

**A Report of Workshop 3:
“Preservation and Promotion of Buddhist Arts”**

Date: 28 May 2007

Time: 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Moderator: Ven. Dr. T. Dhammaratana (France)

Secretaries: 1. Sister Ong Kin Suan

2. Sister Loh Mei Fang

Assistant Secretaries: (1) Phra Supat Siribhaddo

(2) Ven. Meas Suveoun Sumedho

(3) Ms. Gunpasson Kajornsrisorn

Total Attendance: 63 delegates

1. Introduction:

This workshop was implemented as scheduled and seven speakers presented their views and experiences on several aspects of the theme on “Preservation and Promotion of Buddhist Arts”

The presenters were as follows:

1. Mrs. Wangmo Dixey: “Revival of the Dhamma: The Annual 10 Tipitaka Chanting Ceremony at Buddhagaya and the Revitalization of Holy Places of the Buddha”
2. Phra Sithamatchamethi: “The Role of the Leaders of the Sangha in Preservation”
3. Mr. Thambavati U Win Maung: “The Evolution of Buddhist Stupas in Myanmar”

4. Prof. Hong, Seok-Joon: “The Characteristics and Meanings of ‘Gwangju’ Project and some Suggestions for Collaboration among Asian Buddhists and Networking”
5. Ven. K. Rahula: “Preservation of Buddhist Arts in Sri Lanka”
6. S.N. Goenka: “Tradition of Pagoda to Enshrine Relics of the Buddha (presented by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Pratang Dinnaratna)
7. Mr. Khun Khamnuan Chanunto : “Preservation of Buddhist Arts”

For the purpose of this report, seven sub-topics would be briefly looked into:

2. Focus

This workshop focused on (a) preservation (b) promotion of Buddhist which were defined to include both care and development of Buddhist Arts.

3. Who are responsible?

Persons and organizations mentioned to be responsible are as follows:

- Members of the Sangha
- Buddhist leaders and devotees
- Buddhist Organization and ministries
- UNESCO

4. What to preserve and promote?

The list of Buddhist Arts given are as follows:

- Relics
- Stupas (different forms)
- Ancient Buddhist images

- Stone inscription
- Cave mural paintings
- Traditional folk wisdom
- Local traditional songs
- Oral traditional Buddhist education
- Sand Jedi (Stupa)
- Mural arts
- Tangible and intangible culture heritages

5. How do we preserve and promote Buddhist Arts?

Several ways were recommended to help preserve and promote the Buddhist Arts:

- Revitalization of the holy places of the Buddha e.g. encourage visit and participate in the spiritual activities e.g. the annual Pali Tipitaka chanting ceremony in Bodhgaya, India
- Collaboration and Network with other organizations e.g. Gwangju which is an Asian Culture Hub City.
- Education on Buddhism - to train students on interpretation skills and critical thinking skills
- International Conferences on Buddhism
- Joint project among Asian Buddhists
- Establishment of a proper education and training system with appropriate discipline curriculum
- Preservation of relics of Buddha and other sacred objects of sacred value
- Dissemination of correct information of Buddhist teachings and correct images of Lord Buddha
- Preserve of traditional Buddhists cultures or images of Buddha
- Elaboration and explanation in words of the pictures and the history of Buddha stories in order to enhance comprehension

6. What are the challenges

- Decrease in the interest of learning traditional Buddhist education
- Trading or trafficking unique valuable sacred objects to foreign countries
- Inadequate Financial support in preserving Buddhist Arts
- Difficulty in getting a scholar or Buddhist to restore ruins of Buddhist Arts
- Changing of the young Buddhists' sense of value, e.g. placing more importance on philosophy rather than computer games

7. Recommendations:

- UNESCO to make appraisal for granting financial aid
- Preserve manuscripts in microfilm
- Encourage education on Pali transcription
- Provide education to Sangha on proper understanding of all matters associated with job of preservation

8. Resolution

The delegates urge UNESCO and other qualified institutions to make the necessary effort to preserve tangible or intangible cultural heritage which are in danger in different countries. It is recommended strongly that this heritage is preserved as a common property for humanity.