

*A textual study of material relating to  
Vipassanā meditation as found in Pāli  
Buddhist scriptures*

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## Abstract

This thesis is on the meditative practice as found in Pāli Buddhist scriptures. The practise of meditation in Buddhism consists of two inter-related methods. One of them is the Samatha-bhāvanā which is aimed mainly at achieving concentration, one-pointedness of the mind, preventing it from oscillating from one object to another. And the other is Vipassanā-bhāvanā which enables one to penetratively observe the true nature of phenomena, and this latter practice is referred to as the unique feature of the practise of meditation in Buddhism. The main purpose of this study is to clarify the relation between Vipassanā and Samatha meditation.

In modern times, the practise of meditation is popular not only among the monks but also among the laity. There is an ever-growing literature on it. There are also many renowned meditation masters with large followings. These developments have led to different ideas regarding the proper practice of meditation.

In this thesis, an attempt is made to find out what exactly is the meditative practice found in the Nikāyas, and on that basis to examine whether the modern writings and practices have deviated from the original practice, if so what these deviations are, and what could have led to such deviation and so on.

One of the main points of contention is whether Vipassanā practise could be successfully conducted without the practice of Samatha. Many modern meditation masters such as Mahasi Sayadaw is of opinion that one could dispense Samatha and commence the practice with Vipassanā itself. There are many who endorse this view.

However, this study shows that this is not accordance with the practice as described in the Nikāyas, and this is a subsequent innovation. In the cause of this study, other important aspects connected with the practice of meditation were also examined. Some such aspects are : the importance of the practice of satipaṭṭhāna, the problems pertaining to cetovimutti, paññāvimutti and ubhatobhāgavimutti, sukkha-vipassaka, saññā-vedayita-nirodha and so on.