

Old Burmese Painting

U Tin Lwin

(transl.)

(Hamburg)

Die nachfolgende Studie ist die Übersetzung eines birmanischen Textes, der, wohl 1967, vom Kultusministerium in Rangun unter dem Titel *Rhe: rui; Mran mā Pan: Rhyi* herausgegeben wurde.

Der Inhalt des Büchleins wendet sich in erster Linie an den interessierten Laien. Er war gedacht als Führer durch eine Ausstellung, die vom Archaeological Department in Rangun veranstaltet wurde. 22 farbige und zwei schwarzweiße Abbildungen sind dem Heft eingefügt. Trotz der einfachen Fassung des Textes, lohnt sich dessen Abdruck in Übersetzung. Die Schrift ist der erste Versuch, die Entwicklung der birmanischen Malerei systematisch darzustellen und die wesentlichen Charakteristika dieser Kunst aufzuzeigen. Bei dem erheblichen Mangel an Literatur, ja an schlichter Information über die Malerei Birmas verhilft die nachfolgende Übersetzung dazu, eine empfindliche Lücke provisorisch zu überbrücken.

Die Übersetzung hält sich soweit wie möglich an das Original, doch wurden offensichtliche Fehler ohne besondere Kennzeichnung berichtigt, wie z. B. unrichtige Nennungen hinduistischer Gottheiten oder der inkorrekte Gebrauch buddhologischer Termini. Auch erwies es sich um der Lesbarkeit willen als notwendig, den Text an manchen Stellen stilistisch leicht zu überarbeiten, wobei jedoch dessen Aussage nicht verändert wurde.

Der Übersetzer ist Professor für Pali an der Universität in Mandalay. Z. Zt. ist er als Lektor für Birmanisch an der Universität Hamburg tätig. Freundliche Hilfe bei der Erklärung birmanischer Fachausdrücke verdankt der Übersetzer Prof. Hla Pe und Mr. Okell, M. A., beide London. K. Wenk

Nature of old painting

Old Burmese painting can be seen mostly on the walls of buildings of old such as cave-pagodas, brick monasteries, brick *simās* (ordination halls) and the like.

Old Burmese painting can be easily distinguished from modern painting. The main characteristic of old painting is line drawing or outlining and colouring. This is known as Eastern technique. Eastern painting differs from Western painting in origin, objective and appeal.

Western painting involves the technique that produces dimensional effect while Eastern painting involves that of line drawing. In Western painting, figures are differentiated from one another by means of light and shade and colour contrasts; there is no sharply defined parts in it; rather than presenting an image in bold contours, it creates it in the imagination of the beholder. In Eastern painting on the other hand the image can be viewed clearly; it has the outline that not only distinctly defines the figure but also creates moods such as tenderness, severity, calmness or action.

Origin of Burmese painting

The technique of Eastern painting has been introduced to Burma from India. In other words, Burmese painting owes its origin to Indian painting. In its development however it assumes Burmese expression and guise.

In fact, most of religious and cultural elements have come to Burma from India. It may as well be said that the Burmese art of painting and curving is originated in elements suffused with Indian modes. Indian painting itself

is an art that essentially deals with religion. Indian Buddhist paintings depict the life of the Buddha (*Buddhavaṃsa*) and his previous lives (*Jātaka*) with an objective to arouse in the viewer reverence and inclination towards Buddhism. Though such paintings are primarily concerned with religion, scenes from the *Jātaka* contain landscapes, rural and urban settings and palace ceremonies thus revealing styles of costumes, tools and implements, musical instruments and way of life and customs of people from all walks of life. A painting indeed is a mirror of its contemporary period.

According to tradition, there are four categories in Burmese pictorial art: *kanut*, *nārī*, *kapī* and *gajā*. These seem to be a classification of fundamentals in Burmese art. These four fundamentals cover drawings of Buddhas, human beings, celestial beings of *devas* and *brahmās*, animals, palaces, monasteries, floral and linear patterns, and landscapes. But these paintings represent things or figures as conceived in the mind of the artist rather than as they naturally look to others.

The word *kanut* seems to have derived from Sanskrit *kokanuda* and probably refers to the presentation of the curling and curving of the water-lily, and of its stems and roots. We should also take it to be the pleasing and ornamental representation, whether in curving, relief, engraving, casting or painting, of the buds, flowers, fruits, stems, roots, leaves, petals and anthers of the water-lily, as they curve upwards and downwards, roll, twist, sway, rise, fall, contrast, taper or spread out. *Kanut* is synonymous with such pure Burmese words as *chupan chunwai*, "floriated griffon".

The *kanut* ornamentation is applied in Burmese painting and curving to tassels, fringes, encircling bands, canopies, chaplet, back-supports and so on. It is known in different forms and by different names according to where it is used, e. g., inverted lotus, upright lotus, lotus stem, lotus root, tamerind leaf, *thazin* (a kind of orchid) coil, waterweed flower, ogre with hanging flowers (*kīrtimukha*), griffon with hanging flowers, encircling elephant tusks, bow pattern, rhomb, crystal ball, diamond pattern, dot pattern, spiral design, twisted serpents, sea swell pattern, *mudarak* (*Bassialato folia*) creeper, gourd creeper, brocade, etc. These ornaments are employed apart from painting in stone and strucco works. Spirals and tiers of buildings are usually decorated with these motifs. Paintings of natural sceneries consisting of mountains, forests, water and land are also beautified with these motifs. In Burmese painting, it is therefore to be assumed that the art of drawing *kanut* includes not only things floriated but also things connected with geometrical designs, curvy lines and wavy patterns.

Nārī means woman. But probably as a convenient term it covers, besides all forms of human beings such as princes and princesses, figures of *devas* and *brahmās* and even beautifully painted Buddhas.

The name *kapī* is attached to drawing of the monkey figure. Drawings of monkey heads, ogre heads, *haṃsas* (geese) and lions are usually ornamented with *kanut* motifs. Later it lends its far reaching meaning to animals of speed and motion, birds flying with joy, dancing creatures like *kinnaras* (half-human and half-birds) and also *garuḍas* (huge mythical birds), *kumbhaṇḍas*

(ogre like beings with "pot eggs"), *yakkhas* (ogres) and *gandhabbas* (celestial musicians).

The name of elephant drawing is *gajā*. Elephant is a huge bodied animal and it seems that this leads to an inclusion of things of enormous size and height, and also things of static nature, in this elephant drawing.

In the light of these four fundamentals, Burmese modes and styles can be discerned as follows: decorative painting of things in straight and curvy lines constituting floral motifs; figure painting of beings represented in graceful and lovable postures; action painting of frolic creatures; and still life in which calm and serenity predominates. These are four main categories of Burmese art that have been traditionally recognised. It may therefore be said that the art of Burmese painting is the line drawing to which is added detailed presentation of twists and curls, curves and elegant lines, lively shapes and tranquility rather than portraiture of beings and things as they are really seen.

Mural painting

The earliest extant mural paintings in Burma can be viewed in cave-pagodas, *simās* and monasteries of the Pagan period. It was King Anawrahta who rendered a great service for the development of Theravada Buddhism at Pagan, and who, along with it, encouraged the growth of art and crafts. But it is believed that architecture, painting and sculpture were still at the stage of taking roots during his reign. It was only during the reign of King Kyansittha that cave-pagodas came into existence. A cave-pagoda contains a *gandhakuṭi* ("scented chamber") resembling a natural cave, and around the *gandhakuṭi* is a narrow corridor. There is a hall at the entrance. The wall of the *gandhakuṭi*, the corridor and the hall provide space for painting. In Pagan inscriptions it is usually recorded that when a cave-pagoda is built, painting is executed and that the painters are paid.

The inner walls of cave-pagodas, *simās* and monasteries at Pagan are plastered. Some walls have the foundation of crude plaster that is smoothed by a finishing cement coating or two. Then only lime is applied and painting done. But cement on some of the walls contain red soil and is thus perishable. Reasons for the danger of losing original paintings are varied: fading colours due to the ravages of time, breaking and falling off of cement due to lack of tenacity and damage by white ants and other insects due to the mixture of cement with red soil.

As regards the colours of paintings, early Pagan saw mostly white, black, yellow and red. It was only in the later Pagan Period that blue and green also came into use. Generally, dark soil-red, pale soil-red, dark pastel colour (cream) and light pastel colour (beige) were applied. It is said that the paint was mixed with gum from a *nim* tree for adhesiveness and with bile for brightness. It is also said that white was obtained from chalk, black from lamp black, yellow from yellow soil, red from vermillion and red soil, blue from indigo, green from *terra verde*. Pagan inscriptions contain records of purchase of orpiment, vermillion, minium, chalk, gum lac, plumbago, etc. for making paint.

The outline is sketched in black, and only sometimes red is used. Paintings depicting scenes from the *Buddhavaṃsa* are glossed at the bottom in Mon or Burmese for identification. On some walls are written Pali extracts, notes and prayers of the donor and horoscopes. These are in black against the white background. Writing in white on the black are also found, but they are very rare.

Since the Pagan area abounds in cave-pagodas, brick monasteries, *simās* and rest-houses, paintings there constitute a bigger number and a larger variety than in any other places. Areas around Sale, Myingyan, etc. also yield paintings belonging to the Pagan Period. But Pagan has far more, for even when Pagan ceased to be the capital of the country, successive kings of Ava and Konbaung dynasties had their works of merit built at Pagan, and paintings of later periods can therefore be seen in these buildings. Besides Pagan, paintings of the Ava and Konbaung Periods are extant also at Ava, Sagaing, Monywa area, Amarapura and Mandalay.

Pagan wall paintings are now 600 to 900 years old. Some have perished because of the coming off of the cement. Those still remain are not in good condition either: some have fading colours and damaged segments; some have been obliterated by soot and dirt; some have been completely whitewashed with lime by over zealous merit seekers; merit seekers of later times have the walls newly painted after white washing the original paintings. In this way, wonderful creations of old paintings have been lost. But, fortunately, there still remain a number of Pagan paintings to be studied. Indeed, it is not likely for one to be able to study them all in detail. From among them, those providing a possibility of duplicating have been traced and faithfully copied in their original colour and kept as records by the Archaeology Department. Others are still being copied. Besides, scientific techniques are applied in improving those paintings of fading colour and those suffering obliteration of dirt, and also in preserving those in reasonably good condition. In this way, we may be in a position to make contributions to the advanced study and preservation of old Burmese paintings.

Paintings of the Pagan Period

It is obvious that the art of Pagan paintings thrived on the religion. For this reason the paintings mainly include scenes from the *Buddhavaṃsa*, the *Jātaka*, the *Cariyāpitaka*, the *Vimānavatthu*, the *Petavatthu*, the *Apadāna* and their commentaries and sub-commentaries that deserve depiction. In some cave-pagodas, the Prophecy-scenes and the Bodhi-trees of the 28 Buddhas, the story of Asoka and the propagation of the Dhamma in Ceylon by the Venerable Mahinda are elaborately illustrated. The Buddhism prevalent at Pagan consisted of the Hinayāna school, usually called Southern Buddhism, that had been introduced from Thaton by King Anawrahta, and the Mahāyāna school which seemed to have flourished earlier. Paintings belonging to the Mahāyāna school are seen side by side with *Buddhavaṃsa* paintings of the Southern school. At Kyansittha's Abeyadana, paintings of Northern Buddhism are even predominant. Paintings of the Bodhisattva Lokanātha of

the Mahāyāna school are seen more or less at almost all the Pagan temples. Since the Tantra sect also had taken firm roots at Pagan, there are a considerable number of paintings belonging to that branch of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Since there were also paintings devoted to Brahmanism in Pagan, illustrations of Hindu deities can be found at some temples.

Pagan paintings can therefore be studied according to the theme they present as follows:

- a) Buddhavaṃsa and Buddha paintings,
- b) Jātaka stories,
- c) Mahāyāna and Tantra paintings,
- d) *Deva* and *brahmā* figures,
- e) Contemporary Pagan people,
- f) Music and dancing,
- g) Floral motifs, and
- h) Animal and bird motifs.

a) *Buddhavaṃsa and Buddha paintings*

The *Jātaka* stories are numerous, and therefore only the best possible scene of each *Jātaka* could be dealt with on the walls of Pagan temples, each scene having a small rectangular space. The *Buddhavaṃsa* however has less episodes and thus enables the painter to illustrate its scenes in detail on wider and bigger scale.

During the reign of King Kyansittha, scenes from the *Buddhavaṃsa* were painted elaborately at the Patothamya, Abeyadana, Nagayon and Myinkaba Gubyaukkyi. The highly favourite scenes from the *Buddhavaṃsa* are the Bodhisatta's Nativity, the Buddha's Occupation of the Bodhi-tree and the Golden Throne, the First Sermon, the Tamings of Nalagiri the Elephant, Nandopananda the Naga and Āḷāvaka the Ogre. Each of these scenes is painted either as the main panel or all these scenes are painted only as subsidiaries framing the main one. As regards the colour, dark soil-red, light soil-red, dark pastel colour and light pastel colour are used together with scarlet and white. Sometimes the background is black. As these colours are not too much of red or not too much of yellow, it is said that they are pleasing to those who meditate on the earth element.

At the Patothamya is a painting narrating the homage paid by the hermit Kāḷadevīla to the Bodhisatta (Fig. 1). But the colour is too dim to recognise, and only the contour could be traced and recorded. In this painting, King Suddhodana is seen holding out the bedecked Bodhisatta in his hand; the hermit Kāḷadevīla with down cast eyes is doing obeisance. Those who are waiting on behind the king seem to be his lesser queens and retinue. The palace can be seen in the background. It is a chamber with three graduated roofs and completed with "peacock chest" adornments above the entrance and at the corners of the roofs which is perhaps the prototype of Pagan palaces adopted by later Burmese kings. The two trees are probably betel nut palms. The styles of costumes and coiffure of the royalty and courtiers can be studied

in this painting. The robe of the king has patterns, and such patterns can be seen in all other Pagan paintings. The costumes showing the waists of female folk resemble those of Indian ladies. But the facial features of all the figures in this painting are Burmese.

At the Abeyadana Temple is the scene of the Buddha's deliverance of the First Sermon painted as a subsidiary panel (Fig. 2). With both hands at his breast and palms facing each other the Buddha is represented as teaching the Dhammacakka Sutta. Such a style of hands is known as Dharmacakramudra. There are two celestial beings on the top on either side of the Buddha paying obeisance with lotus flowers. At the bottom are seen two kings also in obeisance posture. The way the Buddha is seated crosslegged on the lotus throne on the top of the lotus stalk flanked by lotus buds and flowers, the way the floriated *devas* are hovering in the sky and paying homage with lotus flowers, and the way the two kings are bowing in utmost reverence are extremely beautiful. The composition of the figures is quite lovable, too.

At the Nagayon of Kyansittha also, there are scenes from the *Buddhavaṃsa*. But the colour is so dim and fragmentary that it is only because of the Mon gloss that we know as to which scenes are painted. The paintings include such scenes as the request of a certain *deva* to the Buddha to teach the Maṅgala Sutta, the Buddha Dīpaṅkara's prophesy made to Sumedha the hermit, the teaching of the Mettā Sutta, the Twin Miracle, Devadatta's attempt to kill the Buddha, such *Jātaka* stories as Kusa, Chaddanta and Mahāsutasoma are also painted. The manner in which the royalty and common people are paying homage to the Buddha in the paintings at this temple is so expressive in all their humbleness that it may be said that the workmanship here closely resembles that of the Ajanta paintings.

The painting illustrating the "miracle" of heretical teachers can be viewed at the Myinkaba Gubyaukkyi. The painting shows the heretics making an unseccessful attempt to perform a miracle in competition with the Buddha after gathering at a pavilion near the city of Sāvatti. At the bottom of the mural are two rows of royal audience seated in obeisance posture. Their costumes are of the same style. Only the colour and patterns are different. The audience include two figures with beardless faces which seem to be young women. In this painting, the contour is sharp. The foliage of the trees behind the pavilion provide a pleasant sight.

Also at the Gubyaukki is a painting dealing with the Buddha's descent from Tāvatiṃsa to Saṅkassanagara (Fig. 4). According to Buddhist scriptures, there are four sites called *avijahitaṭṭhāna* which should not be abandoned by Buddhas: the Mahābodhi, the Deer Park, the Jetavana Monastery at Sāvatti and the spot of the Buddha's touch down at Saṅkassanagara on his return from Tāvatiṃsa. Pagan painters paid much attention to these four places and their related scenes from the *Buddhavaṃsa*. During a *vassa* (rain-retreat), the Buddha ascended to Tāvatiṃsa heaven to teach Abhidhamma to a heavenly audience headed by the *deva*, who was his mother Queen Māyā in the latter's previous existance. On the fullmoon day of *Thadingyut* (October), the Buddha came down to Saṅkassanagara. Sakka, king of *devas*,

created three staircases of gold, silver and ruby and let the Buddha take the ruby one in the middle. The Buddha was also surrounded and followed by *devas*, among whom were Pañicasikha with his harp, *gandhabbas* making heavenly music, Mātali fanning the Buddha all along with a fan made of a yak's tail, and the Brahmā holding a parasol for the Buddha. This scene from the *Buddhavaṃsa* at the Gubyaukkyi is really life like and makes the spectator inclined towards the Buddha.

At the Nandamannya near Minnanthu village, the Nativity scene is painted on a big scale (Fig. 5). The Nandamannya is a hundred years later than the Abeyadana and Myinkaba Gubyaukkyi. The size of the temple is very small; there is only a *gandhakuṭi* without a surrounding corridor. But the ceiling and the walls are all fully painted. The paintings include scenes belonging to the Tantra sect. The Nativity scene painted on one of the walls can be seen similarly in other cave-pagodas. But here at the Nandamannya, the colour is still fresh and in good condition. In this painting, Queen Māyā and Pajāpati Gotamī have girdles and arm-bands. Queen Māyā's face looks more Indian than that of Pajāpati. In the Nativity scenes in stucco sculptures the breasts are usually big and the waist small. But in this painting, the breasts are not given prominence. Both the ladies are in a sinuous *dehanché* posture called *tribhaṅga*. It is pleasant to see the girdles painted in detail. Queen Māyā's girdle has lotus flowers each with a different pattern inside, and there are seven different patterns all together. Not only that the postures of the ladies are proportionate, but also their fingers have an appearance of tenderness. Queen Māyā is not holding in her right hand the usual branch of a *sal*-tree, but its *mudra* suggests that she is actually holding one. The left hand is weak and the fingers are just hanging close to one another. It must be said that the fashion in which Pajāpati is embracing Queen Māyā with her right hand around the waist agrees with a similar posture of modern Western painting. According to modern painting, when a lady's fingers are painted, it is beautiful if the little finger is slightly parting with the ring-finger and the ring-finger is close to the middle finger. That the style of Gotamī's fingers agrees with modern concept is merely a coincidence, but one can only guess the high standard of the art of painting 800 years ago. Queen Māyā however has toes in reverse order in her feet, and this is perhaps due to the painter's negligence. Or does he suggest that the legs are twisted though they are seen straight and vertical?

In this Nativity scene, white is predominant, and the whole painting is bright in colour.

In the later Pagan Period, the facial features of painted figures became more of Burmese than before. Especially those paintings at pagodas around Sale have gay colours and less details. At a pagoda situated in the compound of the Shinbinsagyo, south of Yelai village, Sale, there are *Buddhavaṃsa* paintings (Fig. 6). Only one square foot of space is devoted to each scene. The scenes are those of the Renunciation, the Cutting-off of the Hair, the Meeting with King Bimbisāra, the Offering of Milkfood by Sujātā and the Floating of the Golden Bowl in the River Neranjarā, all in a series. In these

paintings, the decorative work in the background is widely spaced and the contours of the figures of the human beings and the horse are not proportionate. However this is not to say that the paintings are of poor quality. Though the scenes are from the *Buddhavaṃsa*, they are painted in small spaces like those from the *Jātaka*; and similarly, *Jātaka* scenes painted at pagodas around Pagan have less details. Here the techniques and styles employed in painting trees, waves and women costumes resemble those of the early Pagan Period. The difference is in the thrones: instead of lotus thrones here we have angular thrones. The hanging hands of the Buddha in standing posture are longer than the natural length and exceeding the knees even. Such an irregularity can be seen in Buddha paintings and images of Ava and Konbaung Periods.

b) *Jātaka stories*

Illustrations of *Jātaka* stories were very much in vogue during the Pagan Period. In Pagan inscriptions, we have records reading "The five hundred *Jātakas* are beautifully painted." In almost every temple, monastery or rest-house, *Jātaka* scenes are more or less painted. At buildings with more room, all the *Jātaka* stories are depicted. Since scenes from the 550 stories of the *Jātaka* are numerous, small rectangular spaces in rows are devoted to, each being only two and a half inches to five inches wide. Between these scenes are painted rhombic and circular design as far as the space allows. Generally, the name of the story and its brief narration in Mon and Burmese is given at the bottom. Since each story is represented only by a single scene of importance, it may not be easy to identify the scenes without these legends.

During the Pagan Period, *Jātaka* stories are also represented in terracotta plaques. Some of these are even glazed. On the terraces of Kyansittha's Ananda Temple, such glazed plaques occupy every other rectangular spot. The Shwezigon has similar glazed plaques, but their condition is not so good as at the Ananda. Ordinary, unglazed plaques can be seen at the twin pagodas of Petleik, the Dhammayazika and the Maṅgalazedi. And these unglazed plaques even bear detailed workmanship. Especially those at the Petleik pagodas are of highly appreciable workmanship. Paintings on the other hand are smaller in size than the terracotta plaques and are thus deprived of details. This makes them not so artistic as the plaques are. Nevertheless, the paintings are beautiful because, being in rows, they generally cover the walls.

Early Pagan paintings in brown, dark and light pastel colour within the black outline have a serene appearance. In the later Pagan Period however yellow and white are added, and the colour therefore becomes brighter. In some paintings, red is used, but blue is totally absent.

At Pagan, the *Jātaka* paintings belonging to the Myinkaba Gubyaukkyi are the earliest extant. But the pictures have become indistinct and disfigured owing to the vagaries of time. Those distinct and also the best are the paintings at the Wetkyi-in Gubyaukkyi (Fig. 7). The plaster foundation there is quite thick and smooth giving the walls a lustrous effect. And also because

black and white are predominant, the pictures present a clear view. That is why, 70 years ago, before the Temple was looked after by the Government, a foreigner took away certain paintings after successfully breaking off the stucco in plaques.

Since the existing *Jātaka* paintings at the Gubyaukkyi of Wetkyi-in, Pagan, are more distinct than those at other temples, details at certain corners can be seen: trees are in full foliage; waves are represented by line upon line linked semicircles; the patterns of royal robes are with circles; some of the girdles of male and female folks are patterned in horizontal lines; the tiger is illustrated with vertical but curvy stripes. In the panels are painted all kinds of figures: human beings, *devas*, *Sakka*, *Brahmā*, kings, queens, brahmins, etc; animals include elephants, horses, tigers, deer, monkeys; aquatic creatures include fish, turtles, *makāras* (sea-monsters), crocodiles, etc; birds include paddy birds, *hamsas*, pheasants, quails, etc; these are all life like figures. As for the postures of personages, there are those of homage paying, rowing, swimming, beating drums and riding elephants and horses. Monasteries with tiers can also be seen. In those paintings depicting scenes from remote existences of the Buddha, a halo or a parasol is added to the figure of the Bodhisatta whether he be a human being or a *deva* or an animal. In fact, the *Jātaka* stories provide an opportunity of fully practising the drawing of all the four fundamentals of old Burmese painting.

While each one of the minor *Jātaka* stories is represented by one scene only, each of the Ten Major *Jātaka* stories is represented by scenes numbering from ten to twenty. At a pagoda in the compound of the Shinbinsagyo of Yelai village, Sale, there is a Pagan painting depicting the Vessantara *Jātaka* in several scenes, such as the giving away of the White Elephant by the Bodhisatta, the taking away of the same by the brahmins riding it, the giving away of other elephants together with horses, cattle, and chariots, the journey of the Bodhisatta and his family on foot to Vaṅka Pabbata, their staying there, the giving away of *Jāli* and *Kaṇhājina*, the interruption by lions, leopards and tigers in Maddi's way home, the giving away of Maddi to Sakka who is under the disguise of a brahmin, and so on; all these are arranged in panels each measuring seven square inches. In these scenes the elephant figure looks more natural than other animal figures. In order to lay emphasis on the nature of the mountain range, peaks are set in a row or one on top of another. The styles of costumes in these small scenes are not painted in detail. But in the picture are shown things and implements in accordance with the episodes depicted. In these Vessantara paintings at the Shinbinsagyo, there are charity scenes in which the Bodhisatta is holding a kettle in one hand. Pagan inscriptions usually contain a phrase reading "pouring the libation water". Broken pieces of real libation kettles are also found in Pagan area. The kettles seen in the paintings are with long beaks and small handles, thus bearing the exact resemblance of a real one. In these paintings jet black is used for painting the hair. The background is reddish brown and the outline is gray within which is painted dark and light pastel colour.

Pale red is used for painting the wrist- and arm-bands and the girdles. It may therefore be said that the colour here is brighter than that used in the early Pagan Period.

c) *Mahāyāna and Tantra paintings*

It is clear that since the time of Anawrahta, Hīnayāna Buddhism, also called Theravāda, had flourished. Mahāyāna or Northern Buddhism which flourished side by side with Hīnayāna Buddhism spread to Pagan. But tradition has it that Mahāyāna became weaker and finally disappeared as Hīnayāna enjoyed royal patronage. Mahāyāna however did not disappear overnight in spite of the fact that Hīnayāna became the religion of the state. There is evidence to show that Mahāyāna still had its followers and influence to some extent.

In fact, it is believed that Pagan people made no discrimination and adopted both the schools as their religion.

To be able to appreciate Mahāyāna paintings, a rough idea of these two great schools of Buddhism is necessary. According to Hīnayāna those who become *Sāvakas* (Disciples of the Buddha), *Pacceka Buddhas* (Private Buddhas) and *Arahats* (Winner of the highest spiritual state) put effort for the attainment of *nibbāna*, thus aiming at their individual benefit.

Mahāyāna on the contrary holds that one must work out salvation of all other beings as well with compassion and loving kindness as the main forces of their effort. Until and unless all achieve salvation one should not attain *nibbāna* but remain as a Bodhisattva and take the responsibility of teaching the Dhamma to them. Therefore the main feature of the Mahāyāna school is reliance upon the Bodhisattva and the belief that everyone has Bodhisattva element in one's own self.

According to Hīnayāna however there is only one Bodhisattva during the period between the time of one Buddha and that of another. On the contrary, according to Mahāyāna texts there are numerous Bodhisattvas, of whom the best known are Arimetteyya, Mañjuśrī and Avalokiteśvara. And from each one of them arise other Bodhisattvas as well having different names and powers. Each Bodhisattva again has two consorts called Śaktis. Of female Bodhisattvas, Tārādevī and Prajñāpāramitā are famous. Tārā is so named because she has the power of conveying the creatures to the other side of Samsāra; Prajñāpāramitā is so called because she can save the creatures by means of her wisdom.

According to Mahāyāna art, a Bodhisattva must be painted in such a way that the figure is handsome and commanding faith. A Bodhisattva is usually painted in a posture in which he is slightly bending to one side or in a *tribhaṅga* posture or in Dharmacakramudra, Varadamudra, Vitarkamudra, Dhyānamudra, etc. A Bodhisattva may be in Padmāsana with crossed legs or Lalitāsana with one leg up and folded while the other down; he may also be in full royal dress and ornaments such as a crown with five *nim* leaves, a pearl necklace, hand-bands, arm-grips, a girdle, anklets, a robe with floral design and so on.

During the Pagan Period, the largest number of Mahāyāna paintings are executed at the Abeyadana. Paintings of Bodhisattvas are also obviously found at the Gubyaukkyi of Myinkaba, the Payathonzu and the Nandamannya of Minnanthu.

At the Abeyadana, the figure of Lokanātha can be seen. It is the figure of the Bodhisattva who is known as Avalokiteśvara, Avalokita or Lokanātha because of his being as a protector of the entire world and as a compassionate one. In the picture, his right hand fingers are in Varadamudra or the Boon-Giving attitude. His left hand is holding a blue lotus. He is seated on a lotus throne with one leg folded on it and the other hanging down. He has tender looks and modest physical manners. His face expresses calm and serenity. Such paintings are mostly seen at Pagan temples. Some paintings even bear such a gloss as: "This indeed is Lokanātha".

At the Abeyadana, the figure of Tārādevī can also be seen. She is beautifully bedecked with queenly attire and ornaments and seated with one leg up and one leg down. On her left side is painted a *padummā* lotus and on the right side a blue lotus. It is said that her lotuses signify purity. She has a sinuous body, a small waist, a big bosom and a smiling face. She is illustrated as though sitting at the entrance of a cave that has been hollowed out at a hill side.

The Payathonzu contains figures of Avalokiteśvara. In one painting the figure is in a standing posture with ten hands. The two front hands are in Dharmacakramudra. With a tender body his face is chubby and gentle. He is flanked by his two divine consorts, seated and waiting on him.

The Nandamannya also yields paintings of the standing Lokanātha, and they are in good condition. But the Bodhisattva paintings on either side of the entrance of the Myinkaba Gubyaukkyi are with fading colour and damaged parts.

At the Loka-Ukshaung of Pagan, the Bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi with eight hands can be viewed (Fig. 8). He is known as Vajrapāṇi because in his front right hand is a *vajra* (thunderbolt) weapon. In the other hands are a lotus, a spike, a spear, a sword, a knife, etc. The weapons are frightening, but the curvy body is pleasing to look at. It is said that the *vajra* weapon implies indestructibility and hardness and that it represents truth. Vajrapāṇi is honoured and paid homage for rains.

A branch of Mahāyāna is Tantra. Tantra originally was a Hindu sect. But as a Buddhist sect it has come into existence since the seventh century. In Hinduism, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva are the three principal gods. Each of these gods possesses both male and female aspects. The female aspect of Brahmā is Sarasvatī, that of Viṣṇu is Laṣkmī and that of Śiva is Parvatī, and these goddesses are known as Śaktis. It is said that this leads to the coupling of each god with his Śakti as a consort. But later there arose a sect which honoured only Parvatī, to whom different names have been applied. Some Mahāyānists began to adopt certain tenets of the Hindu Tantra and this gave birth to the Tantra sect of Buddhism.

Mahāyāna Bodhisattvas then came to be joined with their respective pairs of consorts and worshipped together. Each Bodhisattva is thus flanked by two consorts, and according to Tantra texts they are representative of a combination of such elements as Suññatā (Void) and Karuṇā (Compassion) or Upāya (Means) and Prajñā (Wisdom). Only when these two elements are combined in equal proportion can one see the truth.

Most of the Tantra paintings of Pagan are found at the Payathonzu of Minnanthu village. Bodhisattvas in sitting or standing postures are painted together with their respective Śakti consorts. They are all seen fully bedecked, and those Bodhisattvas in standing posture have a slightly bending or curvy body (Fig. 9). The figures of Śakti consorts are smaller than that of the Bodhisattvas. The faces of the Bodhisattvas wear different expressions, some terrifying and other solemn or smiling.

The Tantra sect provides delightful figures on the one hand and terrible figures on the other. It is said that terrible Bodhisattvas together with demons are honoured because the goal of deathlessness could be gained by overcoming all hindrances that tend to destroy the truth. Tantra paintings therefore contain ogres, demons, and other horrible figures of beasts. Such paintings can be seen at the Payathonzu.

Since the Aris of the Pagan Period were members of the Tantra sect, they not only worshipped Bodhisattvas, but also practised *mantra*-chanting, rune — casting, amulet — making and so on. A painting at the Nandamannya seems to suggest a group of women on a local pilgrimage (Fig. 10). In this painting, middle aged women are dancing, an old lady is chaperoning, a young maiden in fright and awe is clutching her mother in refuge. It seems that the whole painting is a vivid record of a contemporary scene of the Pagan Period.

d) Deva and Brahmā figures

Apart from the two main schools of Buddhism, there were followers of Hinduism at Pagan, and therefore various figures of *Devas* are painted at almost every temple. People belonging to one religion borrowed from another what they thought was good and practised certain well known customs of another which might not be related to them. Therefore there is almost no temple where paintings are confined to one particular religion, school or sect. Only at the Nathlaunggyaung, a Hindu temple, the paintings illustrated purely the Hindu pantheon. But these paintings cannot be studied well as they are in an extremely bad condition.

At the Abeyadana, aside from paintings of Bodhisattvas and Hindu gods, there are paintings of certain common dieties peculiar to Burmese Buddhist belief. Especially in the painting of a back-support, a cross-legged goddess is usually placed at the centre of the pediment.

In paintings depicting the Descent from Tāvatiṃsa, *Sakka*, *Brahmā* and *devas* are definitely seen. In other Buddhavaṃsa paintings, too, *devas* in homage paying attitude are usually painted at suitable spots. *Brahmā* is represented with three heads in serenity. The *Brahmā* figure drawn at the

Theimmasi had four eyes and two noses in a single head. The most favourite figures of celestial beings during the Pagan Period seem to be those of kneeling *devas* in adoration posture and those riding floating clouds. *Deva* paintings in purely Burmese style can be seen in a large quantity at the Penathagu.

Some paintings of celestial beings are not so different from Mahāyāna Bodhisattva figures. The standing figure of a *deva* in the Winidho is fully attired and painted in detail, but it wears an extremely solemn face. At the Kondawgyi pagoda of Nyaung-U, *deva* figures in black and brown can be seen. Gods and goddesses there sitting on their heels or riding floating clouds are quite proportionate; their finger styles are delightful, too.

At the temple (No. 181) near the Upali Thein there are lotus designs in which are painted figures of celestial beings — two *Brahmās* above a *deva* and the painting is typically Burmese. Though they are in black, dark brown, light brown and gray, the figures are quite distinct and clear.

At the Shwetanza (No. 163), a *Brahmā* surrounded by floral patterns and blowing a buffalo's horn is represented with only one head. The painting, illustrated in light brown except the outline and the crown for which black is used, is beautiful.

At a pagoda west of Yelai near Sale, there is a painting of a male and a female divine figures, one above the other encircled by floral motifs. The boundary lines are in a series of circles and lotus leaves. Both are in adoration posture — the male kneeling while the female standing. The ornaments are the same in both the figures except that the male is without necklaces and bangles. The male is in white while the female in light pastel colour.

e) Contemporary Pagan people

There is hardly any painting that solely depict the life of ordinary citizens during the Pagan Period. Since paintings belong to pagodas and temples they are mainly concerned with religion. Nevertheless in *Jātaka* paintings figures of royalty, ministers, brahmins and other courtiers that reflect the mode of dressing and movement during the Pagan Period can be seen. Among the action scenes or scenes of daily life of the citizens, figures in adoration posture pre dominate.

At the Payathonzu, figures of kings and other male persons in adoration postures are painted. Kings are wearing crowns, necklaces and ear-ornaments. Their robes are painted light pastel colour, the black edges of which having rhombic designs. They are also wearing halos painted green and are seated on their heels with folded hands in adoration. At the same temple, there are also figures of officers in the same style of painting. They have no crowns but halos suggesting that they are not commoners. And though they are wearing ear-ornaments, they have no necklaces. Their robes are sacks with neck holes and only their hands in adoration attitude came out of the robes. The colour is brown and light pastel, and two of the figures have rhombic and square patterns. Another figure has the robe with white horizontal lines between which are pearls. The fourth one has black verticle

lines. All these male figures are wearing beards, moustaches, goatees and whiskers.

At the Nandamannya, a devotee worshipping with lotus buds and flowers can be seen. He is wearing a girdle but no robe; the bangles and arm-bands are therefore prominent. His beard and whiskers are just slight.

Figures of three female devotees paying homage with lotus buds can be seen at the Shweleik-U (No. 180). One of them is quite young. The front one has a red outline with reddish brown and dark pastal colour. The old lady at the back has a black outline with a mixed paint of brown and black. Her clothing bears brown and black horizontal lines. These women have small waists, but their breasts are not prominent. At a glance they look like male figures, but their sinuous bodies, small waists and hanging scarves, and their being without beards and whiskers as well, betray that they are female. Similar figures are also seen at the Nandamannya.

At the Kyansittha cave, a female figure in adoration posture with a flower pot in her hand is painted. Since it belongs to the later Pagan Period, the influence of Ava costumes can be felt. The upper part of the body is tied up with a small scarf and the lower garment is up to her arm-pits covering her breasts. The hand-bands, arm-grips and ear-ornaments are painted yellow, the lower garment reddish brown and the body pastal colour. The movement is that of going to a pagoda.

Female figures on their way to a monastery at the Nandamannya also reflect as to how contemporary women of the Pagan Period dressed and moved. Similarly, the figure of a king or a prince riding a horse on his way to a temple might also be a contemporary Pagan scene (Fig. 10b).

At the Payathonzu, a male figure holding a spear and arrows seems to have been painted after the model of a Pagan citizen. The man possesses muscled limbs. His chest is tattooed. Judging from the posture of the man, he appears to be demonstrating his skill in archery by going through the steps and gestures of stylised display. An athletic scene is also found at the temple No. 145, north of Forest Monastery at Myinkaba. Though the painting is small, it is clear that the scene represents a wrestling bout. Both the wrestlers are stout with only loin-cloths on and this shows that they are typical sportsmen.

Those who witnessed the invasion of Kublai Khan during the later Pagan Period have recorded the event with the painting of a Mongol army officer and a soldier. The officer is wearing a headdress with a bird's tail and side flaps, a jacket with a neckhole and long sleeves and a pair of tight trousers. He is wearing boots, too. The jacket has circular patterns. Since he is sitting on a stool with folded arms, the scene is that of a resting hour. On one of his hands sits a bird, but his eyes indicate his deep pondering over something. The use of such colours as soil-red, pastal colour and yellow testifies that the painting bears typical features of Pagan art.

The Mongol soldier is an archer. His dress is not different from the officer's except that his trousers have horizontal lines. He is without boots. His readiness in shooting an arrow is quite expressive, but the youthful face lack an

air of bravery. He is also wearing a scarlet waist-band and a white shoulder scarf. The two legs seem to be moving but all the toes are those of the right foot owing to the painter's negligence. The headdress is fastened with a chin-strap. The headdress with its sideflaps is probably the prototype of the one called *mauk-ru* used by Burmese soldiers of the Ava and Konbaung Periods.

f) Music and dancing

Although there are references in Pagan inscriptions to musical instruments, players of these instruments and dancers, they are not represented fully in a single painting. A painting at the Kyansitha Cave depicting a group of pilgrims on their way to a temple with music and dancing, has five kinds of musical instruments. The painting shows a procession with some people dancing and others playing musical instruments: the woman at the front is dancing; behind her comes a *si* (small hand-cymbal) player, then a harper and then a *nhyin* (a kind of oboe) -blower; then come two women blowing buffalo horns; the last two women are drummers. Behind all these women are five male persons each wearing a hermit's headdress and holding lotus flowers. There are also some women walking along; at the back of them is a chariot drawn by four horses carrying a king and his consorts. Compared with those in the chariot, the walking women look as though they are wearing masks. That it is a contemporary Pagan painting is proved by their costumes.

At the Abeyadana and Patothamya, the figures of men beating drums and playing cymbals and those of dancing men and women can be seen. They are all wearing only lower garments and scarves. The drummers seem to be dancing at the same time. Female figures have small waists and big bosoms and in tender movement. Though painted soil-red and dark pastel colour, they are quite pleasant to look at.

g) Floral motifs

Floral motifs are a prime feature of Pagan paintings. There is not a single temple at which paintings are devoid of floral designs. Since these are of a great variety and of a fantastic creation, one can say that the floral painting reaches its apex during the Pagan Period.

Although pagodas and temples are beautified with floral decorations in stone and stucco-work as well, they do not enjoy a vast scope like in painting. In cave-pagodas, *sīmās* and monasteries, floral paintings dominate covering all the spaces from the ceiling down to the bottom of the walls. In the ceiling are painted circular and rhombic designs and the like with floral patterns inside them. Below the ceiling there are panels one above another where floral designs including double lotus, water-weed, circles, lotus-stalks and lotus-creepers are executed in rows. Below them are hanging flowers including *kirtimukka*. Then come scenes from the *Buddhavaṃsa* and *Jātaka* stories which are separated by floral boundaries. In the scenes themselves certain figures are floriated and flower motifs fittingly fill up vacant spaces.

Floral paintings also occupy pillars, pillar-bands, side and centre pediments of internal archways. In floral designs are fitted certain figures of ogres, *kinnaras*, *hamsas*, parrots, rabbits, etc. Those on the ceilings are lotus stalks and lotus stems that surround images of the Buddha. Such a ceiling painting is called "*kyak ta nguy*" in Pagan inscriptions.

At the temple (No. 698), north of the Myinkaba Gubyaukkalay, ceiling floral motifs painted dark soil-yellow against the back ground of black can be seen. The design is that of octagons each having edges in the shape of lotus leaves. And in each of the octagons is a sharply outlined Greek square surrounded by lotus stalks and lotus buds. The Greek square contains a *deva* figure with folded hands in adoration. Although the pattern is a multiplication of a single motif, it presents a fantastic view because of its fine workmanship.

At the Payathonzu, the background colour of the ceiling is black, but the motifs are in reddish brown and yellow and are extremely distinct. In each of the squares and octagons in the middle is a Buddha image in Dharmacakramudra, and in each of the squares on either side is a disciple. The images are really beautiful.

There are many floral motifs where lotus stalks, lotus stems and lotus flowers are painted without Buddha images. At a temple south of Upali Tlein, is a circle design in brown, light pastel colour and gray. Each of the circles contains five floriated smaller circles.

At the Shwetanza however such a design is outlined in black with floral patterns in green.

At most of Pagan temples, friezes are usually filled with rows of *kīrtimukhas*. Many of these have now suffered fading colours or damaged segments. But some remain distinct. While the friezes on outer walls have various designs of *kīrtimukhas* in stucco, those on inner walls have the same in painting which vary not only in pattern but also in colour and are thus elaborately painted. Pedants of pearls or lotus flowers hanging from the ogre heads are in rows and between these rows are painted lotus-rolls and lotus curls. And one lotus pattern at a temple is different from that at another temple. At the cave-pagoda close to and east of the Thingayaza temple at Myinkaba, the *kīrtimukhas* in dark brown and gray combined are still distinct. At the same pagoda, floral motifs on the friezes have beautiful patterns with figures of rabbits and parrots in between.

f) *Animal and bird motifs*

It is not necessary to point out particularly animal and bird motifs as they are painted not separately but only together with floral designs or in Jātaka scenes. Those usually painted in detail are figures of *kinnaras* and *makāras*.

Painting of the Ava Period

Although Southern Buddhism continued to flourish during the Ava Period, building of religious edifices was not so brisk as in the Pagan Period. Especially, those in the cave-pagoda style are by far less in number. And not

every cave-pagoda is painted. Therefore mural paintings of the Ava Period around Ava and Pinya are but a few. There is no mural painting that could be definitely believed to belong to the Ava Period.

Painting belonging to the later Ava Period or the Nyaung-yan Period can be seen at Sagaing and Pagan. Although there are paintings only in a few buildings at both the places, they remain original to a considerable extent, and the Ava art can therefore be studied well. The two buildings that contain these paintings are the Tilokaguru Cave of Sagaing Hills and the Upali Thein of Pagan. Others that yield paintings of the latter Ava Period are a cave-pagoda of the Shwezigon of Pinya, the Meebaukkyi and Lokahmangin pagodas of Sagaing, caves at Powin Hills of Monywa, the Shwegutha of Amarapura, the Kamma Kyaung-U Pagoda and the Cullāmaṇi of Pagan. Among Ava paintings, those at the Tilokaguru Cave, the Lokahmangin, the caves at Powin Hills and the Taungbi Library are of the same type; all these paintings are thinly composed and less detailed. A striking feature in these paintings that testifies to their belonging to the same period is that the male faces have a bulging cheek. The painting at the Shwegutha of Amarapura also is akin to that of the Tilokaguru Cave. Paintings at the Upali Thein, the Taungbi Kamma Kyaung-U Pagoda and the Cuḷāmaṇi are of the Ava Period, but they are better executed: figures of human beings have tender looks and are painted in detail. The mode of dressing is like that of the Early Konbaung Period.

Like Pagan paintings, all the paintings at these pagodas are of religious themes. But as they depict series of episodes from the *Buddhavaṃsa* and the *Jātaka* so that the stories are told thoroughly, they include things and movements of contemporary people of the Ava Period.

Ceiling paintings of the Tilokaguru Cave are in circular and floral designs of *kumuda* lotus. Upper parts of the walls have paintings of the 28 Buddhas, each with his own Bodhi tree and a couple of flanking Chief Disciples. The Prophecy and Renunciation scenes are also fully illustrated. Below them are paintings of the *Buddhavaṃsa* and the *Jātaka* scenes. While in the *Jātaka* paintings of Pagan each story is represented only by a single scene, here scenes narrating the story from the beginning to the end are painted. Therefore all the 550 stories could not be dealt with; only certain better known stories are chosen to be illustrated in detail. At the bottom of the walls are scenes of hell to warn the viewer of consequences of evils.

Those stories in paintings that remain without any damage include the Sampeyya Jātaka, the Ummāntāntī Jātaka, the Mahājanaka Jātaka, and the Bhallātiya Jātaka (Fig. 13, 14).

The Retirement scene has the background in reddish brown on which are paintings in white, red and green. The figure of the horse in this scene is full of life. Elephant figures at the Tilokaguru Cave are natural, but those of cattle, goats and horses are poor.

Male and female figures have the front view of their faces alike. But the male figures are shown not quite in profile, but with a three-quarter-face and a bulging cheek. But the face of Prince Siddhattha in the Retirement scene is

natural without a bulging cheek. His eyes and eyebrows are in black outline, but the lines below the eyes, and the nose and the lips as well, are painted red.

The male costume in the paintings inside the Tilokaguru Cave consists of a green *thindaing* (blouse) covering the knees with middle length sleeves and a *pahso* (lower garment) is worn with the material bunched at the front of the waist. Figures of princes wear crowns or headdresses and sometimes the headdresses are like that of a minister. The crowns have ornaments above the ears. Wealthy men have turbans. Ear-plugs are put on by people from all walks of life.

As regards the female costume, there are sleeveless jackets that cover the upper part of the body from the breast down to the knees. These are generally white with flower designs. There are *htameins* (lower garments) for females too which are of checks or stripes that cover the body down to the legs with their edges coming down just above the ankles. Their coiffure are upright, at the middle of which is a gold ornament in the form of layers of flowers. The shoulders are covered with white scarves or towels. Sometimes a white scarf is put on across the body covering only one shoulder with its edges hanging on the other side.

Tilokaguru paintings contain forest and mountain scenes and figures of such creatures as lions, deer, elephants, cattle, peacocks, *hamsas*, etc. can be found in them.

The Library at Taungbi, Pagan, have paintings that are like those of the Tilokaguru Cave. Some are similar to those at the Upali Thein. At the Library is an inscription dated 1068, and the paintings are therefore believed to have been executed about the same date. This further proves that the paintings at the Tilokaguru Cave and the Upali Thein are of the same period.

Paintings at the Upali Thein, Pagan, belong to the later Ava Period. The composition in these paintings is different from that of Pagan. The *Buddha-vamsa* scenes here are separated from one another not by simple straight lines, but by curvy lines with winding edges. The uppermost parts of the four walls have the 28 Buddhas with their respective Bodhi-trees painted in such a way as to command respect from the viewer. Below them are paintings narrating their renunciations. Such vehicles as an elephant, a horse, a chariot and a spired wagen used by the Bodhisattas for their retirements, together with *devas* holding torches can spectacularly be seen here (Fig. 15). Below these scenes are painted pictures of the successive *vassas* (rain-retreats) observed by Gotama Buddha.

Red and green overwhelm the paintings. Figures of human and celestial beings are different only in their dresses; their faces and postures are the same. On the walls of the western entrance, princes such as Anawrahta, etc. their ministers and attendants have costumes that are very much different from the Pagan mode of dressing. Princes here have long lower garments with curvy patterns. Monasteries and back supports have become more of Burmese style than before.

Paintings at the Kamma Kyaung-U Pagoda of Taungbi village, east of Pagan, are of almost the same period as those at the Upali Thein. In these

paintings, court scenes are seen more than before and their quality is similar to those at the Ananda Brick Monastery of the early Konbaung Period.

Mural paintings at the Cūlāmaṇi Temple of Pagan were executed only during the later Pagan Period. The paintings occupy only the southern wall but since the wall is roomy, the paintings yield a considerable large variety of subject matter. The upper ones are of religious themes while the lower ones depict social activities of the contemporary Ava Period. These are the earliest extant paintings of contemporary scenes of purely social nature. In court scenes, royal ceremonies at Ava palaces completed with spires and city walls or in the royal *karavika* barge flanked by other vessels are painted. These are also the earliest to record a Burmese musical troupe consisting of a circle of drums, a circle of brass-gongs, a big drum and an oboe. Apart from these troupes with various musical instruments, there are dancers and acrobats. Paintings illustrating everyday life of Ava people include those of weaving, drawing water, filling the pots with water at a stall, offering alms to monks, combing the hair, dressing the hair and looking into a mirror. The costumes are of the later Ava style with the edges of the lower garments of male and female figures lying on the ground.

Paintings of the Konbaung Period Early Konbaung Period

There are not many places where paintings executed during the early Konbaung Period are found. The Ananda Brick Monastery, built in 1137 B.E. (A.D. 1775) at Pagan has fully painted walls and thus gives an opportunity to study early Konbaung paintings. Recently other paintings of the period under review have been discovered at cave-pagodas at Khinmon village, Chaung-U, Monywa district, and these have been recorded by the Archaeology Department by means of faithful reproduction and photography. These pagodas are known as the Illustrated Pagoda of Loka Aungmye and the Pythat Pagoda. At the former, the donor of the paintings has recorded the date of the works and it is known accordingly that they were done in 1118 B.E. (A.D. 1756). These paintings at Khinmon are therefore even twenty years earlier than those at the Ananda Brick Monastery. During the reign of Alaungpaya, the country was occupied with struggles for its rehabilitation and this prevented it from achieving new and further developments in art. Khinmon paintings therefore form supplement to those of the later Ava Period. But since there is no much difference between these and those at the Ananda Brick Monastery as far as workmanship is concerned these can be studied as a separate field of early Konbaung paintings.

All the Khinmon paintings illustrate the 28 Buddhas and scenes from the Ten Major Jātakas. But since figures in these paintings reflect contemporary styles and customs, mode of dress and movements of people during the early Konbaung Period are seen in their true nature. In court scenes, princes are seen in *thoying* (full sleeved gown), *pahso*, and skull caps. Each has a piece of cloth like an ear-flap attached to it slightly on its side; at the top of the cap is another piece but straight, pointed and protruding, with a bending edge. At some places the headdress is not like a cap; but, being loose, it is

rather like a turban. Such a fashion is also seen in the paintings at the Ananda Brick Monastery.

Female figures are in *htaingmathein* (court jackets), long lower garments, and sometimes with white scarves as well. Coiffure is sometimes straight but at other times it is just a hanging knot.

At the Aungmye Loka, a dancer is giving a performance in front of a musical troupe consisting of a drum-circle, a brass gon circle, a short drum, an oboe and a pair of *si* and bamboo clappers, and there are spectators, too. Playing of a xylophone is also illustrated. Toilet scenes, like that at the Cūlāmaṇi and the Ananda Monastery, are favourite to the painter. Travelling in carts with plank wheels also is a contemporary scene. Since there had already been foreigners at that time, gunners in long trousers were also painted. Some Burmese soldiers are also wearing a kind of foreign hat. At one place, a Burman is smoking an Indian pipe and is looked on by a dark man in trousers who is somewhat like an Indian. A lady pilgrim however seems to be in Chinese style.

Figures of elephants and horses here can be compared with those of the Ava Period found at the Upali Thein. A painting depicts the conveyance of Prince Nemi to the heavenly abode in a chariot, and the nine horses pulling the chariot are very life like (Fig. 20). There are also figures of cocks, pigs, goats, ducks, etc.; a cock-fighting scene is not only natural but its colour is gay. In a *Jātaka* scene, floral designs are fully added to a lion figure.

The Ananda Brick Monastery at Pagan is a work of merit belonging to a royal archivist Uttamarājā; the building commenced in 1137 B.E. (A.D. 1775) and ended in 1147 B.E. (A.D. 1785). Although paintings on the walls inside the building are extracts from the *Jātakas* the narration shows court scenes and contemporary scenes of Ava and Amarapura, capitals of the early Konbaung Periods. Costumes of the male and the female are different from each other, but facial expressions are similar both having tender looks. Court ladies have a hair-style that seems to be what is called "Four Seasons", one of the 55 styles prevalent at that time. Long scarves are put on covering both the shoulders and this brings about a cultured and modest manner (Fig. 16).

In these paintings the workmanship which is somewhat like Chinese can be traced. Mode of dress in Western style is also found. Burmese soldiers having a kind of hat and jackets with rolls can be seen in particular.

In entertainment scenes, the musical troupe usually consists of a drum, a xylophone, a harp, a zither, a pair of *si* and other instruments (Fig. 17). Landscapes are painted as though they are viewed from a higher spot, for the building and human figures at the back are not close to things at the front; instead they gradually go up higher and higher giving a wide visual effect.

At this Brick Monastery, different patterns of flowers drawn in a black outline are quite distinct and of high quality.

Konbaung (Amarapura) Period

Paintings belonging to the Amarapura Period are seen at the Kyauktawgyi Pagoda of Taungthaman, Amarapura, which is a work of merit of King Pagan,

and at the Shwezayan Pokala Pagoda. At the Kyauktawgyi of Taungthaman, the plans of the Kyauktawgyi itself and the Mahaweyanbontha Monastery together with pilgrims, and other scenes as well, are painted. The ceiling has the Buddha's Foot-print, stars and planets, and *devas* in adoration posture. The frieze floral designs are not of good quality. Sceneries are painted not in the perspective but as a bird's eye view. People both inside and outside the monasteries and rest-houses can therefore be seen. Above the buildings are landscapes painted as though seen from a distance. Above the forests and mountains are *devas*, *vijjādharas*, or *zawgyis* (alchemists) and flying human figures floating in the air. These flying men have wings on their shoulders like those in the Western style. As for contemporary scenes, these include devotees saying prayers, observing the precepts, and pilgrims travelling in carts and boats, offering alms of provisions to monks and children playing (Fig. 22). Among the pilgrims are people of hill tribes in their native costumes. The plans of the pagoda and the monastery are drawn somewhat on a set scale so as to give the front view just like an architect's blue print.

In these paintings blue is used more than before. The contours are in red. On the northern entrance there are red outlines but without colouring. Perhaps, the painter was about to narrate Jātaka stories. The drawings of palaces, human and horse figures are even more natural than the already painted ones.

During the Amarapura Period, painting was done also on white folded books. But no original paintings of these folded books can now be found and only reproductions or copies are available.

The Shwezayan Pokala Pagoda is small in size, but the walls inside are fully painted. The paintings narrate the Ten Major Jātakas. But they also include contemporary scenes of Amarapura which show movements of people from all classes. Figures of foreigners are also painted here.

Konbaung (Ratanabon) Period

During the reign of King Mindon, the artist U Kyar Nyunt was famous for portraits. During this period, the Burmese traditional method of line drawing continued to be practised, and beside painting on papers, on white folded books and on walls, it is learnt that canvas was used for the first time to paint on. Contact with Western painters has led to perspective and thus natural view as well. But the original paintings of Burmese masters like U Kyar Nyunt can no longer be seen in Burma. They were bought by foreigners, and it is learnt that from them some good ones found their way to certain Western museums where they have been kept ever since.

The famous painting of King Mindon's Procession in State in a white folded book is at present in England. The painting covers 15 pages, but when the book is open and stretched out, the whole scene can be seen in its entirety. It is not a mere painting. It is also a record of a Royal Procession in State together with princes, ministers, elephant troops, chaveliers, chariots, all in full regalia and colour. It is also highly valuable historically speaking, for it has glosses identifying military forces and all parts and parcels of the

royal grandeur. The first line reads: "This is a painting on paper done after copying from the illustrations and notes on the Royal Procession in State with four cardinal troops, six battalions at the front and six at the back, in view of inauspicious and auspicious directions, to inaugurate and pay homage to the Kyauktawgyi Image of the Buddha as requested by those concerned from Ruby Hills and Marble Hills on the 7th waning day of *Kason* (May), 1227 (A. D. 1865)."

In this painting the royal scene completed not only with mode of dress of the Ratanabon Period and officers and other ranks, but with acrobatic and dancing troupes, is seen. Since it was not the practice of Burmese painters to sign their names on their works, the painter of this celebrated work is not known (Fig. 24).

A master during the reign of King Thibaw was Saya Chon. His originals, too, are not in Burma. They are seen only as reproductions in foreign books. These include the Royal Plough and the Royal Exile. During King Thibaw's reign, apart from Saya Chon, there were two Italians appointed as royal artists. Although Saya Chon paints according to Burmese traditional methods, he seems to have acquired painting paraphernalia and Western techniques from the Italians. In his paintings, certain signs of perspective are felt.

Like the Amarapura Period, the Ratanabon Period saw paintings with details. But in painting a tree, each and every leaf is no more illustrated clearly as in the Pagan and Ava Periods. The foliage now has light and shade with a combination of two or three different colours. Blue-black, dark green and yellow came into use during this Period.

In the compound of the Mandaly Palace, a house for observing the precepts by the royalty, still exists on the northern side. The building is now much damaged, but a considerable number of Ratanabon paintings can still be seen. A wall painting shows royal chaveliers on parade while another depicts an infernal scene. These paintings are not of high standard, but they represent mural painting of the Ratanabon Period which have become very scarce now (Fig. 23).

Paintings that are supplement to the Ratanabon Period can still be seen at the covered ways to the Mahamyatmuni Pagoda of Mandalay. The original covered ways were destroyed by fire two years before the King's exile, and the present ones are but those rebuilt after the fire. Paintings there do not all belong to the Ratanabon Period, but since these depict *Jātaka* stories and illustrate contemporary scenes executed with Burmese traditional methods, these are useful for studying the last Burmese paintings prior to introduction and development of Western art in Burma.

List of Temples and Pagodas with old paintings

Pagan Period

(11th—13th century)

Almost every temple at Pagan contains paintings, but only those with paintings still distinct are listed below:

The Pahtothamya, Pagan
The Abeyadana, Myinkaba
The Nagayon, Myinkaba
The Gubyaukkyi, Myinkaba
Temple No. 496, south of the Soemingyi, Myinkaba
The Thingayaza group of pagodas, Thiripyitsaya
The Lokahteikpan, Pagan
The Theimmasi, Pagan
The Pe-nathagu group of pagodas, Pagan
The Gubyaukkyi, Wetkyi-in, Pagan
The Thetkyamuni, Nyaung-U
The Kondawgyi, Nyaung-U
The Kyansittha Cave, Nyaung-U
The Nandamannya, Minnanthu
The Payathonzu, Minnanthu
The Thambula, Minnanthu
The Wineedho group of pagodas, Minnanthu

Ava Period

(The Second Ava Period, 16th—17th century)

The Cave Pagoda near the Shwezigon, Pinya
The Tilokaguru Cave, Sagaing Hills
The Lokahmangin, Sagaing Hills
The Meebaukkyi, Sagaing Hills
The Caves at Powin Hills, Monywa District
The Library, Taungbi, Pagan
The Shwegutha, Amarapura
The Upali Thein, Pagan

Konbaung Period

(18th century)

The Aungmye Loka, Khinmon village, Chaung-U, Monywa District
The Illustrated Pagoda, Khinmon
The Pyatthat, Khinmon
The Ananda Brick Monastery, Pagan

Amarapura Period

(19th century)

The Kyauktawgyi, Taungthaman, Amarapura
The Pokala, Shwezayan, Mandalay

Ratanabon Period

(19th century)

The Sabbath House, Mandalay Palace, Mandalay
The Mahamyatmuni, Mandalay