

## The Importance of Pariyatti Sāsanā

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### Abstract

Sāsanā is the teachings of the Buddha. The nature of the Sāsanā, the three categories of Sāsanā and their similes are mentioned in this paper. Moreover, how the Pariyatti Sāsanā takes the most important role among the three categories of Sāsanā is delved thoroughly. Pariyatti Sāsanā is not only fundamental but also can guide the nature of the other Sāsanā as a teacher.

**Key words:** Sāsanā, Pariyatti, Paṭipatti, Paṭivedha

### INTRODUCTION

While exploring the importance of Pariyatti Sāsanā, first we would like to explain what is the Sāsanā. The usage of the word “Sāsanā” is now flourishing in the field of Myanmar culture. However, it is not a Myanmar word. It is adopted from the Pāli word “Sāsanā” means verbal news, literal news and admonishing. The word “Sāsanā” in combination here with Pariyatti refers to admonishing. Admonishing here means the admonishing of the Buddha.

There are three categories of Sāsanā, namely,

- (1) Pariyatti Sāsanā
- (2) Paṭipatti Sāsanā
- (3) Paṭivedha Sāsanā

It is found that these three categories are also termed as

- (1) Pariyattisaddhamma
- (2) Paṭipattisaddhamma
- (3) Paṭivedhasaddhamma<sup>1</sup>

1. Pariyatti Sāsanā means having learned three Piṭakas, five Nikāyas of the words of the Buddha.
2. Practicing of threefold training (sikkhā) of morality (sīla), concentration (samādhi) and wisdom (paññā) or having practiced threefold training (sikkhā) of morality (sīla), concentration (samādhi) and wisdom (paññā) are known as “Paṭipatti Sāsanā”.<sup>2</sup> These practices are the rules of conduct needed to practice in order to achieve supra-mundane Dhamma (lokuttarā).<sup>3</sup>
3. Path (magga) and Fruition (phala) Dhamma and Nibbāna or insight into Path (magga) and Fruition (Phala) Dhamma and Nibbāna is Paṭivedha Sāsanā.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> . Aṅṅṅha, 3. 309. 144. Netti, ṭṭha.10.

<sup>2</sup> . Aṅ, ṭī, 1. 118.

<sup>3</sup> .Mahāni, ṭṭha. 234. Tipi Dictionary. 13.977.

<sup>4</sup> . Aṅ, ṭṭha, 3.309. Pi, Hnyun, 2.545.

## CAUSE SĀSANĀ AND EFFECT SĀSANĀ

Among these three categories, Pariyatti Sāsanā is the field of object for the knowledge based on learning (sutamaya ñāṇa). Paṭipatti Sāsanā is the field of object for the knowledge based on mental development (bhāvanāmaya ñāṇa).<sup>1</sup> These three Sāsanās are connected causally. Paṭipatti is practised rightly with right method through learning of Pariyatti. Then, you arrive at Paṭivedha, insight into the Magga, Phala and Nibbāna through right practicing of Paṭipatti. Therefore, Pariyatti Sāsanā is the mere cause Sāsanā and Paṭivedha Sāsanā is the effect Sāsanā. Paṭipatti Sāsanā is effect Sāsanā when taking into consideration of Pariyatti Sāsanā. Again Paṭipatti Sāsanā becomes cause Sāsanā when taking into consideration of Paṭivedha Sāsanā. Therefore, Paṭipatti Sāsanā should be called as cause and effect Sāsanā.

## THREE CATEGORIES OF SĀSANĀ AND SIMILES

The connection of the three Sāsanā with cause and effect is expressed by three similes in commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā). They are the simile of a lake, simile of a map and simile of a cow.<sup>2</sup>

### Simile of a Lake

In order to become a glorious and beneficial lake, it is necessary to establish the strong, high and systematic embankment and dyke for holding the water which is clean and having good quality. Because of having water like this, five kinds of lotus will blossom and it can be called the glorious lake that is beneficial to the public.

In this simile, Pariyatti Sāsanā is like an embankment and dyke of the lake. Paṭipatti Sāsanā is like the water in the lake and Paṭivedha Sāsanā is the lotus blossom in the lake. Just like the water can be held in the lake only when the embankment of the lake is good so as in order to get the establishment of the practice of Paṭipatti rightly is depended on the strong foundation of Pariyatti Sāsanā. Depending on the clean and good water, five kinds of lotus will blossom so also depending on the right practice of Paṭipatti Sāsanā, Paṭivedha Sāsanā which is magga, phala and Nibbāna will arise.<sup>3</sup>

### Simile of a Map

Again, I would like to delve with the simile of a map. The map indicating the buried treasure is important for hunting to get the treasures from it. It is sure to gain the treasure if one is hunting and digging according to the guidance of the map. In this simile, Pariyatti Sāsanā is like a map. Paṭipatti Sāsanā is hunting and digging of the treasure. Paṭivedha Sāsanā is like the achievement of the buried treasure. Paṭipatti can be practiced rightly only when you get the guidance of Pariyatti. Insight into magga, phala and Nibbāna i.e. Paṭivedha is achieved only after practicing Paṭipatti rightly and systematically.<sup>4</sup>

### Simile of a Cow

Another simile I am going to explain is the simile of a cow. Breeding can be made only when there is a cow. Proliferation of generation can be obtained when there is breeding. In this simile, Pariyatti is like a cow and Paṭipatti is like a breeding. Paṭivedha is like a proliferation of generation. In this way, the three Sāsanās are interdependent to each other in terms of cause and effect.

<sup>1</sup> .Netti, ṭṭha. 10.

<sup>2</sup> . Sārattha, 3.92.

<sup>3</sup> .Ibid, 441.

<sup>4</sup> .Sārattha, 3.92.

## **REASONS FOR THE IMPORTANCE OF PARIYATTI SĀSANĀ 1**

It can be known that the three Sāsanās are beneficial for one another by studying the aforementioned words. Paṭipatti Sāsanā depends on the Pariyatti Sāsanā. Paṭipatti Sāsanā cannot continue to exist and flourish with no strong foundation of Pariyatti Sāsanā. Paṭivedha Sāsanā depends on Paṭiyatti Sāsanā because Paṭivedha will arise only when Paṭiyatti Sāsanā exists.

Having thoroughly known this issue, the Thera, guardians of Sāsanā, shin Mahākassapa etc. convened and rehearsed only the Pariyatti Sāsanā for six times in order not to let the Sāsanā deteriorate dwindle and disappear. Where there is non-disappearance of Pariyatti there will be right practice of Paṭiyatti. Practice in line with right Paṭiyatti leads to the insight into the Paṭivedha. Owing to this fact, Pariyatti Sāsanā is the most basic one among the three Sāsanā.

Besides, I would like to give an example of the Sinhalese There who protected the Pariyatti Sāsanā. Ancient theras protected and maintained the Pariyatti Sāsanā despite many difficulties. However, these Sāsanās disappeared from their country of origin, India due to the various reasons. And these moved to exist from India to the island of Sinhalese. One day, the danger of Caṇḍhālatissa robbery or civil war broke out in that island. Many people died of this war. Those who did not die had to leave their home and hide in the forest to be free from the danger of war. Thus they did not do their works and lived on haphazardly. Owing to the war and famine people could not offer monks who depended upon them. Therefore monks are not sufficient in four requisites. Because of the insufficiency in four requisites, they could not carry out their tasks and practice the Dhamma. Therefore, most of the monks moved to India where there was free from the danger of war and practiced the Dhamma. Only sixty monks stayed in the island of Sinhalese.

That group of sixty monks withstood the war and food insufficiency. They recited the Pariyatti literature taking only what they had to get. They tried to preserve Pariyatti literature. While they could not recite Pariyatti literature orally, they reflected it mentally while lying with head to head on the heap of the sand. In this way they carried the Pariyatti Sāsanā and protected from disappearance for twelve years.<sup>1</sup>

When the war was over, they examined the Pariyatti Dhamma which was carried by those monks who moved to India. It was found that there wasn't any difference between them. Their morale and ability for protection and maintenance of Pariyatti Sāsanā was marvelous and should be taken as an example.

According to this example, Pariyatti Sāsanā is the most fundamental and essential Sāsanā among the three Sāsanās. Therefore, Sinhalese monks protected and maintained the Pariyatti Sāsanā regardless of their lives. Thus, it should be noted that Pariyatti Sāsanā is the most important.

To put these into a nutshell, Pariyatti Sāsanā is 1. the most fundamental Sāsanā, 2. Can explore the Paṭipatti practice and nature of Paṭivedha, 3. Showing the good instruction taking the duty of teacher to people be benefited, 4. Protect the benefits of people as fort up to the last.

## **REASONS FOR THE IMPORTANCE OF PARIYATTI SĀSANĀ 2**

The Importance of Pariyatti Sāsanā is studied in another way. Pariyatti Sāsanā is the Sāsanā that can explore Paṭipatti Sāsanā and Paṭivedha Sāsanā. The morality training, the

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<sup>1</sup> . Sāsanālaṅkāra Treatise, 30.

tranquility training, and training in wisdom are completely expressed in the Pariyattidhamma called Pariyatti Sāsanā. Morality (Sīla) means to conduct verbal and physical action rightly, to control body and speech, make to increase the wholesome dhammas and refrain from doing evil action (ducarita). Regarding the morality training, we can study in the Dīgha Nikāya, Sīlakkhandha Vagga Pāli<sup>1</sup>, the Khuddaka Nikāya, Paṭisambhidāmagga Pāli<sup>2</sup> and the Mahāniddeśa Pāli<sup>3</sup> and their commentaries. Thus the morality training, Paṭipatti Sāsanā is mentioned to the full by the Pariyatti Dhamma.

Pariyatti dhamma explores not only the morality training, Paṭipatti Sāsanā but also tranquility training, Paṭipatti Sāsanā. Tranquility training denotes the placing one's mind on the appropriate foundation of mindfulness (Kammaṭṭhāna), calmness of mind and practice not to waver the mind. These are called "Samatha".

These training rules are studied in the commentary of the Dīgha Nikāya, Sīlakkhandha Vagga Pāli<sup>4</sup>, commentary of the Majjhima Nikāya, Mūlapaṇṇāsa Pāli<sup>5</sup>, the commentary of the Khuddaka Nikāya, Pārājika Pāli and the Visuddhimagga.

Moreover, the training in wisdom, Paṭipatti Sāsanā is explored by the Pariyatti dhamma as well. Wisdom (Paññā) here refers to the mundane wisdom. It includes wisdom based on listening, wisdom based on thinking and wisdom based on reflection. Of them, knowing of materiality (rūpa) dhamma and mentality (nāma) dhamma rightly, vipassanā paññā that realizes these dhamma are impermanent (anicca), suffering (dukkha), and non-self (anatta) is the highest wisdom. This light of wisdom can be obtained only after the establishment of tranquility training (samādhi sikkhā). The good methods to gain this light of wisdom are found all the five Nikāyas particularly in the Dīgha Nikāya Mahāvagga Pāli, Aṭṭhakathā Mahāsatipatṭhāna Sutta<sup>6</sup>, Majjhima Nikāya Mūlapaṇṇāsa Pāli, Aṭṭhakathā Mahāsatipatṭhāna Sutta<sup>7</sup>, Uparipaṇṇāsa Pāli, Aṭṭhakathā Ānāpānasati Sutta<sup>8</sup>, Samyutta Nikāya Mahāvagga Samyutta Pāli, Aṭṭhakathā Ānāpānasamyutta<sup>9</sup>, Aṅguttara Nikāya Dassakanipāta Pāli, Aṭṭhakathā the Giriphānanda Sutta<sup>10</sup>, Khuddaka Nikāya Paṭisambhidamagga Pāli, Aṭṭhakathā Ānāpānasatikathā<sup>11</sup>, and Visuddhimagga Ānāpānasatikathā.

There are the examples of the Pariyatti dhamma support the Paṭipatti Sāsanā. Moreover, Pariyatti dhamma support not only the practice of Paṭipatti but also conducive insight into magga, phala, and Nibbāna (Paṭivedha Sāsanā). Path (magga) denotes the total destruction of defilements (kilesā) and enters into the Nibbāna<sup>12</sup>. Fruition (phala) is the result of the path (magga)<sup>13</sup>. Nibbāna is the dhamma which is the liberation from the attachment (taṇhā) also known as Vāna<sup>14</sup>, devoid of taṇhā or Vāna and annihilation of kilesāvatta<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>. Dī, 1.3-11. 59-66

<sup>2</sup>. Paṭisam, 41-7.

<sup>3</sup>. Mahāni, 30.

<sup>4</sup>. Dī, 1. 69.

<sup>5</sup>. Ma, 1. 26. Ma, ṭṭha, 1. 128.

<sup>6</sup>. Dī, 2. 231. Dī, ṭṭha, 2. 352.

<sup>7</sup>. Ma, 1. 70. Ma, ṭṭha, 2. 251.

<sup>8</sup>. Ma, 3, 122. Ma, ṭṭha, 4. 96.

<sup>9</sup>. Sam, 3. 271. Sam, ṭṭha, 2. 295.

<sup>10</sup>. Añ, 3. 344. Añ, ṭṭha, 3. 317.

<sup>11</sup>. Paṭisam, 161. Paṭisam, ṭṭha, 2. 69.

<sup>12</sup>. Ṭṭkāyawa, 97.

<sup>13</sup>. Paṭisam, ṭṭha, 1. 27.

<sup>14</sup>. Dī, ṭṭha, 2. 56.

<sup>15</sup>. Buddhavaṇi, ṭṭha, 1. 435. Ltivutt, ṭṭha, 1. 101. Visuddhi, 1. 369. Visuddhi, Tī, 1. 460.

These are found several places in Pāli literature and particularly Saṃyutta Nikāya the Nibbānapañhā Sutta<sup>1</sup>, Aṅguttara Nikāya the Nibbāna Sutta<sup>2</sup>, Khuddaka Nikāya Udāna Pāli are the famous suttas<sup>3</sup>. These are the exploration of Paṭivedha effects which are conducive by Pariyatti dhamma.

## CONCLUSION

According to the facts mentioned above, it is clearly known that Pariyatti Sāsanā is the most fundamental Sāsanā. It can show the Patipatti practices and the nature of the Pativedha for the propagation of Sāsanā. Moreover, it can point out the instructions which are beneficial to the people by taking the duties of the teachers. Furthermore, it and shed the light of wisdom over the people, in the world.

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<sup>1</sup>. Sam, 2. 454.

<sup>2</sup>. Aṅ, 2. 387-407.

<sup>3</sup>. Tipi Dictionary, 12. 378. Ibid, 15. 14.