

Abstract

This thesis has two objectives: to study the meaning, history, and essential contents of Anupubbikathā and to study the ways to apply its teaching methods and contents for the propagation of Buddhism in order to solve our personal problems and social problems at present.

Anupubbikathā means a gradual instruction or regulated exposition of ever more valuable and sublime subjects consisting of five doctrines: 1) the doctrine of donation or sacrifice 2) the doctrine of precepts or refraining from doing harm to the life and property of other people 3) the doctrine of heaven or worldly happiness 4) the doctrine of the disadvantages or bad effects resulting from sensuality 5) the doctrine of the advantages or good effects of renunciation or escape from sensuality. These doctrines are related: donation and precepts, when they are followed, give rise to the heaven or worldly happiness which in its turn causes some disadvantages from which renunciation or escape leads to advantages.

According to the Tipitaka, Anupubbikathā is an instruction that the Buddha liked to preach by himself and then conclude with the doctrine of the Four Noble Truths or Ariyasacca. As for his disciples, Mahāmoggallāna is the only one who ever offered this instruction. But its exact contents are not known, nor available in the Tipitaka. However, since Anupubbikathā is mostly taught to the lay people and the real meaning of the doctrines seems to teach them to realize the disadvantages of heaven or worldly happiness and then to go into monkhood or escape from sensuality, the contents of these five doctrines should emphasize the fundamental or basic sermons suitable for the lay people.

Again, nowadays monks don't teach Buddhist doctrines in line with Anupubbikathā and do not have the same capacities as the Buddha and the holy persons, most listeners are interested in other matters due to their materialism, and some of the contents of Anupubbikathā according to the Buddhist texts don't go along with the current situations, though its teaching methods are still practicable. Accordingly, the Buddha's teaching methods and the contents of Anupubbikathā should

be applied in accordance with the modern situations for the sake of the propagation of Buddhism that will bring about benefits to society.

The important application of Anupubbikathā consists of gradual instruction from the simple to the more difficult or sublime subjects or doctrines, e.g. from donation that is generally performed to precepts that are more difficult to practice, by relating one with another respectively, e.g. relating donation and precepts to heaven or worldly happiness that is their effect, and teaching with the assistance of modern technologies like computers. On the other hand, as for the application of its contents, current situations or events can be analyzed to reveal that they come in line with the doctrines in Anupubbikathā, for example, to violate the copy rights of other people is the violation of the second precept and various sufferings resulting from preoccupation with gambling or drug addiction are the modern disadvantages of sensuality.