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BEGINNING OF KHANTI *PARIYATTI* *SĀSANĀ* IN WUNTHO

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Abstract

“Beginning of Khanti *Pariyatti Sāsanā* in Wuntho” is a research work that has revealed importance of the *Sāsanā* in the region in the development of societies throughout history. Khanti *Pariyatti Sarthin Taik* of Wuntho Town, Sagaing Division, was founded in 1913. It will be a hundred years in 2013. Although the *Pariyatti Sarthin Taik* is quite close to the centenary year, there is not yet any book record on its history and the account of the institution. No one has attempted yet to write a book on Wuntho *Pariyatti Sāsanā* Monastery. For these reasons the compiler intended to compile a paper on “Beginning of Khanti *Pariyatti Sāsanā* in Wuntho”. Moreover he also believes that a Myanmar Buddhist should know, take interest in the study of Khanti *Pariyatti Sarthin Taik* as it is a famous religious institution carrying out the three tasks of *Sāsanā* in Upper Myanmar.

Aim

The purpose of this paper is to give an authentic vivid information about the importance of the *Sāsanā* by making *Pariyatti*, *Patipatti* and *Pativedha Sāsanā* continues to thrive.

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Introduction

Khanti *Pariyatti Sarthin Taik* of Wuntho Town, Sagaing Division, was founded in 1913. It will be a hundred years in 2013. Although the *Pariyatti Sarthin Taik* is quite close to the centenary year, there is not yet any book on the history and the account of the institution. No one has attempted yet to write a book on Wuntho *Pariyatti Sāsanā* Monastery. The hand-written manuscripts and books written by Khanti *Sayadawgyi* and the writings in Shwe Wun Yadana Magazine are notable accounts of the *Pariyatti Sarthin Taik*. But they cannot constitute a record text. Therefore the compiler decided to prepare this paper entitled “Beginning of Khanti *Pariyatti Sāsanā* in Wuntho” based on the records, books pertaining to Wuntho Khanti *Pariyatti* Monastery, and interviews with *Sayadaw* Visuddhi, 95 years, Taungmaw Village, the fourth Khanti *Pariyatti Sarthin Taik Sayadaw* U Javana (Lay), 80 years and lay persons from Wuntho Town.

Research Report

Descriptions in this paper are: Wuntho Town suffered damages due to floods in 1967 and 1995. Many houses in town and historic evidences were destroyed. During the Second World War historic evidences were destroyed due to ravages of war. Moreover the monks and lay persons who know and who can give information about the Khanti *Pariyatti Sarthin Taik* are now quite old. Thus there can be a break in historic link. In researching the history of the *Pariyatti Sarthin Taik*, the history of Wuntho Town can, by no means, be left out. Wuntho Town was the resident town of the famous Wuntho *Sawbwagyi* U Aung Myat. Furthermore Wuntho Town is an important place which contributes much to the prosperity of the *Sāsanā* of Theravada Buddhism. There are several *Pariyatti Sarthin Taik* branches and meditation centres which branch out from the Wuntho Khanti *Pariyatti*

Sarthin Taik. Thus the Khanti *Pariyatti Sarthin Taik* contributes a great deal to the welfare of *Pariyatti Sāsana*.

The Establishment of the Khanti *Pariyatti Sāsana* at Wuntho

Wuntho is situated in the north latitude between 23° 43' and 23°11' and east longitude between 95°33' and 96°8' .On the map it is M 315595. It is from Yangon to the North the railroad track 543 miles and from Mandalay 163 miles to the North on the rail road towards Myitkyina. According to the boundary on the East of Wuntho is Ti Gyain and Kaw Lin Townships respectively. In the North and the North East we have Indaw Township, and Ban Mauk Township. In the West is Pin Le Bu Township. In the South is Kaw Lin Township and their boundary touches each other. The area of Wuntho is 510.13 sq-miles.

In the Wuntho area we have one hundred and thirty one Buddhist Monasteries, five Christian Schools, two Muslim Mosques, and two Chinese Temples. There were also Schools Teaching Buddhism such as, Myo Shae Ye Wun *Kyaung Sarthin Taik*, Khanti *Pariyatti Sarthin Taik*, and Magyi Gon *Pariyatti Sarthin Taik*.

The *Sāsana* of Wuntho *Myo* hails from the time of Konbaung Dynasty, the last king being Badon *Min* (1781 -1819). Wuntho *Sawbwagyi U Htin* (1763 – 96) began to be popular during his reign. Wuntho *Sawbwagyi U Htin* in the year 1767 built a pagoda which is named as the Satu Buddha Maha Athula *Ceti* from the bricks that were backed from three kits in the East of Maha Hman *Kyaung* in Wuntho. *Sawbwa U Htin* himself built and worshiped in front of his palace a small pagoda known as Hawdaw Oo. Besides this pagoda there were in Wuntho *Myo*, Shwe *Kyaung Kyaungtaik*, *Sawbwa U Htin* built in the year 1783, and worshiped Datt Paung Su pagoda near the Maha Thain Taw Win, on the suggestion of King Badon.

Although there are no records of the Theravada Buddhist philosophy in Wuntho town, during the time of *Sawbwagyi* U Htin (1763-96) the existing pagodas are a solid proof of the existence of the Buddhist religion in that area. The relations of Wuntho *Sawbwa* U Htin were the first worshipers of the Khanti Monastery. During the time of *Sawbwagyi* U Shwe Tha (1852-81) Khanti *Pariyatti* Monastery began to be well known in Sagaing – Katha Division. Therefore we will be describing the history of the Khanti *Pariyatti* Monastery from the time of *Sawbwagyi* U Shwe Tha till the present times. U Shwe Tha (1852-81) is the great grand son of *Sawbwagyi* U Htin (1763-96). The genealogy of U Shwe Tha is as follows:- The son of U Htin is U Shwe Yan. The son of U Shwe Yan is U Bwa, the son of U Bwa is U Shwe Tha. In the records mentioned in history, and from the time of Thohon Bwa till *Sawbwagyi* U Aung Myat there were two hundred and sixty four *Sawbwas* that governed Wuntho. During the reign of King Mindon (1852-1878) Wuntho *Myo* was one of the ninety nine area that was govern by the *Sawbwas*. On the 17th December 1852 when prince Mindon rebelled against his brother King Pagan, *Sawbwa* U Shwe Tha was on the side of Prince Mindon, he was awarded with the title of Min Hla Thamanta Raza and he gained a number of titles as the head man of Wuntho in the year 1852, Before long he was raised to the *Sitke* office in the same year. On the 3rd. November 1866 he quelled the rebellion of Padiansa and offered the leader to King Mindon, the king was so pleased and on the 21st November 1867 besides the present office he was rewarded with following title as Wuntho *Myo* Mingala *Sawbwagyi*. He received three decorations as follows:

- 1: Mahavamsa Raza Thohon Bwa.
- 2: Mahathiri Zeya Thohon Bwa.
- 3: Mahavamsa Thiri Raza Thonhon Bwa

Wuntho *Sawbwa* U Shwe Tha possesses all the qualities of a good leader both in the political and religious field; he is also appreciated and respected

by King Mindon. He tried to eradicate from his area all thievery and dacoity. He had love for his country and for the people, and besides he had favored the cause of the Buddhist Religion by encouraging and helping the cause in a very remarkable way. He also was very eager to obtain merits by the promotion of good works. He even made the small pagoda of U Htin's Pagoda into a majestic Pagoda and venerated it. He too spread the Buddhist religion and made it famous in his Wuntho *Myo*. During the time of *Sawbwagyi* U Shwe Tha the following monasteries existed and were venerated: The monasteries were: -

- 1: Taung Paw *Kyaung*
- 2: Shwe *Kyaung*
- 3: Khanti *Kyaung*
- 4: Lay Htatt *Kyaung*
- 5: Hman *Kyaung*
- 6: Sapae Yon *Kyaung*
- 7: Oo Yin Taw *Kyaung*
- 8: *Kyaung Thit Kyaung* and
- 9: Kan Taw *Kyaung*.

The place of the first Khanti Monastery was situated on the North West of the Wuntho which is the place of the five pagodas. On the west side of the five pagodas at one edge of the Daungyu Creek the monastery was built and venerated by U Shwe Tha. The former place of the first Khanti Monastery is known as Kaladan (Mya Thanda) Quarters, and is thickly populated by the houses of the populace. Now we are able to show the periphery of the old place of the First Khanti monastery but there still exist the Five Pagodas. During the year 1868 *Sawbwagyi* U Shwe Tha wanted to honor and venerate one of his relations, a Shan Buddhist monk by the name of U Kateti, who was living in the Khanti Township, and with all respect invited him to Wuntho. The name of the monastery was given as *Khanti Kyaung* since the monk was hailed from the Khanti area. In the year 1881

the first abbot, U Kateti died in his monastery in Wuntho. At the death of the abbot the Khanti *Kyaung* was not raised to the level of a Religious center. He was the first abbot in Wuntho and reigned for 13 years.

In 1882 Wuntho *Sawbwagyi* U Shwe Tha handed his sawbwaship to his son Maung Aung Myat who was at that time only 21 years of age. He studied under Kinwun Mingyi who was at the Palace of Mandalay. Since his father U Shwe Tha was in his 58 year and he asked King Thibaw to grant the office of *Sawbwa* to his son Maung Aung Myat. Therefore in the year 1882 on the 18th April he was officially appointed as the *Sawbwagyi* with the title Mahavamsa Thirizeya Thohon Bwa.

In 1883 there rose a rebellion of Mg Wa and Mg Paw with 3000 men at hand in Mo Gaung and Monyin area; with the help of *Sitke* Min Hla Raza and *Sitke* Min Htin, Wuntho *Sawbwa* U Aung Myat was able to quell the rebellion and was able to present to King Thibaw the arms and the offenders. King Thibaw was so pleased and conferred on U Aung Myat the title “Mawriya Mahavamsa Thiri Thudama Raza Thohon Bwa”, in the year 1883 on the 13th of June. He thus governed justly Wuntho *Myo* with two titles.

On the 1st of January 1886 the Viceroy of India Lord Dufferin declared the end of the Monarchy rule in the Yadanabon Nepyidaw as well as the whole of Myanmar. After the death of U Kateti, the monk U Vilasa who was named before he was a monk as U Shwe Yo, he carried on the succession as the second abbot of the Khanti Monastery. He is the pupil of U Kateti and he hailed from Kauksin Village in Pin Le Bu Township. He was the head architect of the building of the Khanti Monastery. The *Sawbwagyi* U Aung Myat (1861–1964) himself spent all the expenses for his ordination and made him successor to U Kateti. In the year 1890 the British army arrived in Wuntho and destroyed the *Haw* of the place of the successive *Sawbwas* by burning it down. *Sawbwagyi* U Aung Myat with all his retainue opposed the British army but since he was overcome had to

retire to Man Si with his father U Shwe Tha. The Town of Wuntho in the year 1891 on the 24th of February fell under the British rule.

The British army took possession of the Khanti *Kyaung* and operated and governed the whole town and the near by area around Wuntho. On leaving the premises the Khanti *Kyaung* was reduced into ashes. Therefore no succeeding *Kyaungtaik* ever existed from that time. Before his departure, U Aung Myat, ordered his Secretary U Tha Dun to re-build the Second Khanti *Kyaungtaik* with a sum of 3000 *kyats* which he left with him. The *Kyaungtaik* was re-built on a new site on the 10th of December 1891. Besides this *Kyaungtaik*; he also built ponds, monasteries, as well as pagodas for the propagation of the Buddhist Religion. As explained above U Aung Myat was like his father U Shwe Tha who was the benefactor of the second Khanti Monastery. The second Khanti Monastery was built in a *thatch* grass land since the first monastery was burnt down, and so the second Khanti Monastery was built in the land donated by Daw Saing Pauk who was a Shan Lady. This second monastery was also called Khanti. It was not raised up to a *Sarthin Taik* during the time of (U Shwe Yo) U Vilasa. The Abbot U Vilasa was abbot in this Khanti Monastery (1891-1912), he was abbot for 20 years before he died. However the monastery of the second Khanti *Sayadaw* U Vilasa had not been raised to the state of *Sarthin Taik* till 1912.

During the time of the First Khanti *Sayadaw* U Candima (1887-1932) in Wuntho the Khanti Monastery became Khanti *Pariyatti Sarthin Taik* in the year 1913. U Candima was a very learned monk as mentioned in the book of Therut Patti Wibawani. On the 9th December 1912, the death of U Vilasa at Khanti Monastery in Wuntho made U Candima to return from Mandalay to Wuntho. The funeral took place on the 16th December 1912. He saw to it that his master Abbot Monk was cremated, although he had the plan to return to Mandalay, the persistent wish of the people of Wuntho stopped him from returning to Mandalay, and so in 1913, he was 38 years

of age and his monkhood being 18 years; he with 25 students founded the Khanti *Pariyatti* Monastery in Wuntho *Myo* and took over the teaching in that monastery. Therefore in Wuntho the Khanti *Pariyatti* Monastery began to exist on the 17th of July 1913. This monastery was recognized that it was affiliated to the Pakokku Vamsa – Pakokku *Sarthin Taik* in the year 1913. The reason for calling the Pakokku Vamsa – Khanti *Pariyatti Sarthin Taik*, that Pakokku was the seat of Buddhism in that area.

Khanti *Sayadaw* U Candima (1887–1932) was a very learned and famous monk that ever lived at his times at Wuntho. He died at the age of (58), 38 years as monk on the 20th of May 1932, at his Khanti *Pariyatti* Monastery. After the death of U Candima the next abbot was *Abidazamaharathaguru, Aggamahapandita, Bhaddanta* Sujana who succeeded and governed the Khanti *Pariyatti* Monastery. Since from the year 1932 the second *Sayadaw* of Khanti Monastery carried on the same syllabus in teaching as his predecessor U Candima. The Khanti *Pariyatti Sarthin Taik* was gradually losing its fame because of the World War II . The Khanti *Pariyatti Sarthin Taik* also suffered a lot due to the war.

Buddha *Sāsanā* means the Teaching of the Buddha. There are three kinds of *Sāsanā*, namely *Pariyatti Sāsanā*, *Patipatti Sāsanā* and *Pativedha Sāsanā* . Of them learning the Buddha's Teaching is called *Pariyatti Sāsanā*. Practical application of the Buddha's Teaching, *Sila, Samadhi* and *Pañña* is called *Payipatti Sāsanā*. The realization of the Buddha's Teaching i.e., attainment of *Jhana, magga, phala* and *Nibbana* is called *Pativedha Sāsanā*. If three kinds of *Sāsanā* are preserved and practiced it will keep on flourishing. Among them *Pariyatti Sāsanā* is basic foundation for perpetuation and propagation.

Khanti *Pariyatti* Monastery became improved from 1933 to 1941 in the time of second Khanti *Sayadaw*. Before Second World War, there were monks who passed examination: one for higher level, two for middle level and seven for lower level in Khanti *Pariyatti* Monastery. In the time of

second Khanti *Sayadaw*, not only encouragement to sit for examination but also Khanti *Pariyatti* Monastery became an examination paper center as well as examination center. Before Second World War, the student novices and monks who came and studied were from the regions of Upper Myanmar such as Myitkyina, Sahmaw, Nammati, Pinbaw, Hobin, Moekaung, Moehnin, Indawgyi, Nammar, Bamaw, Shwegu, Mawlu, Indaw, Ti Gyain, Katha, Bamauk, Pinlebu, Kawlin, Koedaungbo, Maizar, Nankhan, Kanbalu, Yaw, Gantgaw, Kalay, Khanti, Phaungpyin and Sawathti etc.

Conclusion

In summing up, during the time of Wuntho *Sawbwagyi* U Htin (1763-96) the Theravada Buddhism thrived. U Htin's descendant successors *Sawbwagyi* U Shwe Tha (1852-81) and his son *Sawbwa* U Aung Myat (1861-94) were also very pious Buddhists. Due to the religious faith of the townspeople and rural people the *Sāsanā* thrived day by day in Wuntho. Consequently *Yewun Pariyatti Sarthin Taik* and *Khanti Pariyatti Sarthin Taik* could be founded in 1898 and 1913 respectively. Regarding *Patipatti*, *Khanti Yeiktha Kammattan Kyaung* could be founded in 1954. Moreover branch *Pariyatti* and *Patipatti* Monasteries also appeared. The seeds for emergence of these religious institutions were sown by *Sawbwagyi* U Htin and his descendants *Sawbwagyi* U Shwe Tha and son *Sawbwagyi* U Aung Myat. It has been recorded for posterity that “*Khanti Kyaungtaik* originated from U Shwe Tha- *Khanti Sarthin Taik* began with U Kittī”. After U Vilasa, the successor was Pakokku *Sayadaw* Ganthasara. Only during the time of well learned U Candima (1875-1932) who was greatly relied on by Pakokku *Sayadaw* Ganthasara that *Khanti Pariyatti Sarthin Taik* could be founded on July 17, 1913. Therefore U Candima was recognized as the First Khanti *Sayadaw* of *Khanti Pariyatti Sarthin Taik*. The First Khanti *Sayadaw* U Candima gave the name “*Pakokkuvamsa Khanti Sarthin Taik*. The *Sāsanā*

of Khanti *Pariyatti* is now 100 years (centenary) of age to the time of this compilation at present.

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