

Perpetuation of the Buddhasāsanā: an Analytical study based on Buddha’s teaching and the 2500-year history of Sāsanā

Abstract

Perpetuation of Buddhism as a religion in the world is an urgent issue in the 21st century. Although it was voted the world’s purest religion on 18.11.2011 by more than 200 representatives from all the world’s religious leaders, Buddhists constitute only 6.62% of the world’s population at present. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the causes underlying the declining number of Buddhists in the world. The purpose of this research is to investigate the causes underlying the decreasing number of Buddhists in the world and analyze the actions taken to perpetuate and improve Buddhism based on historical data on Buddhism dating back 2500 years. This study uses a document research method to investigate progress and decline of Buddhism in history. Based on research findings, data collected from relevant documents will be used for analysis to highlight lessons learned from past events to identify do and don’ts for the perpetuation of future Buddhism. Suggestions will be made for the perpetuation of Buddhasāsanā based on the Buddhist Canon and relevant literature. This research will hopefully be of help for future stakeholders to perpetuate and propagate Buddhism.

Key words: perpetuation, propagate, Buddhism,

Introduction

Buddhasāsanā has been in existence for over 2500 years through many fluctuations in fortunes. Due to the tremendous effort of the Saṅgha and laypeople, devout Buddhists, Buddhism has endured throughout the centuries.

There are many dominant religions in the world such as Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. These religions have been in existence for thousands of years. Among them, Buddhism has existed for 2565 years because Buddhists tried hard to perpetuate and develop overcoming many difficulties. Even now, it is customary and even compulsory at times for every Buddhist ceremony at the conclusion that the phrase “May the teachings of the Buddha endure for a long time” (=Buddhasāsanam ciram tiṭhatu) is recited. Buddhists including monks and laypeople attempt to maintain the Sāsanā in spite of all the difficulties.

If Buddhists want to perpetuate Buddhasāsanā, they need to heed the suggestions of eminent Sayardaws. **Mahāgandhāruṃ Sayardaw** advises in his book on *Future Sāsanā*: Chief of the monks or the head monks of the monastery should allow only two kinds of ordination as a monk: ordination by faith and ordination by knowledge; he should be asked if he wants to

practise meditation (Paṭipatti) or if he wants to learn the teaching of the Buddha (Pariyatti). And, as soon as one is ordained as a monk, if he wants to learn the teaching of the Buddha, he should be sent to a Pariyatti monastery and if he wants to practise meditation, he should be sent to a Paṭipatti monastery. He should not be allowed to stay in monasteries that do not practise Pariyatti and Paṭipatti. In addition, monasteries of monks responsible for Buddha's teachings should only be of two kinds – Pariyatti and Paṭipatti – in accordance with the will of the Buddha. State power should be invested in religion so that the government and officials can take action against monasteries that practise neither Pariyatti nor Paṭipatti (as King Dhammaceti attempted to encourage monks to practise only Pariyatti and Paṭipatti and defrocked monks who did divination, medical treatment, agriculture and business (**Maung Arnt, 1995**)). Besides, Pariyattisāsanā can be seen prominently as the monks try hard in Pariyatti and devotees donate the four requisites generously, but it is not as large and prominent or obvious in Paṭipatti, for instance, practice meditation of the monks and the practice of ten right actions of people. Devotees should do only donations and contributions encouraging Pariyatti and Paṭipatti activities therefore they should contemplate to make donations that benefit the religion in many religious ceremonies) (**Mahāgandhāruṃ Sayardaw, 1995**).

Support by kings and rulers has been crucial for perpetuating and propagating Buddhasāsanā. King Bimbisāra, King Sudhodana, King Kosala, King Ajātasatta, King Kālāsoka, King Asoka, King Duṭṭhagāmaṇi, Vattagāmaṇi and Parakkamabāhu of Ceylon, King Minthī and Kubalaine of China, great prince Shotoku of Japan, King Sīridhammacakkavattikarājādhirājā of Thailand as well as King Manūhā, King Anawyathā, King Dhammaceti and King Mindone of Myanmar honored and supported Sāsanā of the Buddha which has resulted in the perpetuation and propagation of the Sāsanā to many parts of the world (**Maung Arnt, 1995; Mahābuddhavaṃ, 1966**)

Moreover, although it is true that donation in building a pagoda can help gain merit, careful consideration should be given before such actions are taken and only suitable course of actions should be done. The construction of the pagoda where no pagoda has been built is suitable can be called righteous (Sammādiṭṭhi) “**appatiṭṭhite disābāge cetiyapatiṭṭhānaṃ**” and re-construction of a pagoda where previously a pagoda used to stand as evidenced in Mahāvaggasamyutta, vihāravagga aṭṭhakathā; “**ekasmim vihāre dwinnam cetiyānampi lābasakkāro uhlāri na hoti**” (There cannot be much gain and honour in having two pagodas in a monastery). Similarly, if a village has two monasteries, it can become divisive for villagers who will start arguing that about this or that monastery, resulting in much strife”. Building too many pagodas without proper Pariyatti learning or Paṭipatti practice does not bode well for future Buddhasāsanā (**Mahāgandhāruṃ Sayardaw, 1995**).

During more than 2500 years of the Buddhasāsanā, it experienced many internal and external dangers like sectarian divisions among Buddhist monks, creating personal ideologies based on Buddhism, influence of other religions and destruction by the leaders of the country. As a result, Buddhism almost disappeared in many countries where it used to flourish. Buddhism

has either nearly disappeared or totally disappeared from such countries which have evidences of ancient Buddhist religious and cultural heritages as Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Indonesia, and Malaysia (**Maung Arnt, 1995**).

World's Buddhist population accounts only for 6.62% in the world now and according to Size and Projected Growth of Major Religious Groups in 2050, it will only remain at 5.2%. Buddhist population is decreasing not only in the world but also in Myanmar. This research will explore the progressions and regressions of Buddhism in Myanmar and elsewhere by studying the books written on Sāsana in Myanmar such as 2500 journeys of BuddhaSāsana, history of Buddhism, to purify, sustain and spread the Dhamma or Sāsana according to the will of the Buddha, Pali cannon and books translated by Pali into Myanmar related the teachings of the Buddha.

The aim of this research is to find out ways and means to perpetuate Buddhasāsana by identifying factors leading to the decline of Sāsana and suggesting ways to perpetuate Sāsana. The specific objectives are, first, to identify factors leading to the perpetuation of Sāsana; second, the investigate factors leading to the decline of Sāsana; and finally, to suggest ways and means to perpetuate Sāsana.

Discussions are done with reference to Buddhist Canon, Kimilavagg-kimilasutta (Pacñcanipāta), Devatāvagga-Kimilasutta (Chakkanipāta), Abyākatavagga-Kimilasutta (Sattakanipāta), Kassapasamyutta-Saddhammapaṭirūpakasutta, Mahāgandarāma Sayardaw's future Sāsana and data compiled in '2500 journey of Buddhasāsana'.

This research highlights the most important role of the Saṅgha community, governments ('kings' according to the Buddhist Canon) and laypeople and the key role of Pariyatti study and Paṭipatti practice for perpetuation of the Buddhasāsana.

There are three sections in this paper:

- 1) The causes for the perpetuation and disappearance of the Buddhasāsana
- 2) Decline of Buddhasāsana due to various sects of Saṅghā from Dutiya Saṅghāyanā to the present day and
- 3) Decline of Buddhasāsana due to external forces- Destructions by hostile Kings.

Method

In this research, a qualitative method will be used to explore key points from the teachings of the Buddha and history of 2500 Sāsana. This study reviews why Buddhasāsana disappeared in many countries and suggests ways on perpetuation based on lessons from the past.

In an attempt to highlight the importance of perpetuating Sāsana, the data is presented and analysed in three sets: 1) The causes for the perpetuation and disappearance of the Buddhasāsana 2) Decline of Buddhasāsana due to various sects of Saṅghā from Dutiya Saṅghāyanā to the

present day and 3) Decline of Buddha Sasana due to External Forces- Destructions by hostile Kings. Based on these, suggestions will be made on the best ways for the perpetuation of future Sasana.

In this research, causes underling progress and decline of Buddhasāsana will be studied not only from the Pāli Canon but also from the Buddhist's history, e.g. 2500 journey of Buddhasāsana (U Maung Arnt, 1995), History of Ceylon (U Myint Swe-London, 2002), History of India (U Myint Swe-London, 2004), and Bagan Sāsanaṅgaṅga (Ashin Kelāsa, 2009) and Innwa Sāsanaṅgaṅga (Ashin Kelāsa, 2009). The causes underlying perpetuation and disappearance of Buddhasāsana from the Pāli Canon as well as internal and external dangers such as sectarian division, influences by other religions and destruction by the leader of the countries will be tabulated for easy reference and description. Instances of causes for progress and decline of Sāsana will be collected from Pathama-Dutiya-Tatiya Sanddhammasammosa sutta, Devatā vagga-Kimilasutta, Kimilavagga Kimilasutta, Abyākatavagga Kimila sutta, Kassapasamyutta Saddhammapaṭirūpaka sutta, Mahāvaggasamyutta Cīvarathitisutta-Parihānasutta- Aññatrabrahamanṇasutta, Dutiya Pamādādivagga, Adhamma vagga, Anāpattivagga and Dī-Mahāvaggapāḷi of Pāli canon. This will be followed by an analysis of the data into Pariyatti and Paṭipatti causes for progress and decline. Based on the analysed data, principal reasons for the disappearance of Buddhasāsana will be tabulated and interpreted to explain events from the history of over 2500-year-old Sāsana. If Buddhism were to be perpetuated as a religion, lessons need to be learnt from past experiences, causes identified and ways and means for perpetuation and propagation of Sāsana developed.

Factors highlighted in Suttanta Pitaka, individual factors responsible for perpetuation and propagation of Sāsana are enumerated in the following table.

Table 1: The causes for the perpetuation and disappearance of the Buddhasāsana

	Sutta sources with reference to Pāli canon (piṭaka)	Causes underlying perpetuation of Buddhasāsana	Perpetuation		Causes underlying disappearance of Buddhasāsana	Disappearances	
			Pariyatti	Paṭipatti		Pariyatti	Paṭipatti
1.	Pathama Saddhammasammosasutta	5	4	1	5	4	1
2.	Dutiya Saddhammasammosasutta	5	5		5	5	
3.	Tatiya Saddhammasammosasutta	5	2	3	5	2	3
4.	Devatāvagga-kimilasutta	6		6	6		6
5.	Kimilavagga-kimilasutta	5		5	5		5
6.	Abyākatavagga-kimilasutta	7		7	7		7
7.	Indriyavagga-	4	2	2	4	2	2

	Sugatavinayasutta						
8.	Kassapasamīyutta- Saddhammapaṭṭirūkasutta	5		5	5		5
9.	Mahāvaggasamīyutta- Cīvaraṭṭhisutta	4		4	4		4
10.	Mahāvaggasamīyutta- Parihānasutta	4		4	4		4
11.	Mahāvaggasamīyutta- Aññātrabrahamaṇṇasutta	4		4	4		4
12.	Dutiya pamādādivagga, Adhammavagga, Anāpatti vagga	28	20	8	28	20	8
13.	Dīghanikāya Mahāvaggapāli p-100	37		37			
	All told	+119	+33	+86	+82	+33	+49
	Percent		27.7%	72.3%		40.2%	59.8%

As seen in Table 1, a total of 119 causes for the perpetuation of Buddhasāsanā were found with 86 (72.3%) identified as Paṭṭipatti causes and 33 Pariyatti causes (27.7%) as Pariyatti causes. As detailed in the Suttanta Pitaka, – the Pathama Sanddhamma sammosa sutta highlights for 5 times respectfully listening to the Dhamma, respectfully learning of the Dhamma, respectful memorization of the Dhamma, contemplating the meaning of these memorized Dhamma and respectfully practicing the Dhamma as important factors for perpetuation of the Sāsanā (Appendix 1).

Dutiya Sanddhamma sammosa sutta also points out for 5 times the importance of learning the Dhamma (that is sutta, geyya, veyākaraṇa, gāthā, udāna, itivutta, jātaka, abbhutadhamma, vedalla), extensive preaching, teaching and reciting to others learned teachings and repeatedly contemplating learned teachings (Appendix 1).

Tatiya Sanddhamma sammosa sutta considers learning with well-learned Pāli and well-kept phrases and consonants, being open-minded (discipline), teaching of Pāli language by monks endowed with knowledge, monks who have memorized the Pāli, monks who have memorized Suttanta, Abhidhamma and Vinaya, the elders (monks) not practising to be influential and increase of four requisites and unity of Saṅgha (organization) to be crucial for progress of the Sāsanā (Appendix 1).

Reverence on triple gems, morality, awareness (appamāda), exchanging pleasantries, monks residing in a community, and integrity are said to be causes for perpetuation of Sāsanā (Kimilasuttas) (Appendix 1).

For the perpetuation of Sāsanā, easy and accurate understanding of the meanings by learning the Sutta with well-kept phrases and consonants, monks being easy to talk to and patient and also

abiding by the disciplines, teaching Dhamma to other people and monks after memorizing the teaching of the Buddha, Vinaya and Mātikā, excessive effort to attain the Dhamma that has not yet been attained, the elder monks not practicing to be abundant in four requisites (catu paccaya) and making extreme effort to attain Dhamma that has not yet occurred and later generations of young monks following suit are presented as supportive factors in Sugatavinayasutta (Appendix 1).

Striving and cultivation (practicing) the 4 Satipaṭṭhāna is considered to be essential for future Buddhasāsanā as detailed in Cīvaraṭṭhisutta, Parihānasutta and Aññatrabrahmanṇasutta (Appendix 1).

In Dutiya Pamādādivagga, not forgetting, having low appetite, satisfaction, proper consideration, discrimination, striving for good action and not striving for bad action are taught by the Buddha to be the ways to perpetuate the Sāsanā (Appendix 1).

In Adhammavagga, manifesting dhamma as dhamma, manifesting Avinaya as Avinaya, manifesting Vinaya as Vinaya, manifesting what the Buddha preached as being preached by the Buddha, manifesting what the Buddha did not preach as not being preached by the Buddha, manifesting what the Buddha is not to be practiced as not being practiced by the Buddha, manifesting what the Buddha is to be practiced as being practiced by the Buddha, manifesting what the Buddha forbids as being forbidden by the Buddha, manifesting what the Buddha has commanded as being commanded by the Buddha are considered to be factors for perpetuation of Sāsanā (Appendix 1).

Also in Anāpattivagga, the Buddha said thus: manifesting what is not Āpatti as not being Āpatti, manifesting what is Āpatti as being Āpatti, manifesting light Āpatti as being light Āpatti, manifesting serious Āpatti as being serious Āpatti, manifesting abusive Āpatti as being abusive Āpatti, manifesting remaining Āpatti that can be healed as Āpatti that can be healed, manifesting Āpatti that has no remedy as Āpatti that has no remedy, manifesting healing Āpatti as healing Āpatti and manifesting incurable Āpatti as incurable Āpatti. These are the ways to perpetuate Sāsanā (Appendix 1).

Finally, Mahāvaggapāḷi, practicing according to 37 Bodhipakkhiya consisting of 4 Satipaṭṭhānas, 4 sammappadānas, 4 iddhipādas, 5 indriyas, 5 balas 7 bojjhaṅgas and 8 maggaṅgas are proclaimed to be foundation for the perpetuation of Sāsanā (Appendix 1).

One hundred nineteen causes of perpetuation of the Buddhasāsanā were found in the Pali Canon and three in the Sub-commentaries and eighteen two causes of disappearance of the Buddhasāsanā were found in the Pali Canon. If the above factors were reversed, (i.e. practising Bodhipakkhiya becomes ‘not practising Bodhipakkhiya’), they would become the causes for the disappearance of the Sāsanā with the exception of the 37 Bodhipakkhiya factors (Mahāvaggapāḷi) which do not have their counterparts in the decline or disappearance of Sāsanā.

This results in only a total of 49 Paṭipatti factors (59.8%) and 33 Pariyatti factors (40.2%), with a total of 82 factors accounting for the disappearance of Sāsana.

In summary, the Pariyatti causes account for 27.7% and Paṭipatti causes for 72.3% for the perpetuation of Buddhasāsanā. On the other hand, the Pariyatti causes account for 40.2% and Paṭipatti causes for 59.8% for the disappearance of Buddhasāsanā.

Emergences of various sects

In the history of Buddhism, harmony in the religious community was found to weaken occasionally. Harmony in the Samgha community is a crucial part of the Paṭipatti practice. The Buddha preached that “There is happy harmony of Saṃghā, harmony is happy practice= **Sukhā saṃghassa sāmaggī, samaggānaṃ tapo sukho**” (**dhammapadapāḷī**). However, communities of monks degenerated eventually into sects due to numerous reasons which are accounted for in the following table.

Table 2: Decline of Buddhasāsanā due to emergence of Saṃghā sects (Dutiya Saṃghāyanā to the present day)

Country	Year of sāsanā	community	Sects of saṃghā (=Saṃghagaṇas)
India	Dutiya Saṃghāyanā	18	(6-Mahāsaṃghika) Gokulika, Ekabyohāra, Paññatti, Bahussutika, Cetiya, Mūlamahāsaṃghika/ (12-theravāda) Mahisāsaka, Vajjīputtaka, Dhamuttarika, Bhadrāyānika, Sannāghārika, Sammitiya, Sabbatthivāda, Dhammaguttika, Kassapika, Saṅkantika, Suttantika, Mūlatheravāda.
India	Tatiya Saṃghāyanā	31	Theravāda, Mahāsaṃghika, Gokulika, Paññattivāda (=paññattivāda), Bāhuliya (=bahusuttika), Cetiya, Ekabyohāra, Lokuttaravādī, Mahisāsaka, Dhammaguttika, Sabbatthivāda, Kassapika, Saṅkantika, Suttantika, Vajjīputtaka, Dhammuttariya, Channāghārika, Bhadrāyānika, Sammitiya, Hetuvādī, Vibhajjavādī, Uttarāpathaka, Andaka, Aparaseliya, Pubbaseliya, Saddhatthika, Rājagirika, Vetulla (=vepulla), Hemāvātika, Vājiriya and Aññamaññasamghika.
China		14	Pītan (=Abhidhammā), chinshee (=Sassāsiddhi), Sanlun (=Trigantha), Lū (=Vinaya), NichPan (=Nibban), TiLun (=Viññānavāda), ChinHu (=Sukhavatībyūhā), Chan (=jhāna), Shelun (=Viññānavāda), Chushe (=Abhidhammakosa), Tiyyintine (=Kyarpadon), Hwarhin (=Avadamsaka), Phasiyan (=Phashan- Viññānavāda), Chinyin (=Tantara).
Japan		17	Kusha, Gogyitsu, Hosō, Sanrwun, Kigun, Tindine, Shingun, Zin (=Rin-zine, Soto, Phuke, Otaku), Sukhavatībyūhā (=Gyodo, Shin, Yuzuninbhu-su, Gyi), Ritsu and Nichirin.
Nepal		4	Sabhāvika, Issariya, kammika and Yātrika.
Tibet		3	Sakya, Gyilat of sankhapa (=Yellow) and Nyeinmapa (=Red).
Ceylon		3	Mahāvihāra, Abhayagīrivihāra and Jetavanavihāra.
Myanmar		13	(Bagan era) Purimasamghā and Pacchimasamghā, (Inva era) Tun and Run, (now) Sudhammā, Shwekyin, Anaukkhyaung dwāra, Mahādwāra, Muladwāra, Veḷuvan nikāya, Catubhummikamahāsatiṭṭhāna HnetTwin, Gaṇavimutta

			Kutoe and Dhammayuttinikāya Mahārin.
		+103	

As seen in Table 2, due to emergences of different sects from the Dutiya Saṃghāyanā onwards, based on individual ideologies, material gains, fame, admiration and competition, with little regard for the Sāsānā, many causes arose for the decline of Buddhism. From a total of 18 sects during Dutiya Saṃghāyanā in India, the number of sects rose to 31 in Tatiya Saṃghāyanā. Later in history, division of sects ranged from the lowest of 3 in Tibet and Ceylon to much higher 17 sects in Japan and 14 sects in China. In Myanmar, the number of sects remains at thirteen. The specific names of the sects are given in the table.

Decline of Sāsānā due to external forces

The perpetuation of Sāsānā in a country also depends on the sovereignty of a nation which can guarantee security to the religious personnel. There are many occasions in history when Sāsānā faced sudden and steep declines due to intervention, disruptions and destructions by hostile kings – usually professing a different religion. Table 3 outlines such hostile forces along with places and frequencies of such events, and the fate that befell monks, monasteries, pagodas and Piṭaka where data is available according to the Commentary.

Table 3: Decline of Buddha Sāsānā due to External Forces- Destructions by hostile Kings

	Countries	Destroyers or attacker	Century of Sāsānā	Monks			Destruction and Burning		
				kill	punishment	Transformation	monasteries	piṭaka	pagodas
1	India	puhramitra king (Hindu)	4
2									
3	India	Turks		10000			.		.
		Magada Migadāvurū		1600			45		52, Gū-30
4	Ceylon	Elāra (Hindu)	4						
5	China	Mongols	10
6	Turkey Pasha Pakistan Afghanistan	Muslim army	12						.
7	China	Kawsu king	12		.				
8	India	Shaṅkara and (Hindu) king	13						
9	China	(Taoism) Vuansaung king	14	4600	260000	40000			.

10	Tibet	Lamdharmā king	14		.			.	
11	Turkistan	Muslim army	16						
12	Ceylon	First Rājāsīha (Hindu) king	18	.				.	
13	Bangladesh	Muslim army	18	4000			.		
14	Myanmar	Thohanbhuwar king (animist)	21	3000				.	
15	China	(Manchu dynasty) Kansī king	23		.				

As seen in the table, damages done to the Buddhasāsanā due to “Rājāpadānam” or ‘the cause of kings’ (Century of Sāsanā) were outlined. From the 4th century to 23rd century of the Buddhasāsanā, the number of monks killed by invading forces and hostile kings range from 1600 to 10,000 – the largest number of casualties inflicted in India by the Turks. The largest number of monks were punished in China at 260,000 with 40,000 defrocked. As outlined in the table, sites of religious worship and residence were also destroyed with 52 pagodas and 30 caves razed to the ground in India.

Thus, bad kings or hostile kings can destroy the Buddhasāsanā. So, according to the commentary, it is very important to have good kings for the perpetuation of Buddhasāsanā:

“Sāsanam nāma rājānam, nissāya tiṭṭhate idha. micchādiṭṭhika rājāno, sāsanam dūsentī satthuno”.

(=Perpetuation of the Buddhasāsanā depends on the kings; the false kings destroy sāsanā of the Buddha).

“Sammādiṭṭhi ca rājāno, paggaṇentva sāsanam. evñca sati ākāse, ulūrājā dibbati”

(=Right belief the kings are only exalted Buddhasāsanā. If it exalts, it is shine bright like full moon day from the heavens.) (Ancient Sayardaw)

With the auspice of Kings holding the right view, the Sāsanā thus promulgated will shine forth in the sky like the full moon. We need good rulers with the right action and the right mind so that Buddhasāsanā can be perpetuated.

Discussion

Perpetuation of Buddhasāsanā certainly depends on the learning of Pariyatti and the practice of Paṭipatti (Table 1) while a lack of learning and practice will lead to the decline and eventual disappearance of Buddhasāsanā. Internal dangers of sectarian divisions within Buddhist monks, creating personal ideologies based on Buddhism (Table 2) and external dangers such as

influence by other religions and destruction by the leaders of the nations and hostile kings can lead to the decline and disappearance of Buddhasāsanā (Table 3).

In order to perpetuate Buddhasāsanā, Buddhists need to be informed on who can do it, what to do, how to do it and how not to do it based on history of Sāsanā and documentary evidences. As outlined in the Kimilasuttas and Saddhammapaṭirūpakasutta, the most important factors for perpetuation of the Buddhasāsanā include Reverence for Triple Gems, morality, awareness (appamāda) and integrity of stake holders including monks, female monks, lay devotees and female devotee among others (Appendix 1). Among these, monks are undoubtedly most important for the perpetuation of Buddhasāsanā because of they are currently leaders and stakeholders of the Buddhasāsanā. The main task of the monks consists of only two kinds of practice: Pariyatti (learning and teaching the teaching of the Buddha) and Paṭipatti (practicing to attain Magga, Phala and Nibbāna or Sīla, Samādhi and Paññā).

A total of 119 causes for the perpetuation of Buddhasāsanā were identified with 86 (72.3%) accounting for Paṭipatti causes and 33 (27.7%) for Pariyatti causes (Table 1). The higher percentage of Paṭipatti causes highlights the importance of practice as compared to the learning of Buddhist scriptures. Though one may be well-versed in the literature, a prevalent lack of practice (72.3%) can result in the degradation of Buddhasāsanā. The two streams of Pariyatti and Paṭipatti are not mutually exclusive but complementary in nature: a sound Paṭipatti practice shall never be independent of Pariyatti nor should there be Pariyatti without Paṭipatti.

Pariyatti learning is important to build a strong foundation as detailed in the *Pathama and Dutiya Sanddhamma Sammosa suttas* along with *Sugatavinayasutta* which highlight the importance of learning and preaching Dhamma respectfully with the second sutta also pointing out, apart from learning, the importance of extensive preaching, teaching and reciting to others learned teachings and repeatedly contemplating learned teachings which can help spread and maintain Dhamma (Appendix 1).

Being well-versed in Pāli, in its phrases and consonants and being open-minded are factors underscored by *Tatiya Sanddhamma sammosa sutta* and *Sugatavinayasutta*. The role of knowledgeable monks skillful in the language as well as proficient in Suttantta, Abhidhamma and Vinaya is emphasized while not practising to increase influence and four requisites by the elders and unity of Saṅgha (organization) are said to be crucial for progress of the Sāsanā (Appendix 1).

Reverence for Buddha, Dhamma and Samgha is repeated in Kimilasuttas as important factors for the perpetuation of Sāsanā. No less important is endeavouring to attain the Dhamma that has not yet been attained. While it is important for elder monks not to pursue abundance in four requisites (catu paccaya), new generations of monks emulating good models set by the elders is presented as a supportive factor in *Sugatavinayasutta* (Appendix 1).

Striving and cultivation (practicing) the 4 Satipaṭṭhāna is considered to be essential for future Buddhasāsanā as detailed in *Cīvaraṭṭhisutta*, *Parihānasutta* and *Aññatrabrahamaṇasutta*.

In *Dutiya Pamādādivagga* which details 8 factors (Table 1), individual needs to develop awareness, having low appetite (contentedness), satisfaction, proper consideration, discrimination, striving for good action and not striving for bad action are taught by the Buddha to be the ways to perpetuate the Sāsanā (Appendix 1).

In *Adhammavagga* which details 10 factors (Table 1), acknowledging truth as delivered by Lord Buddha as truth, i.e. dhamma as dhamma, Avinaya as Avinaya, Vinaya as Vinaya among others, provides ways and means for to perpetuate Sāsanā.

Anāpattivagga further details 10 factors (Table 1) as the Buddha commanded to manifest truths concerning Āpatti: non-Āpatti as non-Āpatti, Āpatti as Āpatti, light Āpatti as light Āpatti, serious Āpatti as serious Āpatti among others as ways to perpetuate Sāsanā.

Finally, in *Mahāvaggapāḷi*, practicing according to 37 Bodhipakkhiya factors are detailed (Table 1) consisting of 4 Satipaṭṭhānas, 4 sammappadānas, 4 iddhipādas, 5 indriyas, 5 balas 7 bojjhaṅgas and 8 maggaṅgas (Appendix 1) proclaimed to be foundation for the perpetuation of Sāsanā.

One hundred nineteen causes of perpetuation of the Buddhasāsanā were found in the Pali Canon and three in the Sub-commentaries and 82 causes of disappearance of the Buddhasāsanā were found in the Pali Canon. If the above factors were reversed, they would become the causes for the disappearance of the Sāsanā with the exception of the 37 Bodhipakkhiya factors (*Mahāvaggapāḷi*) which do not have their counterparts in the decline or disappearance of Sāsanā. This results in only a total of 49 Paṭipatti factors (59.8%) and 33 Pariyatti factors (40.2%), with a total of 82 factors accounting for the disappearance of Sāsanā.

In summary, it was found that Paṭipatti causes were more influential in both perpetuation and the decline of Buddhasāsanā at 72.3% and 59.8% each while Pariyatti causes account only for 27.7% and 40.2% each. This clearly highlights the need for putting Paṭipatti practices at the forefront with a firm foundation in Pariyatti.

Emergences of various sects from the Dutiya Saṃghāyanā onwards, based on individual ideologies, material gains, fame, admiration and competition, with little regard for the Sāsanā, led to the decline of Buddhism. From a total of 18 sects during Dutiya Saṃghāyanā in India, the number of sects rose to 31 in Tatiya Saṃghāyanā. Later in history, division of sects ranged from the lowest of 3 in Tibet and Ceylon to much higher 17 sects in Japan and 14 sects in China. In Myanmar, the number of sects remains at thirteen. Emergence of these sects harms more than helps the Buddhasāsanā since unity among stakeholders is compromised (Table 2).

Apart from the above factors, damages were also done to the Buddhasāsanā due to “Rājāpadānam” or ‘the cause of kings’ (Century of Sāsanā). A large number of monks perished

due to this factor from the 4th century to 23rd century of the Buddhasāsanā. As the fortunes of Sāsanā waned, invading forces and hostile kings killed 1600 to 10,000 monks in India (Table 3). Approximately 260,000 monks were punished in China with 40,000 defrocked. When the Buddhasāsanā flourished, sites of religious worship and residence prospered but once it faced downfall, pagodas and caves razed to the ground in India (Table 3).

Perpetuation of Buddhasāsanā can only be facilitated by two factors: ordination of monks by faith and ordination by knowledge (**Mahāgandhāruṃ Sayardaw 1995**). Sayardaw suggests asking the monk-to-be if he wants to practice meditation (Paṭipatti) or learn the teaching of the Buddha (Pariyatti). The duty of the master is to send the ordained monk to a Pariyatti monastery for Pariyatti learning if he opts to or if monk wants to practise meditation, to send him to a Paṭipatti monastery. Being idle is out of the question once a person has been ordained as a monk.

No less important is the role of State power who can take action against monasteries that practise neither Pariyatti nor Paṭipatti as exemplified by King Dhammacetī who encouraged monks to do only Pariyatti and Paṭipatti and defrocked monks who engaged in the occult and the art and business of lay people. Nowadays, a higher emphasis is placed on Pariyatti learning whereby lay devotees donate the four requisites generously to Pariyatti learning centres. As perpetuation of the Buddhasāsanā depends more extensively on Paṭipatti practice, devotees should provide their contributions equally or a little more to Paṭipatti Sāsanā. The practice of building too many pagodas should also be avoided to prevent dissent and discord among devotees.

As division of Saṃgha into too many sects can also lead to the weakening of Sāsanā (Table 2), unity among monks should be promoted and dissent and discord should be settled amicably.

No less crucial for the perpetuation of Buddhasāsanā is **king or the ruler** of the nation. When the kings or rulers are hostile, it can result in the decline or disappearance of Buddhasāsanā but when they are friendly and facilitative, the Sāsanā can prosper. King Bimbisāra, King Sudhodana, King Kosala and King Ajātasatta during Buddha's time were responsible for preservation of Buddha's teaching. In the post-Buddha era, King Kālāsoka, King Asoka, King Duṭṭhagāmaṇi, Vattagāmaṇi and Parakkamabāhu of Ceylon, King Minthī and Kubalaine of China, great prince Shotoku of Japan, King Sīridhammacakkavattikarājādhirājā of Thailand, King Manūhā, King Anawyathā, King Dhammacetī and King Mindone of Myanmar honored and supported Sāsanā of the Buddha (**Maung Arnt, 1995; Mahābuddhavaṃ, 1966**)

Also due to kings and rulers, Buddhasāsanā declined and disappeared in certain countries including Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Nepal, Indonesia, and Bangladesh. These kings and rulers did not profess Buddhism but were hostile to Buddhists. So, Buddhasāsanā can be perpetuated with kings' or rulers' support and sponsorship as well as it can disappear because of the destruction by the same people.

Four types of persons can perpetuate the Buddhasāsanā: monks, female monks, lay devotees and female devotees. Among these, monks play an important role in carrying out the task. In communities, female devotees are considered to be important and the ruler of a nation is the most important person for perpetuating Buddhasāsanā. Female devotees are important as the King and Chief Monk were born of lay devotees and female devotees are therefore persons who enable the perpetuation of Buddhasāsanā (**Kimilasuttas and Saddhammapaṭirūpakasutta, Anguttra Nikaya**)

Conclusion

In summary, the causes of the decline of Buddhasāsanā can be identified as internal and external. Internal causes are weakness in practical practice in Pariyatti and Paṭipatti and sectarian divisions within the Saṅgha. External dangers are Buddhist kings being defeated by heathen kings or hostile forces of other religions.

Therefore, if Buddhists want to perpetuate the Buddhasāsanā, monks need to study and practice in Pariyatti and Paṭipatti according to the teaching of the Buddha as well as internal missionary work (Ajjattasāsanā) is needed more than external missionary work (Bahiddhasāsanā). Devotees should support not only Buddhasāsanā by the four requisites but also study and practice the teaching of the Buddha. In particular, leaders or kings of Buddhist nations should protect their countries and genuinely revere the three gems following the examples of ancient kings so that the true teaching of the Buddha can be propagated worldwide.

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Appendix 1

Individual factors responsible for perpetuation and propagation of Sāsana

1. Pathama Sanddhamma Sammosa Sutta (5 factors)									
a. respectfully listening to Dhamma	b. respectfully learning Dhamma	c. respectfully memorizing Dhamma	d. contemplating meaning of memorized Dhamma	e. respectfully practising Dhamma					
2. Dutiya Sanddhamma Sammosa Sutta (5 factors)									
a. learning Dhamma (sutta, geyya, veyākaraṇa, gāthā, udāna, itivutta, jāta, abbhutadhamma, vedalla)	b. extensive preaching,	c. extensive teaching	d. reciting learned teachings to others	e. repeatedly contemplating learned teachings.					
3. Tatiya Sanddhamma Sammosa Sutta (5 factors)									
a. becoming well-learned in Pāli	b. being open-minded	c. teaching of Pāli by knowledgeable and disciplined monks	d. elders (monks) striving for influence and four requisites	e. unity of Saṅgha					
4. Kimilasuttas									
i. Kimilavagga-kimilasutta (6 factors)									
a. Reverence for the Buddha	b. Reverence for Dhamma	c. Reverence for the Saṅgha	d. morality	e. awareness	f. exchanging pleasantries				
ii. Devatāvagga-Kimilasutta (5 factors)									
a. Reverence for the Buddha	b. Reverence for Dhamma	c. Reverence for the Saṅgha	d. morality	e. mutual respect					
iii. Abyākatavagga-Kimilasutta (7 factors)									
a. Reverence for the Buddha	b. Reverence for Dhamma	c. Reverence for the Saṅgha	d. morality	e. concentration	f. awareness	g. exchanging pleasantries			
5. Sugatavinayasutta (4 factors)									
a. precise comprehension through good practice	b. being open-minded, patient and disciplined	c. being knowledgeable, reteaching Dhamma, Vinaya and Mātikā to others	d. extreme effort to attain the unattained Dhamma and elder monks not pursuing abundance of four requisites						
6. Cīvaraṭṭhisutta (4 factors)									

a. mindfulness of the body	b. mindfulness of the feelings	c. mindfulness of the mind	d. mindfulness of the dhamma					
7. Parihānasutta (4 factors)								
a. mindfulness of the body	b. mindfulness of the feelings	c. mindfulness of the mind	d. mindfulness of the dhamma					
8. Aññatrabrahmaṇṇasutta (4 factors)								
a. mindfulness of the body	b. mindfulness of the feelings	c. mindfulness of the mind	d. mindfulness of the dhamma					
9. Dutiya Pamādādivagga (8 factors)								
a. awareness	b. having low appetite	c. satisfaction	d. proper consideration	e. discrimination	f. striving for good action	g. having good friends	h. striving for good deeds and not bad deeds	
10. Adhammavagga (10 factors)								
a. manifesting dhamma as dhamma b. manifesting adhamma as adhamma	c. manifesting Avinaya as Avinaya, d. manifesting Vinaya as Vinaya,	e. manifesting Buddha's words His words	f. manifesting what are not Buddha's words as not His words	g. manifesting Buddha's non-practice as His non-practice	h. manifesting Buddha's practice as His practice	i. manifesting the Buddha's forbiddance as His forbiddance	j. manifesting Buddha's commands as His commands	
11. Anāpattivagga (10 factors)								
a. manifesting non-Āpatti as non-Āpatti b. manifesting Āpatti as Āpatti	c. manifesting light Āpatti as light Āpatti	d. manifesting serious Āpatti as serious Āpatti	e. manifesting abusive Āpatti as abusive Āpatti	f. manifesting non-abusive Āpatti as non-abusive Āpatti	f. manifesting remediable remaining Āpatti as such	g. manifesting non-remediable remaining Āpatti as such	h. manifesting healing Āpatti as healing Āpatti	i. manifesting incurable Āpatti as incurable Āpatti
12. Mahāvaggapāli (37 Bodhipakkhiya- Factors of Enlightenment)								
a. four Satipaṭṭhānas,	b. four Sammapadānas,	c. four Iddhipādas,	d. five indriyas,	e. five balas	f. seven bojjhaṅga	g. eight maggaṅgas		