet Nam in particular and to the world as a whole.

Lastly, to conclude my thoughts on the role of Buddhism and its cultural heritage in contemporary Vietnamese society, I would like to cite a statement by former President of State Nguyen Minh Triet at the opening ceremony of the 2008 United Nations Day of VESAK in Hanoi, “Viet Nam hosts many religions of which Buddhism, based on the ideals of loving-kindness compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity, has been welcomed and has developed along with the nation and is geared towards people’s happiness since its inception nearly 2 000 years ago. Every regime throughout Vietnamese history has acknowledged the contributions of venerable monks who exerted themselves for the sake of a happy people and a peaceful nation.” Mr. Nguyen Minh Triet also stressed, “The fact of 2008 VESAK being organized in Viet Nam has clearly affirmed the country’s respect and advocacy to the United Nations’ appropriate resolution on the world’s cultural religious day. This also reflects the nation’s constant concern and respect for the noble moral values of the world’s religions, including Buddhism.”

Preservation and promotion of Buddhist cultural heritage in Viet Nam

Highly appreciating the role of Buddhism as a whole, and Buddhist cultural heritage in particular, in contemporary social life, the government of Viet Nam has established a system of policies and laws aiming at preserving and promoting the values of Buddhist cultural heritage.

First, it has established a system of governmental management agencies from central to local levels with the mission to preserve and promote national cultural heritage.

Second, the Viet Nam Buddhist Sangha was established with mandates to educate the public and to mobilize social resources for the preservation of Buddhist cultural heritage.

Third, besides its primary mandate to organize religious activities, the Viet Nam Buddhist Sangha also makes significant contribution to the guidance and promotion of resources bestowed by Buddhist practitioners and venerables for the preservation of Buddhist cultural heritage.

Fourth, it has established the National Target Program for the restoration and preservation of monuments and sites.

Fifth, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism has promulgated heritage education programmes for local communities, particularly targeting secondary students and young generations.

Sixth, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism has collaborated with the Ministry of Education and Training in launching and implementing the programme ‘Building a life-long learning society’ which, among other things, targets the establishment of cultural and educational institutions, such as monuments, museums and libraries as life-long learning centres.

Seventh, the government has decided that November 23 should be the National Day for Cultural Heritage, which all institutions and societies are encouraged to celebrate.

In summary, the above activities have positively contributed to the mobilization of social resources for the preservation of national cultural heritage, including Vietnamese Buddhist cultural heritage.

References

Hoang Nhu Mai. 2001. Education of Buddhism in present period. In *Education of Buddhism in modern age*. Ho Chi Minh City Publishers.

Le Manh That. 1982. *Studying Mau Tu*, Vol. 1. Sai Gon, Van Hanh Publishers (Tu thư Vạn Hạnh).

Minh Chi. 2005. Education of Buddhism facing current issues. In *Education of Buddhism in modern age*. Ho Chi Minh City Publishers.

Nguyen Lang. 2000. *A short history of Vietnamese Buddhism*. Hanoi, Literature Publishing House.

Thich Chon Quang. 2001. Integral relationships in education of Buddhism. In *Education of Buddhism in modern age*. Ho Chi Minh City Publishers.

Tran Quoc Vuong. 1989. *Christianity and Nation Monthly Journal* 1.

Tran Van Giau. 1980. *The Spiritual Values of Vietnamese Peoples*. Hanoi, Social Science Publishing House.

White Book, 1986. *Religions and Policies on Religions in Viet Nam*, (available at <http://www.giacngo.vn>).



Buddhist heritage conservation and management in Myanmar

(with special reference to the Buddhist Centre of Bagan)

Nyein Lwin

Today global society acts as a catalyst promoting creative design which, thanks to the strength and speed of interaction made possible by power and technology, confers on the modern world a variety of forms of construction. We also tend to prefer modern architecture and have become used to living in advanced residential facilities. Because of people's changed expectations, it may be thought that the erection of modern buildings worldwide may be at the expense of ancient buildings. Generally, ancient buildings which still exist today are historic cities, buildings, cultural landscapes and particular areas of artifact-occurrence, in which religious buildings were essential components of any civilizations of our past. To avoid the destruction of our ancient religious buildings or heritage, we need to look for a correct approach with the emphasis on (i) the historical and functional value of heritage, (ii) the active involvement of the present community and (iii) organizing and implementing the roles of institutions and stakeholders.

The Buddhist centre of Bagan

Bagan is located at N. Lat. 21.10° and E. Long. 94.55°, and is situated near the modern township of Nyaung U of the Mandalay division in Myanmar. It is one of the most significant archaeological sites of the country. Geographically it lies on the east bank of the Ayeyarwaddy River and within the tropical zone of central Myanmar.

The historical origins of Bagan go back to 849 CE under King Pyinbya, but its development was initiated during the time of King Anawratha (1044 - 1077) and onwards. The thirteenth century was the height of its glory and identity which then declined in the mid-fourteenth century. Myanmar had grown out

of the ancient Pyu city states founded in the second century BCE and whose socioeconomic culture had lasted for a thousand years up to the ninth century CE. The Bagan Period followed the Pyu civilization which experienced sociocultural transformations with the influence of Buddhism. The Bagan Empire developed gradually from a compact society to become the centre of the country's power in the tenth century CE. According to linguistic and ethnographic studies, both Pyu and Myanmar cultures belong to the same family of the Tibeto-Burman Group. The two cultural traditions coexisted peacefully side by side. Traditional chronicles and many local histories describe the transmission of Buddhism from Sri Ksetra, the largest and the latest Pyu capital that led to the foundation of Bagan's glory. There is no doubt that the early Bagan



FIGURE 1. Bagan, Myanmar

Buddhist *stupas* are ethnographically and typologically connected with the Pyu *stupas* of Sri Ksetra. During the tenth to fourteenth centuries over four thousand religious buildings were erected in Bagan by kings for ordinary people in all classes of society. During that time Bagan became an incomparable Buddhist centre in the world with its strong belief and construction of religious buildings.

This was due not only to religious concepts but also to the fulfillment of respective traditions of creation, art and architecture from all directions. When Bagan became the centre for Buddhist education and a home for pilgrims and generations of scholars, the structural and artistic creations of other previous and contemporary traditions had already been adapted. Accordingly, the spiritual and monumental establishment of Bagan reached its glory during its zenith in the period of the tenth to fourteenth centuries.

Living Buddhist heritage

The Buddhist religious buildings of Bagan, of different sizes and types, cover an area of 78 square kilometers. Within the archaeological zone there are more than 3 000 monuments in the forms of *stupa* or Pagodas, Temples (*Kū*), brick monasteries, *Umin* (underground cave), *Kala Kyaungs* (single structure), *Pitak Taik* (house to keep religious scriptures), *Sima* (ordination hall) and ruins of brick mounds.

The two developing urban areas of Nyaung Oo and Bagan Myothit and thirteen villages are included in this cultural heritage region. The inhabitants and communities of the urban areas and villages in Bagan have their own temple and *stupa* nearby for worshipping, donation ceremonies, festivals and ritual gatherings. Beyond that there are many important temples and pagodas that are used for celebrations and worship by the whole region of Bagan and sometimes by many Buddhists coming from all over the country. Most of the Bagan temples and pagodas are not as they were in the past, as they are not used for regular worship; they stand as ancient monuments. However, all of them, whether well-known or common temples

and buildings, reflect the religious spirit of glorious Buddhist merit.

Since its decline (1368 CE), Bagan has stood as a stronghold of Buddhism. The kings and even the common donors of later periods of Myanmar added their own religious merit to the old Buddhist capital of Bagan. Today we can see in Bagan not only monuments from the Bagan period but also those that have been repaired in later periods as well as newly built constructions. Submission to Buddhism has continued in society during successive historic periods. Most people of Myanmar are still in admiration of Bagan as their golden past and the most important sacred Buddhist site.

The role of Bagan's Buddhist heritage

The value of Bagan's ancient monuments and their art and architecture is fully visible, but the intangible value behind the monuments is also evident, such as the Buddhist spirit of ancient Bagan. As with Buddhists from other Asian countries, the people of Bagan believe in *Kamma* (action) and 'the Law of Cause and Effect'. They try to understand 'The Law of Impermanence' and wish to reach 'Nirvana' (Buddhist liberation). In order to respect Buddha's teaching (*Dhamma*), they would like to behave well and do good deeds. Additionally they are willing to share their good mental and physical merits with others. In the end such a spirit makes them donors of Buddha's *Sasana* (religion) in their lifetime. They might have become practitioners of *Dhamma*, monks, nuns, followers or donors of religious buildings. That may explain the existence of the myriad Buddhist religious buildings in Bagan. Therefore we can suggest what the role of Bagan's Buddhist heritage is: the unity of society with active, intelligent, peaceful freedom under the patronage of Buddhism. This Buddhist unity has been practiced as a common platform not only at the single site of Bagan but in all the ancient Buddhist kingdoms and in contemporary Asian society.

Tangible and intangible heritage can be defined under the different aspects and forms of heritage sites

The existing monuments of Bagan

Serial No.	Monument and Mound	Total listed	Unnecessary conservation	Necessary conservation	Conserved monuments
1.	Ancient monuments	2 230			
	(a). Stupa/temple	1 745	122	1 623	1 500
	(b). monastery	431	-	431	79
	(c). cave	54	-	54	4
2.	Ordination hall and others	892	-	892	820
	Mounds				
	Total	3 122	122	3 000	2 403

(Source: Department of Archaeology, Myanmar, Bagan Branch, 2011)

and features. The interpretation may vary slightly according to the present state of the sites: whether the site has survived with cultural continuity or whether it was once abandoned. The heritage features of Bagan can be quickly summarized as: existing and living monuments, its history and contemporary record, ritual customs and practice, landscape and environmental setting, the traditional way of socioeconomic lifestyle and the present community.

History and the contemporary record

Traditional histories in the form of chronicles mention Bagan from the early fifteenth century CE. There are particular histories of Bagan itself compiled by later scholars. Normally the histories describe the kings, their donations, ascent and descent from the throne, great events, signs, heroes, venerable monks of Bagan, etc.

Many hundreds of stone inscriptions and ancient ink manuscripts found in temples at Bagan and a good number in other sites are contemporary records for reconstructing Bagan's culture.

Ritual custom and practice

As an important historic site of the country, Bagan is rich in traditional customs and practices of daily life

and especially in Buddhist religious practice, of *Nat* (spirit), the traditional and seasonal festivals, etc., for instance:

- Reciting *Parita* (Buddhist protection verses spoken publicly by gathered monks);
- The famous Shwezigon, Ananda, Lawkananda and Alodawpyi Pagoda Festivals, etc.;
- Buddhist seasonal festivals such as the *Waso* month Robe Offering, *Thitingywoit* Light Festival, *Kathina* Robe Offering, *Thingyan* (New Year) Festivals etc.;
- Daily, weekly and monthly Buddhist alms (food) offering by the local community; and
- *Anaykaja* (Buddhist statue, pagoda and temple consecration), Umbrella setting, and *Sima* (Buddhist ordination) ceremony.

These Buddhist ritual ceremonies are performed publicly by Buddhist monks and the local community, and are led by trustees and devotees.

Landscape and environmental setting

The city of Bagan was founded by the Ayeyarwaddy River, and gradually extended over the plain that is naturally bounded by the river to the north, by the high land to the west, and by the Tuywintaung range of hills to the east and south. The city and its suburbs were historically bounded by the landmarks

of four great sacred *stupas* of Tuywintaung Stupa and Tantgyitaung Stupa on top of the hills to the east and west and by the Shwezigon and Lokananda Stupas at the river port on the north and south. This landscape and environmental setting made people feel that they were within the Bagan cultural heritage region.

Traditional socioeconomic lifestyle

Most indigenous people in Bagan are farmers, growing different kinds of beans, sesame, maize, cotton and palm and making dried fruit. Unlike other parts of the country there is no rice agriculture as the soil type is not suitable; only dry crops are grown in the rainy season. In other times they succeed in toddy making and palm sugar production. In addition, some traditional ways of life continue such as small-scale local dry food making, handicrafts of lacquer wares, furniture and souvenirs, tourist services, artists, hawkers, etc.

The present community

The local community of Bagan is essential for the sustainability of Bagan’s heritage, as they are actually

performing their day-to-day subsistence in the vicinity of the Buddhist monuments as living cultural heritage. Tourism is growing rapidly in the area and Bagan is a major cultural tourist site in the country. The strong emphasis on tourism development has a strong impact on local society and on the people involved in it. People tend to look to business and income rather than public awareness and cultural ethics.

Engaging with modernity

Nowadays tourism development is affecting the Bagan heritage area by means of visible and invisible processes. The heritage area can be exposed to countless problems and risks that may lead to destruction, abandonment or disappearance of cultural properties. On the other hand, a good percentage of the modern population in the area is dependent on tourism and institutional jobs. However, their main business must be in harmony with the cultural heritage. As a living cultural heritage region, the Bagan-Nyaung Oo township needs a strict management plan and practices to protect it from the following threats.

Loss of original space

Occupation of monumental compounds	Additional new buildings	Modern development structures	Tourism impact
At every famous temple that tourists visit, there are different types of shops and hawkers, e.g., at the Shwezigon Pagoda, Kyanzittha Umin, Gubyaukgyi Temple, Alopyi Temple, Htilominlo Temple, Ananda Temple and many others.	In the succeeding historical periods after the Bagan Period, there have been new additions of stairways, ritual halls, trustee offices, toilets, shops, apartments and even small stupas and temples in the original space, which can destroy the integrity of ancient monuments.	Modern development infrastructure leads to the loss of traditional architecture and archaeological landscapes, e.g. village and urban houses within the zones, GSM and electrical power lines, new roads and heavy vehicles, Bagan airport, etc.	Encroachment of hotels, guest houses and restaurants into archaeological zones totally disturb the integrity and aesthetic of Bagan’s cultural heritage, e.g. Nan Myint Tower, a high new building for tourist viewing within the Monument Zone.

Numbers of foreign visitors to Bagan

Year	Tourist numbers	Year	Tourist numbers
2005	73 020	2009	55 061
2006	80 240	2010	76 683
2007	80 446	2011	102 521
2008	38 135	2012	162 888

Increase in visitors

We can imagine how Bagan's religious buildings were originally maintained and dedicated by worshippers for each and every *stupa*, temple and monastery in their thousands. We can also imagine that the donors of every monument preserved it and worshipped regularly there with their families and associated relatives because of their zeal for Buddhist tradition and principles. However, over the long term those Buddhist monuments were forgotten, abandoned and became ruins for lack of community care. Today it can be observed that the relationship between the myriad Buddhist monuments at Bagan and the community, including pilgrims and tourists, is such that only a few temples and pagodas are regularly visited and most are not paid any attention by the public.

There are various types of visitors who come to the Bagan heritage site, such as:

- i) the majority of Buddhists from all over the country, who stay in Bagan only a few days and cannot visit many places;
- ii) foreign tourists who come to Bagan on holiday in order to look at and study the regional culture, ancient art and architecture of the most famous archaeological site of Myanmar; and
- iii) young generations of students, groups from institutions and companies, and individuals from the whole country, who may enjoy visiting Bagan and are proud of the experience of having been to the famous site, for a study tour, picnic or other reasons.

The number of visitors and tourists to Bagan is increasing all the time, a trend that coincides with the greater freedom and transparency of state policy domestically and abroad. The following chart shows the increase in foreign tourists in recent years and the likely trend for the near future.

Faith and abandonment

We have discussed above the general nature and types of visitors to Bagan who could be assumed to have a common interest in Bagan's ancient monuments. Most of them come to worship and pay obeisance to religious temples and pagodas in a traditional way of Buddhist belief and practice that is similar to the local Buddhist community of Bagan. When they are visiting temples they worship the pagoda or Buddha statue with respect, they seem to be peaceful with a sense of freedom, and think about the great merit of the donors who made the original graceful building and made themselves ready to donate something of value so far as they could. They may share with others their merits and good deeds, and the teachings of Buddha would be reflected in their minds. These spiritual faiths are probably what the pilgrims who visit Bagan wanted. The Buddhist people of Myanmar have paid their respects and supported the Bagan monuments. They try to donate money to preserve and conserve ruined monuments and the monks of the Bagan area, by way of collaboration with trustees and with the technical assistants of the Department of Archaeology. As we mentioned above, nearly one thousand ancient monuments of Bagan archaeological area have been repaired through the donations of the public, of institutions and individuals and Buddhists in foreign countries such as the United States, Germany, India, Sri Lanka, China, Japan, Korea and Thailand.

The Ministry of Culture and its institution, the Department of Archaeology, controls and monitors so that heritage monuments do not appear to look abandoned, so as to avoid the encroachment of urban growth, while managing tourism development, natural disasters and environmental impact.

Buddhist heritage contribution

According to state policy, the Ministry of Culture has responsibility for Bagan Heritage Region and, again under the Ministry, the Department of Archaeology has been managing it within the legal frameworks of legislation, laws and orders of heritage protection. Bagan heritage region is divided into three zones: (i) ancient monument zone, (ii) archaeological zone, and (iii) protection zone. It is to be managed and protected using laws, registration of buildings, priority for technical conservation, preservation of the cultural landscape, education in cultural heritage knowledge and publicity management, etc. Beyond the institutional administration and management by government employees in collaborating departments, there are the monks, pagoda and temple trustees, and social and environmental organizations which take care of the heritage region and the ancient and living monuments. Pagoda trustees are normally retired government staff, elders of the community and volunteers. They arrange for the welfare of temples and pagodas, acceptance of pilgrims, publications on the history of monuments, managing donation funds and preservation, holding festivals and Buddhist medication camps, etc. It can be generally asserted that the trustees of Bagan are the social organizations that promote Buddhist religious traditions and practice to the public.

Conservation

Sustaining the integrity and authenticity of Bagan cultural heritage has faced many confrontations and difficulties originating in internal institutions of the Department, weak observance of legislation and ignorance about cultural heritage values. It was explained earlier how the original spaces of Buddhist monument have been lost, caused for instance by (i) occupation of monumental compounds, (ii) additional new buildings, (iii) modern development structures, and (iv) tourism business impact. Other consequences of common challenges to the heritage site of Bagan should be described from a general conservation point of view such as natural and manmade destruction.

Natural impact

- Rain erosion may cause damage because of waterlogging, which can lead to the growth of fungus and vegetation on structures.
- Fortunately the Bagan area belongs to the arid and rain-shadow region of Myanmar, with an average annual rainfall of 30 inches (76 cm), but sometimes heavy rain can cause partial collapses in weakened ancient monuments.
- Wind erosion can damage sandstone monuments and the decoration work of exteriors and mural paintings in the interior of temples. Similarly, sunlight leads to gradual damage of ancient monuments.
- Erosion by the Ayeyarwaddy River in Bagan has caused significant damage not only to ancient structures; for example, it wiped out the western part of the walled city of Bagan while also changing the landform of the archaeological site.
- Its situation in an earthquake zone caused heavy damage to all existing monuments of Bagan in 1975.

Manmade and animal impact

The first manmade impact is the technical work of previous conservation. They used modern materials such as bricks of different sizes and quality and cement, and these were not in harmony with the ancient monuments of the Bagan Period. Any marking and writing on the walls of monuments disturbs the value and aesthetics of the heritage. Taking photos by camera flashlight causes gradual deterioration to temple wall paintings. Bats, insects and birds living inside the temple cause damage to mural paintings and ancient plaster layers. From a management point of view for safeguarding the cultural heritage zone, there are difficult problems to be solved amongst local, regional and higher level institutions. This refers to the lack of cooperation and the absence of regard for the laws and orders by some individuals at ministry level, and in the local authority and community, especially businessmen.

Management

In 1998 the Government of State Peace and Development Council enacted “The Protection and Preservation of Cultural Heritage Regions Law”. This law was necessary for cultural heritage management, especially for the Bagan Cultural Region and its demarcated zones: the Monument Zone; Ancient Site or Archaeological Zone; and the protected or Preserved Zone. Furthermore the law stated the role of the Ministry and Department with their duties and functions, and provided the fundamental mechanism for nominating the country’s ancient monuments to the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Here we have to consider the participation of the religious community of Myanmar, their meritorious deeds and their way of thinking when making donations for an ancient Bagan monument, that is seen to be ruined, to become a visually complete building.

Because of the donor’s desire, most decayed monuments were restored and reconstructed to be complete architectural components. For such cases the Ministry and Department of Archaeology laid down general conservation project guidelines, which have the following principles:

- Listing the priority monuments or monuments in danger
- Assessing their original state, for instance through excavation of an old mound
- Revealing the exact ground plan and making a conjectural drawing
- Conducting conservation works with conservator and contractor
- Monitoring by the Quality Control Team, whose members are charged with the responsible works while observing principles utilized internationally, i.e., authenticity of design, material, workmanship and setting.

Since then the Department’s projects have been supported by public donations, and the preservation of Bagan’s ancient monuments has been carried out with

departmental management and with the traditional donation of funds of Myanmar Buddhists. At the same time responsible governmental sectors, particularly the Department of Archaeology could spend special project funds for ancient monuments where there were not enough public donations or that were not of sufficient historical and archaeological importance.

The Department also attempted to update conservation techniques and technician resources. For example, when the serious earthquake occurred in 1975, the ancient monuments of Bagan suffered huge damage. A Restoration Committee was formed with historians, archaeologists, artists and engineers for restoration and repair works on the damaged monuments. Thanks to the collaboration of the UNDP/ UNESCO restoration project entitled “Conservation of Bagan Cultural Heritage Monuments”, most goals were realized. Subsequently the preservation of mural paintings in Kubyauk-kyi temple and of a rare cloth painting at monument No.315 made possible their recognition as real masterpieces of Bagan painting.

During the UNESCO Bagan Conservation project an inventory of the ancient monuments was published; a huge achievement from a conservation point of view. It was the first of three UNESCO projects on surveying, restoration and rehabilitation of Bagan monuments. It attributed over 2 000 ancient monuments to Bagan and managed to publish nine inventory volumes between 1992 and 1997. These invaluable works of reference were compiled in collaboration between Mr. Pierre Pichard, UNESCO consultant architect-restorer, and the trained team of the Archaeology Department.

While the inventory was being compiled, the conservation works were also conducted annually. The regional office of UNESCO and UNDP in Bangkok occasionally sent missions in which experts and technicians for cultural heritage conservation in Myanmar participated. Sometimes they stayed in Bagan and gave lectures and short-term training to civil engineers, researchers, conservators, masons and workmen engaged in conservation works on Bagan monuments. The present conservators, most of them

in the Department of Archaeology and National Museum (Bagan Branch), are of the generations that participated in the project of general conservation of Bagan ancient monuments which started in 1995 and continues today.

Conclusion

As our introduction described, the heritage region of Bagan is interspersed with new modern buildings in nearby urban and village areas which potentially disturb the aesthetic of the ancient urban landscape. Subsequently the increase in tourists and local population has provided job opportunities and, eventually, local people find work that requires little capital investment such as selling souvenirs within and around temples. This can sometimes cause an unacceptable atmosphere for tourist and pilgrims because it disturbs the homage and worship of the Buddha image and the appropriate occupation of the religious compound. But the crucial consideration stemming from a lack of cultural heritage knowledge concerns the already predicted occurrence of large and new buildings for tourism and modern infrastructure, due to the development of tourism and the needs of the local community. Secondly, a lack of knowledge about cultural heritage leads to younger generations of locals and visitors behaving ignorantly with regard to heritage buildings.

The stakeholders of the Bagan Heritage Region therefore must disseminate public awareness, the rules and regulations of heritage zones, and cooperative projects among departmental institutions and those implementing the laws and orders. Similarly, to the extent allowed by the legal frameworks, reception facilities for tourists and for the greater number of Buddhist pilgrims from all over the country of Myanmar should be arranged. This includes a fair priced pilgrim guesthouse, guidebooks, information, volunteers, tourism facilities etc. As the institution ultimately responsible, the Department of Archaeology and the National Museum under the Ministry of Culture has been monitoring how harmony between the heritage of Bagan and the community's needs can

be maintained in the future. In line with the duties of the Department, regular and project works for conserving the Bagan ancient monuments have been conducted with appropriate practices during recent years from 1995 to the present.

As far as the historical importance and image of the rich cultural heritage in the country is concerned, the Government and the Ministry have undertaken the leading role and have planned cultural policy around the overall conservation of Bagan Heritage Region. In fact it was community based conservation although it has been the institutions which have been responsible and which have an allotted budget. A large amount of funds has been needed for the huge conservation works. It has been made possible through the donations of individuals, families, and organizations of Buddhist communities within the country and abroad.

Selected references (English)

Archaeological Survey of Burma. 1906-65. *Report of the Superintendent.* Rangoon, Office of the Superintendent, Government Printing.

Batra, N. L. 1996. *Heritage Conservation: Preservation and Restoration of Monuments.* New Delhi: Aryan Books International.

Department of Archaeology. 1998. *Inventory of Ancient Monuments in Bagan, Vol. I, Monuments 1-150.* Yangon, tr. Khin Maung Nyunt.

Khin Maung Nyunt. 1992. Department of Archaeology in Myanmar. *The Guardian Monthly Magazine* 39: 7-11 (July-November).

Marshall, J. 1923. *Conservation Manual. A handbook for the use of Archaeological Officers and others entrusted with the care of ancient monuments.* Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing.

Ministry of Culture. 2005. *Cultural Heritage Preservation and Cultural Sustainability in Myanmar (Brief Presentation on Some Salient Points).* Yangon.

Nyunt Han, U. 1989. A Retrospective and Prospective Review on the Conservation of Ancient Monuments in Pagan, *Study on Bagan, Cultural Heritage in Asia* (4). Tokyo: Institute of Asian Cultures, Sophia University.

Pichard, P. 1992-2002. *Inventory of Monuments at Bagan*, Volumes 1-8. KISCADALE EFEO UNESCO.

Taw Sein Ko. 1902-06. *Report on Archaeological Work in Burma For the Year 1901-06*. Rangoon: Government Printing.

Yarmola, J. C. 1992. *Conservation of Historic Brick Masonry in Pagan, Myanmar. Assignment Report on Conservation of Cultural Heritage at selected sites in Myanmar*. Bangkok, UNESCO, UNDP. (for internal use only: not for general distribution).



The conservation and management of Chinese Buddhist heritage and the case of Daming Temple

How can temples with a history of thousands of years contribute to the development of society?

Guang Xiaoxia and Xie Qingtong

Why choose Daming Temple as a case study?

It is located in Shugang-Slender West Lake National Park, in a northwest suburb of Yangzhou, along the Yangtze River. The Slender West Lake has six Buddhist architectural heritage properties on its banks: Tianning Temple, Chongning Temple, Lianxing Temple (with the White Tower), Guanyin Mountain and Daming

Temple. Every one of those six heritage sites is different with regard to its history, current condition and extent of the architecture, scenic features, cultural influences and conservation and management. Among them, Daming Temple has become the Buddhist heritage site that attracts the most attention. This is because it plays an important role in modern religious affairs, the spread of Buddhist culture, public life, tourism and international communication. In addition, it has

a more realistic significance. As an ancient temple nearly two thousand years old, Daming Temple has faced the challenges of rapid modernization.

On one hand, it has adopted a series of scientific and rational conservation measures to keep its function of a Buddhist heritage place, which is to be a religious venue. It carefully conserves the precious tangible and intangible resources and keeps its independence and dignity as a Buddhist heritage. On the other hand, it has effectively utilized its cultural and tourism value to extend the vitality of its historic heritage to modern times.

Should there be different ways of assessing the value of heritage?

When re-recognizing and assessing Buddhist heritage such as Daming Temple, apart from evaluating it against the six fixed criteria for World Cultural Heritage status, we should recognize its most important value, which is as an extraordinary cultural highlight (like Montmartre in Paris). But the difference is the spirit and the extraordinary people, who are of classic significance, which originated here.

Daming Temple is a significant architectural complex in Shugang-Slender West Lake National Park in Yangzhou, Jiangsu Province, China. It was built in the Song era of the Nan Dynasty (457 - 464). The existing main architecture is what remains after it was repaired in the Tongzhi Period of the Qing Dynasty (1862 - 1874).

According to the different cultural elements and types of heritage, the Daming Temple complex can be divided into the Buddhist Architecture Area, the Classic Gardens Area and the Jianzhen Memorial Hall Area.

In the Buddhist Architecture Area, from south to north there are the archway, the Heaven Kings Hall and the main hall, Mahavira Hall. The main structure was built on a central axis and on the slope

of the mountain, so it has an ascending form, which is in accordance with the traditional layout of Chinese temple architecture. Its area and architectural volume are not very large but the scale and architectural style have created a very quiet, peaceful and soothing atmosphere typical of oriental temples.

The Classic Gardens Area includes architectural features such as Pingshan Hall, West Garden, Gulin Hall and Ouyang Memorial Temple. Pingshan Hall was the meeting place for intellectuals, lovers of literature, poets, artists and scholars. Throughout history, celebrities held cultural activities in Pingshan Hall, making it a cultural spot for traditional Chinese scholars and officers to commemorate ancient wise men, comment on current politics, express their feelings, drink alcohol while enjoying the beautiful moon, have salons and get-togethers, and compose poems and verse.

Entering the West Garden is like being deep in the mountains and forest. Inside the garden, creeks surround the hills and the dense forest seems to be endless. Flowers and plants are abundant, decorating the architecture and the rockery. The main buildings are Emperor Kangxi's Pavilion with its Stone Tablet, Emperor Qianlong's Pavilion with its Stone Tablet, Daiyue Pavilion, Fangpu Rockery, Crane's Tomb, Tingshishanfang House, Boat Hall, The Fifth Spring in the World and Meiquan Pavilion. The West Garden is closely related to the development of the salt industry and economy of Yangzhou in the Qing Dynasty, and is an important historic relic of the South Tour made by Emperors of the Qing Dynasty.

Jianzhen Memorial Hall was built in memory of Jianzhen, a prominent Chinese monk in the Tang Dynasty. He held onto his faith and risked his life to travel across the sea to spread Buddhism in Japan. The main hall of Jianzhen Memorial Hall was designed exquisitely and structured perfectly, and can be considered the height of oriental architectural design. It was designed under the instruction of Mr. Sicheng Liang, a renowned Chinese architect. The style was entirely modelled after the Toshodai Temple in Nara, Japan.

Jianzhen Memorial Hall presents the most glorious history and most vital value of Daming Temple. One crucial reason why Daming Temple has always been visited by Buddhists and is a centre for Buddhist activities is that it is where the Chinese monk Jianzhen spread Buddhism in China before he traveled east to Japan. Daming Temple in Yangzhou was where Jianzhen was tonsured and became a monk. Also, the monks in Daming Temple had begun to spread Buddhist culture by going to Japan, communicating with Japanese envoys and learning Buddhism from Jianzhen. All this has had a crucial effect on furthering research into Chinese Buddhist theory, the spread of Buddhist culture and the diversification of the communication of Buddhist culture between China and overseas. The historical role of Daming Temple as a famous ancient Buddhist temple has remained unchanged and it now leads the new era for the development of Buddhist culture in China and even elsewhere in Asia. China and Japan have attached much attention to the communication of Buddhist culture and, at the same time, the group of monks led by Jianzhen in the Tang Dynasty also brought highly advanced knowledge and culture to Japan, such as law, architecture, sculpture, medicine, literature, calligraphy and food.

From this description, we realize that a Buddhist heritage such as Daming Temple has systematic and multiple oriental cultural values, with its accumulative historical information, combined with its aesthetic value and Buddhist spiritual value, and thus multiple values of cultural exchange. Therefore, we should not simply view it as a Buddhist cultural relic, or Buddhist heritage, but become aware of its multiple meanings, which are its true value.

How to conserve it is the prime topic for discussion of Buddhist heritage

Is conservation the prime topic for discussion about Buddhist heritage? Yes and no. I hold the opinion that how to conserve should be the prime topic. The first problem faced by Buddhist heritage is to

conserve its independent spirit, which relies on the historical information and aesthetic charm that its authentic and intact appearance give rise to. However, Buddhist heritage is not only historical evidence but also sustains the vitality of modern religion. Buddhist heritage has the responsibility to contribute to the development and progress of modern society. It has a vital responsibility to human civilization, with its outstanding role for correcting wrong concepts and improving humanity where it has gone astray. Let us see how the conservation and development of Daming Temple are kept in balance.

The whole environment of the temple and the independent spirit of the heritage

The ritual sites of Chinese Buddhism have always been closely related to mountains and forests. Mountains, rivers and rural areas are the eternal residence of monks, which is reflected in the elegance and independent spirit of Chinese temples in mountains and forest. It is close to the Buddha's nature and far away from the worldly. As a modern suburban environment surrounds Daming Temple, we should protect not only the temple architecture but also the whole setting and environment in order to conserve its historic character and Buddhist atmosphere.

Fortunately, Daming Temple has managed to do this. Yangzhou local government, planning authorities and heritage conservation organizations have formulated a whole set of conservation plans at different levels. They have an overall plan for the systematic control and comprehensive management of Shugang-Slender West Lake National Park where the temple lies. The special plans related to Daming Temple heritage area include, Shugang-Slender West Lake National Park Overall Plan, Famous Historic City Protection Plan and the Special Plan for Heritage Conservation, which set rules regarding the protection of Daming Temple itself and its scenery and control of the environmental capacity, presentation and utilization. Apart from heritage related special protection plans, many existing plans also contain measures related to the protection of Daming Temple, such as the City Overall Plan of Yangzhou where the temple is, Land Utilization Plan,

Urban Greenbelt Plan, Comprehensive Traffic Plan, Yangzhou Eco-City Construction Plan, Cultural Expo City Construction Plan, Tourism Development Plan and Environment and Sanitation Plan.

Those systematic plans constitute a set of legal protection measures that are dedicated to protecting and controlling the city relics of Yangzhou of the Tang Dynasty where Daming Temple lies, the moats, Shugang-West Lake Cultural Scenery, Shugang Tea Plantation and the living area of former native residents. They have successfully controlled modernization, development and construction in the surrounding area of Daming Temple, thus protecting Daming Temple itself and its original and authentic environment. This helps conserve the independent spirit of Buddhist heritage.

How to keep the genuineness of Buddhist heritage when repairing it?

Since the end of the 1950s Daming Temple has undergone two large-scale repairs. The last one began in 2011 and ended recently.

The latest repair is gratifying because it conserved the genuineness of the heritage. The repairs to the main hall and Heaven Kings Hall strictly followed the principle of not changing the current condition of the heritage. It kept and reused the original parts as much as possible and tried hard to restore the original condition as per historical documentation. Except for using updated techniques and reinforcing material in order to better protect the heritage architecture, the repair used the original material, shape and craftsmanship, trying to keep the original structure. During the repair, the technicians chose the wood and paint based on strict standards. In addition, by using the latest water and lightning protection technology, the repair intervals of the main hall can be increased from 30 years to 100 years.

Compared to the halls in other temples, the main hall in Daming Temple, which is more than 300 years old, is high and spacious, and its material is of high quality

but small in quantity. The three-layered roof is used to stabilize the main structure of the hall. In spite of the small quantity of material used, the artistic value and wholeness of the clay and wood sculptures in the hall are marvelous. The Buddha sculptures and *arhat* group sculptures in the main hall of Daming Temple have survived the catastrophic damage sustained by Buddhist relics during the Cultural Revolution in China. In the main hall, the images and sculptures of the Buddha are solemn and the Dharani pillars are respectful. There is also a whole collection of Buddhist ritual implements. Sitting on the lotus throne right in the middle of the hall is Sakyamuni. Behind the Buddhist altar is the group sculpture of Guanyin Gazing at the Sea, surrounded by 106 sculptures of the gods based on the story of Sudhana visiting and learning from 53 wise men in Volume 73 of the *Huayan Sutras*. Research has shown that these clay and wood sculptures are the largest and best preserved ancient wood sculptures inside the temple halls of China.

In this famous ancient Buddhist temple, we can still see the faint marks left on the Buddhist sculptures by artists when they decorated them with gold foil. This art has been passed down over thousands of years along with Chinese Buddhist culture, and has become an integral part of Buddhist heritage. Decorating Buddhist sculptures with gold foil is an old technique. It is perfect for giving full play to the advantage of decorating with real gold, which both protects the sculpture itself and enhances its magnificence and solemnity. Gold foil can last hundreds of years and people appreciate the colour of real gold. In the recent repair of Daming Temple, the administrators used 30 kilos of gold for the Buddha and bodhisattva sculptures, so the genuineness of the colour and appearance of the ancient Buddhist sculptures have been respected and restored.

The contribution of intangible cultural heritage to the community

The custom and ritual of ringing the bell in Daming Temple twice a year has become part of the intangible Buddhist cultural heritage in Yangzhou. Daming Temple continues to serve as a religious place where

Buddhist activities are held and Buddhism can be spread. It is an important holy site of Buddhists in China and southeast Asia. The temple administrators have combined spreading Buddhism with local life. The temple plays the role of a special spiritual guide and adviser in local residents' lives and spreads the oriental Buddhist spirit to the local people in the form of intangible cultural heritage. In return for the people's good hopes of removing bad fortune and asking for good luck, Daming Temple rings the bell on New Year's Day and the Chinese New Year. Every time the old year passes and the New Year arrives at midnight, Daming Temple punctually rings the bell 108 times, sharing the blessed ringing sound of the bell with the community.

The vegetarian cuisine in the temple is part of the intangible Chinese Buddhist cultural heritage. Based on the style of vegetarian food in Buddhist temples, Taoist temples, restaurants and home cooking, Daming Temple vegetarian cuisine has acquired its own features, which are high quality ingredients, fine cooking, great variation and a delicate and light taste. The food is very popular and has become a link between the temple and the community. The restaurant has inherited time-honoured vegetarian culture and combined it with modern science. It is scientific, civilized and reasonably priced, which is totally in line with the health concept and environmentally friendly idea of modern vegetarians.

Contributing to the development of tourism

Because Daming Temple has systematic and multiple oriental cultural values, we think that the tourism element of Daming Temple is a combination of Buddhist temple, cultural relics and gardens. Developing tourism in Daming Temple is an effective utilization of its Buddhist heritage.

Daming Temple is the most important tourism attraction in Shugang-Slender West Lake National Park and a highlight on the water route around the lake. It is becoming an important place to relax, enjoy the

scenery, visit the relics and appreciate the beauty and influence of the Buddhist humane spirit. The scholars, local officers, administrative authorities and tourism developers in Yangzhou have created a plan to make the Buddhist Architecture Area, Classic Gardens Area and Jianzhen Memorial Hall, the three core cultural elements of tourism at Daming Temple. This meets the demand of different tourists and endows Daming Temple with the multiple tourism values of visiting a religious holy site, visiting relics, commemorating celebrities, relaxing and sightseeing. This plan for tourism has led to a good reputation and economic benefits. In Yangzhou, Daming Temple is a successful case of making Buddhist culture a tourism product. While conserving the dignity of the heritage, we have managed to develop its economic tourism value.

In the past year, the local government of Yangzhou and the administrators of the National Park have constantly improved the environment of the Buddhist cultural tourism attraction. New bus routes to religious cultural tourism attractions have been arranged and services such as accommodation, shops, tourist guiding and translation have been improved to meet the demand of tourists from home and abroad. They are speeding up the implementation of the environmental improvement plan for Jianzhen Square. The government has improved some old and shabby shops and residents' houses near Daming Temple and moved them to the tourists' square. This has created a better harmony with the temple and the scenery, so that it can better serve the tourists. It provides them with a more comfortable environment and more convenient services. This modification is expected to be finished by spring next year.

The administrators of the temple and its surrounding scenic area have improved the public's awareness and understanding of the value of the heritage and the respect and protection awareness of the cultural heritage. This has been done by systematically making an integrated utilization system to interpret, present and advocate the scenic and cultural value of Daming Temple.

In order to attract tourists, the local government, tourism authorities and scenic area administrators have promoted the Shugang-Slender West Lake National Park with the help of the internet, publications, media and national and overseas academic exchanges and conferences. They have publicized the long history, beautiful temple architecture and fine garden, and explained the link between the temple and Jianzhen to Japanese tourists. The ‘Yangzhou for the World-Cultural Heritage’ book series, compiled by Yangzhou Cultural Heritage Administration authorities, focuses on and interprets the scenic value of Daming Temple in the light of Buddhist civilization and worldly value. This book series were published in the spring of 2013 by China’s famous academic publisher, Southeast University Publisher.

Another value - heritage of Jianzhen

For the last 1 000 years, Japanese people have been commemorating and respecting Eminent Monk Jianzhen who brought Buddhism to Japan. Jianzhen spread Chinese culture and Buddhism to Japan and Korea via the Maritime Silk road and this has sustained the growth of Japan for over a thousand years.

The heritage of Jianzhen is not only a memorial hall or a building, but a kind of Buddhist spirit blending into the cultural heritage of Daming Temple, which is a key point in the conservation and utilization of Buddhist heritage. Through the name of Jianzhen and with the support of Buddhists and tourists, Daming Temple has had a positive effect in promoting international communication about Buddhism, the spread of Buddhist culture and Buddhist education. A tour of China by Jianzhen’s statue, with commemorative gatherings and forums going on for years was an outstanding success, which received positive feedback from all walks of life. In the early twenty-first century, Daming Temple opened a Jianzhen Buddhist Institute outside the protected area of the main building. The Tang Dynasty architectural style of the Buddhist Institute is in harmony with the Daming Temple architecture and the National Park. It is playing a role as a modern academy spreading and advocating Buddhism and Buddhist culture on a higher level,

being a modern extension of the traditional function of a Buddhist heritage.

Enlightenment about conserving and utilizing Buddhist heritage

- a. Protecting the whole environment of the temple is actually conserving the independent spirit of the heritage. We should also protect its natural environment, the surrounding natural ecology and the social environment. Conserving the Buddhist heritage is not merely protecting a building or a group of buildings, but should be a systematic and comprehensive plan taking into account the environment surrounding the temple. In this way, we can ensure that the Buddhist architecture and the background environment are harmonious and form a peaceful, independent cultural atmosphere of Buddhist heritage.
- b. Buddhist heritage has the responsibility of contributing to the development and progress of modern society. We should strike a balance between conservation and utilization and find a sensible compromise. On one hand, we should protect Buddhist architecture. Changing the function of Buddhist architecture can ruin the spirit of a religious place, causing it to lose its sacredness and solemnity. On the other hand, we should use Buddhist heritage wisely and effectively to give play to the function and value of traditional Buddhist heritage in modern society, extend its effects and rejuvenate its vitality.
- c. Using a different way to access the value of Buddhist heritage reveals that Buddhist heritage generally has systematic and multiple cultural values. Buddhist heritage is presented in various forms and it has many layers of beauty, meeting different levels of the spiritual needs of visitors and tourists. The tourist development of Buddhist heritage should also meet the needs of tourists such as their religious needs, beautiful surroundings, education and sightseeing.

- d. We should emphasize the contribution of intangible cultural heritage to the community by conserving and utilizing it. This includes vegetarian food, customs, rituals, music, drawings, sculptures, craftsmanship and so on. These, it can positively influence society and community life.
- e. There is a memorial hall inside this Buddhist heritage place. As a result of respect and commemoration that the public, Buddhists, and tourists wish to pay to the important figures in Buddhist history, this Buddhist heritage shines with the glory of humanism in the modern world. This is more convincing and overwhelming than any form of preaching and enhances the influence of Buddhism on human souls for the good of society.

Buddhist heritage is a cultural heritage with special significance, so what we conserve is not only the Buddhist architecture and art, but also the Buddhist spirit and belief. The Buddhist belief has always been to touch human hearts with the most gentle and unconditional love. Buddhist heritage should be similar. We should conserve its independent religious cultural value and unworldly character. Driven by this overwhelming power, Buddhist heritage can once again be drawn upon by society to contribute to the development of modern society and the progress of civilization.



Summary of the discussions of the ICCROM/CHA Forum on Asian Buddhist heritage: conserving the sacred

Joseph King

Understanding Asian Buddhist Heritage

The meeting recognized that Asian Buddhist heritage comprises a variety of heritage types including archaeological sites, monuments, and living religious places which include both tangible and intangible heritage attributes.

The specificity of Asian Buddhist heritage is embodied in Buddhist philosophy and spirituality which can be characterized by the cyclical nature of time which relates to death and rebirth thus recognizing deterioration followed by renewal. Space within the Buddhist tradition is given meaning by function and associated rituals, tying together the tangible and

intangible aspects of the religion in a way that cannot be separated. This heritage must also be understood as a space of sacred geography encompassing not just single monuments or groups of buildings, but also the landscapes associated with various rituals and performances and the sacred routes that have been created over time by pilgrimage. It must also be recognize that specific Buddhist traditions have absorbed some of the locally held beliefs/traditions which become part of specific local rituals and traditions.

All of these aspects of the nature of Asian Buddhist heritage, as well as a strong affiliations of the society to religious practices, should be taken into account when

planning for conservation of this valuable religious heritage.

The meeting considered that there is a particular difficulty in clearly applying the concept of Authenticity in regard to Asian Buddhist heritage. The strong emphasis on the spiritual and the cyclical nature of life as mentioned above means that material aspects of authenticity may have less importance to understanding the values of the heritage. Rather, the emphasis of authenticity must be focused more on the philosophy, means and processes behind the ritual use of space and should also include understanding the authenticity of the traditional knowledge systems including craftsmanship. Further examination must also be given to the concept of integrity, defined as the wholeness or completeness of a place. This concept may fit better when considering heritage within the context of Buddhist principles.

Challenges of Conservation of Asian Buddhist Heritage (aspects of benefits)

- How do we integrate modern religious practice into what are also important heritage sites? What happens when religious needs conflict with conservation needs?
- Multiple communities exist at many sites, sometimes with competing claims.
- We must recognize that traditions are not static. They change over time and this must be taken into account when thinking about conservation.
- We need better knowledge of religious communities and how they work.
- How do we accommodate new needs/new construction within a temple complex?
- How can we balance religious needs with commercial/economic benefits? Within temples, sometimes, economic benefits have changed the way monasteries work, sometimes distracting them from their religious functions. How can we encourage a balance?
- Externally, many in the local community depend on the heritage for their livelihood. How can we increase dialogue and try to find solutions

which conserve important religious functions while allowing for economic benefit to the local community?

- Is World Heritage more important than local importance/local values?

Conservation

- Merit making is related to repair and restoration of Buddhist Heritage. How conservation activities are linked to merit making. How can we link this to improvement of conservation of the temples?
- We must better understand how to balance management of conservation by governments vs. management of conservation by religious communities. There should be more of a dialogue and shared responsibility for conservation aspects from both sides.
- Conservation ideals should be embedded in belief/knowledge systems.
- We should understand the importance of continuity of practice as opposed to continuity of physical material.
- How can we document and encourage the continuation (or revive where they don't exist) of the traditional craftsmanship and other traditional management systems? We must ensure that the traditions are passed on from one generation to the next.
- Linked to traditional craftsmanship, we must try to discourage the use of modern, industrial materials in maintenance, conservation, and improvement activities at temples.
- The issue of the use of objects for religious reasons vs. museum objects should be discussed further.
- Conservation work must include well developed maintenance and monitoring activities built into the long term care of Buddhist heritage. This will involve working closely over the long term with the religious communities concerned.
- It may be useful to develop a regional programme for documentation of the traditional craftsmanship associated with Buddhist heritage found in different contexts in the region. This programme could also include a means of promoting this traditional craftsmanship and the passing it from the old

generation to the new generation. It needs to be based on existing information, however and should not duplicate already existing programmes or activities. Means should also be developed to ensure that the information is well disseminated. Sustainability of trained craftsmen should be considered.

Management and long-term care

- Working with the religious communities (monks). They must be involved for successful conservation.
 - a. Avoid confrontation
 - b. Achieve balance
 - b. Meet religious needs
- Primary responsibility for long-term care is with the religious community.
- There is a need for dialogue and common understanding between heritage and religious communities. We must share the knowledge with each other and learn from each other.
- Pilgrimage programmes should be promoted to Buddhist sites as a means of increasing awareness and ensuring a continuing relevance in the lives of its adherents. Care needs to be taken, however, to ensure that such increases of pilgrimage can be managed well in relation to maintaining the sacredness of the sites. (Templestay as a potential model and proposal for Asian Pilgrimage Unit by the key note speaker.)
- Transnational nominations (or at least a series of properties with Buddhist themes) and transborder dialogue should be promoted for potential World Heritage properties. It will be important, however, not to stop only at the nomination process, but to promote cooperation once sites are on the World Heritage List.

Final Recommendation

The meeting recommended that the CHA-ICCROM collaboration on forum related activities should continue with a focus on living Buddhist heritage as there are a number of key topics that need to be further explored. One option would be to select one or several topics per year for the next four years for the annual forum. Topics could include:

1. Authenticity and integrity as they specifically related to Buddhist philosophy and practice;
2. Development of useful policy and legal frameworks to help governments and religious communities to better conserve Buddhist heritage;
3. Management of living Buddhist heritage: creating cooperation and balance between government and religious orders who are responsible for the day-to-day management of sites;
4. Traditional knowledge systems at Buddhist heritage sites including promotion of traditional craftsmanship;
5. Utilization of living Buddhist heritage sites for religious, pilgrimage and other appropriate economic uses;
6. Financing and resource mobilization including human resources;
7. Capacity building for conservation at living Buddhist heritage sites covering all audiences;
8. Illicit traffic in Buddhist antiquities.

As many of these topics are interlinked, it may be possible to combine some and have several more general topics such as:

1. A focus on better knowledge and understanding of the relationship of living Buddhist heritage and conservation (this could include principles, and the authenticity/integrity issues);
2. A focus on policy and legislative issues to promote better conservation and management of living Buddhist heritage and establishing more links with the Buddhist community;
3. A focus on practical management/conservation issues for living Buddhist heritage;
4. Understanding Traditional/ Established Knowledge Systems. This can stand on its own or can be explored under any of the above themes.

Other topics brought up by meeting participants included: restoration of Buddhist monuments and archaeological sites, factors affecting Buddhist heritage sites and threats posed by them, and the participation of young people in conservation of Buddhist heritage.

Biographies

Neel Kamal Chapagain

Neel Kamal Chapagain is a heritage professional and researcher from Nepal, currently involved in developing a Masters Degree Programme at the Centre for Heritage Management, Ahmedabad University, India. Neel Kamal holds a PhD in Architecture from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (USA), where his doctoral dissertation focused on “rethinking heritage conservation at traditional settlements”. He also has an Architecture Doctorate from the University of Hawaii at Manoa (USA) and a Bachelors degree in Architecture from Tribhuvan University, Nepal. Neel Kamal has coedited a book titled *Asian Heritage Management: Contexts, Concerns and Prospects* (Routledge, London/New York, 2013) in which he wrote a chapter on conservation issues in the Buddhist context.

Van Bai Dang

Prof Dr Van Bai Dang is the Vice Chairperson of the Viet Nam Association of Cultural Heritage and a Member of the Vietnamese National Committee for Cultural Heritage. After completing his Doctorate in Architecture from Bulgaria he worked with the Department of Cultural Heritage in the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, and from 1997 to 2009 he served as the Director-General of the Department of Cultural Heritage. He has been a former President of ICOM Viet Nam and Chairperson of the Examination Committee for Nominations of national historical, cultural and natural monuments throughout the country. In 2006 he authored the book *Museumizing village cultural heritage* and also has published several research papers and articles on Viet Nam’s cultural heritage in general and on Buddhism’s cultural heritage in particular.

Stefano De Caro

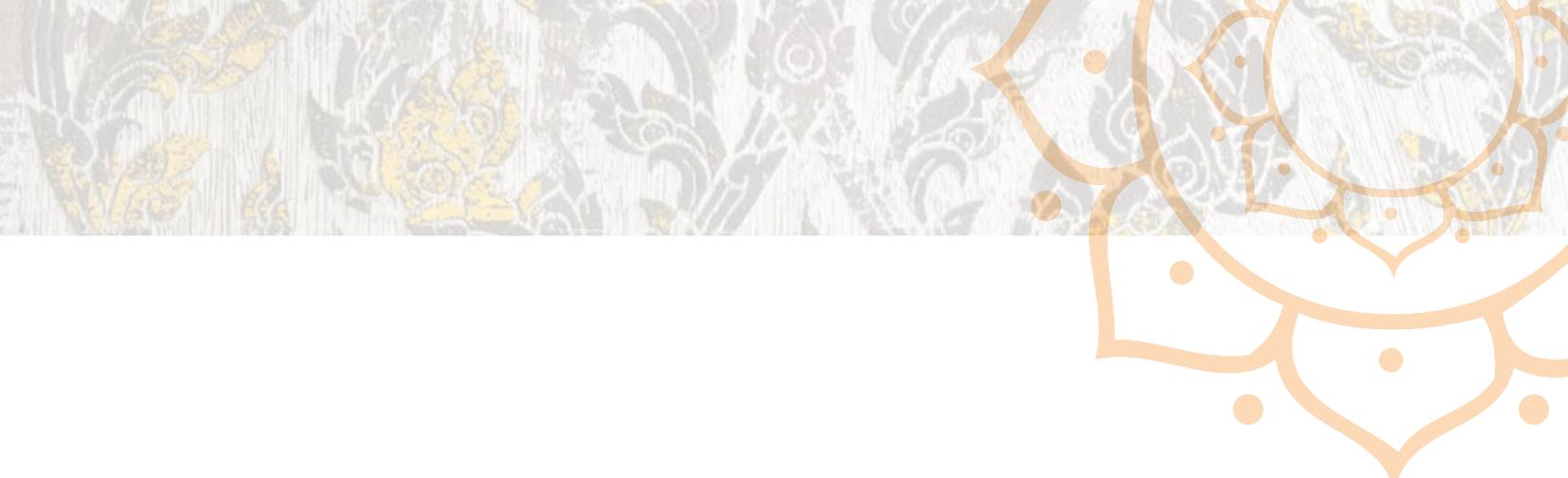
Stefano De Caro was appointed as the Director-General of ICCROM in January 2012. He has a degree in Humanities from Federico II University of Naples and he continued his studies in Archaeology at La Sapienza University of Rome and the Italian School of Archaeology in Athens. From 1976 to 2010, De Caro worked at the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities (MiBAC) and held different positions including that of Inspector/Director of Archaeology in Molise and in Pompeii, and Superintendent for Archaeology in the provinces of Naples and Caserta.

Nangzey Dorjee

Nangzey Dorjee, IAS (Rtd.), has a Masters degree in Buddhist Philosophy from Sampurananda Sanskrit University, Varanasi, in addition to an Honours Degree in Political Science from North Bengal University. He was in Government civil service for 33 years and retired as Secretary to the Government of Sikkim in 2006. Since June 2008, he has served as the Member Secretary of the Bodhgaya Temple Management Committee (BTMC), a Government constituted body which looks after the management of Mahabodhi Temple in Bodhgaya. Earlier, he served as BTMC Member from 2002 to 2007. He is also the President of Sikkim Buddhist Association since 1992 and associated with a number of cultural and social organizations in India.

Pinraj Khanjanusthiti

Pinraj Khanjanusthiti is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Architecture, Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok. She received her BArch from Chulalongkorn University, MArch from the State University of New



York at Buffalo, MA and PhD in Conservation Studies from the University of York, United Kingdom. She is a member of the Association of Siamese Architects (ASA) and has served as a member of ASA's Conservation Commission and as a jury member for the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Awards since 2006. She has been a committee member of ICOMOS Thailand from 2009 to present.

Joseph King

Joseph King has a Masters Degree in City and Regional Planning and Historic Preservation from the University of Pennsylvania USA. Since 2004 he has been the Director of the Sites Unit at ICCROM. Previously he was Senior Project Manager at ICCROM in charge of the AFRICA 2009 programme, a long-term regional programme for the conservation of immovable cultural heritage in sub-Saharan Africa. Before joining ICCROM, he worked as a consultant on projects related to urban planning and conservation in Kenya, the United States and Italy.

Abha Narain Lambah

Abha Narain Lambah is a conservation architect based in Mumbai. She was the principal conservation architect at the Namgyal Institute for Research on Ladakhi Art & Culture (NIRLAC), working on the conservation of the 15th Century Maitreya Buddha Temple of Chamba Lakhang in Basgo, which won the UNESCO Asia Pacific Award of Excellence in 2007. Her projects have won eight UNESCO Awards for Conservation and she has been a recipient of the Sanskriti Award, the Eisenhower Fellowship and the Charles Wallace Fellowship. She has edited a range of books including *Architecture of the Indian Sultanates*, *Custodians of India's Heritage: 150 years of the Archaeological*

Survey of India and *Shekhawati: Land of the Merchant Princes*, and has been a columnist for Indian Express and Hindustan Times on conservation issues.

Sujeong Lee

Sujeong Lee has been a member of the research staff in the Cultural Heritage Administration (CHA) of Korea since 2009. She attained her doctorate in Conservation Studies at the Department of Archaeology, University of York, United Kingdom. While she had studied Korean art history and Buddhist wall painting conservation for her MA in Korea, she participated in the conservation of several wall paintings in Bongjung and Shinheung temples before she started her PhD. Her PhD thesis concerned the conservation of religious buildings in use, comparing approaches to value assessment and the definition of authenticity in conservation, taking conservation cases of British churches and Korean Buddhist temples. Her recent research project in the Administration includes "Ethical Guidelines for Conservators", which offers ways to make a rational decision in conservation.

Nyein Lwin

Nyein Lwin is the Vice Principal of the Field School of Archaeology (FSOA) in Myanmar, and has over seventeen years experience in the field of archaeology. After completing his under graduate studies in Anthropology, he obtained a Diploma in Archaeology from Yangon University. He was the Deputy Director of the Bagan Archaeological Museum from 2010 to 2012 and Assistant Director, Department of Archaeology in the ancient city of Mrauk-U. From 1996-2004 he has worked in some of Myanmar's well known historic sites including Bagan, Yangon and Mrauk. Mr Lwin has authored and co-authored several research papers

including “The Origins of Bagan; New Date and Old Inhabitants”.

Xie Qingtong

Xie Qingtong has worked with the World Cultural Heritage Joint Nomination Office for the China Grand Canal since 2007 and is currently the Chief of the Research Division. Specialized in world cultural heritage conservation and research in China, he has taken charge of conservation, research and nomination work for projects including the China Grand Canal, the Maritime Silk Road, the Slender West Lake Landscape and the Historic Centre of Yangzhou. He has written many articles about cultural heritage published in various academic journals and media. His major published articles are “The Comparative Study of Chinese Grand Canal and Western Canal Heritage”, “Spatial Connection of Civilization” and many others.

Tara Sharma

Tara Sharma has a Masters degree in History from Delhi University. She has been working in the field of heritage conservation management since 1994 and was an intern at ICCROM in 2006. From 2000 to 2006 she worked as the Director (Cultural Resources) of the non-profit organization, Namgyal Institute for Research on Ladakhi Art and Culture (NIRLAC), developing a cultural conservation programme for the institute. Three conservation projects developed by her at the time were awarded the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Award for Cultural Heritage Conservation. At this time, Tara also worked on a community based cultural mapping project to create an inventory of Ladakh’s Immovable Cultural heritage, which was published in four volumes.

Roland Silva

Dr Roland Silva is presently the International Honorary President ICOMOS, President of the National Trust – Sri Lanka, and Chancellor of the University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka. From 1983 to 1991, he served as the Director-General of Archaeology in Sri Lanka. He was a former Director-General of the Central Cultural Fund (1983-1997). He was the Vice President of ICOMOS from 1987 to 1990 and subsequently the President of ICOMOS from 1990 to 1999. He is the recipient of many national and international awards including the *Vidya Jyothi*, Sri Lanka (1992), and Gazzola Prize, International ICOMOS (1999). Dr Silva has been a keynote speaker at several international conferences and forums and has widely published research papers and books.

Karma Tenzin

Karma Tenzin has a Bachelors degree in Architecture from the Dyananad Sagar Institute. He presently works with the Division for Conservation of Heritage Sites (DCHS) under the Department of Culture, Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs, which is the central agency in the government responsible for the conservation, promotion and development of the heritage sites of Bhutan. He has been working on the documentation, conservation and reconstruction plans for Kunchosum Lhakhang and Wangduephodrang Dzong both destroyed by fire in recent years as well as the Takchu gonpa and Ugyen Guru Lhakhang, damaged in the 2011 earthquake.

Katsuhisa Ueno

Katsuhisa Ueno received a Masters degree of Engineering (architecture) in 1985, and his PhD in

1995 from Yokohama National University, Japan. In his working career since 1985, he has taught at Yokohama National University department of engineering, as a Research Associate for nine years (1985-1994). Afterwards, for 13 years, he worked for the Agency for Cultural Affairs (ACA), Government of Japan, as a Senior Specialist for Cultural Properties (1995-2007). He now teaches at Tokyo University of the Arts as a Professor of Division of Buildings and Districts, Department of Conservation, Graduate School of Fine Arts.

Montira Horayangura Unakul

Montira Horayangura Unakul has a BA in Economics and East Asian Studies from Harvard University and Master's degrees from the University of California, Berkeley in Architecture and City Planning. Since 2001 she has worked at UNESCO Bangkok on the safeguarding and sustainable development of cultural heritage. She has written and conducted projects on cultural heritage, cultural tourism, urbanism and traditional architecture and environments, with a special interest in the imperilled canal networks of Bangkok. She also serves on the Council of the Siam Society, the Advisory Boards of SEAMEO-SPAFA and the International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments.

Jagath Weerasinghe

Jagath Weerasinghe is a professor and Director at the Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka. He received his BFA degree from the Institute of Aesthetic Studies, University of Kelaniya and an MFA from American University, Washington D.C. He has been working as a murals conservator since 1983 with the Central Cultural Fund and has been training murals conservators since 1985

at the Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology. He has been a recipient of the David Lloyed Kreeger Award of the Art Department of the American University; Bunka Cultural Award, Sri Lanka; and Hirayama Silk Road Fellowship. He has been a Visiting Fellow at the Institute of Archaeology, University of London; an ICCROM Fellow in Conservation Studies, ICCROM, Rome and Visiting Scholar at the University of California at Berkeley.

Gamini Wijesuriya

Gamini Wijesuriya, having obtained qualifications in Architecture (BSc and MSc) opted to work in the fields of Conservation and Archaeology. While practising, he also obtained an MA (History/Historic Preservation) from the USA, MA (Archaeology/Heritage Management) from the UK and his PhD. from Leiden University in the Netherlands. Since 2004, Dr Wijesuriya has worked in the Sites Unit of ICCROM as a Project Manager. He was one of the Principal Regional Scientists of the Department of Conservation of the Government of New Zealand from 2001 to 2004. Before that, he was the Director of Conservation of the Department of Archaeology of the Government of Sri Lanka from 1983 to 1999.

Muhammad Zahir

Dr Muhammad Zahir has a PhD from the School of Archaeology and Ancient History, University of Leicester, United Kingdom, and has been a lecturer at the Department of Archaeology, School of Cultural Heritage and Creative Technologies, Hazara University in Pakistan since 2007. He is the lead Researcher, Script Writer and Presenter for a Multilingual documentary series on “The Chronicle of Buddhism in Pakistan”, by Pakistan Television Network (the largest television network in Pakistan).



Via di San Michele 13
I-00153 Rome, Italy
Telephone: +39-06585531
Fax: +39-0658553349
iccrom@iccrom.org
www.iccrom.org

 www.facebook.com/iccrom
 @ICCRROM

ISBN 978-92-9077-240-8
© ICCROM 2017

ICCRROM (International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property) is an intergovernmental organization (IGO), and the only institution of its kind dedicated to the protection and preservation of cultural heritage worldwide, including monuments and sites, as well as museum, library and archive collections.

ICCRROM fulfils its mission through collecting and disseminating information; coordinating research; offering consultancy and advice; providing advanced training; and promoting awareness of the value of preserving cultural heritage.

ISBN 978-92-9077-240-8



9 789290 772408 >