

## **Chapter I**

### **Introduction**

#### **1.1. Background and Significance of the Problems**

History tells us about outstanding and learned people from time to time in every country of the world. Due to lack of keeping good records subsequent generations generally remain ignorant of these people and their work. The younger generation needs to recognize that it is essential to maintain good records of the life and work of outstanding and famous people. Theravada Buddhist countries wrote many books on Buddhism and taught people that it is especially conducive to liberating others from the woes and misery of the world. We should bear in mind that we see better and further.

In the present day people accept that mindfulness meditation is important for peace of mind. Many people try to practice vipassanā or insight meditation at a meditation center and participate in meditation retreats as much as possible. People try to practice meditation for their spiritual development using different methods, which are introduced by different teachers.

The Researcher will investigate different ways and ideas of vipassanā meditation procedure and the original sources of these ideas and present guidelines and practical approaches. There is a large collection of literature in Pali Scripture which are discourses related to encouragement, guidelines, reminders and vipassanā meditation procedure. This researcher found that the main thirty-seven states are related and important to enlightenment.

These are the four foundations of mindfulness, the four right attempts, the four ways to strength, the five faculties, the five powers, the seven enlightenment factors, and the Noble Eightfold Path. Also there are some other points that the researcher discovered, namely the Pa-Auk Vipassanā Meditation method. Vipassanā Meditation Instructions in the Mahāsatiṭṭhāna Sutta, ‘The Greater Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness’<sup>1</sup> provides details such as the four foundations of mindfulness:- *Kāyānupassanā*, *Vedanānupassanā*, *Cittānupassanā* and *Dhammanupassanā*, Mindfulness for Breathing: Breathing in, Breathing out, Long Breath, or Short Breath. At the Pa-Auk Vipassanā Meditation center it is possible to learn contemplation on four postures; the meditators concentrate when walking, standing, sitting, and lying.

Furthermore, the meditators also note mindfulness of general activities when using their body. At this center the meditators are guided to realize "intention to move" and "intention to sit" for mindfulness. The four elements- Earth, Water, Fire, and Air in the body are explained, as well as understanding the no self-concept of the body. Types of feelings such as a pleasant feeling (*Sukha*), painful feeling (*Dukkha*), and neither neither-painful nor-pleasant feelings (*Upekkhā*) are identified and the ways to overcome them are revealed.

This researcher had the experience of meditating on nine courses of 10 days each at four of the meditation centers that are following the Pa-Auk Sayādaw's method in Yangon, Myanmar. During the retreats at these centers the researcher noticed that the practitioners had to do ānāpāna, the samatha respiration for the first five days before changing to vipassanā or insight meditation. The meditation procedure is very strict.

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<sup>1</sup> T. W. Rhys Davids, **Dīgha Nikāya**, vols. II. ed. Oxford: PTS, 1982-1995. Pa,335

The practitioners must follow only their center's method. The course is also strenuous. The meditation hours are long and practitioners, in addition to observing the eight precepts, are put on a strict vegetarian diet. This can make them feel rather weak, tired, and uncomfortable. The researcher also noticed that at other centers the period for ānāpāna respiration is not as long as five solid days, the practitioners had more time to relax, and the diet is more balanced. People need to have a sound mind in a sound body to work hard. The Lord Buddha himself was not a vegetarian.

The researcher is very curious to know why ānāpāna or mindfulness of respiration has to be carried out for exactly five days for all practitioners and not more or less than five days. It is well known that mindfulness of the body must precede the work of tranquility and insight. It is specified in the Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta of Dīgha-Nikāya that in order to have firm control of the mind one must adopt and practice one of the exercises for mindfulness of the body.<sup>2</sup> In the Kāyagatāsati Sutta eighteen kinds of mindfulness of the body are mentioned, of which mindfulness of respiration (ānāpāna) is one. The practice of mindfulness of respiration alone is capable of assisting the practitioner to attain “knowledge of liberation” which means development of the path and realization of fruition. This is also mentioned in the Ānāpānasatti Sutta i.e. how mindfulness of respiration can bring about mindfulness of the body, the four absorptions of tranquility meditation, insight meditation, development of the path and realization of fruition (the last two known as

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<sup>2</sup> Maurice Walshe, **The Long Discourses of the Buddha**, A New Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya (DN22), (Wisdom Publication, Boston, 1987). p.335

“knowledge of liberation”).<sup>3</sup> What the researcher is curious about is that there are individual differences in ability of obtaining control over one’s mind. So why should each and every practitioner do the ānāpāna meditation for five days? Some may need more time, while some may be able to do it in a shorter period of time. Another point that the researcher noticed is that in element meditation (*Dhātukammathāna*), the twelve characters of four elements are divided by concentration that arises near the fourth stage of *Jhāna*. At this level this concentration light atomizes thirty-two parts of the body. It is called material meditation (*Rūpakammathāna*) to develop absorption concentration and is also called *Jhāna*.

Therefore a meditator can choose any of the forty tranquility meditation focuses as taught by the Venerable Pa-Auk Sayādaw that accords to the Buddha’s teaching. Having developed right concentration the meditator may proceed to practice insight meditation.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the researcher read through the meditation techniques advocated by Venerable Pa-Auk Sayādaw and found them to be interesting, practical, and useful for performing vipassanā (insight) meditation. A brief explanation about these factors follows. The meditation technique of the Venerable Pa-Auk Sayādaw is divided into four parts called Tetrads. Each tetrad theoretically has four stages.<sup>5</sup> This first stage is the stage of attainment of concentration (*Appanā jhāna*). This First Tetrad is the main and essential stage. If this first stage is properly done one can proceed to

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<sup>3</sup> Bodhi, Bhikkhu, **The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha**, A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya (MN), (Wisdom Publication, Boston, 1995). p.1074

<sup>4</sup> Pa-Auk Sayadaw, **The Only Way for the Realization of Nibbāna** , by PAMC (Singapore) 03/2013.p,23

<sup>5</sup> Bhikkhu Moneyya, **Teaching and Training at Pa- Auk forest monastery**, published by WAVE Publications,Kuala Lumpur,Malaysia, 2005.pa, 76.

tranquility and insight meditation as one desires. The Second Tetrad is also composed of four parts distinguishing rapture, bliss, mental formations and calming mental formations. The practitioner trains himself on exhaling and inhaling. The Third Tetrad contains four parts: perceiving, delighting, concentrating, and freeing the mind. The practitioner trains himself for exhaling and inhaling. The Fourth Tetrad consists of four parts too: contemplating impermanence, dispassion, cessation, and relinquishment. The meditator trains himself in exhaling and inhaling.

The following is the model of insight meditation as laid down by the Venerable Pa-Auk Sayādaw. The main process of vipassanā meditation is the explanation of the five faculties (*Indriya*) and the nine factors to strengthen the above five faculties.<sup>6</sup> He always advises his disciples to practice step by step and to accomplish three trainings: morality (*Sīla*), concentration (*Samādhi*), and insight (*Paññā*). This is the process leading to liberation from suffering and defilements and to attain Nibbāna.<sup>7</sup> Thus, before meditation practice the practitioner should undertake to follow the moral code. After achieving morality practice it is possible to go on to Samatha Meditation leading to tranquility (*Samādhi*) and next practice insight meditation (*Vipassanā*). In this way the three trainings are fulfilled i.e. morality (*Sīla*), concentration (*Samādhi*), and insight (*Paññā*). One by one they follow each other.

The researcher is enthusiastic to investigate meditation, Theravāda Buddhist literature, concept, and formation of techniques in

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<sup>6</sup> Pa-Auk Sayadaw, **The Practice Which Leads To Nibbāna**, (Part 1) Translated by U.Dhamminda, Pā Auk Tawya Monastery, 1998.p,37,38

<sup>7</sup> Venerable Pa-Auk Sayadaw, **Mindfulness of Breathing and Four Elements Meditation**, WAVE (Malaysia) first printed 1995 Reprinted 1997 Revised edition 1998.Pa,47

Pāli Scripture and the vipassanā meditation scheme administered by Venerable Pa-Auk Sayādaw (U *Āciṇṇa*) at Pa-Auk Vipassanā Meditation Centre.

The significant problem of the study of the meditation methods is whether it can be applied into practice in terms of *Samatha* or *vipassanā* teachings; or it may be possible to practice it in both systems by the Buddha's teaching? That is the reason why it should be studied thoroughly and in detail to find out the correct way to deal with it in order to get a better understanding in appropriate application based on the meditation practice.

On the other hand, the main purpose is to study the discourse of different and similarity meditation method to do further research to explore the outlines of meditation centers regarding the aspects of meditation practices. The main sections as showed separately in the discourse with regard to the mindfulness of instruction, full awareness of various physical activities, absorption levels attained from its application, and finally the benefits of their meditation teaching by meditation master.

## **1.2. Objectives of Research**

- 1.2.1. To analytically study the concepts of Satipaṭṭhāna and related texts and other sources in Pāli canon.
- 1.2.2. To analyze Satipaṭṭhāna meditation techniques and models according to the most Venerable Pa-Auk Sayādaw.
- 1.2.3. To analytically study the influence of vipassanā meditation techniques by the Venerable Pa-Auk Sayādaw to society.

## **1.3. Statements of the Problems**

- 1.3.1. What are the concepts of Satipaṭṭhāna and related texts to other sources in the Pali Canon?
- 1.3.2. How to develop Satipaṭṭhāna as an approach to understanding of its reality and Pa-Auk meditation techniques?
- 1.3.3. How to analytically compare and contrast the two relative to samatha-vipassanā practices and how to apply it in daily life practice so as to achieve its ultimate goal?

## **1.4. Scope of the Study**

The research focuses on:

- 1.4.1. Vipassanā meditation in Pāli Scripture correlated to Theravada Buddhism.
- 1.4.2. The Vipassanā meditation technique as applied at the Pa-Auk Meditation Centre.
- 1.4.3. The discourses, Vipassanā meditation instructions, procedures, publications, and journals composed by the venerable Pa-Auk Sayādaw.

1.4.4. Various writings composed by meditators of the Pa-Auk Meditation Centers.

## 1.5. Definitions of Terms Used in Research

**Analysis means** is detailed examination of the elements or structure of something, typically as a basis for discussion or interpretation.

**Meditation means** is a practice in which an individual trains the mind or induces a mode of consciousness, either to realize some benefit or for the mind to simply acknowledge its content without becoming identified with that content, or as an end in itself. The Pali word for meditation is “Bhāvanā” which means ‘to make grow’ or ‘to develop’.

**Technique means** is a practical method, skill, or art applied to a particular task.

**Satipaṭṭhāna means** is the four foundations of mindfulness are contemplation of body, feelings, mind, and mind-objects.

**Pa-Auk Sayādaw means** is the name of Mon Village and Forest Meditation Center of Pa-Auk. Myanmar people name the monastery and Monk who lives in their monastery using the village name. It is 9 miles from Maw La Myine capital city of Mon state and a big village and developed Sāsana in Mon State.

**Aggamahā kammaṭṭhānacariya means** highly respected meditation teacher.

## 1.6. Review of the Related Literature and Research

Many texts and a great deal of research deal with Buddhist meditation and meditation retreats for foreigners as indicated below.



Bhikkhu Anālayo, **The Satipaṭṭhāna: The Direct Path to Realization**, Kandy: BPS, 2003.

This book of academic research is based on exploration of the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta and its relevant discourses found in the Pali Canonical Texts together with actual practices. The research refers to some aspects similar to the outcomes of Bhikkhu Anālayo's Ph.D. research at the University of Peradeniya in Sri Lanka and his personal practical experience as a meditating monk. It attempts to explain in detail the significance and the practice according to the exposition in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta. Bhikkhu Anālayo also gives a practice related perspective on the more scholarly expositions and provides relevant background information from original sources. In addition to these he also consulted selected modern meditation manuals and recent publications.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, his sources are annuals and recent publications and are an excellent key secondary source for this present research. This research intends to extend Anālayo's work by deeper investigating kāyagatāsati.

Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu, **A Handbook for a Perfect Form of Ānāpānasati Bhāvanā**, tr., by Venerable Nāgasena. Bangkok: Sublime Life Mission, 1976.

This handbook outlines a perfect form of ānāpānasati-bhāvanā delivered by the Most Venerable Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu and has been condensed into the customary style of Chien Nurn Eng. This is aimed at providing guidance of the path leading to proper practice of all the sixteen steps are presented in its discourse. In particular it also based on the four foundations of satipaṭṭhāna. It is possible for everyone to use it

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<sup>8</sup> Bhikkhu Anālayo, **The Satipaṭṭhāna: The Direct Path to Realization**, Kandy: BPS, 2003.pa,5.

as a handbook for doing meditation practice by oneself and for those who are interested in practicing Buddhist meditation as well. In addition, this book also composed the form of meditation instruction with clear descriptions of meditation practice in terms of understanding how to practice all the sixteen steps of ānāpānasati meditation that provides broadly the solution of a system of short cut meditation practice.

Nyanaponika Thera, **The Heart of Buddhist Meditation**, Kandy: BPS, 1987.

This book is an excellent source on the actual practice regarding satipaṭṭhāna and is basically an initial guidance to understanding theoretical principles and practical application. It simply shows the systematic cultivation of right mindfulness (sammāsati) as taught by the Lord Buddha and provides simple practice and direct experience gained by practitioners thus elucidating the most effective method for training and developing one's mind to reach its highest aim.<sup>9</sup> In accordance with the traditional technique as taught by the Venerable Mahāsī Sayādaw, the great meditation Master from Burma, Venerable Nyanaponika quotes the main aspects of its principle together with his own understanding and direct experience. This work combines academic rigor and personal experience and is of particular importance for this research when examining the major current meditation traditions of satipaṭṭhāna practice.

Bhikkhu Moneyya, **Teaching and Training at Pa-Auk Forest monastery**, (2005).

He remarks that Pa-Auk Monastery is a Theravadan Buddhist teaching monastery located in the forested hills near the town of

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<sup>9</sup> Nyanaponika Thera, **The Heart of Buddhist Meditation**, Kandy: BPS, 1987.p.43.

Mawlamyine in Southeastern Myanmar (Burma). The first Abbot, Thit-thee Sayādaw, founded the monastery in 1926. Pa-Auk Monastery is open to visitors and some stay for years. The author of this eBook, Bhikku Moneyya, is an American who describes daily life in the monastery and the work lead by Pa- Auk Sayādaw. His emphasis on practice and teaching is attractive to foreign monks. They appreciate his methods of teaching, his style and method of investigating and practicing Dhamma. Pa-Auk Sayādaw motivated them to prove the results of the practice by themselves.<sup>10</sup> The results of his approach were increasing interest, spiritual awakening among foreign monks, and a growing number of foreign visitors. That monastery has brought great harmony as well as increased interaction among monks, lay people and the community. It can be appreciated that Pa- Auk forest monastery is growing and propagating Buddhism in Myanmar as well as abroad.

Pa- Auk Sayadaw The **Practice Which Leads To Nibbāna** - Part 1 (Compiled and Translated by U.Dhamminda), 1998.

This book attempts to interpret and reexamine the theories and the practices including advantages as well as levels of attainment regarding Buddhist meditation. It can also be regarded as a comprehensive and authoritative work on Buddhist ways of practice following all aspects of both tranquility meditation (samāṭha-bhāvanā) and insight meditation (vipassanā-bhāvanā), which are known as the fundamental principles, and teachings of the Lord Buddha as found in the Pali Canon.<sup>11</sup> It seems in the more academic research presented by Pa-Auk Sayadaw on Buddhist

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<sup>10</sup> Bhikkhu Moneyya, **Teaching and Training at Pa-Auk Forest monastery**, (2005).P,32.

<sup>11</sup> Pa- Auk Sayadaw The **Practice Which Leads To Nibbāna** - Part 1 (Compiled and Translated by U.Dhamminda), 1998.P,42.

meditation that he has adopted a critical and comparative method to illustrate the fundamental principles and the benefits of the practice of Buddhist meditation. Through Buddhist practices he very much expects his book would be the best guide for all practitioners to follow in the hope of success in practice leading to the final goal of Buddhism: Nibbāna.

Venerable U Āciṇṇa , **Light of Wisdom Meditation In Pa Auk Forest Monastery**, Translation of Dhamma Talks Especially on Mahāgopālaka Sutta, Pā Auk, Mawlamyaing, Myanmar, 1996.

This describes the Mahāgopālaka Sutta, itself and the nature and characteristics of not self, which was the second discourse given by the Buddha to the five ascetics. But it does not clearly describe the way to practice at the present time in terms of specific meditation methods or techniques to easily contemplate and note according to meditation practice and in particular insight meditation.

In this book the Most Venerable Pa-Auk Sayādaw gives a full exposition of the methods of contemplation based on his personal experience and knowledge in meditation practice under the methodical instructions of qualified teachers as well as relevant Pali Canonical Texts and commentaries.<sup>12</sup> With respect to his modern technique of meditation practice that is generally accepted by many Buddhist scholars, the Venerable Pa-Auk Sayādaw explains in detail and describes the way to reflect and contemplate on not-self or no soul leading to the final goal of Buddhism that is the end of all kinds of suffering, the Nibbāna.

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<sup>12</sup> Venerable U Āciṇṇa , **Light of Wisdom Meditation In Pa Auk Forest Monastery**, Translation of Dhamma Talks Especially on Mahāgopālaka Sutta, Pā Auk, Mawlamyaing, Myanmar, 1996.P,12.

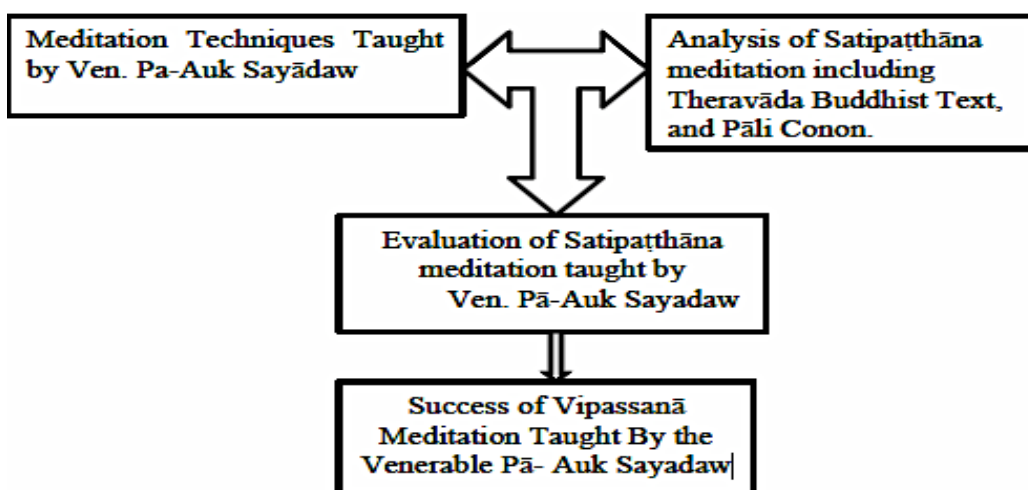
Dr. Min Tin Mon, **Introduction to Pa-Auk Forest Meditation center**, Dagon, Yangon, 1999.

In this book the author provides the following information about the respectable lineage of Pa-auk monastery, a biography and renunciation of Pa-auk Tawya Sayadaw, administration of the monastery, vegetarian diet, the development of the monastery and management of it. For tranquility meditation practitioners' three kinds of Nimitta and Bhāvanā (Sign and development or meditation) are explained i.e. how to practice and develop and help meditation practitioners to penetrate matter and mind with the light of concentration to get right concentration and to realize the final goal. Insight meditation practitioners' are given a way to look into ultimate mind and matter and their common characteristics: Anicca (impermanence), Dukkha (suffering) and Anatta (not-self) and thus to be successful and attain four paths and fruitions.

## **1.7. Theoretical Frameworks and Conceptual Framework**

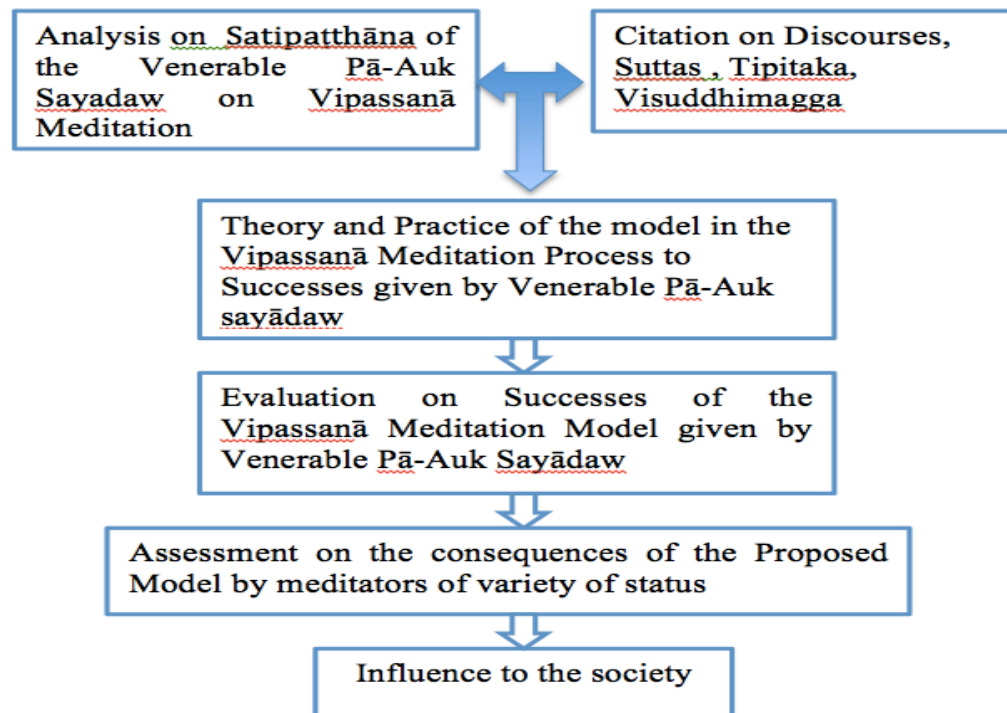
### **1.7.1 Theoretical Framework**

The research has extracted the practical vipassanā meditation technique taught by Venerable Saddhammaramsī and in Theravāda Buddhist texts to compose and evaluate the Venerable's model. the impact on the model will be follows:



### 1.7.2 Conceptual Framework

The researcher uncovered the interactive relationship between the concepts and ideas of the Venerable regarding vipassanā meditation technique and theory to realize the process of the Venerable. Then an evaluation of the model and effect of vipassanā meditation technique will be clarified.



### 1.8. Research Methods

The methodology of the research includes documentary review and perspective of disciples. The research process will be as follows:

- 1.8.1. Collecting Buddhist texts, Tipitaka, Pāli Canon on Vipassanā Meditation.
- 1.8.2. Exploring books, articles, discourses, and instructions given by Venerable Pa-Auk Sayadaw to recognize the concept of the meditation technique and observe the practical process of the meditation technique of the Venerable Pa-Auk Sayādaw and

to depict the procedure and analyze the extent of Pāli Scripture involved.

- 1.8.3. Participants' observation by the researcher and in-depth interviews (10 people for each retreat) separated into three groups: project president (1 person), and participants (10 people). Ascertaining their viewpoints on meditation technique and of the main Pa-Auk meditation center and Six-branches Pa-Auk meditation center that I will be mention at chapter four by detail.
- 1.8.4. Respectful request to Venerable Pa-Auk Sayādaw for an explanation of the level of satisfaction with spreading the Dhamma of the Lord Buddha, future intention, vision, and mission of Dhamma propagation.
- 1.8.5. The data collection will be made through the results of open questions. (Appendix).
- 1.8.6. Analyze & synthesis

## **1.9. Advantages Expected to Obtain from the Research**

After analysis the researcher expects to find:

- 1.9.1. The concept and literature of vipassanā meditation in Pali Scriptures
- 1.9.2. The extent of theoretical essences of Buddhist scriptures that are concerned with the meditation technique taught by Ven. Pa-Auk Sayadaw.
- 1.9.3. The impact (local and foreign) of the meditation technique of Venerable Pa-Auk Sayādaw.