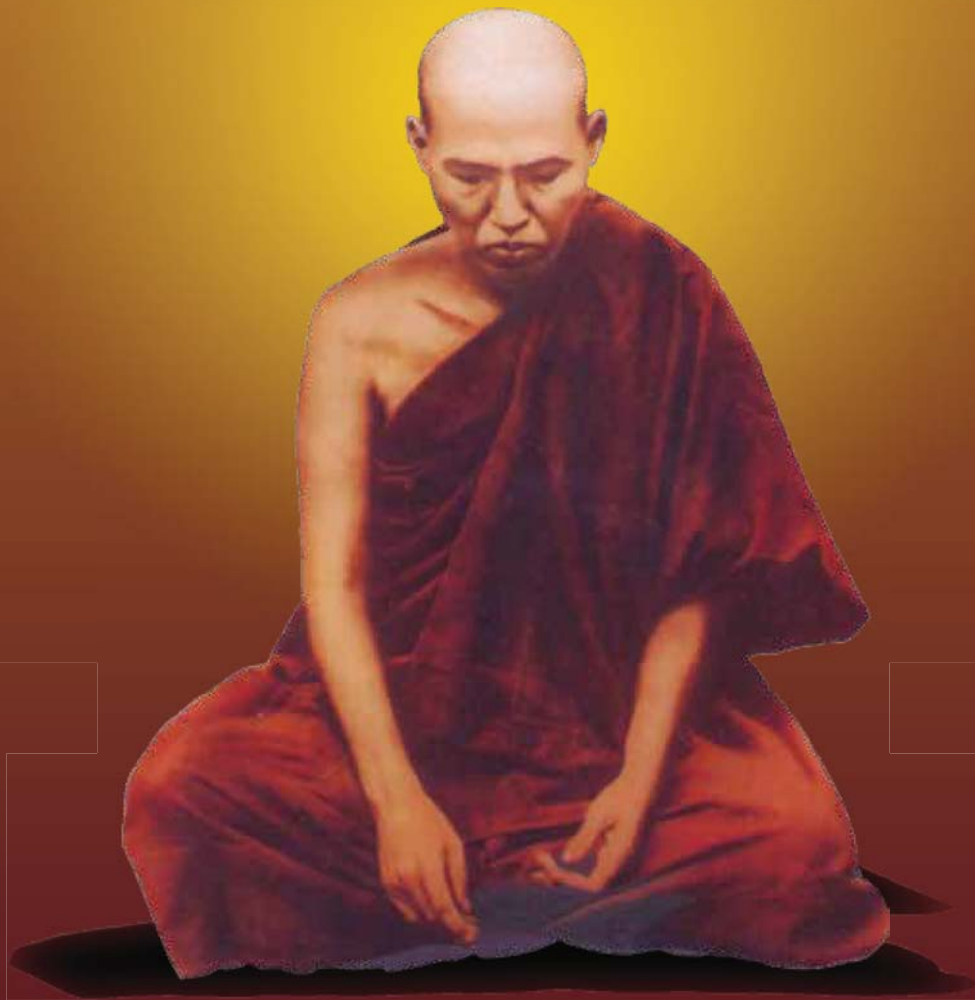




The Manuals of Dhamma



by Venerable Ledi Sayadaw

The Manuals of Dhamma

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These translations have long served as a guiding light for English-speaking meditators. But they are not easily available now. The number of Vipassana meditators in the tradition of Ledi Sayadaw is increasing rapidly all over the world. These meditators are naturally eager to read the Sayadaw's Dīpanīs. To fulfill the demand, V.R.I. is publishing the English translations of these Dīpanīs again.

Since Vipassana meditators from, different religious background know the universal teaching of the Buddha as Dhamma, V.R.I. has taken the liberty to name this collection as Manuals of Dhamma.

May the meritorious work of the Union Buddha Sāsana Council Continue to bear fruits! May the words of Ledi Sayadaw continue to guide and inspire many on the path of Dhamma for a long, long time!

A Short Biography of Venerable Ledi Sayadaw

Known to oriental scholars around the world, the Venerable Ledi Sayadaw was born on Tuesday, the 13th Waxing of Nattaw, 1208 Myanmar (Burmese) Era (1846 C.E.) at Saing-Pyin Kyee village, Dipeyin Township, Shwebo District, Sagaing Division, of Myanmar (Burma).

Ledi Sayadaw's parents were U Tun Tha and Daw Kyene. Their first child, a son, died when he was very young. When the second child was born, the child's parents and relatives bestowed the title of 'Tat Khaung' upon him. In Myanmar, *tat* means to climb, rise, ascend, and *khaung* means the top, who will become the summit or foremost in every field of Buddhism. As a child, he was therefore known as Maung (young boy, master) Tat Khaung, later to become Ledi Sayadaw (Leti Sayataw). As founder of Ledi Nikāya (the Leti Organisation), Maung Tat Khaung became known as U Ñyāṇadhaja which means—the most excellent and greatest sage. He was indeed the great benefactor of many scholars worldwide and the distinguished bearer of the torch of meditation for the modern world.

Before Ledi Sayadaw's time, a short distance to the northeast of the city of Monywa in Upper Myanmar, the land was completely covered with a jungle of dense underbrush and tangled vegetation where many wild animals and birds lived. Farmers cleared parts of this jungle, and farms were created on this once wild land on the outskirts of the city. In Myanmar, *le* means farm, *ti* means invention, and *taw* means forest. Thus this area came to be known as the farms-invention forest, known in Myanmar as *Letitaw*. Later, the Myanmar people pronounced it *Ledi Tawya*, (*ya* means place).

Ledi or Leti is the name by which the Sayadaw, his monastery and his region are most known as outside of Myanmar. Sayadaw or Sayataw comes

from the word *saya*, which means teacher, and *daw* or *taw* which means great or respectable.

Sayadaw stayed in the midst of this jungle where he practised meditation, and established meditation and education monasteries. Taking the name of this place, Sayadaw and his monasteries became known as 'Ledi Sayadaw' and 'Ledi Monastery'.

At the age of ten, Maung Tat Khaung was sent by his parents to the monastery of Sayadaw U Nanda, who lived in Kyaung Ma Taik, the principle monastery of Saing Pyin Kyi village. Maung Tat Khaung learned the Myanmar language and began the study of the foundations of the Pāli language. He learned the *Lokanīti*, the *Dhammanīti*, 11 *Paritta suttas*, etc., by heart.

At the age of fifteen, he was ordained as a *sāmaṇera* (novice) under the guidance of his preceptor, Sayadaw U Nanda, at Kyaung Ma Taik, in Saing Pyin Kyi village, thus fulfilling the expectations of his parents. Sayadaw U Nanda gave him the name 'Ñyāṇadhaja', which also means 'possessor of the wisdom-banner'.

By the age of eighteen, he had mastered the *Vedas* under Sayadaw U Gandhamā, a *Veda* expert, in Ye Thut village near Saing Pyin Kyi. During this time, Shin Ñyāṇadhaja wrote many poems in Myanmar and Pāli, verses connected with ordination, *Jātaka* stories and a Pāli-Myanmar grammar.

At the age of twenty, in 1228 B.E. (April 20, 1866), Shin Ñyāṇadhaja took *upasampadā* (higher ordination) under the instruction of his preceptor, Sayadaw U Nanda. In 1229 B.E., U Ñyāṇadhaja went to Maṅgalā Sankyaung Taik in the northern part of the city of Mandalay. Sankyaung Taik was built by King Mindon. When King Mindon established his new capital and palace in Mandalay, he moved his former palace, San Nan Taw, from

the old capital of Amarapūra to the new capital of Mandalay, where it was reconstructed and donated as a monastery to Sayadaw for the benefit of the *Sāsana*.

King Mindon established over 400 monasteries surrounding his new capital in Mandalay with over 2,000 monks living in each monastery. This was a period of great patronage of and participation in both *pariyatti* and *paṭipatti*. When U Ñyāṇadhaja learned the Pāli *piṭakas* in Sankyaung Taik, there were over 80,000 monks in Mandalay. During recitations of *Vinaya* rules at Sankyaung Taik U Ñyāṇadhaja would take his place behind all the *bhikkhus* and recite with them all 227 rules in a loud voice that was sweet and clear. U Ñyāṇadhaja stayed at Sankyaung Taik in Mandalay for ten years. During this time, he thoroughly learned all of the *Piṭakas* including the *Aṭṭhakathās* and *Ṭīkā*s (Commentaries and Sub-commentaries).

According to the Myanmar Era, in the year of 1233 B.E. (1871 C.E.), on the full moon day of May, the Fifth Great Council (*Pañcama Saṅgāyana*), supported by King Mindon, was held in the Royal Palace of Mandalay. This great council was headed by Baddanta Jāgara (Phayargyi Sayadaw), Baddanta Narinda (Sibani Sayadaw) and Baddanta Sumaṅgala (Myinwon Sayadaw). Over 600 selected monks participated.

In the Fifth *Saṅgha* Council, monks recited the entire *Tipiṭaka*. From Saintkyaung Taik, the monks recited the *Vinaya Piṭaka*, monks from Salin Kyaung Taik recited the *Sutta Piṭaka*, and monks from Sankyaung Taik recited the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*. In this great *saṅgha* reciting assembly, held in the golden Royal Palace, U Ñyāṇadhaja, without any aides, orally recited the *Kathāvatthu Abhidhamma*, the fifth of the seven books which comprise the *Abhidhamma*. He was greatly honoured by the King, the *Saṅgha* and laymen. Based on this assembly of oral recitation, the righteous King Mahādhammarājā had the entire *Tipiṭaka* inscribed onto 729 slabs of marble and housed them in the Kuthodaw Pagoda below Mandalay Hill.

During his stay at Sankyaung Taik, U Ñyāṇadhaja continued to study and learn the

Tipiṭaka texts, commentaries and subcommentaries under the guidance of Sankyaung Sayadaw, Makutārāma Sayadaw, Salin Sayadaw and other eminent scholar-monks in Mandalay. He also gave lectures on the *Tipiṭaka* to the 2000 student monks at Sankyaung Taik. He was considered the most skilful in teaching the *Abhidhamma* and Pāli grammar. After the Fifth *Saṅgha* Council (*Saṅgāyana*), in the tenth year of his monkhood (1239 B.E., 1877 C.E.), his great skill at lecturing was recognised by the King, who awarded him the title of *Paṭhama Sācha* (First Great Lecturer).

He had been a monk for fourteen years, teaching *Tipiṭaka* students at Sankyaung Taik, when Sankyaung Sayadaw set out twenty questions in Pāli about the *pāramīs* (perfections) of a Buddha, a *Pacceka* Buddha and *sāvaka*s. Among the 2,000 student monks, no one could answer these questions satisfactorily except U Ñyāṇadhaja. So remarkable were his answers, that they were collected and published in his first book—*Pāramī Dīpanī* or The Manual of Perfection.

Every *uposatha* (sabbath) day, U Ñyāṇadhaja used to visit U Hlaing, the Minister of the Yo region. U Hlaing was a gifted and learned person in many fields who had a keen intellect and had written many books. U Ñyāṇadhaja spent long hours with him in discussion of both mundane (*lokiya*) and supramundane (*lokuttarā*) aspects of reality. From these discussions, he mastered the comparative study of discourses, verses, proverbs, poems, etc.

Some time later, Shwe Yay Saung Sayadaw instructed Man Aung Sayadaw to translate the *Nigamagāthā* (conclusion stanzas) of *Manisāra Mañjusatikā* from Pāli into Myanmar. Man Aung Sayadaw turned this task over to Sankyaung Sayadaw who in turn assigned the task to U Ñyāṇadhaja. The stanzas were very complicated and difficult to understand. U Ñyāṇadhaja was able to render an excellent translation that satisfied the Sayadaws.

During this period, Myanmar students and teachers of the *Abhidhamma* were relying heavily on a Sinhalese commentary, the

Abhidhammattha Vibhāvani Tikā, written by the Venerable Sumaṅgalasāmi of ancient Sri Lanka. U Ṇyāṇadhaja heard a discussion among some Sinhalese scholar monks who were visiting Mandalay at that time. They said, ‘Myanmar monks do not understand *Abhidhamma* and Pāli grammar correctly because they are studying and teaching the *Abhidhammattha Vibhāvani Tikā* in which there are many mistakes in both theory and grammar. Have they not discovered and realised these mistakes?’ U Ṇyāṇadhaja firmly resolved that someday he would write a new *Abhidhamma Tikā* and new Pāli grammar texts.

U Ṇyāṇadhaja had arrived in Sankyaung Taik in 1229 B.E. In 1240 B.E., Thibaw, the son of Mindon, succeeded Mindon as the king. In 1244 B.E., in the fourth year of the reign of King Thibaw, the whole capital of Mandalay was ravaged by fire, including many parts of the palace and Sankyaung Taik. U Ṇyāṇadhaja lost many books, notes, references, quotations, etc., in the fire. He had spent sixteen years in Sankyaung Taik: nine years as a student and seven years as a teacher. While residing there, he devoted himself to the service of the *bhikkhu saṅgha*. Daily, he cleaned the monastery and compound. He washed the toilets in the morning and fetched drinking water, bathing water and toilet water for the monks. In 1244 B.E., after the great fire, U Ṇyāṇadhaja paid homage to Sankyaung Sayadaw and left the gutted palace and monastery. He went to Monywa.

In Monywa, U Ṇyāṇadhaja stayed at Shwesekhōn Kyaung near Shwesekhōn Pagoda for a short period of time and then returned to Saing Pyin Kyi village where he was born. He spent the rainy retreat (*vassa*) in 1245 B.E., at a bamboo *vihāra* near Marajina Pagoda, in the vicinity of Monywa. During the rainy retreats of 1246-48 B.E., U Ṇyāṇadhaja stayed at U Wine Monastery, donated by Thangyo U Wine, a merchant from Monywa. At the end of the rainy retreat of 1248 B.E. (1877 C.E.), Sayadaw withdrew into the jungle. His disciples, after searching for him for many days, finally found him sitting alone under a huge tamarind tree with only three robes and one black bowl in the middle of a thick jungle, called Ledi,

to the northeast of Monywa. This marks the beginning of the era of Ledi Sayadaw and of his monastery called Ledi Kyaung Taik.

Around this time, Sayadaw started exhorting people not to eat cattle or oxen. He taught that oxen correspond to fathers who plow the land and give food to the family. Cows resemble mothers, who feed milk to their children. Human beings should not eat the meat of oxen and cows because they are so similar to parents. Sayadaw wrote many open letters at that time urging people to abstain from eating beef—(‘The Letter of Fervent Love for Cattle’ or *Gomettasa*, an admonitory letter for the abstention from eating beef).

In those days, in the Ledi jungle, various creatures troubled people who went there. The Sayadaw developed deep *mettā bhāvanā* (loving-kindness) toward them. During this time he became known as ‘Ledi Sayadaw’. Soon after, three young *bhikkhus* who had been students of Sayadaw, came to his forest *vihāra* in order to care for his needs and learn the *Tipiṭaka* from him. The number of students and monks studying under him and devoted lay people gradually increased. When learned monks from many places began to come to Ledi Sayadaw to study the sacred texts and to learn meditation, they built many residential monasteries, dining halls, teaching halls, meditation halls, secluded huts, stupas, water wells, water tanks, etc. Sayadaw consecrated ground to build an ordination hall. He named the Ledi Monastery—*Sādhujanapāsādikārāma* which means, ‘the monastery for the gladdening of good people’ and named the ordination hall—*Sāsana Sobhini Simā* which means, ‘the consecration for the courtesy of dispensation’. These names were actually insignificant in the legend of Ledi Sayadaw.

Sayadaw U Ṇyāṇadhaja established Ledi Monastery and Ledi Organisation at the age of 40, in 1248 B.E. (1886 C.E.). For the next 12 years, he taught the *Tipiṭaka* to *bhikkhus* who came from various places. He also nursed sick *bhikkhus*.

Amongst his many activities and obligations, Ledi Sayadaw also accomplished a task he had set for himself many years before, at Sankyaung

Taika in Mandalay. He corrected over 230 errors in the *Abhidhammattha Vibhāvani Tikā*. From his studies and lectures, he compiled a new commentary on the *Abhidhamma* in 1259 B.E., entitled the *Paramattha-Dīpanī Tikā*. It has become a standard reference on the *Abhidhamma* among teachers, students and scholars around the world.

Meanwhile, he translated his Pāli *Tikā* into Myanmar. He wrote the following works at Ledi Monastery in 1256 B.E.—*Lakkhaṇa Dīpanī* (Manual of Characteristics), and *Uposatha Sīla Vinicchaya* (a decisive talk on sabbath virtue).

In 1257 B.E., Ledi Sayadaw travelled to Bodhgaya, in India. From there, he visited other sacred places associated with the Buddha's life including Sarnath, Rajagaha, Savatthi, Lumbini, etc. As he travelled, first by train to Yangon (Rangoon), then by ship to Calcutta, and while he visited these holy places, Ledi Sayadaw wrote thirteen verses on *paṭiccasamuppāda* (Dependent Origination). On returning to Yangon, Sayadaw compiled a book entitled *Paṭiccasamuppāda Dīpanī* (Manual of Dependent Origination). In the following years, Ledi Sayadaw travelled continuously up and down Myanmar. He would spend his rainy retreats in meditation and also writing manuals in response to the questions of his many disciples and lay-followers.

In 1258 B.E., when he was fifty, Sayadaw entered the Sapagan Tawtankyi Forest, Twante Township and stayed at the Sapagan Forest Monastery. He consequently wrote 'The Lion's Roar', a poem which he gave to his senior disciple and well known *dhamma*-teacher, Ledi Vaṇṇita. From this poem, it is clear that Ledi Sayadaw had attained the fourth *jhāna*.

During 1259 and 1260 B.E., Ledi Sayadaw spent his rainy retreats at Ledi Monastery and wrote the *Puṇṇovāda-kammaṭṭhāna* (the meditation taught for *Puṇṇa*) and the *Vijjāmagga Dīpanī*. At the end of his rainy retreat in 1260 B.E., he went to Thit Khya Taung Tawya (Oak Tree Mountain Forest Monastery) in Kyaik Hto Township in Mon state, at the invitation of U Tiloka. U Tiloka was a forest dwelling monk and one of Sayadaw's senior disciples. He had written *Paṇḍita Vedaniya*

Dīpanī, which was Ledi Sayadaw's favourite book.

In the Oak Tree Mountain Forest Monastery, Ledi Sayadaw taught meditation to his disciples—U Tiloka, U Nandamāla, U Visuddha, U Javana, U Sobhana and U Sundara. He meditated diligently with them day and night.

From the Oak Tree Mountain Forest Monastery, Sayadaw visited Kusinaron Pagoda of Bi Lin Township. There he met many hermits who wanted him to teach them about magical science (*vijjā*) and those who possess magical power (*vijjādhara*). Ledi Sayadaw explained to them about real *vijjā* (wisdom) and real *vijjādhara* (possessors of wisdom). Real *vijjā* is eradication of suffering through purification of mind. The hermits implored him to write a book about *vijjā*. This book is called *Vijjāmagga Dīpanī*.

In 1262 B.E., he authored the *Uttamapurisa Dīpanī*. He then took his rainy season retreat at Maha Myaing Taw (forest) along with his disciple, U Eindaka, the Kyaung Pan Sayadaw. Ledi Sayadaw guided U Eindaka in meditation. They practised diligently and continuously day and night. After some days, U Eindaka fell ill and Ledi Sayadaw would go for alms and offer the food he received to his sick disciple. At the end of the rainy retreat, Ledi Sayadaw also fell ill and returned to Ledi Forest, where he passed the time meditating, reading, writing and teaching.

During the years 1263-64 B.E., Ledi Sayadaw moved to Shwe Taung U Mountain on the banks of the Chindwin (Sallāvātī) River near Alon Town, where he resided in a stone cave. At that time, he wrote three books—the *Āhāra Dīpanī*, the *Anatta Dīpanī* and the *Dhamma Dīpanī*.

In 1265 B.E., he moved to Latpantaung Mountain, on the north bank of the Chindwin River, three miles to the west of Monywa. Here, he meditated and also wrote the following five books—*Sammādiṭṭhi Dīpanī* (Manual of Right Understanding), *Catusacca Dīpanī* (Manual of the Four Noble Truths), *Kammaṭṭhāna Dīpanī* (Manual of Meditation), *Paramattha Saṅkhepa* (stanzas in Myanmar), and *Nirutti Dīpanī* (in Pāli). The *Nirutti Dīpanī* was a commentary on the

Mogallānavyākaraṇa, a famous classical Pāli grammar. Sayadaw inserted the essence of other ancient Pāli grammars into the *Nirutti Dīpanī*, commenting on the *Kaccāyana*, the *Rūpasiddhi* and the *Sadda Nīti*, and presented many examples from the *Tipiṭaka*.

During his visits to the royal palace, Ledi Sayadaw gave Dhamma discourses. On certain days, he taught *Ānāpāna* meditation to those same audiences. He wrote the *Ānāpāna Dīpanī* while staying at U Kyaung's house in the Old Royal Palace. During his sojourn at the Mandalay Palace, Ledi Sayadaw's Dhamma teaching became widely celebrated throughout the capital city.

For many years, Sayadaw had been teaching and expounding the complex metaphysical analysis contained in the seven volumes of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, one of the three main divisions, or 'baskets' of the Theravada Buddhist Canon. At this time, in the world of classical Pāli literature, one of the most popular *Abhidhamma* manuals was the *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha*. *Abhi* means great, excellent, sublime; *dhamma* means doctrine, teaching, truth; *attha* means nature or thing; and *saṅgaha* means a collection, compendium or outline. Therefore, the *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha* is an outline of the nature of the great sublime teaching. Although this book was widely read by scholars, its language was much too complex to be understood by the ordinary layperson. Ledi Sayadaw compiled the *Paramattha Saṅkhitta*. This was written in beautiful and expressive poetical stanzas in the Myanmar language, making it easy for the average person to remember and understand.

In 1266 B.E., Ledi Sayadaw resided at Kyin Myaing Tawya, to the north of Pyinmanar Town, and during his rainy retreat, he authored the following books—*Bhāvāna Dīpanī*, *Bodhipakkhiya Dīpanī* (The Manual of the Factors Leading to Enlightenment), and *Saddasaṅkhepa* (*Sadda Saṅkhitta*).

In 1267 B.E., he spent the rainy season retreat at Yekangyitawya (Great Lake Forest Monastery), in Myinkyan Town. Here he helped to establish and organise a *Paṭiccasamuppāda* Association, a

Paramattha Saṅkhit Association, a *Vipassanā* Association and the Association for Refraining from Eating Beef, among others.

At times, Ledi Sayadaw travelled continuously throughout the country to teach meditation and the study of Dhamma to all levels of society. He travelled not only to drought areas, but also to plague infested areas as well as to feuding villages. His visits were immensely beneficial.

In 1268 B.E., he spent his *vassa* at a Vipassana meditation centre near the ancient capital of Prome, the Vipassanakone Tawya. He also returned to Mandalay for a visit. In 1270 B.E., Sayadaw spent his *vassa* at Mawla Myaing. When the plague spread throughout the country and many people were dying Ledi Sayadaw published *Rogantara Dīpanī* in which he instructed people how to protect themselves from disease.

In 1276 B.E., while Sayadaw stayed at Ratanāsiri Monastery, he wrote the *Vipassanā Dīpanī* (The Manual of Insight Meditation) during the annual meeting of the Society for Spreading the Buddha's teaching in Foreign Countries. The *Vipassanā Dīpanī* was dedicated as an 'Outline of the Exercises of Insight for the Followers of the Buddha in Europe'.

The Sayadaw established many well-known monasteries throughout Myanmar, some of which were located in Monywa, Mandalay, Myinkyan (Mingyan), Sagaing, Pyinmanar, Taung Ngu, Yangon, Mawla Myaing, Hinthata, Pathein, Kyaiktho and Thaton. He set up three kinds of monasteries—education centres, meditation centres and secluded forest retreats. The *Saṅkhitta* Associations, *Abhidhamma* Associations, *Vipassanā* Associations, *Paṭiccasamuppāda* Associations, the Association for Refraining from Eating Beef, the Pāli Translation Society and the World Missionary Association were some of the associations which Sayadaw founded throughout the cities, towns and villages of Myanmar. The Pāli Translation Association, headed by his senior disciple, U Ñyāṇa, compiled a Pāli-English dictionary.

One of these disciples who was to have a far reaching influence in the spread of Ledi Sayadaw's

meditation techniques was the layman Saya Thetgyi.

U Thet stayed with Ledi Sayadaw for seven years in all. Ledi Sayadaw advised him at the time of his departure to work diligently to develop his *samādhi* (concentration) and *paññā* (purifying wisdom) so that eventually he could begin to teach.

U Thet consulted the manuals written by the Sayadaw whenever he needed guidance. U Thet started teaching *Ānāpāna* to a group of about fifteen people in 1914. After teaching for a year, in about 1915, U Thet took his wife and her sister and a few other family members to Monywa to pay respects to Ledi Sayadaw who was about seventy years old at that time. When U Thet told his teacher about his meditation experiences and the courses he had been offering, Ledi Sayadaw was very pleased.

It was during this visit that Ledi Sayadaw gave his staff to U Thet, saying, 'Here, my great pupil, take my staff and go. Keep it well. From today onwards, you must teach the Dhamma of *rūpa* and *nāma* (mind and matter). Pay homage to the *sāsana* in my stead.'

The next day Ledi Sayadaw summoned all the *bhikkhus* of his monastery. He asked U Thet to stay on for ten or fifteen days to instruct them. The Sayadaw told the gathering of *bhikkhus*, 'Take note, all of you. This layperson is my great pupil U Po Thet from lower Myanmar. He is capable of teaching meditation like me. Those of you who wish to practise meditation, follow him. Learn the technique from him and practise. You, Dāyaka Thet hoist the victory banner of Dhamma in place of me, starting at my monastery.' U Thet then taught Vipassana meditation to about twenty-five

monks learned in the scriptures. U Thet soon became known as Saya Thetgyi (*saya* means "teacher;" *gyi* is a suffix denoting respect).

Saya Thetgyi knew many of Ledi Sayadaw's prolific writings by heart. His reputation as a meditation teacher spread. His village was not far from Yangon. Hence government employees and urbanites, like U Ba Khin, also came to learn from him. It was widely believed in Myanmar that he was an *anāgāmi*. He was known in Myanmar as 'Anāgāma Saya Thetgyi.'

In 1273 B.E., (1912 C.E.) Ledi Sayadaw became the first person awarded the title of *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* by the British government since the annexation of Myanmar as a British colony. Later, Ledi Sayadaw was awarded the title of Doctor of Literature (D. Litt.) at the grand opening ceremony of Yangon University.

During the last two years of his life, Ledi Sayadaw dwelled at Ledi Sankyaung in Pinyinmanar. When he was seventy-seven years old, in the fifty-seventh year of his monkhood, he expired on the full moon day of July, 1285 B.E. (1923 C.E.). The lamp of Dhamma was extinguished.

The task given by Ledi Sayadaw, of spreading the Dhamma in all strata of society, to Saya Thetgyi is continuing. S. N. Goenka (Goenkaji) learned Vipassana from Saya Thetgyi's student, Sayagyi U Ba Khin. After practising Vipassana for fourteen years under Sayagyi's guidance, Sayagyi bestowed on Goenkaji the responsibility of *vipassana-ācariya* in 1969. The legacy of Ledi Sayadaw continues.

The *Vipassanā Dīpanī* or The Manual Of Insight

The *Vipassanā Dīpanī* or The Manual Of Insight

by the Mahā-Thera Ledi Sayadaw, Aggamahāpaṇḍita, D. Litt.
Translated into English by U Nyana, Patamagyaw of Masoeyein Monastery, Mandalay.

The Three *Vipallāsa*

Vipallāsa means hallucination, delusion, erroneous observation, or, taking that which is true as being false, and that which is false as true.

There are three kinds of *Vipallāsa*, to wit:

1. *Saññā-vipallāsa*—hallucination of perception;
2. *Citta-vipallāsa*—hallucination of thought;
3. *Diṭṭhi-vipallāsa*—hallucination of views.

Of these three, hallucination of perception is four-fold, thus:

- (i) It erroneously perceives impermanence as permanence;
- (ii) Impurity as purity;
- (iii) Ill as good; and
- (iv) No-soul as soul.

The same holds good with regard to the remaining two *vipallāsa*, i.e., those of thinking and viewing.

All these classifications come under the category of “This is mine! This is my Self or living Soul!” and will be made clear later.

The three *Vipallāsa* may be illustrated respectively by the similes of the wild deer, the magician, and a man who has lost his way.

This is the simile of the wild deer to illustrate the hallucination of perception.

In the middle of a great forest a certain husbandman cultivated a piece of paddy land. While the cultivator was away, wild deer were in the habit of coming to the field and eating the young spikes of growing grain. So the cultivator put some straw together into the shape of a man and set it up in the middle of the field in order to frighten the deer away. He tied the straws together with fibres into the resemblance of a body, with head, hands and legs; and with white lime painting on a pot the lineaments

of a human face, he set it on the top of the body. He also covered the artificial man with some old clothes such as a coat, and so forth, and put a bow and arrow into his hands. Now the deer came as usual to eat the young paddy; but approaching it and catching sight of the artificial man, they took it for a real one, were frightened and ran away.

In this illustration, the wild deer had seen men before and retained in their memory the perception of the shape and form of men. In accordance with their present perception, they took the straw man for a real man. Thus their perception of it was an erroneous perception. The hallucination of perception is as here shown in this allegory of the wild deer. It is very clear and easy to understand. This particular hallucination is also illustrated in the case of a bewildered man who has lost his way and cannot make out the cardinal points, East and West, in the locality in which he is, although the rising and setting of the sun may be distinctly perceived by any one with open eyes. If the error has once been made, it establishes itself very firmly, and is only with great difficulty to be removed. There are many things within ourselves which we are always apprehending erroneously and in a sense the reverse of the truth as regards Impermanence and No-soul. Thus through the hallucination of perception we apprehend things erroneously in exactly the same way that the wild deer take the straw man to be a real man even with their eyes wide open.

Now for the simile of the magician to illustrate the hallucination of thought.

There is a pretended art called magic by means of which when lumps of earth are exhibited in the presence of a crowd, all who look at them think they are lumps of gold and silver. The power of the magical art is such as to take from men their ordinary power of seeing and in its place put an extraordinary kind of sight. It can thus for a time, turn the mind upside