

# Distinctive features of Mural Paintings in Bagan

The use of the *tribhaṅga*

The use of the *Halo*

Dr ZTT

The use of the *tribhaṅga* concept in Myanmar Buddhist art is an ancient tradition that is deeply seated in Sanskrit.

In Sanskrit *tri* means three and *bhaṅga* means bend.

The implication is that if there is the action of the bending there is movement involved.

A significant contribution of Myanmar Buddhist painters of Bagan period is the “Standing *Tribhaṅga* ”.

## The use of the *Halo*

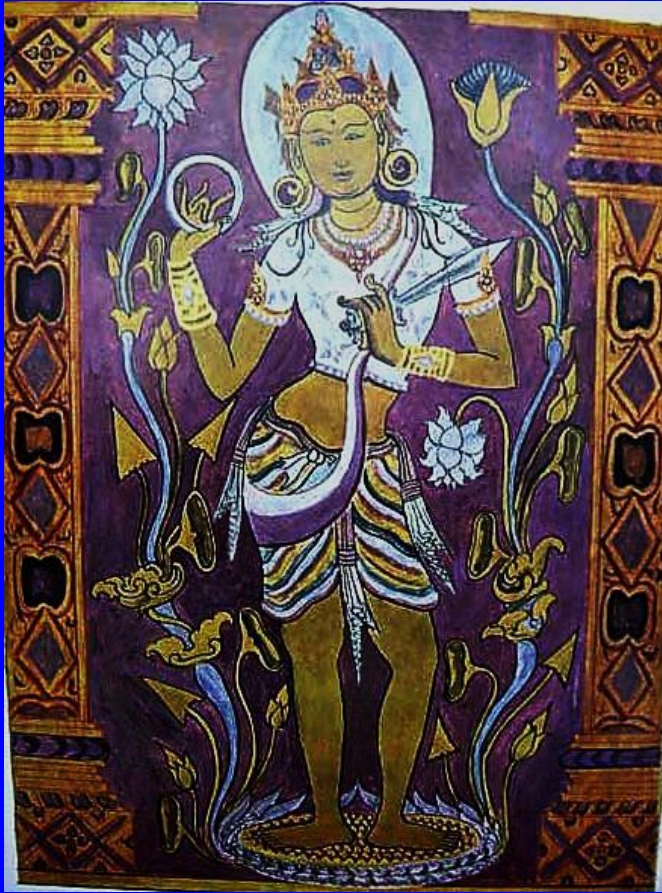
HALO:

a circle of light shown around or above the head of a saint or holy person to represent their holiness



a circle of white or coloured light around the sun, moon, or other luminous body caused by refraction through ice crystals in the atmosphere





Standing *Bodhisattvas*  
Abeyadana Temple  
*Old Burma Early Pagan I,*  
G. H. Luce, 1969)

*tribhaṅga* pose  
and  
halo round on the head



Fourteen armed  
*Bodhisattva*  
Myinkaba Kubyauk Gyi  
Temple

*tribhaṅga pose*  
and  
halo round on the head



The Nativity,  
Reproduced  
Lokahteikpan  
(12<sup>th</sup> Century A.D)  
*(The Lokahteikpan,*  
Ba Shin, *BHC, 1962*



The Nativity  
Minanthu  
(13<sup>th</sup> century A D)



Tantric deities and  
their female counterparts  
Minanthu (13<sup>th</sup> century A D)



Ajanta Cave



tribhaṅga pose

According to Mahāyanism Padmapani  
who is holding the lotus flower can be expressed as  
*Avalokiteśvara* or *Bodhisattava*.

(Ajanta Cave No. 1)

*tribhaṅga pose*  
and  
halo round on the head



Māyā miraculously giving birth to Siddhārtha. Sanskrit,  
palm-leaf manuscript, Nālandā, Bihar, India, Pāla period



Birth of the Buddha, Kushan Dynasty, late 2nd to early 3rd century CE.

# HALO



Pathothamya Temple (11th Century A.D)

The ascetic *Kaladevila* paying homage to the Embryo Buddha.  
In this scene the ascetic *Kaladevila* predicted that the infant  
would become the Buddha.

# HALO



Seated Bodhisattva on double lotus throne  
Abeyadana Temple



The ship-wreck;  
and Janaka's conversation with  
Manimekhalā

(*The Lokahteikpan*, Ba Shin,  
BHC, 1962, Pl.48)

# HALO



a ring of light around the head of a holy person in a religious drawing or painting



a bright circle of light around something, or something that looks like this: