

Chapter V

Conclusion and Suggestions

5.1. Conclusion

Summary of what the researcher has done. The research investigated books about Buddhist Literature on Theravāda and Buddhism. The emphasize Buddhist Meditation is on Tipitaka studies about Vipassanā Meditation. Also studied was the Vipassanā Meditation Techniques of Pa_Auk Sayādaw and these were compared to methods written in the Tipitaka and the methods performed by other Venerables and meditation teachers.

The researcher was also very eager to know why and how Pa-Auk Sayādaw became so famous and came to be known as the Father of Vipassanā Meditation Technique as recognized by the whole Burmese Buddhist Community. Pa-Auk Sayādaw was from Burma and most of the literature about him is still in Myanmar language.

Only a minor portion has been translated into English. This made the work harder for the researcher because he had to read the Burmese Version and try to translate the meaning into English by himself. He also tried to obtain valuable historic pictures showing the events that had taken place a long time ago during the days of Pa-Auk Sayādaw.

The researcher also investigated the theoretical concept of vipassanā meditation. It was found that there are a variety of ways or paths for liberation. Any practitioner can make a trail for liberation but those who have selected the path including samatha may not take longer. As for the researcher he observes that the meditation method developed by Pa-Auk Sayādaw is the direct way to Paññā.

The researcher realizes that the method is similar to building a wall up to a height. It is not possible to pile up the bricks themselves but need cement to stick and for support to get higher. Similarly there is a need Samādhi to realize wisdom and Vipassanā Ñāṇa stage by stage. The Vipassanā Meditation Centre of Pa-Auk applies a method for developing Samādhi as instruction of Vipassanā Meditation e.g. sitting and walking meditation to upgrade Samādhi and good awareness of general activities to achieve continuous samādhi. Magga is possible to realize at any type when there is the balance among **Viriya, Paññā, and Samādhi** and an equilibrium state.

Finally, the researcher observed that the meditators have a positive attitude to the Vipassanā Meditation method, mottos, books, and articles written by the Venerable Pa-Auk Sayādaw.

As a fruitful result, I founded it from my research that if the meditator who was successful in Satipthāna meditation practice, he will get a great benefit and great fruit in this life and next, so that he also can give this great benefit indirectly toward others in a society by guiding them to the right method of development by way of this meditation subject.

Furthermore, when Satipthāna meditation repeatedly practices according to Pa-Auk Sayādaw, it leads to a supreme sense of urgency, to a supreme benefit, to a supreme liberation from bondage, to a supreme mindfulness and comprehension, to the attainment of insight and vision, to a happy life here and now, to the realization of wisdom, emancipation, and fruit. These are mentioned above as happiness and benefit of practicing the Satipthāna meditation. On this way, he can help others to attain a supreme peace and happiness as like he has got experiences by

himself. Therefore, to live a daily life in a society and stay with others surrounding he will be loved and respected in general. Through a successful development of mindfulness, he will discover the beneficial benefits for himself with the true meaning of life and he will keep his mind calm and peaceful together with others living in a society.

Likewise, With respect to the right understanding and kindness, he will not do any evil deeds towards others, yet he tries his best to persuade and encourage others to do good, to purify their mind from all kinds of mental defilements, based on what the right and correct understanding and the techniques of practice in daily life, that leads to the highest purpose and ultimate objective of every one's life.

Lastly, meditation is a scientifically proven way to improve one's health and balance in everyday life and seeks to find a universal solution to suffering and makes one impervious to the vicissitudes of life. There are three integral factors in Buddhist meditation, i.e. morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*). Wisdom (*paññā*) comes from insight meditation (*vipassanā*), which is very helpful in human daily life. The devotees from foreign countries respectfully invited the Venerable Pa-Auk and his followers (*Nāyaka Sayādaws*) for a meditation retreat. Thus his meditation method is applied in many countries; the United States, Australia, Europe, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand. The researcher has strong confidence that Pa-Auk Vipassanā Meditation is still growing and more extensions of new centers will be expected as social resourcefulness allows.

5.2. Suggestion for Further Research

It is difficult to make comparative studies of meditation retreats because they are located in different areas with different periods of

retreat, different groups of practitioners, different purposes, and so forth. Therefore further research could be quantitative research on a suitable model for a Buddhist meditation retreat for foreigners. It should survey and interview all practitioners at the centers. Furthermore the guideline model could be a test in order to make a suitable national model.

There are many other interesting studies that could be undertaken:

- 5.2.1. Compare and contrast different Vipassanā Meditations centers for effectiveness.
- 5.2.2. A study on the concept that Vipassanā Meditation practice could protect from disease (Enzima) and (Transient Forgetfulness) for old age people.
- 5.2.3. Comparison of states of mind between practitioner and non-practitioner of Vipassanā Meditation practice.

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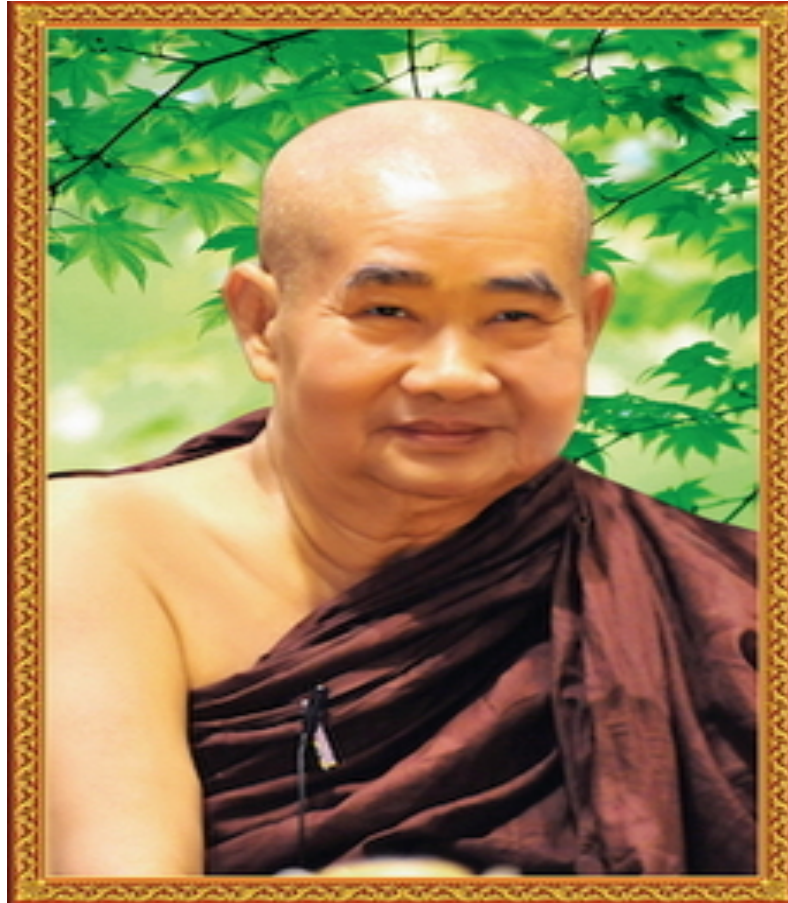
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Appendix A

A Biography of Pa-Auk Sayādaw



The Venerable Pa-Auk Sayādaw

The Venerable Acinna, commonly referred to as the “Venerable Pa-Auk Tawya Sayadaw” (and in less formal circumstances, as “Pa-Auk Sayadaw”), is the current Abbot and principal teacher at Pa-Auk Forest Monastery. “Sayadaw” is a Burmese honorific title meaning “respected teacher.”

The Sayadaw was born in 1934 in Leigh-Chaung Village, Hinthada Township, in the delta region about one hundred miles northwest of the capital Yangon. In 1944 at age ten he ordained as a novice monk (*samanera) at a monastery in his village. During the next decade he

pursued the life of a typical scholar-novice studying the Pali Texts (including Vinaya, Suttas and Abhidhamma) under various teachers. He passed the three Pali language examinations while still a novice. In 1954, age twenty; the Sayadaw received the higher ordination as a bhikkhu.

He continued his studies of Pali Texts under the guidance of learned elder monks. In 1956 he passed the prestigious Dhammacariya examination. This is equivalent to a BA in Buddhist Pali Studies and confers the title of “Dhamma Teacher.” During the next eight years the Sayadaw continued his investigation into the Dhamma travelling throughout Myanmar to learn from various well-known teachers. In 1964, during his tenth “rains retreat” (vassa), he turned his attention to intensifying his meditation practice and began to practise “forest dwelling.” Although he continued with his study of the Pali Texts he now sought out and gained instruction from the revered meditation teachers of those times.

For the next sixteen years he made forest dwelling his primary practice. He spent these years in the southern part of Myanmar in Mon State: three years in Mudon Township (just south of Mawlamyine) and thirteen years in Ye Township (approximately one hundred miles down the coast). During this period he lived a very simple life devoting his time to meditation and study of the Pali Texts. In 1981 the Sayadaw received a message from the Abbot of Pa-Auk Forest Monastery, the Venerable Aggapañña. The Abbot was dying and asked the Venerable Acinna to look after his monastery. Five days later the Venerable Aggapañña passed away.

As the new Abbot of the monastery the Venerable Acinna became known as the “Pa-Auk Tawya Sayadaw.” Although he oversaw the running of the monastery the Sayadaw would spend most of his time in seclusion, meditating in a bamboo hut in the upper-forested area which covered a deserted range of hills running along the base of the Taung Nyo Mountain Range. This area later came to be known as the Upper Monastery. Since 1983 both monastics and laity have been coming to study meditation with the Sayadaw. Foreign meditators began to arrive at the monastery in the early 1990’s.

As the Sayadaw’s reputation steadily grew the Upper Monastery gradually expanded from a simple bamboo hut and a handful of disciples to more than two hundred and fifty kutis (meditators’ huts) in the forest; a large two-storey meditation hall for the men; a library (with an office, computer room and a men’s dormitory on the lower levels); a clinic; a hospital; an alms giving hall; a two-storey refectory; and a reception hall and dwelling for the Sayadaw. In the Lower Monastery facilities include more than 180 kutis, a new kitchen and, for the women, a large three-storey meditation hall (with sleeping quarters on the ground floor) and a five-storey dormitory (still under construction). Currently (March 2007) there are more than one hundred and thirty foreign monks, nuns, and lay practitioners residing at Pa-Auk Forest Monastery. During our three-month rains retreat the total monastic population averages between six and seven hundred. Together with laypeople the monastery population sometimes tops fifteen hundred during festival times.

In 1997 the Sayadaw published his Magnum Opus, an enormous five-volume tome titled ‘The Practice that Leads to Nibbana’, explaining the entire course of teaching in detail and supported by copious

quotations from the Pali Texts – it is currently available only in Burmese and Sinhalese. On January 4, 1999 in public recognition of the Sayadaw's achievements, the government bestowed upon him the title Agga Maha Kammatthanacariya, which means "Highly Respected Meditation Teacher."

The Sayadaw speaks fluent English and has lectured and led retreats outside of Myanmar since 1997. In December of 2006 he travelled to Sri Lanka to undertake a long-term personal retreat staying in seclusion and suspending his teaching schedule throughout 2007. As of this printing, his teaching schedule for 2008 includes a four-month retreat in the United States, July – October, to be held at the Forest Refuge in Barre, Massachusetts. Updates on the Sayadaw's teaching schedule may be obtained at the websites listed in our Resource Guide.

The Pictures of Main Pa-Auk Meditation Center



Main portal leading to the Monastery



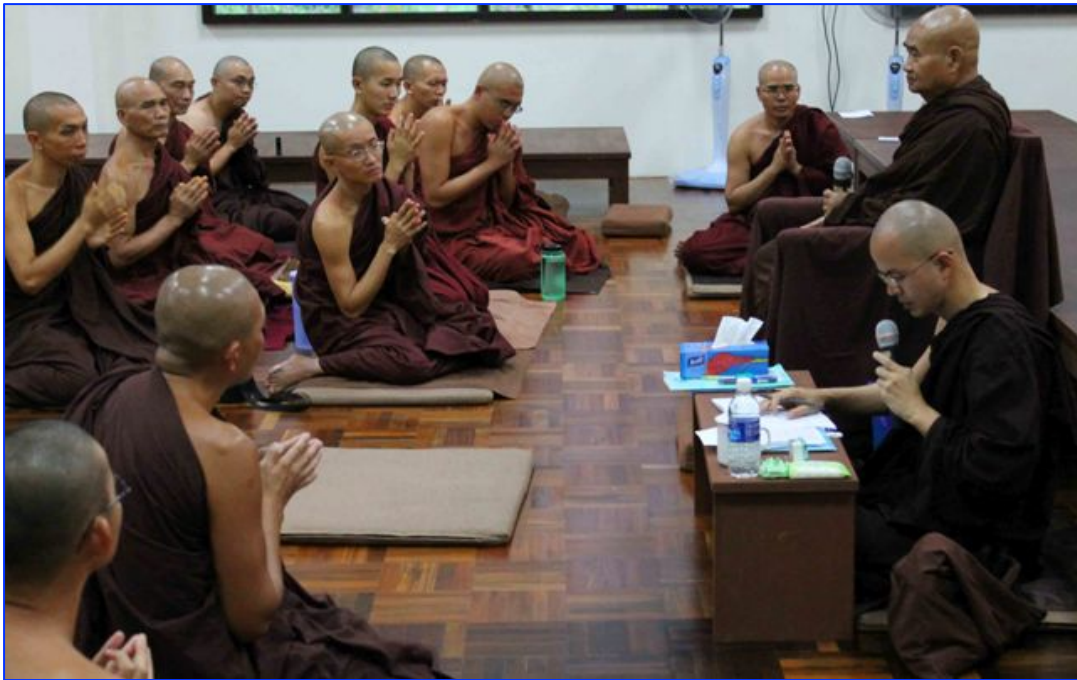
Panoramic view of Pa-Auk Tawya meditation center

Meditation (sīma) hall



Dhamma talk by Sayādaw in Meditation hall





Foreign Monks Interview by Sayādaw



Alms offering hall, Piṇḍapāṭasala Library and Saṅgha Office



Clinic in the meditation center Bhikkhu kuṭi



Mettavihari-new womens' meditation hall

Appendix B

Interview Questions and Analysis of Interview Results

1. Interview Question for Participants

- 1) Why do you want to meditate and why have you chosen this center?
- 2) Are there anything that impressed you on the meditation practices?
- 3) What are the benefits or changes you experienced after the retreat?
- 4) Could you please share some of your meditation experience? What is your most profound memory from the practice?

2. Interview Question for Meditation's Master

- 1) Could the Sayadaw perhaps tell the readers about the Sayadaw's meditation Centre in Myanmar?
- 2) What is taught at the Sayādaw's meditation center?
- 3) Could the Sayādaw please explain this light of wisdom further?
- 4) Could the Sayadaw please elaborate on the ākāsa-dhātu (space element)?
- 5) What are the benefits or changes of the participants after the retreat?

Appendix C

An Interview With Pa-Auk Sayadaw U Āsina (The Chairperson and Meditation Master)

At the main Pa-Auk Meditation Centre Maw La Myine Township,
Mon state, Myanmar in 10- May- 2016.
By Ven.Obhāsa (researcher) for Dissertation

The Most Venerable Pa-Auk Sayādaw, the abbot and meditation master of Pa-Auk Meditation Centre, was in center to give Dhamma talks at the Pa-Auk Meditation Centre I finds out more about the Sayādaw's monastery and what he teaches.

Me : Good morning, Sayādaw,. Could the Sayadaw perhaps tell the readers about the Sayadaw's meditation centre in Myanmar?

The Sayādaw: Pa-Auk Meditation Centre comprises three monasteries near the village of Pa-Auk, outside Maw La Myine (Moulmein), the capital of the Mon State, southwest of Yangon. I am the third abbot since Pa-Auk Meditation Centre was established about 100 years ago. It occupies about 400-500 acres, and there are about 300 single dwellings, 3 dormitories, 5 meditation halls, an almsgiving hall, refectory, infirmary, library, etc. There is a standing population of about 800 yogis. During school holidays or festivals, the population increases up to even 1500 yogis. The majority of yogis are Burmese monks, with a good number of Burmese nuns and laywomen. There are about 150 foreign yogis, most of who have ordained at Pa-Auk meditation center.

Almost all of them are from South-East Asia and East Asia, with a few Westerners. There are also a number of Mahāyāna monks and nuns.

Me : What is taught at the Sayādaw's meditation center?

The Sayādaw: We teach according to the Pali Texts of Buddhism, and the purpose of our teaching is for the yogi to attain Nibbāna. That requires full and direct personal knowledge of ultimate mentality and materiality (*nāma-rūpa*), which is *vipassanā* meditation. Such full knowledge requires that one has developed deep and profound concentration (*samādhi*), which is *samatha* meditation. To develop concentration (*samatha*), one needs first of all to train in morality (*sīla*). At our center this means one needs first to undertake either the nine precepts of a layperson, the ten precepts of a nun or novice, or the *Pātimokkha* precepts of a fully ordained Buddhist monk. Well-established in good morality, one then begins with *samatha* meditation. If one is successful, one will attain what The Buddha calls the light of wisdom (*paññā-āloka*). With further development, one reaches the *jhānas*, and then the light of wisdom is very strong, very bright. One then uses that light of wisdom to *practise vipassanā*.

Me: Could the Sayādaw please explain this light of wisdom?

The Sayadaw: The light of wisdom is a natural concomitant of deep and profound one-pointedness of mind (*citt-ek-aggatā*). It is necessary to develop this light, in order that one may penetrate to ultimate reality. Unless one penetrates to ultimate reality, one cannot practice *vipassanā* meditation. With the light of wisdom one will with four-elements meditation be able to see that one's body and other materiality is made up of sub-atomic particles, which arise and perish with great speed. They are

called material unit (*rūpa-kalāpas*). They cannot be seen unless one has developed the light of wisdom it is impossible.

Me : Could the Sayadaw please elaborate on the ākāsa-dhātu (space element)?

The Sayādaw: The *ākāsa-dhātu* (space element) forms the boundaries between the material unit (*rūpa-kalāpas*). And only when the yogi is able to discern those boundaries is the yogi able to discern the material unit (*rūpa-kalāpas*). And only when the yogi has discerned the material unit (*rūpa-kalāpas*) is the yogi able to penetrate to ultimate materiality, and analyses the various elements that make up the material unit (*rūpa-kalāpa*), for example, the earth-, water-, fire-, and wind element, colour, odour, and flavour. Without such direct knowledge, one cannot understand materiality, in which case, one cannot develop proper vipassanā, in which case one cannot attain Nibbāna. That is why one needs to develop proper concentration (*samādhi*). By concentration, The Buddha means nearly always *jhāna* concentration and proper mastery of each *jhāna*, first the four fine-material *jhānas* and then the four immaterial *jhānas*. At Pa-Auk, we usually teach the yogi to develop the *jhānas* with *ānāpānassati* (mindfulness of breathing) and then we teach them to use their *ānāpānassati jhāna* to develop all the other *samatha* subjects taught by The Buddha — for example, the four sublime abiding such as loving-kindness and compassion.

Me: How does a yogi know that she or he has achieved a certain level of proficiency in concentration? A certain level of jhāna?

The Sayādaw: This is what we mean by proper mastery of the *jhānas*. It requires systematic practice under a qualified teacher. For example, to

practise mindfulness of breathing, the yogi needs to concentrate on the in-and-out breath as it touches on the upper lip or around the nostrils. The yogi then needs to know whether the breath is long or short. Then the yogi needs to know the beginning, middle, and end of the breath. That is all, nothing else. Once the yogi is able to know the in-and-out breath in this way, and no other object, over a long time, there may arise a sign (nimitta), which means sign. It is a mental image that arises because of one's concentration, because of one's perception of the breath. With further development, eventually the breath object and the nimitta will become one. There is no difference. Then, once the yogi can sit for two or three or four hours continuously over many days without adverting to any other object, we may say that the yogi has attained the first jhāna. Then, according to The Buddha's instructions, the yogi needs to learn how to discern what are called the jhāna factors of the concentrated mind. And the yogi needs to learn how to predetermine the duration of the jhāna attainment, how to enter jhāna and how to emerge from jhāna, and how to discern the jhāna factors. The yogi needs to learn how to do this with ease, and this is what is called mastery of the jhāna. Then the yogi learns how to develop the second jhāna and the masteries of that jhāna, and so on up to the fourth immaterial jhāna. Here again, many Asians and Westerners complain, and say The Buddha does not teach the nimitta in the suttas. Again, this is true. The Buddha does not teach such details in the suttas. But He mentions the radiant light of the concentrated mind in many suttas — when He explains the practice preliminary to vipassanā.

Me : How important is it to be able to 'see' this nimitta (sign)?

The Sayadaw: If you want to go to Pa-Auk, you need a visa. Without a visa, the authorities will not allow you to enter Myanmar. In the same

way, the nimitta is the visa to deep concentration, the jhānas. Without such deep concentration, one cannot come fully to know ultimate mentality and materiality with one's own direct knowledge, which means one cannot attain any vipassanā knowledge, which means one cannot attain Nibbāna. Then you may decide for yourself how important it is to be able to see a nimitta.

Me : How long does a beginner need to stay in the meditation center for preliminary instructions and practice?

The Sayadaw: That depends on the individual yogi. Some stay only for a short time, some stay for a longer time, and some stay for many years. Some only want to try a little bit, some wanting to try more, and some want to attain Nibbāna. How quickly one succeeds depends on one's perfection (pāramī) the practice of morality, concentration and wisdom that one did in past lives, and the quality of one's present practice. How far one wants to go, depends also on one's perfection (pāramī). It is because of their pāramī that some foreign yogis ordain as a nun or monk, and stay for many years. Our foreign yogis usually get a meditation visa from a Burmese embassy either in their home country or somewhere else. They can get that visa extended. We have volunteers who do all the paperwork.

Me : One final question — are there any sort of fees or charges involved?

The Sayadaw : The Burmese government demands US dollars for meditation visa, and for the one-year extension of one's meditation visa. There are no other charges. There are no charges for staying at the monastery. Some visitors make a donation, but that is their own wish.

Food, dwelling, and meditation instructions, etc., are given free of charge — that is The Buddha's way. For the welfare and happiness of all beings.

Me : Thank you, Sayādaw.

Appendix D

An Interview With old mediators

**At the main Pa-Auk Meditation Centre Maw La Myine Township,
Mon state, Myanmar in 10- May- 2016.**

By Ven. Obhāsa (researcher) for Dissertation

1. Mr, Soe Naing Tun, Student, Dagon University, (old meditator) 3-5-2016. 10am.

1) Why do you want to meditate and why have you chosen this center?

I took meditation three years now. Because, Meditation is the art of silencing the mind. so many people take meditation and is a quality everyone can benefit from.

As you know, The center has suitable persons such as good teaching monks and the staff are very kind. The center has a suitable area such as a hot springs, mountains, ponds and it has very nice open atmosphere suitable for meditation.

1) Are there anything that impressed you on the meditation practices?

The quality of silence in the center, in the forest and in the air makes the practitioners calm and concentrated. The monks and staff at

the center inspire the practitioners. They all have many admirable qualities and most are really striving for the goal.

2) What are the benefits or changes you experienced after the retreat?

I've been meditating twice a day for the past 9 years because I enjoy it. It may seem strange, but I feel happiest when sitting in perfect silence. The experience is difficult to express in words. Sometimes meditation is a struggle to control the mind, while at other times it feels effortless.

3) Could you please share some of your meditation experience? What is your most profound memory from the practice?

Many people like the idea of meditation, but feel they don't have enough time. When you really want to do something you can find time. Get up earlier or watch 30 minutes less TV. Meditation requires an investment of time, but clearing the mind makes the rest of the day more productive. Nothing is better than the feeling of inner peace.

After you have practiced concentration and learned to focus on one thing at a time, you can proceed to the next stage: no thought at all. Achieving a silent mind is difficult, but when to attain it the experience is powerful.

4) Mr. Mg Tin Mg San, Marketing Manager, Yangon,(old meditator) 10-5-2016.1:20pm.

5) Why do you want to meditate and why have you chosen this centre

Because, I have been meditating seriously for a little over a year now, I want to learned how to better understand my internal self, and observe how it coincides with my external self. So I want to take

Buddhist meditation. The center has good accommodation and good facilities and a nice location, which is suitable for the small group of practitioners. So, I choose this center.

6) Are there anything that impressed you on the retreat?

The center is famous. There are many practitioners who come to visit and The center has a good meditation instructor as a suitable person (puggala sappāya) and a good friend (kalyānamitta) who has a good knowledge of the Dhamma and has meditation teaching experience. Their teachings are clear and their lectures are very interesting and helpful.

3) What are the benefits or changes you experienced after the retreat?

Meditation brings better health to us. Meditation is food for the soul. It is an energizer for the mind. So the benefits of meditation are many. Basically, you can say if you want to be happy you need to meditate. Happy and healthy! If you want to be happy and healthy, you got to be meditative!

4) Could you please share some of your meditation experience? What is your most profound memory from the retreat?

I have to say everything! (Laughs) but it should not be that according to meditation master. As you know, Meditation helps to change your perception, perspective. I can clear my minds and see the “bright light” when I meditate. I feel like this were on the top of a very high tree. The feeling was very short but it seemed to be real. However, I feel calm and I can concentrate more.

3- Miss. Zin Mar Myint, business women,(old meditator) live in Mon state. 10-5-2016,2:0pm.

1) Why do you want to meditate and why have you chosen this center?

The reasons, Meditation is, indeed, a very effective stress reducer, but its benefits—sometimes mysteriously hidden—are far more bountiful. This meditation center is very noble saline place and very suitable place to take meditation. Therefore, I chose this center.

2) Are there anything that impressed you on the meditation practices?

The monk and staff here are friendly and give a warm welcome. The practitioners are impressed here with a simple meditation technique to reduce thought, how to make them forget the body, and make them relax. The food and refreshment at this retreat are appropriated for the practitioners who come from different countries because they serve various types of food, both vegetarian and not vegetarian.

3) What are the benefits or changes you experienced after the retreat?

I understand the meditation practice and basic Buddhism before then. The lesson of this retreat includes the basic knowledge of Buddhism to help Participants to understand more about meditation. I can find inner peace for my selves.

4) Could you please share some of your meditation experience? What is your most profound memory from the practice?

I should also say, I recently took an 8-month break from meditation. In addition, I felt two or three times that when I could attain good concentration, I felt very happy and could meditate longer without any move. Sometimes, I cried because of these new and good emotions.

4- Mr. Than Zin Tun, Dr, (old meditator), live in Yangon, 10-5-2016.2:20.

1) Why do you want to meditate and why have you chosen this center?

I meditate for a few reasons. First, I love to practice meditation. I meditated to rest in the exquisite silence and stillness I find there.

Why I am tacking meditation this center? Because, The instructors have a lot of experience so they can explain the meditation practice very well.

2) Are there anything that impressed you on the meditation practices?

The participants appreciated a peaceful sanctuary such as mountainous serenity; the cleanliness of the retreat center, the privacy that the retreat center provides, the hospitality of the people; the inspiring dhamma talks by the monks.

3) What are the benefits or changes you experienced after the retreat?

I can apply Dhamma and meditation in everyday life. Meditation makes calmer and more peaceful so I became able to solve any problems better. I can improve my selves.

4) Could you please share some of your meditation experience? What is your most profound memory from the practice?

I can share my experiences that more understand the meditation practice and basic Buddhism. The lesson of this retreat includes the basic knowledge of Buddhism to help Participants to understand more about meditation. I can find inner peace for myself. I can apply meditation for everyday life and bring the Dhamma to use in my lives and improve their life styles.

5-Mr. San Shwe Aung, deputy rector, Yatan Bon University, Mandalay, (old meditator) 3-5-2016, 9:30am.

1) Why do you want to meditate and why have you chosen this center?

Because, I had a short temper. but now after receiving the guidance of the Venerable Sayādaw on Satipaṭṭhāna that can able to avoid loba, anger and mohā (*ignorance*). So I want to take meditation as much I have free time.

In addition, teaching and practicing are well-structured in regard to the methods and presentation of ideas. The centre has a suitable area such as a hot springs, mountains, ponds and it has very nice open atmosphere suitable for meditation.

2) Are there anything that impressed you on the meditation practices?

The meditation hall can accommodate about 200 people. However, there are many practitioners. And then, this hall is used for

chanting In addition; residents are separated between male and female. The practitioners have their own room or “kuti.” The monks and staff are very skillful to guide for meditation retreat at the center.

3) What are the benefits or changes you experienced after the retreat?

I can control my mind, has less kilesa, and is capable of determining right and wrong. At my work, I encounter stress and dissatisfaction but after practicing vipassana meditation I had competence to control my mind and accepts that these are *Dukkha* (suffering) and with my subsequent thought I immediately becomes at peace.

4) Could you please share some of your meditation experience? What is your most profound memory from the practice?

True liberation and happiness, therefore, has to come from the mentality that life is continuously changing and evolving, and rather than suppressing all of the bad stuff, we just need to learn to ride with it nothing after all stays the same.

An Interview With New Meditators

1. Miss. Nan That Zin Thin, Director of government office, Yangon, (new meditator) 7-6-2016.10am.

1) Why do you want to meditate and why have you chosen this center?

I went on a 10 day Buddhist Vipassana course last year, which was my first real insight into Vipassana meditation. I’m not necessarily

recommending this, but I found some of the Buddhist teachings to be incredibly useful — particularly the emphasis on being equanimous.

Why I chose this meditation? Because, this center is located in the midst of the hills and mountains near the National Park. Therefore, the environment is close to nature and very silent.

2) Are there anything that impressed you on the meditation practices?

The instructors have a lot of experience so they can explain the meditation practice very well. The monks and staff here are friendly and give a warm welcome.

3) What are the benefits or changes you experienced after the retreat?

I had become more civilized, humble, patient with better understanding and loving kindness and sympathy for others.

4) Could you please share some of your meditation experience? What is your most profound memory from the practice?

I could understand the meditation practice and basic Buddhism. I had benefits for my lives and minds that they can apply for their everyday lives.

5) Miss. Khin Wint Myint, Student, Yangon University, (new meditator) 7-6-2016. 2:30pm.

1) Why do you want to meditate and why have you chosen this center?

The reason why I confirms that thanks to practicing vipassanā meditation because I had heart disease is nearly cured. I feels better now.

The retreat center sets the meditation in a good location such as a mountainous region, so the participants can enjoy the environment allowing them to take a break from their usual daily routines and to spend some peaceful time away in a mountainous area for themselves, as work-life may have been very hectic.

2) Are there anything that impressed you on the meditation practices?

The volunteers at the center with their dedication and the kindness of the monks, nuns, and laypeople impressed the participants. The teaching monks and nun also had the ability to meditate for long periods of time, which was very impressive, and inspiring to the practitioners. They were also impressed about the generosity of the community in being hospitable to foreigners who wanted to learn about Buddhism and meditation.

3) What are the benefits or changes you experienced after the retreat?

I had become more civilized, humble, patient with better understanding and loving kindness and sympathy for others.

After the meditation practice I prefers to avoid noise and to be solitary and in peace. I feels like this.

4) Could you please share some of your meditation experience? What is your most profound memory from the practice?

In addition, some practitioners felt two or three times that when they could attain good concentration, they felt very happy and could meditate longer without any move. Sometimes, some practitioners cried because of these new and good emotions.

2. Mr. Tun Tun Aung. Student, Yangon University,(new meditator) 7-6-2016. 2pm

1) Why do you want to meditate and why have you chosen this center?

Some of my friend had attended the retreat before, so I wanted to practice here. After the retreat. I also want to improve my self and learn more about meditation and Buddhism.

2) Are there anything that impressed you on the meditation practices?

The teachings of the meditation instructors impressed the practitioners because they were able to learn meditation and the Buddha teaching. The nature of the place, the mountains, the animals, and the hot spring bring peacefulness of mind. Very good organization and all the teachers are genuine people who have had a lot of meditation experience.

3) What are the benefits or changes you experienced after the retreat?

I stilled practicing at the meditation center identifies that I have more patient, sympathetic, and understanding of others and tries to assist as much as possible.

4) Could you please share some of your meditation experience? What is your most profound memory from the practice?

I were able to meditate longer, I could do meditation for nearly two hours in lotus position without any movement. I has diminished and greater belief in the Triple Gems.

3. Miss Than Dar Aye, marketing manager, Yangon, (new meditator) 20-3-2016.p 1:30.

1) Why do you want to meditate and why have you chosen this center?

I want to apply Dhamma and meditation lifestyle in everyday life. Meditation makes them calmer and more peaceful so I will know how to solve their problems better in the future. I better able to improve my selves.. There are many participants who visit the temple because of the guidebook and due to information from the Internet. So I chose this center.

2) Are there anything that impressed you on the meditation practices?

They all have many admirable qualities and most are really striving for the goal. In addition, the practitioners also feel impressed with the monks because they practiced meditation hard and worked hard.

3) What are the benefits or changes you experienced after the retreat?

I have a foundation in Buddhist literature and knowledge and realize the elements of the Noble Dhamma.

4) Could you please share some of your meditation experience? What is your most profound memory from the practice?

I can apply Dhamma and meditation in everyday life. Meditation makes them calmer and more peaceful so they became able to solve their problems better.

4. Mr. Myo Min, government officer, Yangon,(new meditator), 20-3-2016. 9am

1) Why do you want to meditate and why have you chosen this center?

Meditation is, indeed, a very effective stress reducer, but its benefits—sometimes mysteriously hidden—are far more bountiful.

This meditation center is very noble saline place and very suitable place to take meditation. Therefore, I chose this center.

2) Are there anything that impressed you on the meditation practices?

The openness of the centre and acceptance of the participants from every country and every religious background without any booking or any charge for the retreat always makes the meditators feel grateful. Sometimes, the foreigners first want to observe the meditation retreat, and then make a decision about attending. The centre accepts this practice.

3) What are the benefits or changes you experienced after the retreat?

I do not speak loudly and, I can self-controlled, understand the four noble truths, and practice full time.

4) Could you please share some of your meditation experience? What is your most profound memory from the practice?

I outlined that in the first two or three days her mind was wandering but later, after the meditation Master instructed how to practice sitting and walking meditation precisely I improved and feels peace of mind. I have to practice by the method of the Great Pa-Auk Sayādaw and trust that they are achieving great noble kusala.

6. Miss. Tin Zar win, Assistant Lecturer, Pego Collage, (new meditator), 20-3-2016,10am.

I have problems or suffering in mg lives, so I want to find the right way to get rid of such suffering and change it to happiness. Before, I never take meditation retreat. But my friend encouraged me to practice meditation. Therefore I took meditation retreat this center.

1) Are there anything that impressed you on the meditation practices?

The environment including the staff makes the participants feel comfortable without pressure. Warm welcome by the staff and the instructors.

2) What are the benefits or changes you experienced after the retreat?

I had to practice precisely by observing the stages of mind and that improved control of my anger. Even when I sees someone acting in a wrong way I can accept it as a lesson and she sympathizes with people who are out of control of their anger.

3) Could you please share some of your meditation experience? What is your most profound memory from the practice?

I feel difficulty in mediating in the beginning but that it is easier later so, they are able to practice sitting meditation longer. Some practitioners feel peaceful, relaxed, and calm.

Biography of Researcher

Name : Ven.Obhāsa

Date and Place of Birth: 2, March 1973, Wundwin Township, Mandalay division, upper Myanmar.

Address : Pu Thein Basic Education Monastery No 198, Myo MaKyaung Street, Dagon Township, Yangon, Mammay.

Present address : Wat Mahāpuṭharam, section3, Bang Rak, Bangkok, Thailand.

Monk ordination 7.Mar.1993

Education Background

1996-2004, I passed all Pāli Pathmapyan examinations and studied Dhammācariya subject.

2004-2008 B.A (English) U.M.A Academy of Art education center in Yangon, Myanmar.

2008-2012 M.A (Buddhist Studies) Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Thailand.

2012-2016 Ph.D candidate (Buddhist Studies) Mahachulalongkorn rajavidyalaya University.

Noble Services (Missionary Work):

Teaching sâmaneras monastic education from 2002 to 2007 in Pu Thein basic education monastery Yangon.

Experience in Meditation:

10 days Meditation Retreat in Thanlyin International Pa-Auk Meditation Center; 30 days in Mogok Vipassanā Meditation Center in Yangon and 60 days retreat meditation course in MCU, and 30 days in the main Pa-Auk meditation center.