

BUDDHA GAYA TEMPLE ITS HISTORY

DIPAK K BARUA



ABOUT THE BOOK

BUDDHA GAYA TEMPLE : ITS HISTORY is probably the first publication which supplies with a continuous history from the very erection to the present development of the historic Mahabodhi, popularly known as the Buddha Gaya Temple. In the first six chapters of the present monograph the author has endeavoured to narrate the history of the Temple upto the present day, while in the seventh chapter he has given an idea of the art and architecture around and of it. This monograph will help both the serious scholars and general readers who may like to have a comprehensive idea about the past and present history of this sacred Temple. The present revised enlarged edition of the monograph includes one additional chapter on recent activities in and around the Temple, besides the five important appendices including the texts and translations of the inscriptions discovered at Buddha Gaya, Two learned papers written by Dr Benimadhab Barua and Sir Edwin Arnold, and the texts of the Buddha Gaya Temple Act 1949 (Bihar Act 17 of 1949) as well as of the Bye-Laws of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee.

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DIPAK K. BARUA

With a Foreword by

DR. RICHARD A. GARD

DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTE SERVICES

The Institute for Advanced Studies

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New York, U. S. A.



BUDDHA GAYA TEMPLE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

BUDDHA GAYA

1981

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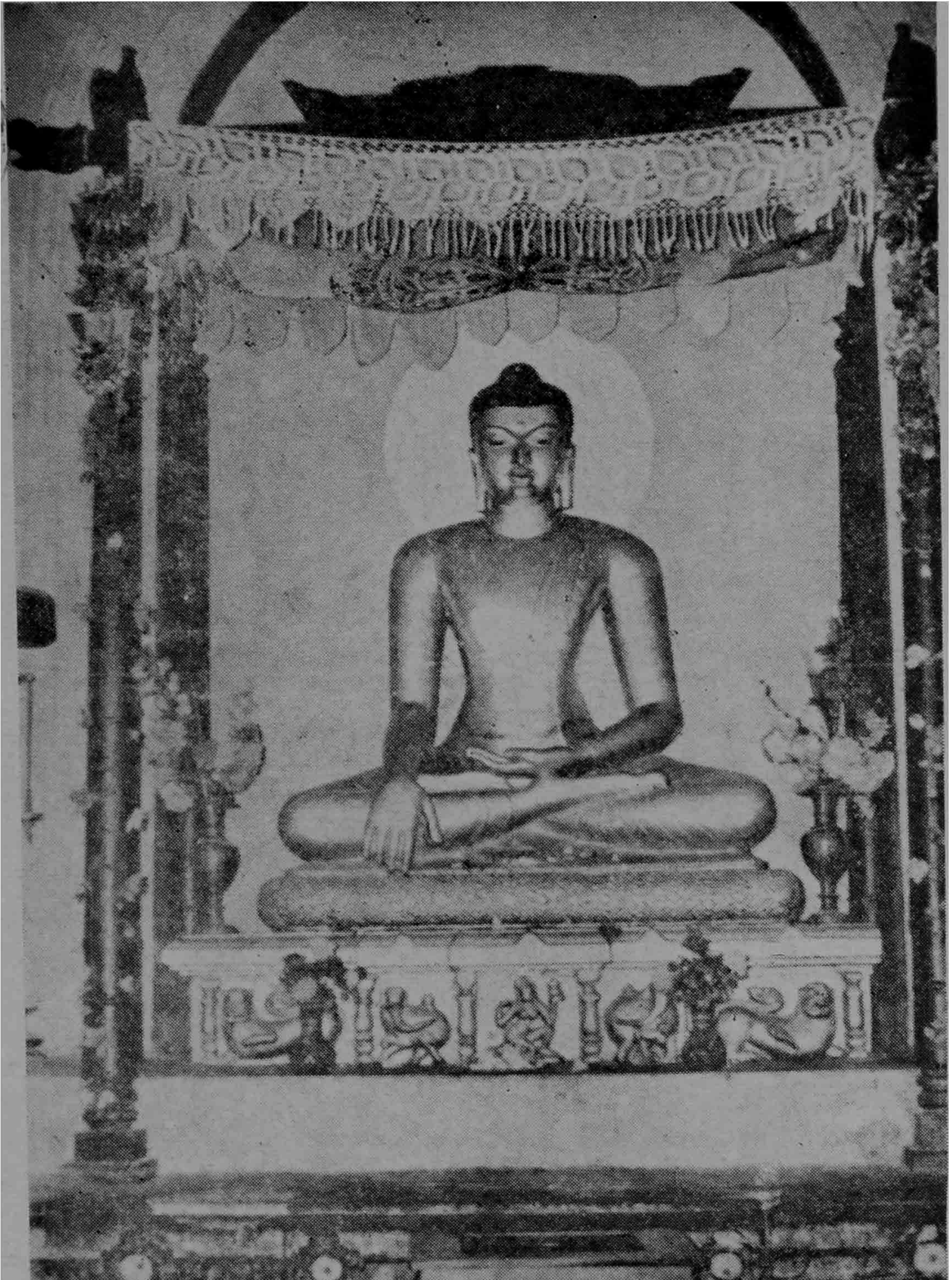


Image of Lord Buddha in the Main Shrine of the Buddha Gaya Temple

To
my learned teacher
SUKUMAR SENGUPTA
who has dedicated his life
to Pali and Buddhism

FOREWORD

BUDDHA GAYA TEMPLE, also called Mahābodhi Vihāra, architecturally commemorates the place where Siddhārtha Gautama attained Perfect Enlightenment (*Sammā-sambodhi*). Hence, the site was early called by Buddhists Sambodhi or Mahābodhi, or Bodhi Maṇḍapa. It is locally known as Buddha Gaya or Bodhgayā, located in Gayā District, Bihār State, in northeastern India.

This Temple, as well as its environs, has had a long history. The extant sources of information about it are various and subject to further examination : Chinese travel records particularly of the seventh and eleventh centuries A. D. ; Indian, Scythian, Bengali, Arakanese, Burmese and other inscriptions of an earlier or later date; and archaeological evidence unearthed since the latter half of the nineteenth century. An account of the origin and history of the Buddha Gaya Temple until the seventeenth century, and a review of the available sources and modern studies by A. Cunningham, B. M. Barua, R. C. Mitra, T. Bhattacharyya and other scholars are ably presented in Chapters One to Five of this new book by Dr. Dipak Kumar Barua of Calcutta.

The Buddha Gaya Temple has often been the concern of Asian kings and governments as well as the object of pilgrimages by devout Buddhists, monastics and laity alike ; nowadays it is also visited by foreign scholars and tourists. In the past, royal patronage for its maintenance, repair, or

restoration was given by kings of India, Bengal, Arakan, and Burma (including Pagan, Pegu, and Ava or Mandalay), and even by pious monks from Bengal and Ceylon (Śrī Lāṅka). For instance, after a period of relative neglect by Buddhists, which followed the Muslim invasions in India, Arakanese and Burmese kings undertook, or attempted, to restore the Temple at times during the eleventh to fifteenth centuries and again in the nineteenth century, as the Indian Government in 1887 and since.

Thus the Buddha Gaya Temple, in one way or another, has inspired and received international assistance since its early beginnings, culminating in the present Buddha Gaya Temple Advisory Board which is composed of government representatives from Burma, India, Sri Lanka, Laos, Sikkim, Thailand, Cambodia and distinguished persons from Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Ladakh, West Bengal, and locally Buddha Gaya and Gaya. A detailed account of the property disputes with Hindu religious interests, administration, and future plans of the Temple is conveniently given in Chapter Five of the present book.

These intermittent periods of neglect, repair, and restoration of the Buddha Gaya Temple have naturally resulted in certain changes in its original contour and size, although the basic style may have remained much the same. Art historians, archaeologists, and other scholars now ponder when the Temple was first constructed in its now distinctive lines, determine what modifications were effected by

royal patrons such as the Burmese kings at different times, and study the excavation work begun by Sir Alexander Cunningham in the 1860s. These considerations and a graphic description of the art and architecture around and of the Buddha Gaya Temple are given by Dr. Barua in Chapter Six. The general, splendid appearance of the Temple in the fifteenth century, for example, may be suggested by noting its Thai model, the Mahābodhārāma or Wat Jet Yōt (Seven Spires Monastery) near Chiangmai, which was begun in 1455, completed about 1470, and is still in fair condition.

The Buddha Gaya Temple, as well as its historic environs, has great religious significance for Buddhists everywhere as well as historic and cultural interest for many others. The Revised Draft of the Master Plan for Buddha Gaya promises notable improvements and development of the area, worthy of support by all followers of the Buddha and friends of Buddhism. Dr. Barua has rendered a real service by writing this book for timely publication by the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee.

Richard A. Gard

The Institute for Advanced
Studies of World Religions
New York, U. S. A.
May 8, 1975

PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION

I am really encouraged when I find that all the copies of the first edition of the present book have completely been exhausted within one year of its appearance in 1975. But this second revised enlarged edition could not be published earlier because of some circumstances beyond my control. I am happy that the authorities of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee have decided quite aptly to introduce this edition to the reading public. In order to present a comprehensive idea of the Temple. I have added to this edition a new chapter on the recent activities in and around the Temple till the printing of the book and six appendices containing the texts and translations of the inscriptions discovered at Buddha Gaya, two learned papers—one of Professor Dr. Benimadhab Barua and the other of Sir Edwin Arnold, texts of the Bodh Gaya Temple Act, 1949 (Bihar Act 17 of 1949) as modified up to the 8th February, 1955, texts of the Bye-laws of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee, and a discussion on the proposed Institute of Buddhist Study and Spiritual Retreat. Hence the arrangement of the chapters in the present edition has to be changed. As the chapter six is a new addition, so the chapter seven has been on art and architecture around and of the Buddha Gaya Temple. The additions will, I hope, undoubtedly supply the readers with some primary and secondary source materials of discussion on the subject, which are not easily available now and unveil the current situations of the Temple and achievements of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee made during these years. I shall be glad if these additions will be of any help to the readers.

In the note of acknowledgement I must mention that without the co-operation and sympathetic treatment from Rev. Jñanajagat Bhikkhu, Superintendent of the Temple, who has kindly supplied me with the copies of the texts of the Bodh Gaya Temple Act, 1949 and the Bye-laws which have enriched this edition to a great extent, could not be published. Brahmachari Jivananda, now Rev. Prajñāvaṃsa Bhikkhu and Sri Amal Barua have taken keen interest for the publication of the book from its very first edition. My wife Sm. Dipa Barua who is an orthodox librarian, inspite of her strict official and family commitments has gladly prepared the index of this edition with the assistance of my son Sri Ankur Barua. Sri Amalendu Sikdar of the Joyguru Printing Works, Calcutta, and Sri Debdas Nath of the Sadhana Press Private Limited Calcutta have proved their endurance and sincerety during the printing work of this edition. Sri Shanti Swarup Barua of Calcutta has assisted me in various way for its publication. To all of them I express my heartfelt gratitude and obligations.

Lastly, I hope that my readers will excuse me for innumerable printing mistakes found in the present edition of the book. For these I have to depend on their patience.

Calcutta 700 015
Buddha Purnima
May 18, 1981

Dipak K. Barua

PREFACE
TO THE FIRST EDITION

ERUDITE SCHOLARS like Sir A. Cunningham, Dr. R. L. Mitra, Dr. B. M. Barua, Dr. T. Bhattacharya, Sri R. B. Lal, Sri D. Valisinha had composed their excellent treatises on the Mahābodhi or the Buddha Gaya Temple. Still there was an urgent necessity of another publication on the same most fascinating subject, because the previous books do not supply us with a continuous history from the very inception to the recent development of this Temple. Hence the present monograph is designed specially to furnish the readers with the latest information about it. In the first five chapters of this publication I have endeavoured to narrate the history of the Temple up to the present day, while in the sixth chapter an idea has been given as to the art and architecture in and around the Temple.

I have acknowledged my debt to my predecessors in this field of study on appropriate occasions in the body of the text and I sincerely believe that this publication will help both the serious scholars and general readers who may like to have a systematic idea about the past and present history of the sacred Buddha Gaya Temple.

In fine, I must convey my heartfelt thanks and gratitude to Dr. Richard A. Gard, Director of Institute Services, The Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions, U. S. A., for his informative Foreword to this publication. This Foreword has undoubtedly enhanced the importance of it to a considerable extent. I am also thankful to the authorities of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee for publishing this monograph first in the *Prajna : The Buddha Gaya Quarterly* serially and next in the present book-form for the use of the reading public.

Calcutta-700 015
Buddha Purnima
May 25, 1975

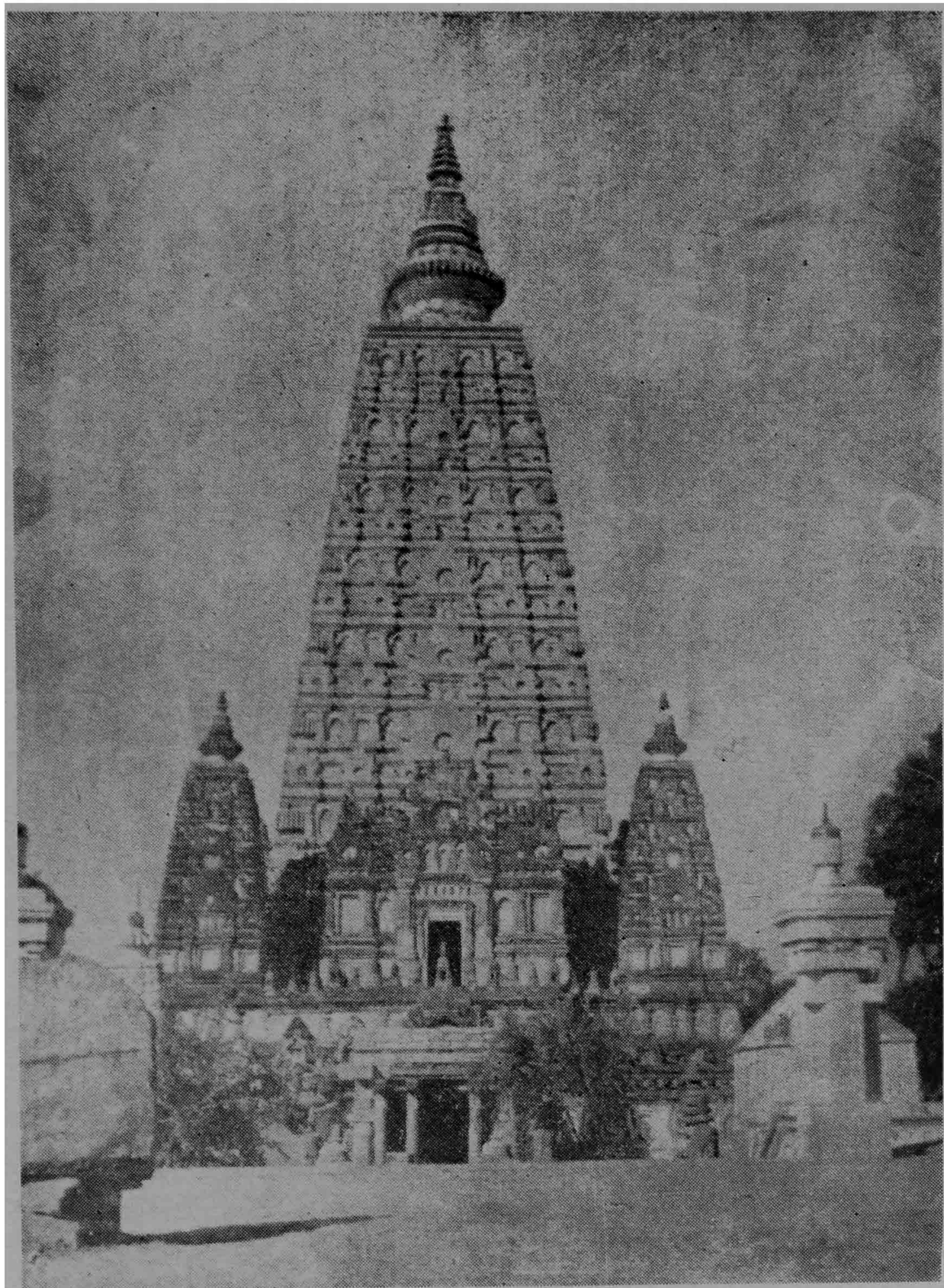
Dipak K Barua

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Buddha Gaya Temple : Its History



The Mahābodhī or Buddha Gaya Temple

INTRODUCTION

Uruvilva or Uruvelā, a hamlet which is identified with the modern village called Urel, six miles south of Gaya Railway Station, and where Gautama or Gotama sat in meditation under an aśvattha or pipal tree and had attained to the Sambodhi or Perfect Enlightenment, occupies an important position in the history of Buddhism. Because of such holy association this locality ultimately came to be known as Buddha Gaya or Bodh Gaya (Lat. 24° 41' 45" N., Long. 85° 2' 4" E.) which lies, as already said, six miles to the south of Gaya in Bihar, one of the States of India, and the tree is called the Bodhi Tree. Hence B. M. Barua had remarked : "by 'Bodh-Gayā' we are to understand broadly the ancient tract of Uruvelā, and narrowly the sacred site of the Bo-tree and its neighbourhood."¹ Incidentally it may be mentioned here that the *Mahāvamsa* narrating the story about the life and labours of Buddhaghosa noted : "A Brāhmaṇa youth, born in the neighbourhood of the terrace of the Bodhi Tree (in Magadha), accomplished in the 'vijjā' and 'sippa', who had achieved the knowledge of the three 'Vedas'... Thereupon having assembled the priesthood who had acquired a thorough knowledge of the doctrines of Buddha, at the Bo-tree, he commenced to read out (the work he had composed)... Thereafter, the objects of his mission having been fulfilled, he returned to Jambudīpa to worship at the Bodhi Tree (Uruvelāya in Magadha)."² The *Cambodian Mahāvamsa* also mentioned the village called Uruvelā as : "Uruvelāsenānigamo"³ and in connection with the attainment of the Perfect Enlightenment by Gotama at Buddha Gaya recorded as follows :

dārikāya Sujātāya Visākha puṇṇamīdine

bhuñjitvā dinnapāyāsaṃ pāto yeva tadantare, (verse 158)

Nerañjarāya nadiyā hemacāṭim pavāhiya

Nerañjarāya tīre so mahante vanasaṇḍake (verse 159)

samāpattīhi nānāhi divasaṃ vītināmayi.

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Kālena nāgarājena abhitthutaguṇo tato (verse 160)

Suddhodanassa atrajo varo so sakyapuṅgavo

Sotthiyabrāhmaṇen eva gahetvā dinnatiṇakam (verse 161)

sāyāṇhasamaye yeva bodhimaṇḍam upāgami. (verse 162)⁴.

The name 'Buddha Gaya' appears for the first time, as we shall observe subsequently, in the apocryphal inscription of Amaradeva.⁵ But it was pointed out by A. Cunningham that the magnificent Temple at Buddha Gaya continued to be called by the name 'Mahābodhi' even as late as the year 1877 and was known to Hiuen-tsang as 'Mahābodhi' (Mo-ho-pu-ti). In fact, the same name 'Mahābodhi' was mentioned by all the Chinese pilgrims who visited the place during the seventh century A.C. This name also appeared in the inscription of Keśava recording the installation of a Chaumukh Mahādev in the reign of king Dharmapāla and also in the votive inscriptions of king Aśokavalla who reigned during the 13th century A.C. It was also current when Jīṇadāsa caused his votive record to be inscribed on one of the pillars of the Old Stone Railing.

However, both the terms 'Sambodhi' and 'Mahābodhi' primarily denote the Great Bodhi Tree which is in reality a lordly āśvattha or pipal, the Indian Fig, "and secondarily the place of Buddha's Enlightenment, the far-famed spot" where the Bodhi Tree still exists. They are same as the words like 'Bodhi' of the Barhut labels⁶, 'Bodhi-vṛkṣa' of the Buddhist literature and 'Mahābodhi taru' of the *Gayā-māhātmya*. In this connection it should also be noted that the spot of the Bodhi Tree in its narrowest sense had been known by the name of 'Bodhi-maṇḍa' or 'Mahābodhi-maṇḍa', implying a terrace surrounding the foot of the Bodhi Tree. The Kālingabodhi Jātaka supplied us with a vivid description of the Bodhimaṇḍa and its surroundings prior to the advent of the Bodhisatta on this spot.⁷ It recorded that the Bodhi-maṇḍa was just at that time a small silver-white sandy ridge

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around the Bodhi Tree with a radius of eight *karisas* and without a single blade of grass growing upon it. It was then encircled by the creepers with their serpentine courses and surrounded by a grassy woodland with lofty trees inclining all towards the Bodhi Tree which stood at the centre.⁸ The celebrated Temple which was erected here is called the Mahābodhi Temple, popularly known as the Buddha Gaya Temple. The religious importance had also been attached to Buddha Gaya as we find that Lord Buddha in the Mahāparinibbāna Suttanta of the *Dīgha Nikāya* of the *Sutta Piṭaka* had spoken of it as one of the four places, made sacred by His association, which faithful followers should visit with reverence and awe.⁹ They were the birthplace of Buddha, i.e. Lumbinī; the place where Buddha gained the Perfect Enlightenment, i.e. Buddha Gaya, the place where Buddha turned the Incomparable Wheel of Truth, i.e. Sarnath, and the place where Buddha attained to Mahāparinibbāna, i.e. Kusinara. "And they", added Buddha "who shall die with a believing heart, in the course of their pilgrimage will be reborn, on the dissolution of their body, after death, in a heavenly state."¹⁰ Accordingly, after the great demise of Buddha the sacred Bodhi Tree at Buddha Gaya, gradually has become one of the main objects of veneration for the entire Buddhist world and Buddha Gaya itself has turned to be a great centre Buddhist pilgrimage owing to its association with the life of the Perfectly Enlightened One as the well as it has become a place of immense interest to the archaeologists, historians, and tourists from different parts of India and abroad. In fact, this sacred spot still presents a religious reminiscent of Buddha's supreme attainment.

The Mahābodhi Temple being situated at Buddha Gaya is probably one of the most interesting and impressive religious buildings in India. Hence B. M. Barua pointed out: "It is by the name of *Mahābodhi-Vihāra* that the Chinese pilgrim Hwen-Thsang has sought to make known the far-famed

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Buddhist shrine in India—the great Bodh-Gayā temple. It stands to the east and just in front of the present Bo-tree, and in the centre of the sacred area of the Great Bo, usurping the site of the original Bo-tree as well as that of the Old Diamond-throne temple. It stands indeed in the same relation to the present Bo-tree as the Old Diamond-throne temple did in respect of the original Bo. As a building, it stands out as the unmistakable aristic landmark of the Buddhist Holy Land, putting up an imposing sight.”¹¹

However, the Buddha Gaya Temple has a pyramidal tower in the centre and four similar smaller towers at the four corners. Inside the Temple there is a colossal gilded image of Buddha in the attitude of touching the earth, which symbolizes the great event of the attainment of the Perfect Enlightenment by the Blessed One. The image is set up facing the east in the exact position the Lord sat for his final effort for attaining Buddhahood with his back to the Tree. It is said that having observed the sculptural grandeur of the Buddha image installed in the Temple Rabindranath Tagore, the Nobel Laureate of India, fostered a very high esteem for Buddha Gaya. He noted : “I had once gone on a visit to Buddha Gaya, and it had thrilled me to think that he who had hallowed the earth by the touch of His feet had once come to that very place in the flesh. Why, I had thought with a pang, had I not been born in his day, that I might have received His holy influence directly with all my mind and all my body !”¹² Hence with reference to Rabindranath’s visit to Buddha Gaya, Sri Krishna Kripalani remarked : “Only once in his life, said Rabindranath, did he feel like prostrating before an image, and that was when he saw the Buddha at Gaya.”¹³ In the centre of the Main Shrine Room at the ground floor there is a square stone platform on which the Brahmanical worshippers sometimes drop offerings of flowers, milk, and water.

Apart from the Mahābodhi Temple, the present objects of

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interest at Buddha Gaya are (i) the Bodhi Tree which lies to the west of the Temple and which is the world famous sacred pipal tree under which Gautama sat and attained the Perfect Enlightenment ; (ii) the Vajrāsana or the seat made of stone, which exists between the Temple and the Bodhi Tree, marks the actual site where Gautama sat to become the Perfectly Enlightened One ; (iii) seven sites where Buddha passed seven successive weeks in meditation after his enlightenment, namely, (a) the Bodhi Tree, (b) the Animeshalocana Stūpa erected at the site where Lord Buddha stood gazing at the Bodhi Tree out of gratitude, (c) the Caṅkamana or the Promenade marked by a raised platform to the north of the Temple, (d) the Ratana-ghara or the small roofless shrine in which Lord Buddha sat and meditated, is situated in the compound to the north of the Caṅkamana, (e) the Rājāyatana Tree, of which the actual site has not been identified yet, (f) the Ajapāla Nigrodha Tree, of which also the actual site has not been found out, but a place within the premises of a Brahmanical temple on the eastern bank of the Neranjara river is pointed out as the site where the Tree stood, (g) the Mucalinda Lake which is identified now with a dry pond called Mucharin at a distance of about a mile to the south of the Mahābodhi Temple ; (iv) the stone railing round the Temple, erected during the period of the Suṅga Dynasty, of which only some portions remain intact in the south and west ; (v) the votive stūpas round the Temple as well as in the large courtyard ; (vi) the so called Pañca Pāṇḍava Temple which is a white building to the left side of the entrance to the great Temple with five images of the Bodhisattvas ; (vii) the samādhi or grave of a Mahanta, which is identified with a white structure situated to the right of the entrance to the Temple ; (viii) the foundation of a Buddhist monastery to the south west of the Temple ; (ix) a large tank for bathing to the south of the Temple ; (x) the Aśoka Pillar at the entrance to that tank ; (xi) the P. W. D. Inspection Bungalow to the north

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of the Temple on the road ; (xii) the Office and Library of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee just adjacent to the P. W. D. Inspection Bungalow ; (xiii) the Mahābodhi Rest House of a two storeyed building erected by the Mahābodhi Society of India, on the other side of the District Board Road to the north west of the Buddha Gaya Temple ; (xiv) the Tibetan Temple and Monastery situated to the east of the Mahābodhi Rest House ; (xv) the samādhis or graves of the Mahantas to the east of the great Temple and surrounded by a wall ; (xvi) the Mahanta's Monastery on the main road about two hundred yards from the Temple ; (xvii) the new Burmese Rest House on the main road to the great Temple near the Police Station ; (xviii) the Birla Rest House and the Stūpa situated to the west, beyond the Mahābodhi Rest House ; (xix) the Chinese Temple and Rest House situated to the south west of the Mahābodhi Rest House ; (xx) the Government Rest House built in 1956, lying to the west of the main Temple ; (xxi) the Archaeological Museum housed in a red coloured building situated next to the Government Rest House ; (xxii) the Thai Buddhist Temple and Monastery to the further west ; (xxiii) the Japanese Buddhist Temple and Monastery situated on the right of the Thai Buddhist Temple ; (xxiv) the Government Dormitory of a two storeyed building erected in 1956 ; proposed sites of the monasteries and temples of the (xxv) All India or Bhāratīya Bhikkhu Saṅgha, as well as of the (xxvi) International Meditation Centre ; (xxvii) the Naranjara River which was crossed by Prince Siddhārtha on his way to the shade of the Bodhi Tree is now situated to the east of the Temple ; and (xxviii) the Sujātākuṭi or Sujātā's house marked by a brick mound on the opposite side of the Naranjara River. The Buddhists have traditionally been worshipping the Bodhi Tree and the seven holy places of Buddha Gaya daily by reciting the following words with great devotion : "Seated at whose base, the Teacher overcame all enemies, attaining omniscience, that

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very Bodhi Tree do I adore. Those great Trees of Enlightenment, revered by the Lord of the World I too shall salute you ! May there be homage to you, O royal Bodhi !” and “I make my adoration firstly to the place of Enlightenment, secondly to the place of Animeshalôcana, thirdly to the Caṅka-mana, fourthly to the place of Ratanaghara, fifthly to Ajapāla, sixthly to the Mucalinda, and seventhly to the Rājāyatana.”¹⁴ So quite relevantly we may mention here that describing the “Old Shrines” at Buddha Gaya B.M Barua had also noted : “by ‘Old Shrines’ we are to understand (1) the Bodhidruma Aśvattha (Bo-tree of Buddha Śākyamuni), (2) the Dharmāśo-kotṣṛita-śilāstambha (Stone-pillar erected by Aśoka), (3) the Prāchīna Śilā-prākāra (Old Stone-railing), (4) the Prāchīna Vajrāsana-Gandhakūṭi (Old Diamond-throne-temple), (5) the Animesha-chaitya (Fixed-gaze-shrine), (6) the Ratna-chaṅkrama-chaitya (Jewel-walk-shrine), (7) the Ratnagṛiha-chaitya (Jewel-house-shrine), (8) the Ajapālanyagrodha-mūla-chaitya (Shrine under the Neat-herd’s Banyan), (9) the Rājāyatana-chaitya (Shrine under the Rājāyatana-tree), (10) the Muchalinda mūla chaitya (Shrine under the Muchalinda-tree), (11) Other shrines mentioned by Fa Hian, (12) the three Buddhist monasteries noticed by Fa Hian and known to Hwen Thsang by the name of Mahābodhi-saṅghārāma, (13) the Mahābodhivihāra (Great temple at Bodh-Gayā), (14) the Pūrṇavarmākṛita Śilā-prākāra (Stone-railing erected by King Pūrṇavarmā), (15) the Śilā-toraṇa (Stone-gateway), and incidentally (16) Other shrines mentioned by Hwen Thsang who visited Bodh-Gayā in the second quarter of the 7th century.”¹⁵

Besides, a few of the antiquities lying in the Mahanta’s Maṭh at Buddha Gaya are the following.¹⁶ Buchanan Hamilton also referred to these relics.

“(1) The Buddha-Gaya inscription of about 1190 A.D. of king Jayacchandra, which is built into a wall of the maṭh.

(2) The image of Nāgarāj Muchalinda protecting Buddha

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from rain. Buddha is represented as sitting cross-legged on the coils of the Nāgarāj, who holds his seven-branched hood over the ascetic's head. There is an inscription on the pedestal from which Mr. Bānerji ascribed the image to the eighth century.¹⁷

(3) The image of Kulika Nāgarāj, similar to the one below the Vajrāsana.

(4) A colossal image of the goddess Trailokya-vijaya, which represents the deity as having three heads (the fourth one behind not being shown) and eight hands, standing over a *mithuṇa* in the *yuva-yuma* or gestation pose, the male figure of the couple wearing a *jatamukuta*, and holding a trident in his hand. The goddess holds respectively a *chakra*, a bow, a noose and a bell in her right hands, and a *vajra*, a quiver of arrows, a goad and a sword in her left hands. She has a garland of Dhyani Buddhas, and the *jatamukuta* and three eyes in each head. This image is an inscribed one.

(5) The image of Yamantaka, who is represented as riding a buffalo. He has six fierce looking heads with matted hair turned upwards and beard, and wears a tiger and a garland in which human heads alternate with lotus or *chakra*. He has six hands ; the three right ones hold respectively a sword, a *vajra* and a staff. Two of the left hands are broken off."¹⁸

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1. Barua, Benimadhab. *Gayā and Buddha-Gayā*, Vol. ii, Book II-V : Old Shrines at Bodh-Gayā (Calcutta, Indian Research Institute, 1934), p. 1.

2. Bodhimāṇḍasamīpamhi jāto brāhmaṇamāṇavo,
Vijjāsippakalāvedī tisu vedesu pārāgo,
Tato saṁghaṁ samūhetvā Saṁbuddhamatakovidam
Mahābodhisamīpamhi so taṁ vācetuṁ ārabhī.

...

...

Atha kattabbakiccesu gatesu pariniṭṭhitim
Vandituṁ so Mahābodhiṁ Jambudīpaṁ upāgami.

(*Mahāvamsa*. edited by Turnour, pp. 250-253)

Introduction

3. Malalasekera, G. P. ed. *Extended Māhāvamsa* (1937 ed.), p. 14.
4. Malalasekera, G. P. ed. *Extended Manāvaṃsa* (Colombo. The Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1937), p. 10.
5. *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. I, p. 84.
6. cf. Bhagavato Vipasino Bodhi. Bhagavato Vesabhuno Bodhi Sālo. Bhagavato Sākamunino Bodho.
7. *Jātaka*, No. 479.
8. Tadā kira aṭṭhakarisa-matte ṭhāne sasaka-massu-mattaṃ pi tiṇāṃ nāma n'atthi, rajata-paṭṭa-vaṇṇa-vālukā vippakiṇṇā hoti. Samantā tiṇa-latā-vanappatayo Bodhi-maṇḍaṃ padakkhiṇaṃ katvā āvattitvā Bodhi-maṇḍābhimukhā va aṭṭhaṃsu.
9. *Dīgha Nikāya*, Vol. II (P. T. S., 1886), p. 141.
10. Mahāthera, Nārada. *The Buddha and his Teachings* (Calombo, 1973), pp. 257-258.
11. Barua, Benimadhab. *Gayā and Buddha-Gayā*, Vol. II, Books II-V : Old Shrines at Bodh-Gayā (Calcutta, Indian Research Institute, 1934), p. 37.
12. Tagore, Rabindranath. *Buddhadeva* (Calcutta, Maha Bodhi Society of India, 1962), p. 2.
13. *The Visva Bharati Quarterly*, Vol. VIII, Part IV, New Series, Feb.-April, 1943, 1943, p. 179 (Kripalani, K. R. Natir Puja : An Appreciation).
14. Paṭhamam bodhi pallaṅkam, dutiyam animisa pi ca, tatiyam caṅkamanaseṭṭham, catuttham ratanagharam, pañcamam ajapalaṅca, mucalindaṅca chaṭṭhaman, sattamam rājāyatanam vande taṃ bodhi-pādapaṃ.
15. Barua, Benimadhab. *Gayā and Buddha-Gayā*, Vol. ii, Bks. II-V, p. 1.
16. Barua, Dipak Kumar. *Vihāras in Ancient India : A Survey of Buddhist Monasteries* (Calcutta, Indian Publications, 1969), pp. 123-127.
17. *Pravāsi*, Magh, 1334, p. 540.
18. Sarasvati, Sarasi Kumar and Sarkar, Kshitish Chandra. *Kurkihar, Gayā and Bodh-Gayā* (Rajshahi, K. C. Sarkar, 1936), pp. 55-56.

ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY OF THE TEMPLE

As regards the origin of the Buddha Gaya Temple, we have as yet no direct evidence which enables us to fix, with accuracy, the date of its first establishment. Various traditions ascribe the erection of the very *first* Temple of Mahābodhi or Buddha Gaya to the great Indian emperor Aśoka of the third century B. C. Incidentally it may be mentioned here that Aśoka in his Rock Edict (R.E.) VIII recorded that “in the ages gone by, the kings went forth on pleasure-trips. Here were hunting and such other diversions. The said king Priyadarśin, Beloved of the gods, then he had been anointed ten years, proceeded to Sambodhi (i.e. the holy spot of the Bo-tree). Thereby it turned out to be a pilgrimage of peity...”¹. From the above edict it became obvious that Aśoka “started for Sambodhi” or “undertook a pilgrimage to Sambodhi.” This event occurred in about B.C. 260. “Going to *Sambodhi*” may, according to D. R. Bhandarkar, mean a physical process and indicate a journey to the *place of Enlightenment*, i.e. to Buddha Gaya. Hence the word *Sambodhi* had both a physical and spiritual significance. The Kālingabodhi Jātaka pointed out that in its physical sense, namely, that of going on pilgrimage to the spot of the *Bodhivṛkṣa* or *Bodhidruma*, it meant the Bodhi Tree.² But in its spiritual sense, it implied the enlightenment of the Perfect Buddha. In the above edict Aśoka mentioned that he visited Buddha Gaya in the tenth year of his coronation. But the *Mahāvamsa* assigned Aśoka’s visit to Buddha Gaya to his eighteenth regnal year.³ If the account of this Pali chronicle was true, it must be his second visit. However, the *Divyāvadāna* noted that when Aśoka visited all the important places in Northern India, including Buddha Gaya, associated with the life of Buddha under the guidance of his religious preceptor Upagupta, it was

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a continuous tour. In this connection R.K. Mookerji observed : “The *Divyāvadāna*, however, makes Lumbini-vana as the first of the holy places visited by Aśoka on his pilgrimage with Upagupta, and his visit to *Bodhi-mūla* following afterwards. The *Divyāvadāna* dates Aśoka’s pilgrimage as following the construction of his *vihāras* and *stūpas* which, according to the *Mahāvamsa* (V. 173), were completed after the seventh year of his coronation, i.e. after 262 B.C., and so the legends may be taken to be at one with the inscription on this point. The *Divyāvadāna* further states that after his first visit to the *Bodhi-tree*, Aśoka became so much attached to it that it roused the jealousy of his then Chief, but wicked, Queen, Tishyarakkhita who had a spell cast upon the tree to destroy it. Eventually she had to yield to the king’s devotion to the tree, and to accompany him on his anxious visit to the tree with elaborate measures to revive it.”⁴ But the discrepancy between the legends supplied in the *Mahāvamsa* and in the *Divyāvadāna* was so flagrant, and also between them and the edict, we could not presume that it was convincing in any way.

However, Chiang Hsia-pias, a comparatively later Chinese pilgrim, who composed his inspiring hymn in A.C. 1021 had in high terms of eulogy credited king Aśoka with the erection of the Buddha Gaya Temple. Even the unknown author of the Burmese inscription had expressly reckoned this Temple as one of the 84,000 shrines erected by His Gracious Majesty King Śrī Dharmāśoka, the Great ruler of Jambudvīpa, i.e. India, at the end of 218th year of Buddha’s demise on all the important holy spots associated with Buddha’s life. Unfortunately no description of it except a short notice by the pilgrim Hiuen-tsang, who said that it was a “small Vihāra” and that Aśoka “surrounded the Bodhi Tree with a stone wall about 10 feet in height”, which was still existing in A.C. 637, when he visited Mahābodhi. Hence Aśoka, the emperor, cannot probably be given the credit of constructing the Temple on any other

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reasonable ground than that it was he who infused the real impetus to the artistic development at Buddha Gaya. So B. M. Barua thought : "He (i.e. Aśoka) is far from being the builder of the great shrine. Anyhow, Hwen Thsang's testimony is very explicit on this point. Even it is difficult to ascribe to his piety the erection of the earlier smaller shrine referred to by the Chinese pilgrim. The only smaller shrine which may be believed to have existed and stood in front of the original Bo-tree as anything like a shrine is the Diamond-throne temple... this earlier shrine was not brought into being by king Aśoka but by some such personage as Kuraṅgi, the Matron and Lady Kuraṅgi, to whose munificence the ancient stone-railing was mainly due. The Diamond-throne temple still exists inside the present temple without its covering roof and with its four pillars broken and damaged."⁵ It is to be noted that among the bas-reliefs of the ruined Stūpa at Barhut there were two sculptured representations of Aśoka's Temple with the holy Pipal Tree behind, one of which contained the legend : "the Bodhi Tree of the Blessed Śākya Muni." As the sculptures of the Barhut Stūpa belonged certainly to B. C. 120 or 100, the bas-reliefs appeared to be the tolerably faithful representations of the Temple, as accurate indeed as the skill of the artist became able to represent them. The bas-reliefs of Barhut revealed that Aśoka's Temple was an open pavilion supported on pillars ; in the centre was found the Vajrāsana or the Diamond Throne decorated in front with four flat pillars ; behind the Throne appeared the trunk of the Bodhi Tree, which rose up high above the building and on each side of the Tree, there was a combined symbol of the Triratna or the Threefold Jewel and the Dharmacakra, standing on the top of a short pillar ; on each side of the 'Vajrāsana Room' there was a side room of the same style ; the top of the Throne was ornamented with flowers, but there was no figure of Buddha. Hence the bas-reliefs presented probably the vivid

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representation of the early Mahābodhi Temple. Such a conclusion was soon afterwards made still more positive by the discovery *in situ* of two Persepolitan pillar bases, one of each side of the sandstone Throne at equal distance from its end, the southern base being partly under the south wall of the Chamber while the northern one was quite clear of the northern wall. Therefore, A Cunningham concluded : "Putting all these discoveries together, and comparing them with the view of Aśoka's Temple, preserved in the bas-relief of Bharhut (i.e. Barhut), I cannot help feeling the conviction that we have found some of the actual remains of the original building."⁶ But B. M. Barua opined that "the great temple must have come into existence sometime after the visit of Fa Hian and decidedly before the coming of Hwen Thsang, we mean, sometime between the 5th and the 7th century A.D."⁷

According to a much later tradition the Great Temple of Buddha Gaya was erected by Amaradeva, the author of the *Amarakoṣa* in A.C. 948. Such a traditional belief was upheld by the Mahanta of Bodh Gaya on the basis of an inscription which was supposed to be a spurious one set up by a Vaiṣṇava monk, probably at the instigation of one of the Mahantas, to strengthen his claim to the Temple. Still scholars denied to acknowledge this inscription as absolutely worthless as a historical document and opined, on the other hand, that the Temple as well as all other ancient monuments found at Buddha Gaya were the remains of those erected by the pious Buddhists through many centuries. Discussing the lower limit of the age of the Mahābodhi Temple R L. Mitra had said : "The Gupta inscriptions..., though not referring to the erection of the temple forcibly impress the idea that the temple must have been existing in the second century, and we must, therefore, proceed to the first for the age of the monument, and that may be looked upon as the *terminus ad quem*". Likewise, in connection with the highest limit as well as the mean limit respectively of the

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age of this Great Temple he had further made the following two statements : "It may be safely accepted as facts that the spot on which the Great Temple now stands was once the site of some structure, not a chaitya, which had been built by Aśoka, and that the old monument was for some cause or other removed to make room for the temple. If we allow 150 years for the duration of Aśoka's monument, we have the beginning of the first century B. C. to be *terminus a quo* for the present temple", and, "so far the chain of evidence may be accepted to be tolerably complete, or as much so as we can reasonably expect in a case of this kind, though some of the links are not quite so strong as could be wished. This gives us a period of two hundred years, from the beginning of the first century B. C. to the close of the first century A. C. within which we must look for the date of the Great Temple"⁸ of Buddha Gaya.

Incidentally we may mention here that a small model in stone of the Buddha Gaya Temple had been unearthed amongst the ruins, from which the whole design of the present railing, as it was in the mediaeval age, may somehow be traced. The existing form of this great Temple may also be justified by another model found out at Mrohoung, the old capital of Arakan, and now preserved in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. But it should be noted that the model discovered in the district of Chittagong and the terracotta model found in Pagan did not show any tower at any of the four corners. Also while we are to trace the early history of the Buddha Gaya Temple we must take note of an earthen plaque buried in a mound six inches below the surface. This plaque looked like a small circular disc of burnt clay and had been discovered at Kumarahar near Patna. The convex of the plaque in its outer adorned face presented a number of designs, with the design of the Temple in the middle; the temple which appeared as an arched chamber with a seated figure of Buddha, enshrined inside, stood as a high round shaped tower with three pinnacles on the top, approached

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on its two sides by the flying angels, poised in the air ; the courtyard of the temple as described in the plaque was enclosed by a quadrangular stone railing, which was provided with a gateway in front, on two sides of the entrance to the temple and within the courtyard there were two standing human figures, both of which were marked by a halo, precisely like the seated figure inside the temple ; within the same enclosed courtyard, in front of the temple and on the right side of its entrance stood an Aśokan monolith bearing on its top the standing figure of an elephant, with a short Kharoṣṭhī inscription running lengthwise from the foot of the monolith, which was found to be a votive label recording the plaque to be a gift from a person of the Kauṭhuma family, who was described as a Saṅghadāsa or the servant of the Buddhist Holy Order ; the temple was surrounded in its outer circle by various shrines and artistic representations of legends connected with the life of Buddha, while all were enclosed by an outer wall of brick or of stone ; and the left side of the temple the figure of a gentleman, who remained standing with his fat body, long beard and a felt hat on his head. Judging by the early form of the Kharoṣṭhī characters in which the above mentioned inscription was written Sten Konow⁹ was inclined to consider it as a Kaṇiṣkan record and to assign it to circa A. C. 134. But having noticed the difference in style between the Buddha Gaya Temple as it exists today and the temple as designed in this plaque Vincent A. Smith doubted if the design in the plaque was a design at all of the Temple of Buddha Gaya and on the contrary suggested that the design was rather the design of the Temple of Tliadaka as described by Hiuen-tsang than the Temple of Mahābodhi. But B. M. Barua opined : "There is little doubt in our mind that the plaque is intended to present designs of various shrines at Bodh-Gayā and artistic representations of various legends connected with the period of enlightenment. The representa-

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tion of the Neat-herd's Banyan and the shrine under it precisely on a spot, where Hwen Thsang would locate them, leaves no room for doubt as to the plaque being a plaque of Bodh-Gayā."¹⁰ Still he concluded : "We have to declare the plaque, as it appears, as spurious, nothing but spurious."¹¹

The early date of the Mahābodhi Temple may further be proved by an inscription on the pedestal of a statue of Buddha, which was found near a small ruined temple close to the south gate of the railing of the Great Temple. This statue was undoubtedly of a very ancient period, because of the unmistake-Indo-Scythian or Gupta style of letters and sculptures ; but as the inscription was dated in the samvat year 64, and the record was worded in the usual form of the Indo-Scythian inscriptions discovered at Mathura, there was no doubt that it belonged to the 2nd century of the Christian era. The date of 64 would represent 464 of the Seleukidan era, equivalent to A. C. 152, whtch, as it agreed with the ascertained dates of Huvishka's reign, may be accepted as the actual date of the building of the temple in which the statue was enshrined. The present inscription was unfortunately very much broken, and the name of the donor of the statue was not quite clear. He was a Mahārāja himself, and, according to A. Cunningham, he "may therefore have been the agent employed by the Indo-Scythian king Huvishka (i.e. Huvishka) in building the Great Temple. His name was either Tukamala or Turamala." Further, on removing the plaster facing of the inner Vajrāsana Throne there was discovered in the middle of the front face, and just below the sandstone floor, and resting on the upper plastered floor, a ball of stiff earth or clay. On being broken it yielded five punch-marked silver coins which would point to a date as early as the 2nd or 3rd century A. C., when these coins were still current. The gold impression on thin gold of the obverse face of a gold coin of Huvishka, joined together, held by a ring and found in the same cecosit, would seem to point to the period

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of his reign as the actual time when the deposit was made, in about A.C. 120 to 160.

There were also some other inscriptions which, to some extent, pointed to the early history of the Buddha Gaya Temple. As for instance, the fifteen inscriptions of Kuraṅgi on the fifteen pillars of the old stone-railing, the inscription of Sirimā on a mutilated pillar of the old stone-railing, the inscription of Nāgadevī on a pillar of the old stone-railing, and two coping-inscriptions of Kuraṅgi and Sirimā on sandstone found at Buddha Gaya, undoubtedly belonged to the first or earliest stage in the growth and development of the life of this Buddhist holy land. They recorded the names of three female donors, namely, Kuraṅgi, Sirimā, and Nāgadevī—Kuraṅgi and Sirimā appearing as joint donors in the two inscriptions on the sandstone coping. On all the fifteen inscribed railing pillars where the name of Kuraṅgi occurred as a female donor, i.e. Ayāye Kurumgiye dānaṃ, 'the gift of the Noble Lady and Matron Kuraṅgi', she had been honoured with the simple but significant epithet *Ayā* or *Āryā* implying that she enjoyed the reputation of being a Noble Lady and Matron. In the two coping inscriptions, however, she figured as the elderly wife of king Kauśikīputra Indrāgnimitra, having the right of pride in being a mother of living sons. Whether in the inscription on a railing pillar or in the two inscriptions on the sandstone coping, Sirimā described as *cetikā* or a female donor from the royal palace of king Indrāgnimitra, the expression : Raño Imdāgi-mitra (sa pāsādā-cetikā) Sirimāye (dānaṃ), '(the gift) of Sirimā, a female donor from the Indrāgnimitra-prāsāda', being taken as similar to *Migāramātupāsāda*, which stood as a name for the Buddhist monastic 'abode erected by Lady Viśākhā, the daughter-in-law of Migāra the Banker. Considering from this point of view B. M. Barua suggested that Kuraṅgi built one or two Buddhist monasteries at Buddha Gaya perpetuating the name and memory of her deceased husband king Indrāgnimitra, one

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of them serving as a retreat for herself in her retirement from the household life. Evidently these were the monasteries which existed prior to the erection of the Maha Bodhi Saṅghārāma built to the north of the sacred area of the Bodhi Tree by king Meghavarṇa of Sri Lanka for the Sinhalese monks and pilgrims during the reign of Samudragupta. Another Buddhist retreat appeared to have been erected at Buddha Gaya during the reign of Aśokavalla Sapādalakṣa for the residence of some teachers of Mahāyāna Buddhism. In the inscription of Nāgadevī on a yakṣa-pillar of the old stone-railing she had been described simply as the wife of king Brahmamitra, namely, Raño Brahmamitrassa pājāvātiye Nāgadevaye dānaṃ, 'the gift of Nāgadevī, the wife of king Brahmamitra.' Such a pillar was *ex hypothesi* included together with a yakṣiṇī-pillar in the middle of the western side of the old sandstone railing in order to create the appearance of a false gate corresponding to the entrance on the east side. So it could be presumed that when the old sandstone railing was erected, the pillar or pillars donated by Nāgadevī formed an integral part of the whole structure. If that was the case, it seemed that the ancient railing around the original Bodhi Tree and the old Diamond-Throne Temple was erected during the reign of king Brahmamitra who must have been an immediate successor of king Indrāgnimitra then deceased, and that Noble Kuraṅgi was at that time not a queen in her glory but just a queen dowager. In this connection we should note three inscribed rail-bars, each of which appeared to have been the gift of a male donor, Amogha Bodhirakṣita, or the like. Noting that the forms of letters in these three inscriptions differed in some respects from those in the inscriptions of Kuraṅgi and other female, donor we may postulate that these three rail-bars were added at a somewhat later date, probably when a small repair had to be made and certainly long before the granite enlargement of the old stone-railing during the reign of king Pūrṇavarmā of

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Magadha. B. M. Barua said : “we are of opinion that the old Diamond-throne temple, the jewel-walk shrine and the old stone-railing were famous erections of female piety towards the close of the 1st century B.C. and that the first small repair of the sandstone railing calling for an addition of a few rail-bars occurred shortly after, though not later than, the middle of the 1st century A.D.”¹²

Again an inscription on the covering stone-slab of the the Diamond-Throne had been found out at Buddha Gaya. A. Cunningham aptly said that all that remained of this inscription was so much injured that very little could be read consecutively. He inclined to opine that letters certainly belonged to the Indo-Scythian or early Gupta period, and that the two words which distinctly preceded in the now available fragmentary inscription with the words *mātā-(pitunokā)rito*, ‘...caused to be made for the benefit of mother and father’, are *patimā patithapet*, ‘statue established.’ But the words were rather *pajāya hitāya* than anything else. But B. M. Barua thought that the forms of the Brāhmī letters here were in no way different from those of the letters used in the inscriptions of Kuraṅgi.

Still it should be noted that the main inscription or set of inscriptions recording the name of the donors by whose munificence the old Jewel-Walk Shrine was erected, had, if at all it was there, vanished with its demolition. Now all that remains of this Shrine consists of a pillar-shaft bearing masons’ marks in the shape of the Brāhmī vowel letter *a* and a number of fixed pillar-bases found in two separate rows, those in the southern row bearing serially the masons’ marks in the shape of the Brāhmī vowel letters and those in the northern row, in that of the Brāhmī consonant letters—the series in each case beginning from western margin. However, from the point of view of date it may be remarked that the general forms of these letters or masons’ marks on the pillar-shafts

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and fixed pillar-bases of the old Jewel-Walk Shrine closely resembled those of the Brāhmī alphabet found in the inscriptions of Kuraṅgi. Also the inscription of Amogha on a rail-bar of the old stone-railing, which recorded : 'the gift of Amogha', used the Brāhmī letters which were prominently flat at the base—a feature which went to connect the labels chronologically with the Hāthigumphā and other old Brāhmī inscriptions in the Udayagiri and Khaṇḍagiri Caves that were placed by Ramaprasad Chanda immediately after the inscriptions of Kuraṅgi from the point of view of the chronological development of Indian palaeography.

The inscription on the pedestal of an old image of Buddha still in the Bodhisattva state, dated in Saṃvāt 64 during the reign of Mahārāja Trikāmala displayed the third stage in the growth and development of this Buddhist holy place. It should be noted that the general wording and style of this inscription were closely similar to those of the Jaina and Buddhist image inscriptions incised at Mathura during the reign of Kaṇiṣka and other Kushana kings and the particular image on which the inscription occurred was carved like another standing figure of the Buddha-Bodhisattva in sandstone of Mathura. The donor claimed, in this inscription, to have set up two such Buddha-Bodhisattva images of stone—śailikā Bodhisattva-paṭimā—in a monastery called Amātyadhura Vihāra. As to its date B. M. Barua remarked : "...the inscription can by no means be regarded as later than the 2nd or 3rd century A.D. and the two figures must be counted among the Buddha images noticed by Fa Hian in the then existing Buddhist sanctuaries at Bodh-Gayā in the beginning of the fifth century A.D."¹³

As already mentioned, traditionally it is believed that Śrī Meghavarna, a Sinhalese king of between A.C. 301 and 328 became instrumental in building a saṅghārāma at Buddha Gaya. In this connection we may mention here that during

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his reign the Tooth Relic of Buddha was brought to Sri Lanka from India. The existence of a Sinhalese monastery may be proved by the itinerary of Hiuen-tsang also. This Chinese pilgrim, as we will observe subsequently, recorded that this monastery was erected by a former king of Simhala, i.e. Sri Lanka, and that it had six halls with towers of observation of three storeys. This Sinhalese monastery was surrounded by a thirty or forty feet high wall of defence. The image of Buddha in it was cast of gold and silver decorated with gems and precious stones. Hiuen-tsang narrated the circumstances which led this particular monastery to be built. He noted that in the old days there was a king of Sri Lanka, who was truthful and a believer in the doctrines of Buddha. Now it happened that a brother of this king, who had become a Buddhist monk thinking of the holy traces of Buddha went out for India where he was treated with disdain as a foreigner and was not received with due hospitality in all the Buddhist monasteries visited by him. Naturally he became very much afflicted and humiliated and as he returned to Sri Lanka, he could not speak but only stammer. However, at the insistence of the king he reported how he was insulted and treated with scorn during his travels and earnestly requested the king to erect monasteries in India in order to remove the inconveniences of the Sinhalese pilgrims here. And the king of Sri Lanka being moved by this report sent messengers probably headed by the same monk with valuable presents to the king of India, asking his permission to build rest-houses in all important places of India for ease of the Sinhalese pilgrims. On this occasion Buddha Gaya was selected as a place for erecting such a monastery. Having spent an adequate amount of money the king of Sri Lanka caused to erect the monastery at Buddha Gaya with the following royal proclamation engraved on a copper-plate : "To help all without distinction, is the highest teaching of all the Buddhas ; to

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exercise mercy on occasions, is the illustrious doctrine of former saints. And now, I unworthy descendant of the royal line, have undertaken to fund this Saṅghārāma, to enclose the sacred traces and to hand down their renown to future ages, and to spread the benefits among the people. The monks of my country, will thus obtain independence and be treated as members of the fraternity of this country. Let this privilege be handed down from generation to generation without interruption." It became evident that the copper-plate inscription caused to be written by this king of Sri Lanka was probably intact when Hiuen-tsang visited Buddha Gaya and he might have copied it from its original one. But the *Dipavaṃsa* and *Mahāvāṃsa* are silent about the construction of this Sinhalese monastery at Buddha Gaya. As remarked already, this Sinhalese king was probably Meghavarṇa of the fourth century. The existence of a Sinhalese monastery may be proved by also the report of Wang Hiuen-t'se, a Chinese envoy, who visited India during the latter half of the seventh century A.C.¹⁴ and by the discovery of an inscription which recorded the establishment of a shrine, probably at the Sinhalese monastery, by Thera Mahānāma of Sri Lanka. Wang Hiuen-t'se noted that the former king of Sri Lanka, who caused to be built a Buddhist monastery at Buddha Gaya was Chi-mi-kia-po-ma or the 'Cloud of Merit' implying to Meghavarṇa and the contemporary Indian king to whom he sent presents was San-maon-to-lo-kiu-to identified with Samudragupta. The Chinese envoy further recorded that the monks who visited Buddha Gaya were Mo-ho-nan or Mahānāma and his companion Lou-po or Upasena mentioned in the above Buddha Gaya Inscription of Mahānāma.¹⁵ But S. Paranavitana had pointed out that if the information available in the Sinhalese chronicles and the above-mentioned two Chinese records would be scrutinized, it would be obvious that Upatissa I of between A.C. 365 and 406 was the Sinhalese king who could have sent envoys to Samudragupta

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asking permission to erect a monastery at Buddha Gaya.¹⁶ S. Paranavitana further, as regards the name of the king, supposed that a number of kings including Upatissa I had the title 'Sirimegha'. Hence the Chinese word Chi-mi-kia-po-ma or 'Cloud of Merit' seemed to suggest Sirimegha and not Sirimeghavanna. Also it was recorded in the *Mahāvamsa* that Upatissa's younger brother, Mahānāma by name, became a monk for some time before he ascended the throne. So it would be quite likely that he visited Buddha Gaya when he became the Buddhist monk and took the initiative to establish a monastery there. During his stay at Buddha Gaya he became probably acquainted with Buddhaghosa, wherefore the latter visited Sri Lanka to undertake commentarial work when Mahānāma became the king. The remains of this Sinhalese monastery had been unearthed by A. Cunningham and Beglar. It was situated within the outer walls nine feet thick and its lofty walls thirty to forty feet in height, led to its occupation as a fort, after the decline of Buddhism. As reconstructed by A. Cunningham, its ground plan was laid out in the form of a square. It consisted of thirty six squares, six on each side, with an open courtyard surrounded by a group of cells. On one side of the courtyard there was a well with a covered drain leading to outside the walls. such revealed that the Sinhalese monastery with its towers and enclosure, was a separate establishment complete in itself.¹⁷

Incidentally we may mention here that also a copper-plate inscription in Sanskrit had been discovered by A. Cunningham at Gaya. It was inscribed on one side only and measured about 8" by 7 $\frac{1}{8}$ " and was quite smooth, the edges having been neither fashioned thicker, nor raised into rims. This inscription purported to be one of the Early Gupta king Samudragupta ; to record a charter issued from his camp at the city of Ayodhyā, to be dated in the year nine (i.e. A.C. 328-329), on the tenth solar day, without any specification of the fortnight, of the

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month of Vaiśākha (i.e. April-May) ; and to be a non-sectarian inscription. It should be noted that the legend on the seal of this grant was in the script which presented a very different type to those of the body of the inscription. But actually this inscription was engraved long after Samudragupta's reign. J. F. Fleet considered that the fabrication was done probably at the beginning of the 8th century A.C., because he noted the expression : Mahā-nau-hasty-aśva-jayaskandhā-vārāt in some later inscriptions. It should be noted that such an expression may also be traced in the grants of Harṣavardhana of A.C 627 and 630 and palaeographically the present inscription may be later than the period of Ādityasena. Hence this record may have been fabricated during the 6th or 7th century A. C. Quite possibly the record was prepared to replace a lost or damaged record of Samudragupta and the seal of the old record was attached to it. We may presume that Gopadevasvāmin, donee of the Gaya plate, and Gopasvāmin, under whose orders the Nalanda and Gaya plates were prepared, may be identical, and also that the forgers believed that Samudragupta had a camp at Ayodhyā.¹⁸ Still the seal of this record was in all probability a genuine one of Samudragupta, detached from other plate. According to J. F. Fleet, "the inscription itself, however", was "undoubtedly spurious," as he had cited some reasons in favour of his opinion. But the grant had "the general appearance of having been made somewhere about the beginning of the eighth century" A.C. In this inscription we find that "the two village Valatkaṣanas, i.e. officers, together with the Brāhmaṇas, at the village of Revatikā belonging to the Gayā viṣaya" were directed to know that "for the sake of increasing the religious merit of" king Samudragupta's parents and of himself, that village was granted by him, "as an agrahāra, with the assignment of the uparikara, to the religious student, the Brāhmaṇa Gopasvāmin, of the Bhāradvāja gotra and the Bahvṛca śākhā"¹⁹.

But an inscription of the Gupta period was discovered on

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a headless statue which was found by Major Mead in a temple when he was excavating around the Mahābodhi Temple in 1863. It noted : "This most ornamental, excellent, and lofty temple, constructed for the Muni compassionating all sentient creatures, and the vanquisher of Māra, by him named Bodhisena, a monk, pure minded, delighting in the way of perfect wisdom, an inhabitant of Dattgalla, for the (purpose of) unloosing the fetters of the world, of his parents, and also of relations, and his teachers, etc., inhabitants of Ahavāgra."

The Buddha Gaya inscription of Mahānāman of the year 269 was written on a stone tablet which was unearthed in course of excavation made by A. Cunningham and J. D. M. Beglar at Buddha Gaya. Such a stone had the appearance of having been originally set in a socket about three inches deep, and morticed at the sides into a building. Below the inscription towards the proper right side of the stone, there were engraved in outline a cow and a calf, standing towards, and nibbling at, a small tree or bush. The characters of the inscription belonged to the northern class of alphabets ; and the language used in it was Sanskrit : and, except for the opening symbol representing *Om*, and for the date at the end, the inscription which was a Buddhist one did not refer itself to the reign of any king. Its date was the year 269, i.e. A.C. 588-589, on the seventh solar day of the bright fortnight of the month Caitra (March-April). The object of it was to record the erection, by a certain Mahānāman—the second of that name mentioned in this inscription—of a mansion of Buddha, i.e. a Buddhist temple or monastery, at Bodhimāṇḍa, or rather, within the precincts of it, i.e. at modern Buddha Gaya. The inscription recorded : "Then there was the Śramaṇa Bhava, whose welfare was effected by the development of abstract meditation ; who destroyed error ; (and) who possessed an unequalled wealth of true religion. And his disciple (was) he who had the name of Rāhula ; after whom (there came) the ascetic Upasena (I) ;

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then in succession (there was) Mahānāman (I) ; (and) after him another Upasena (II), whose special characteristic of affection, of the kind that is felt towards offspring ;—for any distressed man who came to him for protection, and for any afflicted person whose fortitude had been destroyed by the continuous flight of the arrows of adversity,—extended, in conformity with the disposition of a kinsman, (even) to any cruel man who might seek to do (him) harm ; (and) by whose fame, arising from good actions, the whole world was thus completely filled. His disciple, greater (even than himself), (is) he who has the excellent name of Mahānāman (II) ; an inhabitant of Āmradvīpa ; a very ocean of a mighty family ; born in the island of Laṅkā ; delighting in the welfare of others ;—by him this beautiful mansion of the Teacher of mankind, who overcame the power of (the god) Smara,—dazzling white as the rays of the moon, with an open pavilion on all sides,—has been caused to be made at the exalted Bodhimaṇḍa.” As to the places mentioned in this inscription, Laṅkā may be identified with Sri Lanka and Āmradvīpa, ‘mango-island, was another of its name, derived from its resemblance in the shape to a mango. Bodhimaṇḍa was the name of the miraculous throne under the Bodhi Tree at Buddha Gaya, also called the Vajrāsana or “diamond-throne”, on which Buddha and his predecessors sat, and attained Bodhi or Perfect Enlightenment. The term was also probably applied to the raised terrace built under the Bodhi Tree within the precincts of any Buddhist temple, in imitation, presumably, of Buddha’s throne. This, rather than the throne itself, seemed to be its meaning in the present inscription. But the chief interest of this inscription, lay in the probability that the second Mahānāman mentioned in it, was “the person of that name who composed the more ancient part of the Pāli *Mahāvamsa*, or history of Ceylon. If this identification is accepted, it opens up a point of importance in the question of dates. On the one hand, there can be no doubt

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that the date of the present inscription has to be referred to the Gupta era, with the result of A.D. 588-89. On the other hand, from the Ceylonese records, Mr. Turnour arrived at A.D. 459 to 477 as the period of the reign of Mahānāman's nephew (sister's son) Dhātusena ; and it was during his reign that Mahānāman compiled the history"²⁰. Another Buddha Gaya Image Inscription of Mahānāman was on the pedestal of a Buddhist image which was discovered during the excavation made by A. Cunningham and J.D.M. Beglar at Buddha Gaya. The characters of this inscription belonged to the northern class of alphabets, and are of precisely the same type with those of the preceding inscription of Mahānāman. The language used here was Sanskrit and the inscription was in prose throughout. The inscription did not refer to the reign of any king, and was not dated ; but the characters allotted to it precisely are of the same time those of the preceding Buddha Gaya inscription of Mahānāman, of A.C. 588-589. It was a Buddhist inscription. Its object was to record the presentation of the statue, on the pedestal of which it was engraved, by a Sthavira named Mahānāman mentioned in the preceding inscription. Thus the present inscription noted : "This (is) the appropriate religious gift of the Śākya Bhikṣu, the Sthavira Mahānāman, a resident of Āmradvīpa. Whatever religious merit (there is) in this (act), let it be for the acquisition of supreme knowledge by all sentient beings !" This inscription revealed that Mahānāman must have been at least thirty years old when he visited Buddha Gaya ; by the Buddhist practice, he could not receive the upasampadā-ordination, before attaining the age of twenty years ; and, after that, he would have to wait at least ten or twelve years, before he could be invested with the title of Sthavira or Thera. Mahānāman's visit to Buddha Gaya probably occurred before the time when Dhātusena became the king of Sri Lanka during the flight of the uncle and nephew probably between A.C. 434 and 439 to avoid the persecution of the usurper Pāṇḍu.²¹ Also

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the Buddha Gaya Stone Image Inscription was inscribed on the pedestal of a Buddhist stone statue which was found by A. Cunningham and J. D. M. Beglar during their excavation at Buddha Gaya. The characters of this inscription belonged to the northern class of alphabets and were of almost precisely the same type as those of the Buddha Gaya image inscription of Mahānāman. The language used in it was Sanskrit and the inscription was in prose. The inscription did not refer itself to the reign of any king, and was not dated ; but, on palaeographical grounds, it may be allotted roughly to the sixth century A.C. It was a Buddhist inscription ; and the object of it was to record the grant, by two Śākya mendicants called Dharmagupta and Daṁṣṭrasena, natives of Tiṣyāmratīrtha, of the statue on the pedestal of which it was engraved. Hence in it we find : “*This (is) the appropriate religious gift of the two Śākya Bhikṣus, Dharmagupta and Daṁṣṭrasena, residents of Tiṣyāmratīrtha. Whatever religious merit (there is) in this (act), let it be for the acquisition of supreme knowledge by all sentient beings, after (their) parents and (their) Ācārya and Upādhyāya.*”²² As the pedestal on which this second inscription was engraved had actually been found within the walls of the ruined temple, to the north of the Great Temple, there could be no doubt that this was the actual temple referred to in the longer inscription which mentioned the building of a temple by Mahānāman or Mahānāma, a resident of Āmardvīpa. A. Cunningham opined that “the interest attached to these two records lies in the fact that they may possibly be memorials of Mahānāma ; the author of the *Mahāvamsa*, or History of Ceylon. This assignment, however, is not borne out by the date of the inscription in Samvat 279, which, if referred to the Gupta era, as the characters undoubtedly belong to the Gupta period, would refer the record to the later part of the 6th century. But the date of Mahānāma is already well known from his own history.

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He was the uncle of Rājā Dhātusena, the heir of Rājā Mitra-Sena, who was conquered and killed by the invader Pāṇḍu, in A.D. 433. when Dhātu Sena and his uncle escaped...these two inscriptions found at Mahābodhi show that he may have visited the Bodhi Tree in Magadha, where he built a temple and dedicated a statue. Of course the inscription belongs to the later Mahānāma of A.D. $318 + 279 = 597$, and consequently I feel inclined to identify the first Mahānāma mentioned in the record with the historian of Ceylon. To the earlier one I would assign the erection of the Great Monastery of Mahābodhi." This second inscription of Mahānāma began with the following formula in use during the Gupta period for the record of a religious gift : "The religious gift of the Śākya mendicant, an inhabitant of Āmradvīpa, the Sthavira Mahānāma. Whatever religious merit there may be in this (act) let it be for the acquisition of supreme knowledge by all sentient beings."

But the earliest record available now during the repairs of the Mahābodhi Temple was supplied by a Sanskrit inscription, incised on one of the coping-stones of the present stone railing. This inscription consisted of two lines, the beginning and end of each of which were not found. About it Bloch said : "There is no mention of any date nor is there any reference to any king or other known person. However, the style of writing, employed in the inscription, allows us to put down the date at about the 6th or 7th century A.D." This inscription may, in any way, be connected with another such inscription incised on another such coping-stone, standing close to the one bearing the above mentioned inscription, in order to supply some of the missing links, especially the name of the person who bore the cost of repairs. The almost similar characters in which the two inscriptions were written and the contiguity of their positions on the stone railing might point to their inter-connexion. Of these two, the second inscription was a votive record left by Śramaṇa Prakhyātakīrtti, a distinguished

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Buddhist monk from Sri Lanka, who was praised as one “born from the house of rulers of the isle of Laṅkā and a moon in the sky of his race.” Prakhyātakīrtti, in this inscription, was felicititiously recording his pilgrimage and the homage he paid to the Holy Triad, although he was not recording whether the homage paid by him assumed a tangible form, probably for simple reason that details were to be found in the other inscription. Thus considering that the two inscriptions were records left by one and the same person, the illustrious Sinhalese Buddhist monk called Prakhyātakīrtti might be taken to be a distinguished person who supplied the funds for the earliest known repairs of the Buddha Gaya Temple. Turning to the first inscription of these two it might be observed that the great deed of merit on the part of Prakhyātakīrtti was not confined to the work of repairs. From its contents it became evident that he caused a new temple to be built adjoining the Vājrāsanavṛhadgandhakuṭi or the shrine of the large Diamond Throne, to the west of the Great Temple and the Bodhi Tree, and a brass image to be installed in the Sinhalese monastery. Also he endeavoured to make an adequate provision for recurring expenses for the repairs of the Temple as well as regular worship of the Buddha image inside it and made a permanent endowment for the monastery nearby and a suitable provision for daily of burning a lamp of ghee before the brass image mentioned above. Thus this Sanskrit inscription, incised on one of the coping-stones of the present stone railing recorded : “A (temple ?) has been made where the great (Diamond throne chamber) is. The temple has been adorned with a new coating of plaster and paint, at the cost of 250 *dināras*. And in the temple a lamp of *ghee* has been provided for the Lord Buddha by the gift of a hundred cows for as long as the moon, sun, and stars shall endure. Also, by another hundred cows, in addition to the cost of small, perpetually recurring repairs to the temple, pro-

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vision has been made for (another) lamp of *ghee*, to be burnt daily before the image inside the temple. By another hundred cows, provision has been been made for having a lamp of *ghee* burnt before the brass-image of the Lord Buddha in the monastery (*vihāra*)...There also...a large water-reservoir has been dug out for the use of the whole congregation of monks, and to the east of it a new field has been laid out."²³

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However, the earliest literary notices of the Mahābodhi or the Buddha Gaya Temple may be found in the itineraries of the Chinese pilgrims who visited India in different periods from the beginning of the 5th century A. C. down to the end of the 11th century. They had measured the way in terms of *li* which was about a third of a mile. The first of these Chinese pilgrims was Fa-hien, who left China in A. C. 399, and travelled across India from the Indus to the seashore of Orissa, from where he embarked for Sri Lanka, and eventually returned to his native land in A. C. 414. His *Fo-kwo-ki* did not include a statement from which we might, with A. Cunningham, infer the existence of the Buddha Gaya Temple at so early an age as the period of the visit of this Chinese Pilgrim. The mention of Buddha Gaya as one of the four Buddhist places of pilgrimage was nothing but a reiteration on the part of Fa-hien of the traditional Buddhist reckoning. The only significant point to note that in the old shrines brought into being by Kuraṅgi and her coadjutors is a number of figures of Buddha installed in them. The image bearing on its pedestal an inscription dated in the 64th year of the reign of King Tukāmala or Trikāmala must have been one of the figures of Buddha observed by Fa-hien. Hence the great temple of Buddha Gaya must have come into existence sometime after the visit of Fa-hien and positively before the visit of Hiuentasang.

From his travelogue, it became evident that Fa-hien came to the city of Gaya, a city of Magadha (Lat. 24° 47' N., Long. 85° 1' E.), but inside the city all was emptiness and desolation and further noted that going on again to the south for twenty li

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(he and his companions) arrived at the place where Bodhisattva for six years practised with himself painful austerities. All around was forest. Three li west from here they came to the place where, when Buddha had gone into the water to bathe, a deva bent down the branch of a tree, by means of which he succeeded in getting out of the pool. Two li north from this was the place where the grāmika girls presented to Buddha the rice-gruel made with milk ; and two li north from this (again) was the place where, seated on a rock under a great tree, and facing the east, he ate (the gruel). The tree and the rock were there during the period of Fa-hien's visit. The rock might be six cubits in breadth and length, and rather more than two cubits in height. Half a yojana from this place to the north-east there was a cavern in the rocks, into which Bodhisattva entered, and sat cross-legged with his face to the west, where Buddha, after attaining to perfect wisdom, for seven days contemplated the tree, and experienced the joy of vimukti ; where, under the patra tree, he walked backwards and forwards from the west to the east for seven days ; where the devas made a hill appear, composed of the seven precious substances, and presented offerings to him for seven days ; where the blind dragon Mucalinda encircled him for seven days ; where he sat under the nyagrodha tree, on a square rock, with his face to the east, and Brahmadeva came and made his request to him ; where the four deva kings brought to him their alms-bowl ; where the 500 merchants presented to him the roasted flour and honey ; and where he converted the brother Kāśyapa and their thousand disciples ;—at all these places topes were reared. At the place where Buddha attained to perfect wisdom, there were three monasteries, in all of which there were monks residing. The families of their people around used to supply the societies of these monks with an abundant sufficiency of what they required, so that there was no lack or stint. The disciplinary rules were strictly observed by them. The laws regulating their

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demeanour in sitting, rising, and entering when the others were assembled, were those which had been practised by all the saints since Buddha was in the world down to the time of Fa-hien.¹

Sung Yun and Hoei Seng were the next Chinese pilgrims to visit Northern India in A. C. 520. But their itineraries were confined to the Kabul Valley and Western Punjab, and hence are of no use for the history of the Buddha Gaya Temple.

But the most valuable information about the Mahābodhi Temple may be had from the travelogue of Hiuen-tsang, who left China in A.C. 629, and did not return until A. C. 648. He presented a lengthy description of this Temple, with numerous measurements and other details. Hiuen-tsang recorded that from the Śīlabhadra Monastery he travelled 40 or 50 li south-west, crossed the Nairāñjanā River and came to Gaya. This city, according to him, was strongly situated but had few inhabitants ; there were only above 1000 brahmana families, descendants of the original (or according to some texts, great) ṛṣi, and they were not subject to the king, and were treated by all with reverence. Above 30 li to the north of the city was a clear spring, the water of which was regarded as sacred and purifying. Five or six li to the south-west of the city was the Gayā Mountain with dark gorges and inaccessible cliffs, called by the Indians 'Spiritual Mountain.' On the top of the mountain was a stone tope above 100 feet high built by Aśoka at the place where Buddha uttered the 'Pao-Yun' and other sūtras. The Pilgrim proceeded to tell that south-east from the Gayā Mountain was a tope at the native city of Kāśyapa, and that to the south of it were two topes at the places where Gayā Kāśyapa and Nadī Kāśyapa 'served fire'. Eastwards from the place where Gayā Kāśyapa served fire, the narrative proceeded, on the other side of a great river was the Prāg-bodhi Mountain. The Pilgrim next went on to tell us that a journey of 14 or 15 li south-west from the Prāg-bodhi Hill brought one to the

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Bodhi Tree. The enclosing walls, he related, were built of bricks, high and strong ; the inclosure was long from the east to the west, and narrow from the north to the south, and it was above 500 paces in circuit ; rare trees and noted flowers made continuous shade ; fine grass and strange plants climbed over and covered everything. The principal gate opened east towards the Nairañjanā River, the south gate was connected with a large flower tank, the west limit was a natural defence, and the north gate communicated with the grounds inside the walls of a large monastery. The sacred traces were very close together ; topes or shrines had been raised, as memorials, by sovereigns, high officials, or nobles of India, who were pious Buddhists. Proceeding with his description the Pilgrim related that in the centre of the Bodhi Tree Inclosure was the 'Adamant (Vajra) Seat' and was 100 paces in circuit. The name was derived from the fact that here 1000 Buddhas of this kalpa went into the Vajra-samādhi ; and as they attained to Bodhi at this spot it was also called the Bodhi-Arena, i.e. Bodhi-maṇḍala or-maṇḍa. To the east of the Bodhi Tree was a temple above 160 feet high, and with a front breadth at the base of above twenty paces. This temple was made of bricks and coated with lime ; it had tiers of niches with gold images ; its four walls were adorned with exquisite carvings of pearl strings and genii ; on the roof was a gilt copper āmalaka, connected with the east side of the temple were three lofty halls one behind another ; the woodwork of these halls were adorned with gold and silver carvings and studded with precious stones of various colours ; and an open passage through them communicated with the inner chamber. On the left hand side of the outside door of these halls was an image of Bodhisattva, and on the right one of Maitreya, each made of silver and above ten feet high. On the site of the temple there had once stood a small caitya (or temple) built by Aśoka. The present Temple had then built by a brāhmaṇa acting on advice given to him by Śiva in the Snow

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Mountains, and the neighbouring tank had been built by the brāhmaṇa's brother also according to Śiva's advice. The Pilgrim then went on to tell the wonderful story of the image of Buddha made by Maitreya in the disguise of a brāhmaṇa. Next the Pilgrim proceeded to relate that to the north of the Bodhi Tree was the Place of Buddha's walking up and down. Gautama on the attainment of Bodhi remained motionless under the Tree for seven days. Hiuen-tsang added that he learned from local records that the base of bricks for the sacred footprints indicated the duration of a person's life, its length being greater or less to a devotee according to the years of his life. North of the Walk, and on a flat rock to the left of the road, was a large caitya. In this was an image of Buddha gazing with uplifted eyes. Hieun-tsang further recorded that near the Bodhi Tree, on the west side, was a large temple containing a bronze standing image of Buddha adorned with precious stones. This image faced the east, and in front of it was a dark-blue stone beautifully ornamented. The temple represented the Hall of the seven precious substances made by Brahmā for Buddha on his attainment of Bodhi ; and the sotne was the seat of similar substances presented by Sakka on the same occasion. Here Buddha remained for seven days, absorbed in meditation, and lit up the Bodhi Tree with light emitted from his body. In the long lapse of time, however, the precious substances had changed into stone. Continuing his narrative Hiuen-tsang related that not far from the Bodhi Tree, on the south, was an Aśoka tope above 100 feet high at the spot where Bodhisattva on his way to the Bodhi Tree got grass for a seat from India being disguised as a grass-cutter. Near this, he added, on the north-east side was a tope where the 'dark coloured birds' in flocks gave the Bodhisattva as he was going to the Tree a happy omen. Hiuen-tsang further told that on the east of the Bodhi Tree were two topes, one on the right and one on the left of the high way. It was here that Māra tempted

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Bodhisavatta as the latter was about to become Buddha. Hiuen-tsang next told of a tope near the west or the north-west of the Bodhi Tree Inclosure. It was above 40 feet high and was called the Saffron Tope. He next related that at the south-east corner of the Bodhi Tree Inclosure was a banyan tree beside which were a tope and a temple. The latter contained a sitting image of Buddha, and was on the spot where Brahmā besought Buddha on his attainment of Bodhi, to begin the preaching of his religion. At each of the four corners of the Bodhi Tree Inclosure, Hiuen-tsang continued, was a large tope. These four topes marked the places, on the verge of the Vajra-seat, where on the Bodhisattva's arrival earthquakes occurred, and these disturbances ceased when he found the Vajrāsana. Within this Inclosure the sacred memorials were crowded together, and it would be possible to enumerate them. He went on to describe that a tope to the south-west of the Bodhi Tree Inclosure marked the home of the two cowherd maidens who presented Bodhisattva with milk-gruel, and near it were two other topes also connected with this incident. Outside of the south gate of the Bodhi Tree, or the Bodhi Tree Inclosure, was a large tank, above 700 paces in circuit, of pure clear water, the home of dragons and fishes. This was the tank made by younger brother of the brāhmaṇa who built the beautiful temple already described. To the south of this tank was another where Buddha had attained to *samyak sambodhi* and he wanted to wash his clothes, and Indra created this tank for him. On its west side was a large rock: when Buddha had washed his garments and he wanted to have them dried, Indra brought him this rock from the Snow-Mountains. Beside this was a tope where Siddhārtha put on the old clothes, and south from it, in a wood was a tope at the place where he received the poor granny's offering of old clothes. In a wood to the east of the Indra Tank was the tank of the Dragon-king Mucalinda,

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the water of which was clear and dark with a sweet agreeable taste. On the west bank was a small temple with an image of Buddha. It was here Buddha on attaining to Bodhi sat in samādhi for seven days while the Dragon-king, with his body in seven coils round the body of Buddha and with several heads specially produced for the purpose, screened and protected him. In a wood to the east of the Mucalinda Tank was a temple with an image of Buddha in an emaciated condition; near it was his exercise ground with a Pipal at its north and south ends. Near the Pipal tree of the place of austerities was a tope to mark the spot at which Ajñāta Kaundinya and his four companions lodged while they were in attendance on the Bodhisattva. South-east from this tope was one at the spot where Buddha went into the Nairāñjanā river to bathe, and near it was the place where he received and ate the milk-gruel. Near this were topes where Buddha received his first food for 49 days from the two travelling merchants, and where the four Deva-rājās offered him four golden alms-bowls to hold the food. Close to the tope of the Alms-bowls Offering was one where Buddha preached on his mother's behalf. Beside this on a bank of a dried-up tank was a tope at the spot where Siddhārtha exhibited miraculous appearance converting those with the efficient karma. Close to this was a tope at the place where Buddha received into his communion the three brothers Kāśyapa, and their 1000 disciples. Two or three li outside of the east gate of the Bodhi Tree Inclosure was the home of the Blind Dragon. Hiuen-tsang next told of the tope at the place where Māra-rājā tried to frighten the Bodhisttva at the side of the east gate of the Bodhi Tree Inclosure. Outside of the north gate of the Bodhi Tree was the Mahābodhi Saṅghārāma built by a former king of Sri Lanka. Its buildings formed six courts, with terraces and halls of three storeys, enclosed by walls between 30 and 40 feet high; the sculpture and painting were

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perfect. The image of Buddha was made of gold and silver, and ornamented by precious stones of various colours. There were elegant topes lofty and spacious containing bone and flesh relics of Buddha. On the last day of every year when the relics were brought out to be shewn a light shone and flower fell in showers. In this establishment there were nearly 1000 ecclesiastics all Mahāyānists of the Sthavira School and all perfect in Vinaya observances. The Pilgrim then narrated the origin and foundation of the monastery at some length. Hiuen-tsang reported that for ten li and more south of the Bodhi Tree the sacred traces were too close together to be all enumerated.⁴ The above description of the Mahābodhi Temple as presented by Hiuen-tsang corresponds so closely to the Great Temple as it now stands, there can be no reasonable doubt that it is, in spite of all its repairs and alterations, the same building which was witnessed by this Chinese Pilgrim in A. C. 637, will be evident by the following comparison made by A. Cunningham : (i) The dimensions of the two Temples are exactly the same, the present building being 48 feet square at its base, and between 160 and 170 feet in height. In 1861 his measurement of its height, in its broken state, was 160 feet from the floor of the chamber to the top of the ruined pinnacle. It is now, after repair of the pinnacle, upwards of 170 feet. (ii) It is built of bluish bricks, with a coating of plaster. (iii) The four faces present several tiers of niches, rising one above the other, each of which, no doubt, once held a Buddhist figure. Only three figures remained when A. Cunningham first saw the building. (iv) The entrance on the eastern side was certainly an addition to the original building, as its courses of bricks did not correspond with those of the main body of the Temple.⁵ From Hiuen-tsang's travelogue one point is, however, certain that the Temple as well as its quadrangular stone-enclosure came into existence sometime before Hiuen-tsang's visit in the first half of the 7th century

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A.C, The stone enclosure was just a granite enlargement of the old sandstone railing that once surrounded the original Bodhi Tree and the old Diamond Throne Temple. The occasion for removing the earlier railing appeared from the requirements of the great shrine occupying a site even larger than that of the railing itself. Hiuen-tsang seemed to record the dismantling of the earlier railing and the practical destruction of the old Diamond Throne Temple and Jewel Walk Shrine as a work of desecration of Buddhism on the part of the Śaiva King Śaśāṅka of Bengal. This Chinese Pilgrim made us understand that the erection of the enlarged stone-railing around the Buddha Gaya Temple was undertaken by King Pūrṇavarmā immediately after the tragic and sudden death of the Śaiva King Śaśāṅka. This information shows that the laudable work of the construction of the Mahābodhi Temple, undertaken by a Brāhmaṇa minister of Śaivite persuasion, connected probably with the court of Śaśāṅka, was attended with the dismantling and partial demolition of some structures as its regrettable exigencies, and that for some reason or other, may be the tragic death of Śaśāṅka. The task of setting up the enlarged railing around the Temple and the planting or rearing of a new Bodhi sapling had to be left to be accomplished by King Pūrṇavarmā who between circa A.C. 600 to 620 shortly before the visit of Hiuen-tsang, made some alterations and additions of Buddha Gaya. The holy Pipal Tree had been completely destroyed by Śaśāṅka ; and, in spite of Hiuen-tsang's statement about the escape of the Great statue of Buddha inside, A. Cunningham remarked that both the statue and the Throne were destroyed at the same time. To Pūrṇavarmā, therefore, A. Cunningham would ascribe the erection of the blue basalt pedestal in front of the Inner Throne, and the vaulting of the inner chamber, which rested on the same floor as the blue pedestal and was evidently not a portion of the original work. Pūrṇavarmā enclosed outside

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the new Bodhi Tree with a stone wall 24 feet high, which in Hiuen-tsang's time was still 20 feet high. The difference of level A. Cuningham would explain by a great influx of sand, which actually hid the outer Vajrāsana at the time of Hiuen-tsang's visit.⁶

We have already noted that an elderly Sinhalese Buddhist monk called Mahānāman and his companion made significant contribution to Buddha Gaya. This incidence had also been mentioned in the Chinese account of the travels of Wang Hieun (or Hiuen)-ts'e who visited India in the seventh century.⁷ This Chinese envoy recorded : "Formerly, the king of Cheu-tzeu (Sri Lanka), named Chi-mi-kia-po-mo, which means in Chinese 'Cloud of Merit' (Koung-to-iun) (Śrī Meghavarman), an Indian (fan) king, directed two bhikkhus to visit this monastery (the monastery built by Aśoka to the east of the Bodhi tree and later enlarged). The elder monk was named Mo-ho-nan, which means 'great name' (Mahānāman); the other lou-po, which means 'giver of prophecy' (cheou-ki) (Upa...). These two bhikkhus made homage to the Throne of Diamond (Vajrāsana) of the Bodhi Tree. The monastery did not offer them asylum, and the two bhikkhus returned to their native land. The king questioned them : 'You went to pay your homage to the holy places, what good fortune do the omens declare, O Bhikkhus ?' They replied : 'In the great country of Jambudvīpa, there is no spot where one can live in peace'. The king, hearing these words, sent some people with precious stones to offer as presents to the King San-meou-to-lo-kiu-to (Samudragupta). And that is why, up to this day, it is the bhikkhus of the kingdom of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) who reside in this monastery".⁸ We have already observed that Hiuen-tsang also referred to the monastery of the theras at Mahābodhi as follows : "The younger brother of a king of Ceylon, who had gone on a pilgrimage to the holy places, met with a bad reception at the place. Returning to his native isle, he persua-

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ded his elder brother to build, near the Bodhidruma, with the consent of the king of India, a monastery intended to give lodging to Sinhalese monks".⁹ Here we find that Hiuen-tsang did not mention the name of the king of Sri Lanka concerned, nor of his younger brother, nor of the Indian monarch, while Wang Hiuen-ts'e intimated us that the Indian monarch who allowed the building of a Sinhalese Monastery at Buddha Gaya was the great Gupta emperor Samudragupta and the Sinhalese king had the name of Śrī Meghavarman¹⁰ identified with the elder son of Mahāsenā who began his reign in or about A.C. 303 approximately.¹¹ Sylvain Lévi became struck by the similarity of the event reported by this Chinese envoy, to that recorded in the Buddha Gaya Inscription of Mahānāman. He thought that Sthavira Mahānāman who built a shrine for Buddha at Buddha Gaya was the same Mahānāman mentioned by Wang Hiuen-ts'e and remarked with regard to the latter's junior companion Upa as follows: "The alteration of the names Mahānāman and Upasena in the spiritual genealogy of the Sinhalese monk, would lead us to believe that another Upasena is here in question."¹² But complication may appear if the aforesaid Buddha Gaya Inscription would be referred to the Gupta era. Still Sylvain Lévi said: "The dilemma, as almost always happens, presents a means of escape, and we must have recourse to a third solution. The mention of Samudragupta and of Śrī Meghavarna as contemporaries of Mahānāman excludes henceforth the assignment of the date 269 to the Gupta era. The *Mahāvamsa*, in fact, makes Kittisiri Meghavanna reign from 304 to 332 A.D., and if Sinhalese chronology is not irreproachably accurate, it at least gives very little room for correction. In order to decide the preliminary question raised by Mr. Fleet, I have consulted the references to Ceylon found in the Chinese annals....The accuracy of the Sinhalese annals is triumphantly indicated by this test...There can no longer be any question of carrying back the date of

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Mahānāman's inscription to the Gupta era. The Kalacuri Era, which Mr. Fleet himself, seized with doubts, suggests as an afterthought in the Index to the Corpus (*s.v.* Mahānāman II) is scarcely more apposite. The year 518 A.D. is impossible, as is the year 588. The most likely hypothesis, therefore in the circumstances, is to consider the date 269 as expressed in the Śaka Era, which gives us 347 A.D. It falls thus in the reign of Samudragupta, but the date, it must be confessed, is fifteen years posterior to the date of Mahānāman according to the chronology of the *Mahāvamsa*. It is by no means any discredit to these venerable Annals to attribute to them an error so slight, in regard to an epoch so remote."¹³ Although S. Lévi's hypothesis with regard to the date of the Buddha Gaya Inscription had not been able to prevail, the synchronisms between Sinhalese and Chinese history, which he brought to light in justification of that hypothesis, became the most valuable contribution to Sinhalese chronology. However, if the above-mentioned Buddha Gaya Inscription was dated in the Śaka Era, there could be no possibility of Sthavira Mahānāman mentioned therein being identical with the author of the *Mahāvamsa*. On the other hand, V. A. Smith had pointed out that palaeographically the inscription must be of a date later than Śaka 269. Against S. Lévi's hypothesis he further informed of the unlikelihood of the Śaka Era being used at that time in that part of India. According to him, Mahānāman of the Buddha Gaya Inscription was a person different from the Sthavira of that name mentioned by Wang Hiuen-ts'e.¹⁴ Sylvain Lévi had evidently accepted the arguments put forward by V. A. Smith against the hypothesis that the Buddha Gaya Inscription of Mahānāman was dated in the Śaka Era ; but, twenty-five years after the paper containing that hypothesis was published, he wrote another paper on the document from a different angle pointing out the fact that there was a reference by *dhvani* (suggestion) in the first verse of the Inscription to the

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well-known work *Abhidharmakośa* of Vasubandhu was of considerable significance for an investigation into the identity and date of the Sthavira Mahānāman who set up the record. However, after a detailed study S. Paranavitana concluded : “The identity of Mahānāman, who caused the foundation of a shrine for the Buddha at Bodh-Gayā, and set up an epigraph recording that fact, with the author of the *Mahāvamsa*, is thus established.”¹⁵ But it should be noted that the events referred to by the Chinese envoy and the aforesaid inscription were not identical. The first is the foundation of a saṅghārāma by the emissaries of the Sinhalese king, the second the erection of a shrine of Buddha by an elderly Buddhist monk. The same scholar further said : “But the possibility of Mahānāman I of the epigraph being identical with the Mahānāman mentioned by the Chinese traveller (Wang Hieun-ts’e) is worth considering.”

The *She-kia-fang-che* which being an important Chinese account on India and supplemented the *Si-yu-ki* and the *Life* as its author had supplied with the description as he had heard it from Hiuen-tsang, recorded : “The Bodhi tree is surrounded by brick walls high and strong. It is long from east to west and has a circuit of 540 paces. Rare trees with their renowned flowers connect their shade and cast their shadow. The main gate opens to the east facing the Nairāñjanā river. By the side of the southern gate there is a large-flower tank. The western side is firmly blocked. The northern gate leads to the Mahāvihāra. Within the walled courtyard there are holy traces, stūpas, vihāras extending in all directions, connected with each other. The Vajrāsana is right in the middle of the enclosure. When the Bhadrakalpa was first reaching perfection, it (Vajrāsana) appeared with the great earth. It is in the middle of the Mahāsahasralokadhātu. It goes down to the extremity of the golden wheel and upwards it reaches the horizon of the earth. The Vajrāsana is more than 100 paces in circuit. One thousand

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Buddhas sat here and entered the Vajrasamādhi ; hence the name. It is the place where they attained the *tao*. It is also called Bodhimaṇḍa. When the great earth is shaken this place is not moved. When after Buddha's attainment of enlightenment the law started decaying, earth and dust covered this place and the original basement was not seen. On ascertaining the words of Buddha by tradition it was marked by two images of Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva. Thus the south-north boundary was fixed. The images face south and are in sitting posture. The *Ki* (*Si-yu-ki*) says—'As soon as these images disappear the law of Buddha will get destroyed'. The image at the south angle is buried up to its breast.

When Buddha was in this world the Bodhi tree was several hundred feet high. Its branches were yellow and leaves green, not changing either in winter or summer. But after the nirvāṇa of Buddha the leaves wither and fall down but they revive soon after. King Aśoka attacked the tree, cut it, assembled (the branches) several tens of paces in the west and set fire to it according to the practice of the Deva worshippers. Fire could not burn it and there were double trees produced. From amidst the fire the leaves looked shining. The king imbibed faith and poured scented milk on the root (of the tree). The next morning the tree sprang up as original. The king's queen being angry had the tree cut down in the night. The king was exceedingly (sorry), prayed to it and bathed it in milk. The tree again sprang up within a few days. The king surrounded it with a stone wall about 10 feet high. Recently King Śaśāṅka of the kingdom of Karnaśuvarṇa cut the tree, dug it up to the water springs but still he could not destroy the bottom of the roots. He then burnt it and sprinkled the juice of sugar-cane on it wishing to destroy the root completely. A few months afterwards king P'u-la-na-fa-mo who was said to be descendant of King Aśoka, on hearing that the tree has been cut, cast his body on the ground, invited the monks and for

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seven days made *pradakṣiṇa* of the tree and poured the milk of several thousand cows in the large pit. When he had done it for six days and nights the tree grew a little more than 10 feet. Fearing that it might be cut again afterwards, he surrounded it with a stone wall 24 feet high. So the tree now goes up the stone wall more than 20 feet. The counter of the tree is 3 feet.

To the east of the tree there is a brick built monastery more than 160 feet high. Its basement is more than 20 paces in breadth. There is a stone railing *Kou lan* 10 feet high, surrounding it. In every storey, on four sides, there are golden images. On four sides are engraved the heavenly Ṛsis. On the top there is an Āmalaka fruit in gilt copper. These are called 'precious vase' and 'precious terrace'.

On its south-eastern side there is a tower in three storeys. Its shape is peculiar and decorated with gold and silver engravings. There are doors in all the three storeys and inside the niches on the left and right there are images of Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya respectively. They are made of white silver and are about 10 feet high. King Aśoka built it. The monastery was at first small and it was then made broad. Inside there is the image of attainment of Bodhi. A Brāhmaṇa in response to the call came and built it. He alone went inside the monastery with scented clay and a lamp. The door was to remain closed for six months for completing the image. When 4 days only remained the monks out of astonishment opened the door to see what was happening and saw the beautifully decorated image. It was in a sitting posture with face turned to the east; the right foot was uppermost, the left hand resting and the right hand falling down—but the (artist) could not be found. The seat was 4 feet 2 inches high, and 12 feet 5 inches broad. The image was 11 feet 5 inches high; the two knees were 8 feet 8 inches apart and the two shoulders 6 feet 2 inches. The signs were perfectly done. Above the right breast it was not completely rounded off.

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They filled it with different kinds of precious things but still from a distance it looked unfinished. There was a Bhikṣu who had a dream about the artisan—‘I am Maitreya. Fearing that other artists will be incapable of conceiving it I myself painted it.’ He also said—‘The right hand hangs down. Buddha is speaking to Māra by pointing out to the earth as his witness.’ In recent times when King Śaśāṅka destroyed the Bodhi tree he ordered his minister to break the image. He then returned to the east. The minister who was really a believer raised a brick wall in front of the image and out of fear in his mind left a lamp inside. Outside it (the wall) he painted the image of the god Maheśvara. When it was completed he informed the king. When King Śaśāṅka heard about it he was seized with fear, his body got sores, his flesh rotten off and he died after sometime. The officer ran to the place, removed the brickwall and although many days had passed the lamp had not extinguished. At present it is kept in a dark chamber. In the morning by holding a mirror and getting the reflection in it one can see the image of the image. Those who see them get their religious emotion much increased. Buddha attained Bodhi on the 8th day of the 3rd month of the Chinese calender. The Sthavira school says—He obtained Bodhi on the 15th day of the 3rd month. He was then 30 years old ; according to another view 35 years. There is a difference and this is due to discrepancy in their calender just as in Chinese calender the initial days (of the year) vary according to the dynasties. The 1st days of the year as fixed by the three dynasties are not the same. So there is no wonder if there is a difference.

Buddha on attaining Bodhi meditated for seven days. To the north of the tree there is the place where Buddha walked up and down for 7 days. It is about 10 paces for going and coming from the north to the south. Different flowers sprang up under his footsteps and there were 18 of them. Afterwards this space was covered by a brick wall more than 3 feet high.

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There is a belief according to which the length and shortness of a man's life can be shown in it. After making a sincere vow take a rope and measure the wall. If it is long the life increases and if it decreases life becomes short. To its north on the left side of the road there is a large rock on the top of which there is a large monastery. Here is an image of Buddha with eyes raised up and contemplating the Bodhi tree. He did not remove his eyes for seven days. In a large monastery to the west of the tree there is an image in bronze. It stands with its face to the east and is ornamented with rare jewels. In front of it there is a blue stone with wonderful marks of beauty. On the first day of his enlightenment the Brahmarāja made a seven jewelled hall for him and Śakra Devendra made a seven jewelled seat (at this place). While at this place he was in his meditation for 7 days, a mysterious light went forth towards the tree. Now the jewels have changed into stones. To the south of the tree there is a stūpa more than 100 feet high. Formerly Bodhisattva after bathing in the river while searching for a seat thought of grass. Śakra Devendra then changed himself into a man who paid homage to Buddha at this place with Ku-she grass. King Aśoka built a stūpa to mark the spot. Further, to the north-east, there is a stūpa. It was from this place that Buddha at the time of getting the fruit of enlightenment saw a flock of blue birds going round him in an auspicious manner.

To the east of the tree there is a stūpa on each side of the high road. This is the place where Buddha resisted the temptation of the Māra. To the north-west of the tree inside a *vihāra* (there is the image of) Kāśyapa Buddha which at times emits bright light. The people say—'If a man walks round it seven times with a sincere mind he obtains the knowledge of his previous life.' Besides, to the north-west of the enclosure (of the tree) there is another stūpa. It is made of saffron plaster. It is more than 40 feet high. In the south-eastern angle of the enclosure of the tree, by the side of the Ni-kiu-lu

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tree there is a stūpa. Inside the Saṅghārāma there is a seat. Formerly at the time of Buddha's obtaining the fruit of enlightenment Mahā Brahmarāja requested him here to turn the wheel of law. Inside the enclosure (of the tree) in all the four corners there are stūpas. Formerly Buddha after getting the (*Kuśa*) grass proceeded towards the tree. When he came to its south-west the earth trembled. The earth trembled similarly while he went to north-west, north-east, and south-west. But when he reached the north-west he sat down under the tree. He sat on the Vajrāsana facing the east. The earth then remained peaceful. So the stūpas were established to mark the spots. To the south-west, outside the enclosure is the place where the house of the two shepherd girls stood. By its side is the place where they boiled the rice. By its side is the place where Buddha received the boiled rice. In all these places *stūpas* have been erected to mark the events. Outside the southern gate of the (enclosure of the) tree there is a large tank. It has a circuit of more than 700 paces. Its water is clear and is infested by fishes and dragons. The tank in the south was made by Śakra Devendra for Buddha's washing his clothes.

There is large stone to the west of the tank. The Devarāja brought it from the Himālaya for Buddha's drying his robes. Near it there is a stūpa on the spot where Buddha was presented with the old garments.

Further to the south inside a forest there is a stūpa on the place where Buddha received the old garments given by the poor mother. To the east of the phantom lake there is the Dragon lake in the forest. Its water is clear, black and sweet to the taste. On its western bank there is a Saṅghārāma in which there is an image. Buddha, when he first attained Bodhi sat at this place for seven days and entered into Samādhi. The king of the dragon encircled him in seven coils. He produced many hoods covering Buddha like a parasol on this spot. To the east of the Dragon lake there is a Saṅghārāma in the

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forest. It contains an image of Buddha representing as thin and withered away. By its side is the place where Buddha walked up and down more than 70 paces. On its north and south, on each side, there is a Pi-po-lo tree. While walking up and down Buddha held its branches and allowed them to go up and entered into a penance for six years taking one grain each day. Now-a-days, those who are sick, besmear the image with scented earth and many get cured. Besides, there is a stūpa at the place where the five men lived. To its south-east there is a stūpa at the place where Buddha entered the Ni-lien river to bathe. Nearby, on the bank of the river, is the place where Buddha ate the milk-rice. He obtained the emancipation underneath the Bodhi tree. Near it there are two stūpas. A noble man offered him honey and fried grains at this place. There is a stūpa to the south-east of the tree. The four Devarājas came from four directions, each holding a golden bowl and all sorts of jewelled bowls. Buddha did not take any of them. Then each of them brought a stone bowl of deep blue colour and translucent. He then joined them together into one and accepted the same. So the four borders are seen outside one bowl. Near this place (where the bowl was offered) there is a stūpa. After his enlightenment he spoke the law for his mother here. He exhibited various spiritual changes at this place. He converted Yu-lu-(Uruvilva) Kāśyapa with his 1000 men at this place. To its north-west is the place where he converted the fiery dragon. Five hundred Pratyeka Buddhas entered Nirvāṇa at this place. To the south of the tank of Mu-chen (Mucilinda) dragon is the place where Kāśyapa said that Buddha was covered by flood. Māra tried to frighten Buddha at this place. Everywhere stūpas have been founded to mark the places. Outside the northern gate of the enclosure of the tree there is the Mahābodhi monastery. It has six halls with three storeyed observation towers. It is surrounded by a wall of about 50 feet high. There are images

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of Buddha in copper, gold and silver artistically decorated. The stūpas are high and broad and contain relics of Buddha which are large like the joints of figures. They are shining, smooth, white, and translucent. The *inner* relics are big like true pearls of a bluish-red tint. Every year on the day of the full moon when Buddha displayed great spiritual changes the relics are taken out by the followers of the Law. [This is in India the 30th day of the 12th month. It corresponds to Chinese 15th day of first month]. The relics occasionally emit bright light and there are showers of flowers. These raise great and profound faith. This monastery is constantly inhabited by a little less than 1000 monks. They all belong to the Sthavira school of the Mahāyāna. They have clear knowledge of the meaning of the Dharma. There was a king Seng-kia-lo (Ceylon) in the south sea. He requested Mahā-śrī, King of Middle India, to build it. 400 years have passed away since then ; so the old monastery contains many monks of the country of Ceylon. In front of the Bodhi tree up to a distance of about 10 li the holy signs are too numerous to be fully described. Every year when the Bhikṣus break up their *varṣā*, religious persons come from directions in large number (lit. hundreds, thousands and ten thousands). During seven days and nights they offer incense, flower, dance and music, etc. in the forest. All monks of India enter *Varṣāvāsa* on the 16th day of the 5th month of the Chinese calender. They break up their *varṣā* on the 15th day of the 8th month of the Chinese calender. But it may be changed and there is no fixed rule. To the north of the Snow Mountains there are countries where they practise it in spring or autumn. The sense is that it should be observed in the most rainy and hot (time) in the year for three months. It is not fixed whether it should start a month earlier or later. For this practice of the law all times are suitable. It is sinful to practise travelling during the period of three months. But it is permissible to break it if there is

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business. To the east of the courtyard of the Bodhi tree, crossing the river Ni-lien there is a tank to the north of a stūpa inside a large forest. Buddha, formerly born as the son of a *Gandhahastin*, served his blind mother at this place. A stone pillar has been set up in front of it. Formerly Kāśyapa Buddha sat here in meditation. By its side there are traces of the four Buddhas' sitting and walking. There is a small stone pillar inside the forest. This is the place where Yu-tou-lan (Udraka) took his evil vow."¹⁶

I-tsing who visited India between A.C. 671 and 695 recorded relating to the Mahābodhi Vihāra as follows : "Afterwards we came to the Mahābodhi Vihāra, (near the bodhi tree, built by a king of Ceylon) and worshipped the image of the real face (of the Buddha). I took stuffs of thick and fine silk, which were presented by the priests and laymen of Shan-tung, made a kāshāya (yellow robe) of them of the size of the Tathāgata and myself offered this robe to the Image. Many myriads of (small) canopies (also), which were entrusted to me by the Vinayamaster Hiuen of Pu, I presented on his behalf. The Dhyānamaster An-tao of Ts'ao charged me to worship the image of Bodhi, and I discharged the duty in his name. Then I prostrated myself entirely on the ground with an undivided mind, sincere and respectful. First I wished for China that the four kinds of benefits should widely prevail among all sentient beings (Han-shih-- sattva) in the region of the Law (Dharmadhātu), and I expressed my desire for a general reunion under the Nāga-tree to meet the honoured (Buddha) Maitreya and to conform to the true doctrine, and then to obtain the knowledge that is not subject to births. I went round to worship all the holy places."¹⁷

Further, from the Chinese inscriptional records available at Buddha Gaya it is evident that there were two great epochs of Chinese pilgrimage to Buddha Gaya—the first in the 7th century, during and immediately after the reign of the powerful

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King Harṣavardhana, and again in the 11th century, during the most flourishing period of Buddhism under King Mahīpāla and his successors. Besides, the fact that no less than five Chinese inscriptions were set up at Buddha Gaya reveals that the Buddhists of China took keen interest in this sacred place. Of them four are : (a) the inscription of Chi-I, (b) the inscription of Yen Shu who erected a stone stūpa 30 paces to the north of the Bodhi Tree, (3) the inscription of I-Ching I-lin who visited the place in A.C. 1030, founded a shrine, and presented an elaborate gold embroidered robe to cover the Vajrāsana, and (d) the inscription of Hui-wen who came to India at the suggestion of Emperor Ming Tao in A.C. 1033 and who was commissioned to erect a stūpa in memory of Emperor Tai Tsung. The inscription of Chi-I records that Chi-I, a priest of the Great Han country, "having first vowed to exhort or encourage 30,000 men to prepare themselves by their conduct for a birth in the heaven, to distribute in charity 30,000 books relating to a heavenly birth, himself to recite as many books, then in company with others, travelled through India, arrived at Magadha, where he gazed upon the diamond throne and other sacred vestiges of his religion. After this, in company with some other priests, he further vowed to continue his travels through India apparently for the same purpose." Two of his companions were named Kwei-tseih, and Kwang-fung. This inscription consists of three lines of Chinese characters placed beneath a row of eight standing figures, representing the seven mortal Buddhas and the Bodhisattva Maitreya.¹⁸ As these sculptures are undoubtedly of the later style, the inscription cannot be elder than A.C. 1000. Also the two Chinese inscriptions of between the 10th and 11th century A.C. were caused to be written by the Chinese pilgrims. One of them mentioned the names of several Chinese pilgrims who visited the place, along with its author, Che-Yi, and who had taken a vow to do such meritorious deeds, as would lead to their birth in the

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Tuṣita heaven. The second one written by K'oyun and not by Yu-shu,¹⁹ is an euology of the three Kāyas of Buddha, namely, Nirmāṇa-Kāya, Sambhoga-Kāya, and Dharma-Kāya. Further a hymn of praise was inscribed on a slab set up by the priest Yün-shu, from the Western River, i.e. Yellow River, of the Great Sung Empire in China, who was the reciter of the Sūtras in A.C. 1021 in honour of the body and the throne of Buddha. In a postscript the priest Yün-shu added : "There went with me to worship in the land of Buddha the two priests I-ching and I-lin, from the monastery of Established Doctrine in the High Street of the Eastern Capital, who each took with him a gold embroidered kāṣāya to be hung up in the shrine of Mahābodhi, and each set up his own memorial tablet in perpetual remembrance thereof." Another Chinese inscription was actually found *in situ* at Buddha Gaya on a slab forming the lower part of the basement of a small stūpa built of sandstone. It recorded that a Buddhist priest called Yu-pin, from the monastery of the Commencement of Holiness in the Eastern Capital of Great Sung Empire, presented one gold embroidered kāṣāya to be spread over the throne of Buddha and he had further caused to be erected a stone stūpa in humble recognition of the 'Four Mercies', and the 'Three States of Existence' of which he had been mercifully permitted to partake. As a building, the Buddha Gaya Temple urged the following praise from the pen of a later Chinese pilgrim, Chiang Hsia-piao of A.C. of 1021, partly in eulogy of the "Shrine of Samboga-Kāya" .

"This shrine towers above the limits of the Trilokaya ;
Its shapely summit rests above the sky,
The kalpa of fire exercises no influence over it ;
On earth how should we seek to model its like ?"

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**THE TEMPLE BETWEEN THE NINTH AND
THE SIXTEENTH CENTURIES**

It appears that the Mahābodi or Buddha Gaya Temple began to decline after the seventh century A.C., as many of the Buddhist inscriptions discovered near about it belonged to the earlier dates,¹ and even an inscription dated the eighth century of the reign of Dharmapāla found here recorded the installation of Caturmukha Mahādeva. But from the tenth century A.C. there was a slight recovery, as the following inscriptions, would reveal² :

(a) The inscription of Śatrusena of the reign of Gopāla II (tenth century), recording the installation of a Buddha-image.³

(b) The inscription of the year 11 of the reign of Mahīpāla (eleventh century) recording the installation of an image of Buddha and two shrines. This inscription was incised on the pedestal of one of the so called Pañca-Pāṇḍava images discovered near the Buddha Gaya Temple.

(c) The inscription of the year 1170 of Aśokacalladeva of Sapādalakṣa or modern Ajmer.⁴

(d) The inscription of the Gahaḍvāla King Jayacchandra of about A. C. 1190, recording the erection of a Buddhist shrine.⁵

(e) The inscription of the Nirvāṇa year 1913 of Dharmarakṣita of Sapādalakṣa recording the erection of a temple.

Thus it became evident that the Buddha Gaya Temple received warm patronage from many distinguished persons during the period which ranged between the 9th and the 16th centuries

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of the Christian era. As already said, some more inscriptional records provided us with the materials for reconstructing the colourful history of this Temple at that time. Thus, an inscription which was exhumed at Mahābodhi recorded the dedication of a statue during the reign of Śrī Gopāla Deva at the beginning of the 9th century A. C. There is another short inscription of the time of his son Dharmapāla, which was found by A. Cunningham to the south of the Great Temple, but was probably discovered during the Burmese surface clearance. It also informed us of the dedication of an image of four-faced Mahādeva. The mention of the week days in the inscription had enabled us to fix the date as corresponding with A.C. 850. Thus this inscription would place the beginning of Dhamapāla's reign in A.C. 825. Mention may also be made of an inscription found at Buddha Gaya of Mahīpāla, dated in the 10th year of his reign or about A.C. 1010. The important portion of this inscription was contained in the following words of the second line: "During the prosperous and victorious reign of the supreme sovereign, the pre-eminent Buddhist, the fortunate Mahīpāla Deva...in the 10th year". Here the term 'Parama Saugata' distinctly showed that Mahīpāla Deva himself was a follower of Buddha. It may be mentioned in this connection that the great Temple at Nālandā was repaired in the 11th year of the reign of Mahīpāla.

That the considerable repairs of the Temple were done in the mediaeval period was clearly shown by the terracotta figure which was found in one of the top niches on the eastern side of the Temple and is now in the British Museum, as the letters of its two inscribed seals belonged to the 10th or 11th century. A long inscription on a black slab at the Mahanta's gateway, on which the lower tenon of the gate worked, was discovered. It was dated on the 5th of Śrāvaṇa in the year 15 of the reign of King Tuṅga of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa race and contained a long rambling farrago of the praises of the king and his immediate

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predecessors, ending in the simple statement regarding the erection of the Gandhakūṭi, "like unto a flight of steps to the heaven." From the style of its characters A. Cunningham opined that the inscription belonged to the 10th or the 11th century A.C.

But among all the inscriptions discovered at Buddha Gaya the most interesting and by far the most important were the records of the two Burmese missions of the 11th century A. C. From these only we get an idea of the history of the ups and downs of the Great Mahābohi Temple, beginning from its earliest days down to the date of the Burmese embassies. The first of these inscriptions was engraved on a copper-gilt umbrella, which was found carefully buried 8 feet under the modern ground level, to the west of the Temple. The inscription was repeated in mediaeval Nāgarī characters just below the Burmese record. Although the Burmese portion was much injured, the Indian inscription, which was nearly perfect opened as follows : "Sam 397, Śrī Dharma Rājā Guru". Here the date, which was very clearly carved, may only be referred to the Burmese common era of A. C. 638, which fixed the period of Dharma Rājā Guru's visit to $638 + 397 = \text{A.C. } 1035$. The other Burmese inscription was inscribed on a stone slab, and was discovered fixed on a wall of the Mahanta's residence. As this inscription recorded a brief history of the Mahābodhi Temple, we cannot but prevent ourselves from supplying with a word-for-word English rendering of it after Ratnapāla, a Pali scholar of Sri Lanka, as follows : "This is one of the 84,000 shrines erected by Śrī Dharma Aśoka, ruler of the World (Jambodwīp), at the end of the 218th year of Buddha annihilation (B.C. 326) upon holy spot in which Bhagwān (Buddha) tasted milk and honey (Madhupāyasa). In lapse of time, having fallen into disrepair, it was rebuilt by a priest named *Naik-Mahanta*. Again, being ruined, it was restored by Rājā Sado-Meng. After a long interval it was once more demolished, when Rājā Sempyu-

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others. The date was the 29th day of Bhādra of the year 51 since the (commencement of the) reign (now) past, of the illustrious Lakṣmaṇasena. The inscription mentioned the royal preceptor called Bhadanta Gucaṭho¹¹ who had been an inhabitant of Kāśmīra and included a Sanskrit verse at the beginning of the record with the usual formula of the Buddhist creed and that "Siṅghala-saṅgh-ādayas" in II.9-10 probably indicated the income which the Mahābodhi derived from the Sinhalese pilgrims of whom there was obviously a large number.

As already mentioned, the second inscription was written in the alphabet used in Bengal and Bihar in the 12th Century A. C., which was scarcely differ from that of the inscriptions of Lakṣmaṇasena and his sons. It recorded the dedication of some votive offerings, not specified, by Sahaṇapāla, an officer of Daśaratha, the younger brother of King Aśokacalla. It should be noted that Sahaṇapāla was a kṣatriya and was the treasurer of prince Daśaratha. He was the grandson of *Mahā-mahattaka* Mṛsibrahma and the son of the *Mahattaka* Cāṭabrahma. Aśokacalla, the elder brother of Daśaratha, was mentioned as the king of the Khasa country of the Sapādalakṣa Hills. The inscription was dated in the year 74 of the Lakṣmaṇasena era, on the twelfth day of the dark fortnight of Vaiśākha,¹² corresponding to Thursday, 19th May, 1194.

To be more specific about the Burmese patronage we note that Kyanzittha, king of Pagan, of between A.C. 1084 and 1112, who was the first known ruler of Upper Burma, made a serious attempt to repair the holy Temple of Buddha Gaya. He "gathered together gems of diverse kinds and sent them in a ship to build up the holy temple at Buddhagayā and to offer lights which should burn for ever."¹³ But the Burmese inscription found at Buddha Gaya revealed that this previous attempt on the part of King Kyanzittha proved unsuccessful. It was during the reign of King Alaungsithu of between A. C. 1112

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and 1167, his immediate successor, that a ruler of Arakan, King Letyāmengnan, who gained back his ancestral throne with the assistance of King Alaungsithu, undertook, in fulfilment of the desire of the benefactor, to repair the sacred shrines of Buddha Gaya, the work of supervision having been entrusted to Penthagu, son of the Lord of Seinnyet. Undoubtedly this Burmese inscription of Buddha Gaya was an epigraphic record of the ceremonial repairs of the Buddha Gaya Temple and other shrines, done under the auspices of the ruler of Arakan. A model of the great Temple, discovered at Mrohoung, ancient capital of Arakan, and now preserved in the Indian Museum of Calcutta, would appear to be a souvenir of success of this mission from Arakan. A. Cunningham had sought to account for the Mrohoung find by the supposition that "models of the Buddhist temple were kept on sale for pilgrims.". In fact, the present find was nothing but an interesting relic of success of the mission despatched from Arakan by its pious ruler in the 12th or 13th century A.C. Another Burmese inscription found near the Bodhi Tree recorded that Mindi, a king of Arakan, also restored it in A. C. 1296-1298. Indeed the work of repairs undertaken by this ruler of Arakan was not confined to the Buddha Gaya Temple itself, but was extended to other structures too. The fact is obvious from a number of new carvings on some of the granite pillars of the railing of the Temple. Such carvings included the human figures and the stūpa-models of purely Burmese design. It appears that these carvings must have been executed when the railing itself was repaired along with the Temple.

Also a black marble inscription engraved in Old Burmese, which dealt with the religious mission despatched by King Kyawswa to Buddha Gaya probably after his return to Pagan and coronation in A.C. 1289, was discovered near the Vajrāsana. It was said that Kyawswa probably sent this mission

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with a gift of the large copper-gilt umbrella to the Mahābodhi Temple to win the local support and sympathy in India for saving his kingdom. Unfortunately, he was dethroned and murdered by the Shan brothers. The aforesaid inscription threw a flood of light on his devotion to Buddhism and his significant contribution to the cause of Buddhism. Curiously enough, Captain George Burney, brother of Colonel Henry Burney, the British Resident at Ava (i.e. Amarapura) in Burma, came to Buddha Gaya with two Burmese envoys in January, 1833. They noticed the said inscription on the wall of the inner court of the Maṭh of the Mahanta. Some local people reported to them that about forty years ago it had been discovered near the Vajrāsana. This inscription corroborated King Kyanzittha's Mission to Buddha Gaya in A. C. 1095 and the reconstruction of the Temple by the members of his Mission.¹⁴ The words like Satuiw Man, 'Our Lord the King', and Chan-phlu-skhin, 'Lord of the White Elephant', in this inscription may be identified respectively with King Kyanzittha and King Kyawswa who being filled with intense love and reverence for the Blessed One and deeply imbued with the truth of Buddha's tenets sent his religious preceptor to Buddha Gaya to rebuild the famous Temple there. This was the only inscription which referred to Kyawswa's devotion to Buddha. Some portions of it ran as follows : "... the one at the site of the giving alms of Milk-Rice (i.e. place where Sujātā offered food to Lord Buddha before the attainment of Enlightenment by Him) fell into ruin through age and stress of time. It was repaired by the Mahāthera Pinthagugyi. Subsequently, it was repaired by Thadomin. It again fell into disrepair and King Sinbyuthikin deputed the Royal Preceptor, Siri Dhammarājaguru, to undertake the work of repairs and Siri Kassapa, disciple of the Preceptor. But with the funds they had for doing the work, they were unable to do it. So on the occasion of giving almsfood to Lord Thera Vanavāsī,

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Putasiñ Mañ granted permission to the junior monk (Kassapa) and Venerable Thera (Dhammarājaguru) to carry on the work (?). On the Friday the 10th waxing of the month of Pyatho in the year 657 (i.e. Friday, December 16, 1295) they resumed the work. When (final) dedication was made on the Sunday the 8th waxing of the month Tazaugmon in the year 660 (i.e. Sunday, October 12, 1298), there was an offering of many flags and flag-streamers, many offerings, time after time, of rice-alms by the thousand ; oil lamps by the thousand ; also two children styled as 'son' and 'daughter' ; the offering also of a patañsā (kalpavṛkṣa tree) hung on bamboo framework. In order to provide for the daily offering of rice at the shrine, at all times, land, slaves, and cattle were purchased and likewise dedicated. As for this good deed done by me, I want it to be a means and support for the the attainment of Nibbāna."¹⁵ As to the dates of this inscription we find that the initial date was definitely 657 which corresponded, as pointed out already, to A. C. 1295 and the final date was 660, which was equivalent to A. C. 1298 and during the period indicated by these two dates, the Burmese empire of Pagan was in the throes of a Chinese invasion. We have noted above that Pagan had been occupied by the Chinese in A. C. 1284 and in A.C. 1298 Kyawzwa, the titular king, was dethroned by three Shan brothers, who bore divided rule at the new capitals of Myinzaing, Metkaya, and Pinle in the Kyauksé district. The Chinese again invaded Myinzaing two years later. According to Taw Sein Ko, the last repairs to the Mahābodhi Temple alluded to in this inscription were probably carried out under the auspices of a king of Arakan. Also Mahāthera Pinthagugyi cannot be identified with certainty. It may be noted that Pinthagugyi or the 'Great Pinthagu' is a title or designation, rather than a personal name, and was derived from the Pali word pamsukūlika, 'One who obtains the materials for his clothing from a dust-heap or a cemetery',—a title was generally conferred on a

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Buddhist monk of exceptional sanctity and austerity, who had earned the esteem and admiration of the lay worshippers. In fact, there was such a celebrated Buddhist monk at Pagan during the reign of Narapatisithu between A.C. 1167 and 1204. The Pyu-ta-thein-min or Pu-ta-thin-min, a designation identified with King Sinbyuthikhin or Sinbyuthikin Tra Mingyi, bore by Meng-di, No. VI of the "Dynasty of the City Loung-Kyet", who reigned from A. C. 1279 to 1385 and was called the "son of Meng-bhi-lu". Actually there were two "Meng-bhi-lus", namely No. VII of the same dynasty, who reigned from A. C. 1272 to 1276 and No. XII of the "Dynasty of Ping-tsa City," who ruled from A. C. 1075 to 1078. Ultimately the latter king was driven out from his kingdom by a usurper, and his son and heir, Mengre Baya, sought refuge at the Court of Kyanzittha, king of Pagan. But Mengre Baya died leaving a son called Letyāmengnan. We have already mentioned that this Arakanese prince was restored to his ancestral throne by Alaungsithu, Kyanzittha's grandson and successor, in A. C. 1103, with the aid of 100,000 Pyus and 100,000 Talaings. Therefore this fortunate prince was called Pyu-ta-thein-min or 'Lord of the 100,000 Pyus'. It might be quite likely that Meng-di, during whose reign the inscription was set up at Buddha Gaya, was a descendant of Letyāmengnan and was also called a Pyu-ta-thein-min. In this context Taw Sein Ko noted : "Phayre says—'Alaungsithu caused the Buddhist temple at Gaya to be repaired'. I am inclined to think that, on that occasion, the King of Pagan deputed the *Mahāthera* Pinthagugyi to superintend the work, and that he required his *protégé*, Letyāmengnan, to render the necessary assistance in this work of merit. It would then appear that the 'Thadomin' mentioned in the inscription was a descendant of Letyāmengnan, the Prince, who first for the title of 'Pyu-ta-thein-min' or 'Lord of the 100,000 Pyus.' It is quite possible that one of the conditions of Letyāmengnan's restoration to the Arakanese

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throne was that, for the accumulation of merit of Alaungsithu, his suzerain and benefactor, he and his descendants were to render material assistance in the repair and maintenance of the temple at Bodh-Gaya.”¹⁶

Further, Dhammazedī, the King of Pegu, of between A. C. 1472 and 1492, who was famous as the author of the Kalyāṇī Stone Inscriptions, despatched a mission from Lower Burma to Buddha Gaya to take plants of the Bodhi Tree and of the Temple for buildings at Pegu. It may be that the brief Mon or Talaing inscription recording the gift of a copper umbrella by a royal Buddhist high priest Śrī Dharmarājaguru, the elder brother King Sahadevinda, was a relic which proved the reality of such a mission from Lower Burma. In this connection we may recall that King Htilo Minlo, who reigned in Burma during 13th century, endeavoured to earn great fame by erecting a new Temple called the Mahābodhi Pagoda in the city of Pagan on the very model of the famous Temple at Buddha Gaya. On the whole, the history of Burma and the lithic inscriptions clearly showed that, since the eleventh century A.C., successive Burmese kings had taken a personal interest in Buddha Gaya and its Holy Temple.¹⁷

Turning back to the Indian situation we find, as already mentioned, that during the period from A.C. 1100 to 1200, several works of repair were carried on under the superintendence of a zealous Buddhist monk called Dharmarakṣita at the cost of Aśokaballa, Rājā of Sapādalakṣa, which was identified with the hill country of Siwalik, including Kumaun and Garhwal. No less than four inscriptions of this prince had been found, of which three were dated, namely, two in the Bengali era of Lakṣmaṇasena, and the third in the Parinirvāṇa of Bniddha.

One of these inscriptions distinctly stated that in consequence of the decay of the ‘Śāsana or Law of Buddha’, an appeal was made to the illustrious Aśokaballa, king of

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Sapādalakṣa, for assistance.¹⁸ With his aid and that of a local chief named Puruṣottama-simha, a Gandhakuṭi or the Temple of Buddha, was built in the year 1816 of the Parinirvāṇa of Bhagavat (Buddha). On the other hand, the inscriptions dated in the year 51 of the era of Lakṣmaṇasena of Bengal or in A.C. $1106 + 51 = 1157$ and found at Buddha Gaya of the king Aśokaballa notes : "Adoration to Buddha ! The Great Sramaṇa. He it is who tells what the root is from which virtue springs, as also what it is that chokes that virtue. This is the virtuous gift of the great king, the illustrious Aśokaballa-Deva, an adherent of the excellent Mahāyāna School, a great Upāsaka, pious at heart. May whatever be its merit, be for the advancement in spiritual knowledge first of my father and mother, and after them of all beings. Moved thereto by the Kashmir Pandit, the honoured Chathopadhi, by the King's Pandit Muṣala, the worthy Trailokya-brahma, the illustrious king built and furnished with an image of Buddha this Prahinya Vihāri (Bhatu Dāmodara Bhatupaima, Śiṣu Raghava, and Mahipukha ?). Moreover, for the offering to Buddha the daily ration with pots, incense and lamps, shall be given so long as the Sun and Moon shall endure, by the leaders of the Ceylon Assembly in Mahābodhi. This offering must be prepared by the cook Māmaka, and the good keeper and disposer Hari-chandra, Samvat 51 of the reign of the illustrious Lakṣmaṇasena having elapsed, the 8th day of the dark half of Bhādrapāda, the 29th solar day."¹⁹ Another inscription dated A. C. 1202 and discovered at Janibigha in Bihar recorded the gift of a village to the Vajrāsana at Buddha Gaya. "It was given in trust into the hands of Maṅgalasvāmī who must have been the guardian of the Vajrāsana, The purpose of the donation was the maintenance of the Adhivasati, residence or monastery, attached to the Vajrāsana, or the residence of the monk Maṅgalasvāmī himself."²⁰ This Maṅgalasvāmī must have, therefore, been the bhikṣu-in-charge of the Buddha Gaya

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Temple at the time. During his incumbency probably Buddha Gaya was overrun by invaders and therefore the place was subsequently left without a guardian. Maṅgalasvāmī had become the chief of the Buddha Gaya Vihāra on account of his learning and piety. But in a Sanskrit work entitled *Vṛttamālā-khyā* composed by Rāmacandra Kavibhāratī, a great poet of Gauḍa in Bengal, during the 13th century A. C. it was mentioned that in about A.C. 1245 in the Temple of Buddha Gaya there was a Sinhalese Buddhist monk called Maṅgala (Saṅgharāja) Mahasthavira.²¹ Also we find that as late as the middle of the thirteenth century, about three hundred Sinhalese Buddhist monks had the privilege of being the official priests of the Mahābodhī Temple. This was mainly evident from the account supplied by Dharmasvāmin, a Tibetan monk, who lived in India between A.C. 1234 and 1236 and visited several places including Vaiśālī, Rājagṛha, Nālandā, and Buddha Gayā. A. S. Altekar who wrote a historical and critical introduction to the *Biography of Dharmasvāmin*, presented valuable information about the Sinhalese monks as described by the Tibetan pilgrim. He noted ; “No one other than they (i.e. the Sinhalese monks), could sleep in the courtyard of the main temple.” In fact, the account of Dharmasvāmin revealed that Buddha Gaya was a stronghold of Theravāda Buddhism under the Sinhalese monks, at least till the end of Sena rule in ancient Bengal. Further an inscription in ten lines incised on the upper portion of a face of pillar of the old stone railing, which recorded : “the merit which is acquired by Jinadāsa, a learned (Buddhist pilgrim) hailing from Parvata, by means of having a view of the deity of Mahābodhi reigning in his glory as the supreme lord falls, first of all, to the share of the patients,” was written in the Devanāgarī characters by Saṃgatta, a scribe, for Jinadāsa, who probably professed Mahāyāna faith, and may be assigned to so late a date as the 15th or 16th century A. C. Jinadāsa was evidently a learned Buddhist pilgrim from the

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mountainous country called Parvata, which was probably the same place as Hiuen-tsang's Po-fa-to near Mūlasthānapura or Multan of the North-Western part of India.

It was written in the Devanāgarī script by Saṃgatta for Jinadāsa and may be assigned to the 15th or 16th century A. C. This inscription ran as follows : "Salutation to Buddha. The merit which is acquired by Jinadāsa, a learned (Buddhist pilgrim hailing from Parvata), by means of having a view of the deity of Mahābodhi reigning in his glory as the supreme lord falls, first of all, to the share of the parents. Having done this, it is (here) caused to be written Saṃgatta." Obviously Jinadāsa of this inscription was a learned Buddhist pilgrim from a mountainous country called Parvata, which was probably the same place as Hiuen tsan's Po-fa-to near Mūlasthānapura or Multan. Parvata was mentioned by Pāṇini as a country in the Punjab under the group of Takṣaśilādi.

The Mahābodhi Temple of Buddha Gaya thus remained in the possession of the Buddhists uninterruptedly from the 3rd century B. C. to the invasion of the Muslims and all repairs and alterations were undertaken not only by the Indian Buddhists, but also by the Buddhists of Sri Lanka, Burma and other foreign countries. It, thus, in course of time, turned into an international centre of Buddhist activities. During the confusion which naturally prevailed in the whole area in the days of Muslim conquest, the Temple was neglected and fell into despair and the history of this Great Temple after this became obscure for several centuries. In fact, from the time of the invasion by the Muslims to the date of the arrival of the first Mahanta at Buddha Gaya, no definite information about the Temple may be obtained from any source.

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AFFAIRS OF THE TEMPLE SINCE THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Materials available on the history of the Buddha Gaya or Mahābodhi Temple during the 17th and 18th centuries of the Christian era are not sufficient. It is said that in A. C. 1590 a wandering Saiva sannyāsī named Gossain Ghamandi Giri arrived at the village of Buddha Gaya and being struck by the sylvan solitude of the vicinity ultimately decided to make the place his permanent abode. Hence close to the ruins of the Temple, he had erected a small monastery gathering round him a number of followers and in course of time his monastery grew in importance until in a few generations it developed into the present enormous Maṭh of the Mahantas. The present Mahanta is a successor to Ghamandi Giri. It was during the time of Mahanta Lāla Giri that the Maṭh acquired a substantial portion of its vast property and the villages of Mastipur and Taradih were given to him as grants by the Muslim emperor of Delhi. But there is no evidence whatsoever to show that the Mahantas had accuired any right over the Mahābodhi Temple which was obviously in a ruinous condition at that time. In the firman of Delhi no mention of the Great Temple was made. The fact was that Temple was not situated in the village Taradih but in the village Bodh Gaya. How the Temple that stood in the village Bodh Gaya which belonged to the Tikari Raj was removed to the adjoining village Taradih is a question that could be answered only by the dead. According to a memorandum supplied to R. L. Mitra by the then head Mahanta, one Dhamandinātha, a mendicant of the Order of Giri, one of the ten Orders of the followers of Śaṅkarācarya's

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Śaivite School, first took up his abode in the village of Buddha Gaya, and built a small monastery for the accommodation of the itinerant members of his Order. He was followed by his disciple Caitanya Giri, whose physical remains was buried within the enclosure of the Mahābodhi Temple, and a small temple built thereupon. The Buddha Gaya Temple at that time had no priest, nor any worshipper ; and such an appropriation of it by a saintly hermit in a small village during the Muslim rule was an act which none would question. Caitanya was followed by his disciple Mahādeva, who was renowned for his learning and austerity. He worshipped Mahādevī for several years in front of the Mahābodhi Temple, and through her special favours became able to build the present large monastery of his Order. It is said that he got from the emperor Shah Alum a firman to hold the Buddha Gaya Temple in his possession, and to be recognised as the chief Mahanta of the place. He was followed by his disciple Lāla Giri. He was distinguished for his beneficence, and to him is due the credit of establishing the alms-house. His successor was Rāghava Giri, the only especial epithet in whose favour in the memorandum before R. L. Mitra, recorded was about his personal beauty.

His successor, Rainahita, was described to have added to the accommodation of the monastery. He died in Kāśī, leaving three disciples, of whom the first two died early, and the youngest was Śiva Giri whose successor was Hemanātha Giri. But such an account did not agree with the entries made in General Cunningham's plan of the Mahābodhi Temple, attached to his first report. There Mahādeva was described as the first Mahanta, and the second Caitanya, occurred under the name of Chait Mull. But according to Buchanan Hamilton 'Chaitan' was the first who came to the place, at a time when it was overrun by bushes and trees and the sect of Buddha in its neighbourhood was entirely extinct. Mention was also made

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in the record of the Gaya Collectorate of a Mahanta called Golāpa Giri. It may be that Golāpa was an alias of Śiva Giri, who obtained a mukarrari lease from the Government of the village of Mastipur Tārādih.

It is interesting to note that King Bodawpaya of the Alompra dynasty in Burma sent a mission in A.C. 1810 to Buddha Gaya. It was either Bodawpaya himself or another King of Ava (Mandalay) and some other predecessor of King Thibaw, the last independent ruler belonging to the Alompra dynasty, who did the last work of repairs of the Buddha Gaya Temple. In this connection, it is to be remembered that A. Cunningham discovered three inscribed bricks in the steeple of a dilapidated temple. The inscription on one of those three bricks was obviously written in the square characters of Upper Burma and there were two letters which distinctly recorded the name of Ava. The other two inscriptions, were written in Bengali characters, one of which recorded the name of one Gopapāla and the other that of one Dharmasimha. Now there is little doubt as to the fact that Gopapāla and Dharmasimha were two masons from Bengal, employed to carry out the last work of repairs of the Buddha Gaya Temple.

The Temple once again was able to attract the notice of the public when the King of Burma in 1811 visited Buddha Gaya and later the King of Ava sent two messengers who identified Buddha Gaya and other places round about with the help of the Buddhist texts. At that time a Nepali monk who followed Mahāyana Buddhism visited Buddha Gaya and spent a considerable period in close company with the inmates of the Mahanta's monastery. He also had the distinction of converting one of the sanyāsīs into Buddhism.

Dr. Buchanan Hamilton, the well-known archaeologist, visited Buddha Gaya in 1812. He noticed the Vihāra in utter ruins and it was evident that the Mahantas had not shown the slightest interest in the Mahābodhi Temple until then. In 1819

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the ruins of Buddha Gaya was again visited by a Burmese ambassador named Mengy Maha Chesu and his suite. They discovered in Burmese characters an inscription, of which English rendering after Ratnapāla has already been given above. But Bagyidaw, another king of the Alompra dynasty of A.C. 1819 to 1837, sent a mission in A.C. 1823 to Buddha Gaya with offerings for the Temple. Meanwhile, however, the possession of this Temple with all its appurtenances had mysteriously gone to the Brahmanical Mahanta who promptly and persistently claimed the sacred Temple and the land around it as his own property. His successors also had followed him earnestly in this regard. Curiously enough, the position and power of the Mahanta with regard to this sacred place was recognised by the British Government to such an extent that when in 1874 Mindoon Min, King of Burma, despatched an embassy to the Government of India with costly gifts to the sacred Bodhi Tree, requesting the Government of India to render every possible assistance to these delegates to offer worship to the holy place on his behalf, the then District Magistrate of Gaya, Mr. Palmer, ultimately wrote a letter and asked the Mahanta whether he approved of and agreed to the proposals of the King of Burma. This was indeed the first endeavour in the modern age to revive Buddha Gaya as a Buddhist centre of worship. After reporting the king's wishes in regard to worship etc., Mr. Palmer's letter noted : "The King (of Burma) further desires that the compound of the tree which may have been (burnt ?) on account of age be repaired. It is also his wish that two persons be deputed near the Bodhi tree. He also wishes that once or twice a year his people may make offerings to the tree as they may desire." The wishes of the King of Burma being conveyed to the Mahanta by the District Magistrate of Gaya, the former replied as follows : "1. As to the compound of the tree which the King of Burma wishes to repair, His Majesty is at liberty to do so if he so desires.

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2. Secondly, the King of Burma may at his pleasure depute persons to officiate at the worship of the said Bodhi tree." Accordingly, the delegates despatched by the King of Burma made the offerings at the Temple and left for Burma to report. The value of the gold and silver articles alone offered by the King were of worth about Rs. 60,000. The King's instructions to the Mahanta were to have these kept in a paribhoga house specially erected for the purpose at the expense of the King. On return of the Delegation to Burma, the Foreign Minister of the Government of Burma wrote to the Agent of the Governor-General on August 18, 1875 as follows : "The locality where stands the Mahābodhi tree of India being the original spot where the Omniscient and Most Excellent Lord, on His blossoming to the dignity of Buddhahood, understood the four great Truths, extraordinary reverence and honour should be paid to it. His Majesty the King accordingly desires to do that homage : 1. by repairing the Mahayan or sacred enclosure, now in a state of decay, of the Manābodhi tree ; 2. by the repair of the sacred chaitya built by the King Dharmāsoka over the site of Aparājita Throne ; 3. by firmly propping up with masonry the right branch of the Mahābodhi tree ; 4. by repairing all ruined structures connected with the treasures situated within the enclosure of the Mahābodhi tree ; 5. by building near the Mahābodhi tree a monastery capable of containing about 20 Royal Rahans who will live there continually to perform the Bodhiranjan duties, namely, those connected with lighting of lamps and those connected with the presentation of flowers and cold water ; 6. by enclosing the above Royal Monastery with a solid wall of masonry ; 7. by hiring men to live on the spot to watch and to attend to the wants of the monastery , 8. by erecting a paribhoga for the deposit of the Royal offerings to the Mahābodhi tree. Orders have consequently been given to the Royal scribe at Calcutta to submit plans and estimates for the

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completion of the above mentioned items." The Mahanta agreed to all such proposals. His only condition was that the Brahmanical idols lying in the compound etc. were not to be destroyed or interfered with. The repairing work was actually commenced in 1877 and the King of Burma spent a huge amount of money on this account. He had further a small monastery built about 80 yards to the west of the Temple for the use of the Buddhist monks. This building called the Burmese Rest House was pulled down by the Government in 1956 along with many huts near the Temple. The Paribhoga House was not even begun and also for some obvious reasons the work of repairs of the Temple ultimately undertaken on behalf of the King of Burma was not carried out in a systematic manner. The bewildering state of ruin of this magnificent Temple may also be witnessed in the following pathetic description in the *Englishmen*, a contemporary newspaper published from Calcutta : "The whole of the plinth and lower mouldings buried under accumulation of rubbish ; the floor of the sanctum and of the great hall in front 4 feet lower than the level of a rough stone-floor laid by the Burmese, who had partially cleared away the heaps of rubbish in front,— the great hall roofless ; the half-hall, or porch of the second storey, roofless ; the whole of the front of the temple above the level of the third chamber fallen, disclosing a great triangular gap, about 20 feet high and 12 feet wide at best ; the stairs leading up from lowest floor or ground floor or terrace, from which the towers spring, roofless ; the whole of the facade of the platform to the east a mound of ruins ; the whole south facade of platform ruinous, but retaining here and there portions of original work ; the entire west face of the platform of the temple buried under rubbish, which itself was held up by a rivetment wall, 32 feet high, of plain brick and mortar, unplastered, and looking for all the world like a dilapidated jail wall.¹ Hence the Government of India could not be satisfied

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with the way the work being executed and hence deputed General Alexander Cunningham and Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra as two experts to supervise the operations. Meanwhile, the Anglo-Burmese War broke out and the King's representatives had consequently to leave India. So by a strange irony of fate the great Temple which would have been in charge of the representatives of the King of Burma, fell into the dual control of the Saivite Mahanta and the Government of India. During this work of repairs the old Bodhi Tree fell down and two saplings from it were planted in two places—one in its original place to the west of the Temple and the other to the north thereof. The repairing works taken over subsequently by the Govt. of India were completed at a cost of over a lakh of rupees and the building was placed under the supervision of a custodian. Accordingly, an order dated the 25th July, 1889, passed by Mr. (later Sir) George A. Grierson, Magistrate of Gaya, noted : "Mr. Maddox is placed in charge of Bodhgaya Temple and Bungalow. He should visit once a month and see that the drains are kept clear and that the other things insisted upon by me are carried out. He should also see that the Bungalow is kept in watertight repair, and that the chaityas and other stone relics are not carried away." From the order issued by Mr. G. A. Grierson, it appeared that the Temple and the Rest-House were placed in charge of a government official in July, A.C. 1889, and at his instance the building was taken over by the Public Works Department in A.C. 1890, although it was realised that it was not the property of the Government and had been taken charge of with the consent of the Mahanta.² Mr. G. A. Grierson further on May 6, 1891, wrote to the Commissioner of Patna, a note concerning the Temple : "I can find no paper in the office defining the position of Government in regard to the Bodh-Gaya Temple. There must have been some negotiations between the Government and the Mahant when the repair of

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the temple was first undertaken, and probably the rights of the Government in the matter were then defined. You can understand that while hitherto acquiescing in the traditional arrangement I am unwilling to give the Mahant a written document confirming it till I am certain that no other arrangement has been previously made.”³

Also Mr. D. J. Mc Pherson, another Magistrate of Gaya, in 1895 in his judgement in regard to the celebrated Buddha Gaya Temple Case had done much to add to its literature and although his judgment in that year did not overstate the case in favour of the Buddhists, it would stand as a tribute to the tolerance and the enlightenment of a people of whom he was not an unworthy representative. As already observed, it was then felt that the Temple was not the property of the Government and was only taken charge of with the consent of the Mahanta. Hence one government official at that time informed the Mahanta that the Temple was his, i.e. Mahanta's property. But one of the Secretaries to the Government told the Collector of Gaya that this was merely the personal opinion of the officer who said so and that it was in no way binding on the Government. But to whoever the Mahābodhi Temple remained, it then evidently did not belong to the Buddhists who were seeking to recover possession of the Shrine as the natural and religious heirs of its founders and who were treated as people having no right to the Temple at all. But in some indirect and obscure manner it was very learnedly suggested in some of the judgements in the ‘Buddha Gaya Temple Case’ that the Buddhists might recover the Temple by invoking the aid of those rapid working tribunals, the Judge at Gaya, the High Court at Calcutta, and His Majesty's Privy Council in London ; but there was no hint from any quarter that the Government of Bengal or the Government of India considered it any part of their business or their justice to restore the Temple to the Buddhists, although they had spent thousands

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in having repaired it, and rightly regarded themselves as having complete control over it. Meanwhile the Mahanta converted the image of Buddha, which stood within the Shrine into a Brahmanical deity by dressing it up in a red robe or in a suit of fantastic garments and daubed its brow with lime or clay to make it appear a real true blue Brahmanical image. And for some obvious political reasons the British Government always indirectly patronised the Mahanta and hence were created tremendous trouble as well as endless confusion for those who wanted to find a peaceful settlement of the question of the possession of the Temple between the Mahanta on the one side and the Buddhists on the other. But at that very moment Sir Edwin Arnold who published in 1879 the famous poem entitled *The Light of Asia* had been moving the British Government in England and the Government of India and writing in the press appealing to have the Mahābodhi Temple transferred to the Buddhists who were its legitimate custodians. The idea at once caught the imagination of the Buddhists, especially that of a wealthy young man of Colombo called David Hewavitarne who later on became widely known as Anagarika Dharmapala and who with the cooperation of the Indian Buddhists initiated a vigorous movement for the purpose of materialising the object, culminating in the establishment in 1891 of the Maha Bodhi Society.⁴ We note that E. Arnold for a long time had desire to visit Buddha Gaya and other sacred places relating to Buddhism, because during his stay in India for four years from 1857 as the Principal of the Deccan College, Poona, he had not gone there. So he approached to Buddha Gaya in 1885 with real reverence, while the repairs of the Temple were being carried out. But at the time of his visit it was the property of a Saivite priest, the Mahanta. Edwin Arnold was grieved to find the place desecrated by the Saivite priests, as one of them replied : "Pluck as many as you like, sahib ; it is nought to us" when Edwin asked if he could pick a few leaves

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from the sacred Bodhi Tree. E. Arnold silently took three or four leaves which he pulled from the bough over his head. From India, he then crossed over to Sri Lanka, carrying the Bodhi leaves with him. His first visit to Panadura where at the historic Rankoth Vihara he met an erudite scholar called Weligama Siri Sumangala Maha Nayaka Thera. In course of his interview with Siri Sumangala, Arnold narrated him the shocking state of affairs at Buddha Gaya and suggested the restoration of the Buddha Gaya Temple by amicable settlement with the Mahanta and the favour of the Government of India. Further he urged that a request be made to place the said Temple in the hands of a representative committee of the Buddhist nations. Arnold himself said on this matter : "I think there never was an idea which took root and spread so far and fast as that thrown out thus in the sunny temple-court at Panadura, amid the waving taliputs." This suggestion quickly became an universal aspiration, first in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and next in other Buddhist countries. Hence the Buddhist monks and lay people alike requested Edwin Arnold to place his suggestion before the appropriate authorities. Instantly Arnold acceded to their request and took up the question with the Governor of Ceylon, Governor of Madras, Secretary of State for India, and Viceroy himself. He next went to Kandy in Sri Lanka, where he presented the Buddhist prelates with a leaf of the Bodhi Tree he had brought from Buddha Gaya. The leaf which was received with "eager and passionate emotion" was placed in golden casket for regular worship by the devoted Buddhists there. The monks, in return, offered him a begging bowl and yellow robe.⁵ E. Arnold also wrote to all Buddhist countries asking them to take interest in the matter. In particular, after his visit to the ruins of Buddha Gaya, he went to Japan. During his first visit to Japan in 1889 he addressed a meeting of the Japanese Buddhists, arousing their interest in the Buddhist sacred

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places in India, and caused to establish a society to take up the question of the Buddha Gaya Temple. When he visited Japan for the second time in 1892, he delivered similar lectures in which he passionately declared that he would unhesitatingly sacrifice his life, if necessary, for liberating the Buddha Gaya Temple. Indeed his pleading was so convincing that a Society was set about for making plans to purchase land at Buddha Gaya and to send a number of Japanese Buddhist monks to Buddha Gaya. In this connection we may recall here that Sir Edwin Arnold wrote an important article entitled "East and West : A Splendid Opportunity" in *The Daily Telegraph* making out a strong case for the restoration of the Buddha Gaya Temple at the hands of the Buddhists. This article also gained publicity as it was reprinted once again in the *East and West* and in the *Maha Bodhi Journal*. Further, Arnold in the 'Book the Sixth' of his *The Light of Asia* noted about Buddha Gaya as follows :

Thou, who wouldst see where dawned the light at last,
North-westwards from the 'Thousand Gardens' go
By Gunga's valley till thy steps be set
On the green hills where those twin streamlets spring,
Nilājan and Mohāna ; follow them,
Winding beneath broad-leaved mahūa-trees,
'Mid thickets of the sansār and the bir,
Till on the plain the shining sisters meet
In Phalgu's bed, flowing by rocky banks
To Gayā and the red Barabar hills.
Hard by that river spreads a thorny waste,
Uruwelaya named in ancient days,
With sandhills broken ; on its verge a wood
Waves sea-green plumes and tassels thwart the sky,
With undergrowth wherethrough a still flood steals,
Dappled with lotus-blossoms, blue and white,
And peopled with quick fish and tortoises.

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Near it the village of Senāni reared
Its roofs of grass, nestled amid the palms,
Peaceful with simple folk and pastoral toils.

There in the sylvan solitudes once more
Lord Buddha lived, musing the woes of men,
The ways of fate, the doctrines of the books,
The lessons of the creatures of the brake,
The secrets of the silence whence all come,
The secrets of the gloom whereto all go,
The life which lies between, like that arch flung
From cloud to cloud across the sky, which hath
Mists for its masonry and vapoury piers,
Melting to void again which was so fair
With sapphire hues, garnet, and chrysoprase.⁶

* * *

But Buddh(a) heeded not,
Sitting serene, with perfect virtue walled
As is a stronghold by its gates and ramps ;
Also the Sacred Tree—the Bodhi-tree—
Amid that tumult stirred not, but each leaf
Glistened as still as when on moonlit eves
No Zephyr spills the gathering gems of dew ;
For all this clamour raged outside the shade
Spread by those cloistered stems :
In the third watch,—
The earth being still, the hellish legions fled,
A soft air breathing from the sinking moon—
Our Lord attained Sammā-sambuddh(a) ; he saw,
By light which shines beyond our mortal ken,
The line of all his lives in all the worlds ;
Far back, and farther back, and farthest yet,
Five hundred lives and fifty.⁷

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Again, out of great respect and admiration for Lord Buddha in the concluding verses of *The Light of Asia* Edwin Arnold further recorded :

Here endeth what I write

Who love the Master for his love of us.
A little knowing, little have I told
Touching the Teacher and the Ways of Peace.
Forty-five rains thereafter showed he those
In many lands and many tongues, and gave
Our Asia Light, that still is beautiful,
Conquering the world with spirit of strong grace :
All which is written in the holy Books,
And where he passed, and what proud Emperors
Carved his sweet words upon the rocks and caves :
And how—in fulness of the times—it fell
The Buddha died, the great Tathāgato,
Even as a man 'mongst men, fulfilling all :
And how a thousand thousand lakhs since then
Have trod the Path which leads whither he went
Unto Nirvana, were the Silence lives.⁸

However, in Japan E. Arnold continued to plead with the eminent Japanese Buddhist leaders of Tokyo to take initiative to restore the Buddha Gaya Temple and the site and to have control over the management on behalf of the Buddhists. His untiring endeavour earned soon universal sympathy, but became otherwise unsuccessful, because neither the governments concerned nor the Buddhists could take any positive measure.

It may be noted that Anagarika Dharmapala who established the Maha Bodhi Society in May, 1891 visited Buddha Gaya on January 21 of the same year. He with a few of his Bengali and Bihari friends went to the spot and was as distressed at its state of utter neglect as was Sir Edwin

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Arnold. Immediately after his visit Dharmapala wrote on January 22, 1891, in his diary the following words : "After taking breakfast we went in the company of Durga Babu (i.e. Sri Durga Shankar Bhattacharya, a Bengali gentleman of Gaya) and Dr. Chatterjee (i.e. Dr. Haridas Chatterjee, another Bengali gentleman of Gaya) to Bodhgaya—the most sacred of all sacred spots to the Buddhists. After driving six miles (from Gaya) we arrived at the holy spot. Within a mile you could see lying scattered here and there broken statues, etc., of our Blessed Lord. At the entrance to the Mahanta's temple on both sides of the portico, there are statues of our Lord in the attitude of meditation and expounding the Law. How elevating ! The sacred Vihāra—the Lord sitting on his throne and the great solemnity which pervades all round makes the heart of the pious devotee weep. How delightful ! As soon as I touched with my forehead the Vajrāsana, a sudden impulse came to my mind. It prompted me to stop here and take care of this sacred spot—so sacred that nothing in the world is equal to this place where Prince Śākya Simha gained Enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree. The tree is a noble representative of the old tree. I gathered some leaves of the tree and one was very peculiar in its formation. When the sudden impulse came to me, I asked Kozen priest whether he would join me, and he joyously assented, and more than this he had been thinking the same thing. We both solemnly promised that we would stop here until some Buddhist priests come and take charge of the place." But it is to be noted that when Dharmapala made this grave decision and sacred vow the question of the ownership of the Mahābodhi Temple did not occur to him. He observed with much mental agony that the most holy spot to the Buddhists was being shamefully neglected, its sculptures were being carried away, the image of Buddha was being desecrated. So he thought that as a devout follower of Buddha he had not only the duty, but also the

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right to stay at Buddha Gaya and protect the sacred Temple. Also the government officials whom Dharmapala came across did not give him as yet any scope to think otherwise. So the keys of the Burmese Rest House built at Buddha Gaya twenty years before by King Mindon of Burma were handed over to him. And as soon as he had settled down there, he began to write the first of those thousands of letters, which he was afterwards to write in favour of the Buddha Gaya Temple. Thus he wrote to scores of people in Sri Lanka, Burma, and India narrating the appalling condition of Buddha Gaya, and pleading for the revival of Buddhism and for re-establishing the Buddha's Order there. Also he contributed lengthy articles in Sinhalese and English respectively to the *Sandaresa* and the *Buddhist*. At the beginning Dharmapala did not receive any reply. His agony increased when he thought that his appeal in this regard had gone unheeded and the Buddhists themselves were indifferent to the fate of the Buddha Gaya Temple. Over and above he fell in difficulties there due to the shortage of money, because he had brought with him the money to provide the necessities of a few days only. With his determined will strengthened rather than weakened by the opposition he had to face, he resolved to die of starvation rather than quit Buddha Gaya. Still in the midst of serious mental anxieties the serene atmosphere of the moonlit nights of the surroundings, the imposing structure of the Temple stood in bold relief against the starry sky and played upon his spiritual sensibilities to such an extent that one day he recorded in his diary as follows : "February 17...This night at 12 for the first time in my life I experienced that peace which passeth all understanding. How peaceful was it ? The life of our Lord is a lofty and elevating subject for meditation. The Four Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path alone can make the devoted pupil of Nature happy". However, after a few days the letters and financial assistance for which he had been

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waiting with much eagerness began to arrive and Dharmapala realised that he was not alone in his struggle for a noble cause. But not until he met Mr. G. A. Grierson, the then Collector of Gaya, could he foresee the enormous obstacle which practically was to block his way. So long he had the impression, through his conversations with the subordinate government officials, that the Mahābodhi Temple was the government property and that there would be no difficulty in transferring the same from the management of the Brahmanical Mahanta to the custody of the Buddhists. But when he discussed the matter with Mr. Grierson, he was shocked to learn that the Temple together with its revenues legally belonged to the Mahanta and that the Buddhists could only, with the help of the Government, buy it from him. Having realised such a stern reality after his stay at Buddha Gaya at that time for more than six weeks, Dharmapala at once left for Calcutta with the intention of raising funds in Burma for the purchase of the Temple. He stayed in Calcutta in the house of Neel Comal Mookerjee, a Bengali theosophist, who became his life-long friend and loyal supporter of his religious missions. With Neel Comal he visited several places including the Indian Museum and the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal in Calcutta, where he made the acquaintance with Sarat Chandra Das who travelled with great pains Tibet and became expert in Tibetan language and literature. Thus Dharmapala was determined to spend a considerable period of his life for the recovery of the sacred Temple and in fact every hour of his life was to be devoted to that tremendous task. Being a public man he sounded leading Indians and Europeans of the day. So persons like K. T. Telang, G. Subrahmaniam of Madras, Narendranath Sen, Editor of the *Indian Mirror*, and Robert Knight of the *Statesman* of Calcutta, were approached by him before undertaking any move to restore the control of the Buddhists. Next Dharmapala from Calcutta mailed for Ran-

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goon where he spent most of his time with Moungh Hpo Myhim, a theosophist and a learner of Buddhist meditation, who encouraged him in his programmes for the restoration of the Buddha Gaya Temple to the hands of the ardent followers of Buddha and promised to extend to him financial assistance. Other persons of Burma became also interested in such programmes. But ultimately Dharmapala was not successful in raising the fund expected by him. Still he was by no means disappointed. He felt that the people of Burma were better versed in the subtleties of Buddhism than the Buddhists of other countries of South Asia. Therefore he sailed for Colombo *via* Adyar being determined to establish a society for the restoration of the Mahābodhi Temple. On his return to Sri Lanka, Dharmapala organised a public meeting with the Most Venerable H. Siri Hikkaduwe Sumangala Nayaka Mahathera, Principal of the Vidyodaya Pirivena (later on a University), a saint and scholar of international fame, in the chair, on May 31, 1891. At that meeting, as already said, the Maha Bodhi Society was formally established with the main object of regaining the possession of the Buddha Gaya Temple by the Buddhists themselves and revitalising the religion of Buddha in the land of its origin. In that meeting Dharmapala narrated how the impulse to restore the Mahābodhi Temple to the Buddhists had come to him as he knelt beneath the ancient spreading branches of the Bodhi Tree. After a thorough discussion on the matter the office-bearers of the newly founded Society were elected with Venerable Sumangala as the President, Col. Olcott as Director, Weerasekera and Anagarika Dharmapala as Secretaries, W. de Abrew as Treasurer, and Pandit Batuwantudave and twelve others as members of the Executive Committee of the Society. But the establishment of mere the Society did not attract much attention in those days of widespread Buddhist revival. Consequently Dharmapala not only experienced difficulties in rousing the interest of the

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lay people, but also in finding Buddhist monks willing to accompany him to Buddha Gaya. Still he determined that on the Full Moon Day of the month of Āṣāḍha (July-August) when Buddha preached His First Sermon to the members of the Saṅgha should once more be in residence at Buddha Gaya. Accordingly, he appealed first to the Siamese Sect and then to the Burmese Sect, and at the end he succeeded in obtaining the four following Buddhist monks, namely, Dunuwia Candajoti, Matale Sumangala, Anuradhapura Pemananda, and Galle Sudassana. On July 10, 1891 the party set out on its historic mission reaching Calcutta on the 15th and arriving at their destination a few days later. In the evening of the day following that of their arrival the Full Moon rose bright and glorious in the blue sky Dharmapala noted as follows with extreme satisfaction in his diary that after seven centuries the Buddhist flag had been hoisted at Buddha Gaya : "Ah, how beautifully it flutters in the moonlight breeze ! May the mission be a success ! I hope and sincerely trust that the priests may be light to the people and they will lead a life of purity and show the people of India the intrinsic merits of our holy religion. On 22nd January last I pledged that I will work on to make this sacred spot to be cared for by our own Bhikshus and I am glad that after seven months of hard work I have succeeded in establishing a Buddhist Mission." Thus having installed the four monks in the Burmese Rest House, Dharmapala now began negotiations with the Mahanta for the purchase of a piece of land. As a consequence, his direct confrontation with the Mahanta, the second wealthiest landlord in Bihar, started. At the first instance the Mahanta promised a piece of land, but ultimately denied, and after further negotiation agreed to hand over to him a much smaller piece of land. But Mr. Grierson first ordered the registration of this transfer of land to be postponed and then suggested that a different plot of land should be selected. Being very much annoyed by

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Mr. Grierson's interference the Mahanta asked Dharmapala to go back to Sri Lanka and return after a few days to discuss the matter. At last Dharmapala became successful in appeasing the Mahanta and persuading him to part with the plot earmarked by Mr. Grierson. Still this time the size of land of his original offer was reduced by half and Dharmapala had to interview his notary no less than seven times before the deed was considered to be in order. Next Dharmapala decided to organize an International Buddhist Conference which was actually convened after his short visit to Sri Lanka, at Buddha Gaya on October 31, 1891 on the eve of the visit to this holy place of the Lt. Governor of Bengal. This Conference was largely attended by the delegates from Sri Lanka, China, Japan, and Chittagong of Bengal in India. Now, the British Government of India for the first time realised the international importance of the place where Gautama attained to Perfect Enlightenment. It was resolved in the Conference that a deputation should wait on the Mahanta with the Japanese proposal regarding the purchase of the Mahābodhi Temple. Also it was further resolved to call for subscriptions from all Buddhist countries for the construction of a Buddhist monastery at Buddha Gaya, to promote the Buddhist propaganda, and to undertake the work of translating the Buddhist texts into some Indian languages. Being too much enthusiastic admirer of Japan Dharmapala had even hoisted the Japanese flag beneath the Bodhi Tree side by side with the Buddhist flag. It was quite likely that when the Lt. Governor and his group visited Buddha Gaya the sight of the Japanese flag not only reminded him of the Russo-Japanese problems, but also flashed in mind the possibility of the Japanese using Buddha Gaya as the spearhead of their ambition not only in India, but also throughout the whole of Asia. So, he refused to meet the Buddhist delegation and sent Anagarika Dharmapala a message through Mr. Grierson to the effect that the

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Mahābodhi Temple actually belonged to the Mahanta, and that the Government could not accede to the Buddhist request of intervening and restoring Buddha Gaya Temple to the control of the Buddhists. We also learn that in the International Buddhist Conference the Japanese delegates publicly declared that they were authorised to open negotiation with the Mahanta to purchase the Temple and the site, provided he became agreeable to transfer them and reported that as soon as the Mahanta would fix the amount the Japanese Buddhist organisations would start raising the fund. Naturally in no time after that open declaration the British Government became alert about the future political implications of Buddha Gaya due to such a potential change and the British administrators like Mr. Grierson, Governor Sir Charles or Viceroy Elgin henceforth became more conscious over the movement which ended in setting up a Commission by Lord Curzon for settling the question of the right of ownership of the Temple including the claims of Brahmanical worshippers and Buddhists over it. And the British Government rigidly continued to maintain the pressure on the Mahanta for not entertaining the Japanese or any other foreign offer for purchasing the Buddha Gaya Temple.⁹ However, Hem Narayān for Giri, the Mahanta at that time, was very sympathetic and wished Venerable Dharmapala every success in his endeavour. The Mahanta later handed over on lease a small plot of land to Dharmapala for erecting a temporary rest-house there. Unfortunately, he died soon after and Krishna Dayal Giri ascended the gadi on February 4, 1892. Krishna Dayal Giri had not that breadth of vision and sense of justice necessary to view the work of Venerable Dharmapala with any sympathy and hence took up a definitely hostile attitude. Still Dharmapala with unflagging zeal and tireless energy continued to work in Calcutta for the cause to which he had already dedicated his life, appealing for funds to the Buddhists all over the world, arranging weekly public meetings,

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and labouring to interest every person he met in the redemption of the Mahābodhi Temple from the sacrilegious hands of those to whom it was nothing but a source of income. Although he was extremely busy with his activities in Calcutta and at Buddha Gaya, Dharmapala found time to attend the Annual Convention at Adyar as well as to establish relations with the Himalayan Buddhists of Darjeeling, to whom he presented some relics of Buddha, a few leaves from the Bodhi Tree, and a Buddhist flag. At this time Col. Olcott arrived in Calcutta. So Anagarika Dharmapala along with Col. Olcott and Mr. Edge, a European theosophist from Darjeeling started immediately for Buddha Gaya. As they reached Gaya Station on February 4, 1893 they were met by Ven. Candajoti who informed them that on the evening of the previous Friday the Mahanta's men had made a murderous assault on the two Buddhist monks and their servants at the Burmese Rest House at Buddha Gaya, while they were peacefully engaged in studying the Vinaya Piṭaka and religious discourses. Bhikkhu Sumangala was so badly beaten about the head with sticks that he had to be removed to the hospital. When Dharmapala and others arrived at the Burmese Rest House the bloodstains were still visible on the floor. The news of such cowardly and unprovoked attack on the inoffensive Buddhist monks created immediate sensation and meetings of protest against this misbehaviour were organised not only in India, but also in several Buddhist countries. Without losing any time Col. Olcott interviewed the Mahanta who stubbornly refused either to sell or lease the land on any term, or to allow the Buddhists to erect a rest house for the pilgrims. On the other hand, Dharmapala was insistent that the assailants should be detected and punished. Therefore Nanda Kishore Lall, a famous legal practitioner of Gaya, was retained as counsel for him. The striking feature of this sordid business was the exemplary behaviour of the wounded Buddhist monk who had

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not only made no attempt to defend himself from the vicious blows of his attackers, but who actually sent to the local police, while still in the hospital, an application stating that neither he nor his fellow monks could be witnessed to the legal case under issue and thus cause their assailants to be punished. When this was done it was reported that the Superintendent of Police of Gaya District roared with laughter and remarked : "I always thought these Indian priests made a living out of religion. These Buddhist priests from Ceylon actually practise it," and the Mahanta in his palace merely chuckled. But a few weeks later Dharmapala was informed by Nanda Kishore Lall that the Mahanta's lease on the land had already expired and that the Mahanta had applied for a permanent lease. Now Dharmapala thought that it would be easy for him to acquire the place and the Buddhists would be united to subscribe the lakh of rupees which would be required for such a purchase. So he immediately went to Calcutta and wrote appeals for financial assistance to all concerned. Ven. Candajoti was deputed to Akyab and Col. Olcott went to Rangoon for collecting the required money. Dharmapala himself on May 13, 1893 left for Burma where he met his old friend Moungh Hpo Mhyin and personally explained the situation to some wealthy persons of Rangoon, Mandalay, and Moulmein. But there during this visit he could not collect the necessary amount of money, although he received promises from several persons. Thus his attempt did not become wholly unsuccessful. Then he returned to Calcutta. In the meantime the affairs of the Buddha Gaya Temple were fast taking a new turn. Nanda Kishore Lall reported to him that the Mahābodhi Temple was actually located in the village of Mahābodhi and not in the village of Mastipur Taradi as the men of the Mahanta thought. So Dharmapala called upon Mr. McPherson, Collector of Gaya, explained to him the present situation concerning the Temple and mentioned Sir Edwin Arnold's recent article on

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Buddha Gaya in the *Daily Telegraph* of London. But Mr. McPherson remarked that everything should be done as quietly as possible and it would be better to postpone negotiation until Dharmapala would return from Chicago.¹⁰

It was arranged that during his visit to England on the occasion of the World's Parliament of Religions held in Chicago, U.S.A., in 1893 Dharmapala should stay with Sir Edwin Arnold, with whom he called on the Secretary of State for India, Lord Kimberley, who promised that the letter Sir Arnold had already written him about the Buddha Gaya Temple would be forwarded to the Viceroy.

Again on his return from the World's Parliament of Religions Anagarika Dharmapala paid his another visit to Japan. Just on the morning of the last day of October of 1893 he disembarked at Yokohama and by the evening he reached Tokyo, where Noguchi, Horiuchi and about one hundred young Buddhist priests had welcomed him at the station. Dharmapala could then feel how deeply the Japanese people had been passionately concerned with the question of "the deliverance of the Buddha Gaya Temple from the bondage of sacrilegious hands" during the last four years which passed away since his first visit to Japan. Still in spite of the interest shown by the Buddhist monks of different schools and distinguished men of Japan, Dharmapala's endeavour did not bear much fruit and when at a meeting of the Buddhist monks held at the Seishoji Temple he was told that after two years they might raise twenty thousand *yen* only, Dharmapala became much frustrated. Besides, the intrigues to monopolize the manufacture and sale of clay models of the sacred things and the disputes between the Buddhist monks over the possession of the seven hundred years old beautiful Gupta image of Amitābha Buddha, had embittered his stay at Japan. Incidentally we may note here that this image was made of stone by the famous Buddhist sculptor, Sodatomo Nara

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in A.C. 1200. It was removed to a far-off mountain valley when the Kamakura Court changed. In 1890 the image was placed in the newly built temple of Koikoji Furoson. So being very much disappointed Dharmapala left Japan on December 15 after his second visit with this historic image of Buddha, which was formally presented to him for enshrinement in the Mahābodhi Temple. Now he decided to visit Siam, a Buddhist country, for financial assistance. He wrote at Shanghai a message to the Chinese Buddhists, and with the help of Dr. Timothy Richards, translator of Aśvaghoṣa's *Śraddhotpāda Sūtra*, he addressed the monks of the temple at Mount Omei, and presented them with a leaf of the Bodhi Tree and other Buddhist relics. In Siam also Dharmapala did not achieve much success. He stayed there for three week, and then left Bangkok for Singapore. Next after two weeks he arrived in Colombo. But he had not much time to spend in Sri Lanka, because he had then urjent piece of business in India. However, having lectured in Colombo, Kandy, Kalutara and other places in Sri Lanka on his unique experiences in Chicago and on the plan of restoration of the Buddha Gaya Temple, he left for Madras. On April 11 he arrived at Buddha Gaya bringing with him for installation in the upper chamber of the Mahābodhi Temple the beautiful Japanese Buddha image mentioned above. But because of the hostilities of the Mahanta's men, it was then accommodated, as we shall observe later on, in the Burmese Rest House at Buddha Gaya and subsequently brought to Calcutta and enshrined in the Mūlagandhakūṭi Vihāra of the Mahabodhi Society of India in Calcutta, where it along with other such sacred images became the object of devotion and prayer of hundreds of the devotees. But as per the request of the Buddhists of Japan for installing this image of Amitābha Buddha on the upper storey of the Buddha Gaya Temple Dharmapala initially expressed his intention to do the

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same to the then Collector of Gaya, who consulted the Mahanta on this point. At first the Mahanta agreed to this proposal, but subsequently recanted. Then Mr. McPherson, Collector of Gaya, had advised Dharmapala to win over the Brahmanical opinion to his side. So Dharmapala went to Varanasi where he consulted the brahmin scholars on this particular issue. But they were emphatic that since Buddha was an incarnation of the Brahmanical god Viṣṇu, the Buddha Gaya Temple was Brahmanical shrine and that the Buddhists had, therefore, no claim over it. The Mahanta also held the same view and objected to the installation of the Japanese Buddha image on the ground that its presence would be a desecration. Besides, he threatened that if Dharmapala would attempt to bring the Buddha image to Buddha Gaya five thousand men would be lying in wait to kill him and that he was prepared to spend one hundred thousand rupees for materialising such a plan. However, Dharmapala on February 25, 1895 took the Buddha image to the top floor, and after installing it, along with other members of his party, he engaged himself in worship and meditation. Later on that very day Dharmapala himself wrote in his diary : "At 2 in the morning I woke up and sat in meditation for a little time and then my mind suggested, as it did yesterday, under the Bodhi Tree, to take the Japanese Image to the Maha Bodhi Temple. I woke up the priests and then asked them to sit in contemplation for a time. Then it was decided that we should take the image early morning from Gaya to Buddha Gaya. In silence I vowed 7 times to give up my life for the Buddha's sake. Before dawn we packed the image and by 7 were off to Buddha Gaya. On our way we met two Muhammedan gentlemen driving towards Buddha Gaya. Soon after our arrival at Buddha Gaya the boxes containing the Image were taken upstairs to the Maha Bodhi Temple and by a strange coincidence these two gentlemen were present and were witnessing

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the placing of the Image. My friend Bepin Babu was also present and when we were going to light candles the Mahant's gosains and the Muhammedan Muktiar came up and threatening me asked to remove the Image. Oh, it was painful indeed. Buddhists are not allowed to worship in their own temple. Great excitement. The Mahant rushes off to Gaya and in the evening the Collector Mr. D. J. McPherson came to investigate the case. Several witnesses were examined and when he was leaving the place the Collector said that a great desecration had been committed in the Temple. He ordered the Inspector to take care of our party. We stayed in the Burmese Rest House. In this connection it may be mentioned that the gosains were heavily armed with clubs and sticks numbering forty or fifty; the old Japanese Buddha Image was thrown on the courtyard below; the Mahanta's men forcibly removed the Image; several persons engaged in worship were also roughly handled and one or two were severely beaten; and Dharmapala himself was badly assaulted by those men of the Mahanta. This incidence resulted into the famous Buddha Gaya Temple Case which lasted for a number of years. During this criminal prosecution at the lower courts those men of the Mahanta were convicted and sentenced to simple imprisonment for a month and a fine of Rs. 100/-. On appeal the conviction was upheld by the Session Judge. The Case was referred for revision to the Calcutta High Court which set aside the conviction. In this connection, it should be noted that the learned judges held that the Temple was entirely a Buddhist Shrine, but as the Case was a criminal one, they did not think it expedient to go into the question of the civil rights of the parties. Hence the question relating to the ownership of the Temple was left to be decided by a Civil Court and the parties were left where they were before the prosecution. Below are presented extracts from the judgements of the two Courts. Thus the District

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Judge of Gaya observed : “(a) The temple has continually and regularly been used as a Buddhist place of worship by Buddhist pilgrims. (b) No form of Hindu worship has been carried on inside the Maha Bodhi Temple and there is nothing to show that any such has been carried on in it for many centuries, if ever, since Śaṅkara’s attempt. But since July of last year there has undoubtedly been an attempt at the instance of the Mahant and his disciples to carry on a semblance of Hindu worship of the great image of the Buddha which is on the altar of the Sanctum on the ground floor of the temple. Since then, as deposed by the custodian, a Brahmin priest named Bishnu Misra has been employed who passes a light in front of the image, sounds bells, leaves the image and altar and a tilak or Hindu caste mark has been painted on the forehead and the image clothed with a regular vestment and the head decked with flowers. The custodian who is a Kulin Brahmin of the highest caste deposes that nevertheless what is done does not constitute complete Hindu worship, and it must be remembered that inspite of this neither the Mahant nor any of his disciples nor any Hindu has ever been seen by him worshipping inside the temple. All the Hindu worship started last year, it will be observed, shortly after Dharmapala endeavoured to place the Japanese image in the temple, and on a review of evidence there is no room for reasonable doubt that it is of a spacious kind started as a mere strategem for giving the Mahant a pretext for interfering with the dealings of the Buddhists with the temple and strengthening whatever prescriptive rights he may possess to the *usufruct* of the offerings made at it.” One of the two judges of the Calcutta High Court who, heard the appeal further remarked : “It may be conceded that the Maha Bodhi temple which is very ancient and very sacred to the Buddhists, was a Buddhist temple, that although it has been in the possession of Hindu Mahanta, it has never been converted into a Hindu temple in the sense that Hindu idols have

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been enshrined or orthodox Hindu worship carried on there, and that Buddhist pilgrims have had free access and full liberty to worship in it.”¹ As the Criminal Case ended in favour of the Mahanta, the Image presented by the Buddhists of Japan was placed in the Burmese Rest House of Buddha Gaya. But the Collector of Gaya, who represented the British Government in favour of the Mahanta ordered the Maha Bodhi Society to remove the said Image from the Burmese Rest House and informed that otherwise the Government would remove it. Ultimately, however, good sense prevailed and the order was rescinded. Although the law suit was thus finally lost, Dharmapala was able to draw the attention of the public to the state of affairs relating to the Buddha Gaya Temple. He had no funds to go before the Privy Council. As the proceedings of the Case were published in all leading newspapers, a strong public opinion was formed in favour of the Buddhist claim on the Mahā Bodhi Temple. Strangely enough, the Zamindars’ forum, the British Indian Association of Calcutta, of which the Mahanta of Buddha Gaya was a leading and important member, in 1897 represented to the Government that the existence of the Japanese Image installed in the Burmese Rest House was offensive to the Brhmanical worshippers and urged the Government to remove the Image on the grounds that its presence “near the Buddha Gaya Temple which had been held, it was stated, to be a Hindu Temple by the High Court, was deemed objectionable by the Hindus.” But the Government could not yield to such an urge and so the Image continued to be in the Burmese Rest House wherein, at that time, Bhikkhu Sumangala and Anagarika Dharmapala used to reside. Further, the Government pointed out that any claim to treat the Temple as a purely Brahmanical shrine could not be admitted, while at the same time it had no desire to interfere with the Mahanta’s position.

In connection with the installation of this Japanese Buddha

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Image Edwin Arnold also wrote a friendly letter to the Mahanta in Hindi for amicable negotiation, and despatched it together with a copy of his translation of the *Gītā* as an evidence of his goodwill towards the followers of the Brahmanical faith. But the endeavour ended with no positive result. However, for the next few years the aforesaid Buddha Image remained in the Burmese Rest House.

With the advent of Anagarika Dharmapala in 1891, publication of the *Maha Bodhi Journal* first in 1892, and the Buddha Gaya Temple Case of 1895-95, the cultured people of Bengal were becoming more and more sympathetic towards Buddhism. During this period Dharmapala must have realised that although the Maha Bodhi Temple was still in alien hands, his endeavour had not been totally futile. The affairs of the Buddha Gaya Temple became also popular with the newspapers, the Anglo-Indian section of which in general championed the cause of the Mahanta. Also the *London Times* took interest in the Temple and in 1895 wrote that "from time immemorial Bodh Gaya had been a place of pilgrimage for Buddhists of Ceylon, China, Siam (Thailand), and Eastern Asia. Until the annexation of Upper Burma in 1886 the Burmese kings were the most liberal supporters of the establishment. The Japanese had now come forward as its benefactor. Last year (1894) the leading priest of Tokyo entertained a leading Buddhist of Ceylon (Anagarika Dharmapala) with an ancient and beautiful image of Buddha to be enshrined there with due ceremony". Replying to the comments of the *London Times* Sir Edwin Arnold remarked : "To have declared the Temple open to the devotees of the Siamese, Burmese, Ceylonese, Tibetans, Chinese, and Japanese pilgrims who desired to supervise would have been worth untold moral face to England in Asia."

In 1900 Dharmapala again appealed to Sir Edwin Arnold for further assistance in respect of the Buddha Gaya

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Temple issue. But unfortunately Arnold became badly sick then and ultimately passed away in 1904 almost fifty years prior to the ultimate solution in 1953 of the question of the Buddha Gaya Temple. The next attempt to secure control over the management of the Buddha Gaya Temple by the Japanese Buddhist organisations on behalf of the world Buddhists was made in 1901-1902 when Rev. Tensin Okakura, a celebrated Japanese monk, scholar, artist and radical thinker, first in company with Svami Vivekananda and later on with Sri Surendranath Tagore reopened negotiations with the Mahanta for a plot of about 2 or 3 bighas of land near the Mahā Bodhi Temple to build an independent Mahāyāna Monastery-cum Japanese Rest House for the pilgrims. The Mahanta and the government officials became by this time sufficiently alert. Hence although Rev. Okakura was welcomed and well received by the Mahanta and his men, his mission became a total failure. In the meantime, the *Indian Mirror* had been writing frequently on the affairs of the Buddha Gaya Temple, published documents and plans about its future as also reports of Lord Curzon's visit and Sri Sarada Charan Mitter's courtesy visit to Mahanta and observed that the Government appeared to be intended to take over the Temple. On July 16, 1905 the *Indian Mirror* noted : "It might be imagined that we ourselves would jump at the proposal but it is not so. We have strenuously advocated the Buddhist right over the Temple, but we cannot entertain the idea of a foreign government practically assuming Mahantship over it. Our private information is and we give it out for whatever it may be worth—that the Mahanto was in negotiation with some Japanese gentlemen for the sale of some lands at Bodh Gaya and the Government getting scent of it vetoed the proposal on political grounds. Well whether that be truth of the matter or not the fact remains that neither the Government nor the Hindu Mahanto can shut out Buddhist pilgrims from Bodh Gaya and

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other Buddhist shrines in India. We are not in alliance with the foremost Asiatic power and the Japanese are mostly Buddhists by religion. We trust Lord Curzon's Government will not take a leap in the dark". As already said, Rev. Okakura's plan became disastrous to the movement initiated by Anagarika Dharmapala whose object was purely religious. The Government of India being so long sympathetic towards the Buddhist claim over the Buddha Gaya Temple now feared Japanese complications and turned definitely hostile to the Buddhists.

The memorable legal war between Dharmapala and the Mahanta entered its final phase in 1906 when the Mahanta at the instigation of the Commissioner of Patna filed a suit against Sumangala Thera who during these years had been taking care of the Image, and Dharmapala for a declaration that he was the sole owner of the Burmese Rest House for the ejectment of the defendants, and for the removal of the said Buddha Image therefrom. In that suit the Government of India was also joined as a defendant subsequently inasmuch as it had refused to order the removal of the Image in 1896. It was recorded : "The Sub-Judge who decided the suit in the first instance held that the (Burmese) Rest House had been built by the Mahant for the convenience of the Burmese Buddhists who had been allowed to stop in it, that the defendants were not entitled to make it their permanent abode and to place the Image in it and ordered their ejectment with the image."¹ Thus it became obvious that Sub-Judge decided the Case in favour of the plaintiff Mahanta. Quite naturally Dharmapala appealed against this judgement to the High Court, which varied the decree of the Sub-Judge and held that the Burmese Rest House which was partially built with the financial assistance from the Burmese, was in the possession of the plaintiff who had the control and superintendence thereof subject to the right to use it in the customary manner. Still

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this question of the right was not decided on as it did not arise in that suit.

So being failed to get redress from the law courts, Dharmapala turned his attention to the general public and carried on an intensive campaign through the medium of the press and by means of numerous publications. Thus distinguished writer like Charles Moore had noted : "In conclusion it is only necessary to add that under no circumstance can it be possible for a Buddhist Temple to become a Hindu shrine in the hands of Hindu menials. Those who at present presume to style themselves the owners or the custodians of the Temple do not even pretend that it is now a place in which any Hindu God is worshipped. It is merely held for any notoriety or profit which it may bring, and there are probably not ten Hindus in India who do not believe the Mahanta's custody of it to be a great wrong which they would rejoice to see brought to a quick and speedy end. This consideration should make it all the more obvious why a scandal such as this should be forthwith terminated."¹ Mr. Moore in another article had further recorded : "In our appeal to Lord Reading we ask him to do for the Buddhists not what others would do or what others have done to them, but that which the dictates of justice and of reason demand. We have already offered him immortality in having his name and his memory associated with the Bodhi Gaya and its Temple by restoring this Temple to the Buddhists. We now offer him the glory and the consolation which the discharge of that duty will bring when no longer Viceroy of India, he meditates with pride or with regret, on what he had done or did not do, while at the head of the Government of India."² Also the great indologist Prof. Sylvain Levi on being approached by some bhikkhus to get his opinion on the contemporary situation of the Mahā Bodhi Temple wrote from Santiniketan on November 18, 1921 : "You ask me to tell you how I felt while visiting Bodhgaya twenty four years

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ago. I am not a bhikkhu, I am not an upāsaka. I do not belong to the Buddhist faith ; but the more I have been studying Buddhism in its magnificent spread over a large part of Asia, the more I have been wondering at the personality of the Master who taught the world some of the most sublime, deep, sweet lessons it ever heard. The place where, according to all traditions, he attained the Supreme Wisdom should be sacred to all mankind. I expected to find the place full of devout pilgrims coming from all parts to worship their Master, full of monks meditating on his words, as they stand even now, written in a wonderful variety of languages. No vihāra, no bhikkhus, no pilgrims ! Such a neglect is a disgrace for the whole Buddhist Church. I fully realize that the place is the property of a Hindu Mahant, and I am not going to discuss his rights, whatever may be said for or against. But I am bound to say that the whole Buddhist Church has a common duty to fulfil there ; the spirit of Buddhism should by any means be kept alive in the place where it reached, in Buddha's mind, its first and most complete achievement.”¹

Also Justice Gurudas Banerjee wrote : “The great Temple of Bodh Gaya said to occupy the site of Buddha's hermitage, was originally a Buddhist temple, but it has for a long time (how long, it is neither easy nor necessary in this case exactly to determine, but certainly for more than a century) been in the possession and under the control of the Hindu Mahanth of that place.” On the question of the right of possession of the Buddha Gaya Temple Rabindranath Tagore expressed his opinion as follows : “I am sure it will be admitted by all Hindus who are true to their own ideals that it is an intolerable wrong to allow the temple raised on the spot where Lord Buddha attained His enlightenment, to remain under the control of a rival sect which can neither have an intimate knowledge of nor sympathy for, the Buddhist religion and its rites of worship. I consider it to be

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a sacred duty for all individuals believing in freedom and justice to help to restore this historical site to the community of people who still reverently carry on that particular current of history in their own living faith". Deshbandhu C. R. Das noted : "In my opinion the Buddha Gaya Temple belongs to the Buddhists.²"

Still, as already observed, the Mahanta of Buddha Gaya continued to desecrate the image of Buddha even in 1921 by dressing it up in a red cloth or other fantastic garments and daubing its brow with lime or clay, and thus the sentiments of the Buddhists were wounded much³. But Anagarika Dharmapala soon after his bitter experience in enshrining the Japanese Buddha Image in the Buddha Gaya Temple realised that the issue of restoring its control to the Buddhists was made political by the British Government and could only be settled politically. The Congress leaders with whom he kept contact almost since he made Calcutta the headquarters of the Mahabodhi Society of India in the early nineties were approached for moral and practical support. As the question relating to the Buddha Gaya Temple appeared before the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee held on December 16, 1922 at Gaya, Ven. K. Sirinivasa Thera was deputed to represent the Maha Bodhi Society. It was here that he met Sri Rahula Sankrityayana who was then known as Baba Ramodar Das. At this meeting a resolution was passed recommending to the All India Congress Committee to give its sympathy and active support to any peaceful association of the Buddhists for the rescue of the Buddha Gaya Temple. Also the question of the Temple was put up at a meeting of Bihar Hindu Sabha which was attended by Anagarika Dharmapala, where it was resolved to appoint a Committee in which Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Ven. Dharmapala and others were included, to make recommendations.

The question of the Buddha Gaya Temple was again raised

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during the 37th Session of the Indian National Congress held at Gaya in the Christmas week of 1922. The Maha Bodhi Society of India despatched there also a delegation consisting of Svami Sacchidananda, Sri Dharmacarya, Ven. K. Sirinivasa Thera, and Sri Devapriya Valisinha.

Some Buddhists of Burma as delegates headed Rev. U. Ottama also attended the Congress. Many meetings were arranged with the assistance of Svami Satyadeva and Baba Ramodar Das. But as the Congress was busy in discussing the case of entry into the Legislative Councils, which had aroused a heated controversy among the members of the Indian National Congress, the question of the Mahā Bodhi Temple was neither taken up directly nor discussed thoughtfully by the Congress, which but was referred to the Working Committee for disposal. The above question was, therefore, considered by the which Committee which passed the following resolution on the 21st January, 1923 : "Babu Rajendra Prasad is authorised to investigate the proposal of placing the custody of Bodh Gaya temple in Buddhist hands and to make report to the Committee. Babu Rajendra Prasad is also empowered to co-opt suitable persons." But unfortunately the investigation could not be undertaken accordingly. So the Buddhists represented their Case again at the Congress at Coconada in December, 1923 and the question was discussed at some length in the Subjects Committee and the All India Congress Committee, but it was dropped subsequently. Also Dr. Cassius Pereira in 1923 was deputed to attend the Indian National Congress and induced it to take up the question of the Buddha Gaya Temple. Again the Buddhists from Burma, Sri Lanka and Nepal, who attended the Congress at Belgaon in December, 1924 earnestly placed the Case before the Subjects Committee, but it was decided that the matter be dealt with the All India Congress Committee which, accordingly passed a resolution on the 28th December, 1924 to the following effect : "Regarding the

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question of the restoration of the Bodh Gaya Temple to the Buddhists, resolved that Babu Rajendrn Prasad be requested to go into the matter in terms of the Working Committee resolution dated 21st January, 1923, and to present his report by the end of January"¹. In 1924 the Conference of the Burmese Buddhist Association constituted a Buddha Gaya Temple Committee "to secure the restoration to the Buddhists of the control of the Buddha Gaya Temple and its sacred lands." A memorial was also submitted in September, 1924 to Lord Reading by the Buddhist Chiefs of the Ceylon Honorary Chiefs' Association, and on the 6th September, 1924 its receipt was acknowledged by the Lord.² In this memorial Lord Reading was invited to do justice to the Buddhists by restoring them their ancient and venerable Temple at Buddha Gaya. On the other hand, the above mentioned Rajendra Prasad Committee included, as already said, among others Anagarika Dharmapala,³ but as in the meanwhile he left for England his place was taken by Sri Devapriya Valisinha and P. P. Siriwardene. The Committee met at Patna and drew its Report, a good deal of which was written by Sri Valisinha at the dictation of Dr. Rajendra Prasad. Sri Valisinha was insistent that the whole management of the Buddha Gaya Temple should be in the hands of the Buddhists and only refrained from writing a note of dissent at the request of Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Baba Ramodar Das, who considered that a unanimous report would stand a better chance of being accepted. The Committee ultimately made the following recommendations : (i) both the Hindus and Buddhists should be assured fullest liberty of worship according to their own methods ; and (ii) a Committee of five Buddhists and five Hindus should be formed and the management and control of the Temple and of the worship in it should be entrusted to that Committee. The Report made by this Committee further suggested that legislation was a better way of dealing with the Case

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of the Mahā Bodhi Temple. The All India Congress Committee accepted the recommendations with the modification that of the five Hindus one should be the Mahanta and another a Hindu Minister of the Government of Bihar.¹ But these recommendations were not favourably received by the Buddhists of India, Sri Lanka, Burma and Nepal. Curiously enough, at that time Prof. J.N. Samaddar of the Patna College was engaged by the Mahanta to carry on the work of propaganda on his behalf and the former accordingly directed his whole scholarship in defence of the Brahmanical claim over the Mahā Bodhi Temple.² In the meantime M. K. Gandhi expressed his viewpoints on the question of this Temple to Anagarika Dharmapala as follows : "Much as I should like to help you, it is not possible for me to do anything directly at the present moment. The question you raise can be solved in a moment when India comes to her own", and in the *Young India* Gandhi further wrote : "At the Coconada Congress (1923) Babu Rajendra Prasad was appointed to inquire into the matter and report. He had not been able to do so up to the time of the meeting... There is no doubt that the possession of the Temple should vest in the Buddhists. There may be legal difficulties. They must be overcome. If the report is true that animal sacrifice is offered in the temple, it is a sacrilege. It is equally a sacrilege if the worship is offered, as it is alleged, in a way calculated to wound the susceptibilities of the Buddhists."¹

However, later on in pursuance of the Rajendra Prasad Committee U Tok Kyi of Burma obtained previous sanction of the Governor-General for the introduction of a private bill entitled the "Buddha Gaya Temple Bill" in the Autumn Session of 1925 of the Indian Legislative Assembly to make provision for the restoration of the Buddha Gaya Temple to the Buddhists and for the better management of the same.² Such an attempt of legislation failed as Burma was shortly separated from India and consequently the Burmese members ceased to

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be the members of the Indian Legislative Assembly.³ Towards the end of his life in 1933 Dharmapala made a solemn asseveration that he would take birth in a brahmaṇa family of Vārāṇasī and in a new physical form continue the battle for the Buddha Gaya Temple. Even when he was lying on his death-bed, his enemies did not scruple to direct a serious blow at him. It was found that even the leader of a certain Buddhist group in Sri Lanka, who became very much eager for notoriety, concluded a secret agreement with the Mahanta of Buddha Gaya, which would have ruined Dharmapala's life-long endeavour. Later on, however, due to vehement protests from the Sinhalese Buddhists such a heinous agreement could not be put into operation. But when Dharmapala himself heard of the treachery, he became very much agitated and disquieted. Subsequently Devapriya Valisinha noting it wrote : "It was the greatest shock of his life, and I can vividly recollect his pain and anguish...Alas ! He never recovered from the shock. How could he forget such treachery even on his sick bed ?" During Anagarika Dharmapala's stay in Europe the agitation was continued with unabated vigour by Sri D. Valisinha, who succeeded in having the Buddha Gaya Temple question brought up before a meeting of Hindu Mahasabha, which was held at Kanpur under the presidency of Rev. U. Ottama. Again a Committee of Enquiry was appointed, with Bhai Paramananda as Chairman, and Sri Valisinha and others as members. This Committee became successful in finding a satisfactory solution to the problem, but Śrī Śaṅkarācārya of Puri, an orthodox leader, intervened and succeeded in upsetting the plan.² Bhai Paramananda had issued the undernoted statement on the refusal of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya to accept the findings of the Buddha Gaya Temple Committee : "The disapproval and consequent refusal of Sri Sankaracharya of Puri to accept the findings of the Buddha Gaya Temple Committee formed at the annual session of the Hindu Mahasabha at Cawnpore is based

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on two main grounds. The one is that the Buddhists in spite of being pressed by the Sanatanists and myself could not make out a *prima facie* case of their grievances against the present administration of the temple. And, the second is that in spite of the decisions of the Committee being of pro-Buddhist and anti-Sanatanist nature the Mahabodhi Society's Standing Committee and other responsible Buddhist bodies had repudiated them. Regarding both of these statements I have to say that they are absolutely wrong and unfounded. The grievances of the Buddhists have been of a very long standing nature. It was in 1925 that a Committee was appointed with Babu Rajendra Prasad as Chairman to enquire into their case. Babu Rajendra Prasad wrote a detailed report, the findings of which were deeply appreciated by the present Committee. The Sanatanist section was fully represented at the Cawnpore session of the Hindu Mahasabha and the present Committee was constituted with their full agreement. This Committee consisted of two Buddhists and two Sanatanist representatives, named by each section, and two members of the Hindu Mahasabha. It was very unfortunate that one Sanatanist representative Pandit Dwarka Prasad Chaturvedi was assisted by several other Sanatanists, who were always present in the meeting and of the Committee and were permitted to explain the Sanatanist views and who, though quite informally, had agreed to accept the decisions which were all unanimous. *Ceylon Buddhists' Attitude* : As for the second statement the letter, dated Colombo, July 29, 1935 of Maha Sangharaj Thero, the High Priest of the Buddhists in Ceylon, to whom the decisions of the Committee were referred for approval (just as to Sri Sankaracharya) evidently contradicts what Sri Sankaracharya says : 'I have the honour to inform you' continued the letter to the Chairman, 'that a public meeting of the Buddhists was held to-day in Colombo to consider the the proposals made by your Committee on the 9th instant for the settlement of the

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Buddha Gaya Temple question. A resolution was adopted consenting to the proposed arrangement with a view to arriving at an amicable settlement, a decision which I have great pleasure in endorsing'. Similarly a resolution accepting the terms of this settlement was passed at a meeting of the Burmese Buddhist Committee held on August 1 at Rangoon recommending slight additions to it. Under these circumstances, I would request Shri Sankaracharya to reconsider the situation and modify his views accordingly. I wish, however, to let the public know that after waiting for sufficiently long time I wrote the following letter on August 7, 1935 to the Mahant of the Buddha Gaya Temple, Gaya to which I am still awaiting a reply :—'The Assembly was in session in New Delhi when Pandit Dharma Dutt, your representative, approached me and other members and expressed a desire that efforts should be made to come to a compromise on the question of the Buddha Temple Bill that was to come before the Assembly as being introduced by the Burmese members. This question was taken up by the Hindu Mahasabha at its annual session at Cawnpore in April and the Mahasabha appointed a Committee to arrive at some settlement. This Committee met last month in Gaya and on that occasion we had the pleasure of playing you a visit. The decisions of the Committee which were unanimous and to which the Sanatanist representatives had agreed were conveyed to you. And at the same time one full month was given to both the parties to consider the question and communicate their approval to me by the 11th August, 1935. Only four more days are left and I have received no communication on that subject from the Sanatanist section. So far as I can see it is in the interest of your temple and its management that the settlement of the Committee should be given a practical shape. But in case I receive no approval from the Sanatanist section within the fixed date I shall be bound to absolve the Buddhist members from their promise of not proceeding with

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the Buddha Gaya Temple Bill and at the same time issue a statement to that effect.”¹

We have seen above that during a long period various recommendations in respect of the amicable settlement of the question of the Buddha Gaya Temple were suggested by many Committees. But none of the recommendations could be put into effect due to some obvious reasons. The failure of the efforts by some of the leading statesmen of India showed to the fact that this matter, as already remarked, could only be settled by legislation. Therefore, adequate steps were being adopted for passing a Bill on the management of the Buddha Gaya Temple by the Bihar Legislative Assembly. At last such a Bill was, only in 1949 passed and became an Act which is of utmost significance, because by it the Buddhists are once again allowed to have control over the management of the Buddha Gaya Temple.²

This Act called the Bodh Gaya Temple Act (Bihar XVII of 1949) which received the assent of the Governor of Bihar on June 19, 1949 is aimed “to make provision to the better management of the Bodh Gaya Temple and the properties appertaining thereto.” The Act provides the constitution of the Bodh Gaya Temple Management Committee by the Government of Bihar for entrusting it with the management and control of the Buddha Gaya Temple, Temple Land and the properties appertaining thereto. The Committee, as the Act allows, shall consist of a Chairman and eight members nominated by the Government of Bihar, all of whom shall be Indians and of whom four shall be Buddhists and four shall be Hindus including the Mahanta of the Bodh Gaya Math. The District Magistrate of Gaya shall be the ex-officio Chairman of the Committee. The Government of Bihar shall nominate a person from among the members to act as the Secretary to the Committee. The term of office of the members of the Committee shall ordinarily be three years. The Committee shall maintain its office at Buddha

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Gaya. Subject to the provisions of this Act or of any rules made subsequently, it shall be the duty of the Committee (i) to arrange for (a) the upkeep and repairs of the Temple, (b) the improvement of the Temple Land, (c) the welfare and safety of the pilgrims, and (d) the proper performance of worship at the Temple and piṇḍadāna (offering of piṇḍas) on the Temple Land ; (ii) to prevent the desecration of the Temple or any part thereof or any image therein ; (iii) to make arrangements for the receipt and disposal of the offerings made in the Temple, and for the safe custody of the statements of accounts and other documents relating to the Temple or the Temple Land and for the preservation of the property appertaining to the Temple ; (iv) to make arrangements for the custody, deposit and investment of funds in its hands ; and (v) to make provision for the payment of suitable emoluments to its salaried staff. The Act also provides that the Buddhists and the Hindus of every sect shall have access to the Temple and the Temple Land for the purpose of worship or piṇḍadāna ; and notwithstanding anything contained in any enactment for the time being in force, if there be any dispute between the Buddhists and the Hindus regarding the manner of using the Temple or the Temple Land, the decision of the Government of Bihar shall be final. According to this Act, the Committee shall also have jurisdiction over the movable or immovable property of the Saivite Monastery of Buddha Gaya ; and the Government of Bihar may constitute an Advisory Board which shall consist of such a number of members as the Government may determine. With the previous sanction of the Government of Bihar, the Committee may, from time to time, make bye-laws to carry out the purposes of this Act, which may provide for (a) the division of duties among the Chairman, the members and the Secretary to the Committee ; (b) the manner in which their decision may be ascertained otherwise than at the meetings ; (c) the procedure and conduct of business at the meetings of the Committee ;

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(d) the delegation of powers of the Committee to individual members ; (e) the books and accounts to be kept at the office of the Committee ; (f) the custody and investment of the funds of the Committee ; (g) the time and place of its meetings ; (h) the manner in which notice of its meeting shall be given ; (i) the preservation of order and the conduct of proceedings at the meetings and the powers which the Chairman may exercise for the purpose of enforcing its decisions ; (j) the manner in which the proceedings of its meetings shall be recorded ; (k) the persons by whom receipts may be granted for money paid to the Committee ; and (l) the maintenance of the cordial relations between the Buddhist and Hindu pilgrims. In this connection, it must be acknowledged that for the successful adoption of such a Bill effecting the management and control of the Buddha Gaya Temple, invaluable contributions were actually made by Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the First President of India, and Dr. Srikrishna Sinha, the then Chief Minister of Bihar. Without their keen interest this Bill would never have become an Act.

But the Mahanta of Buddha Gaya still continued to interfere into the matter and in the meantime had instituted a legal suit in the Civil Court for a declaration that this Act of the Government of Bihar was invalid and obtained an interim injunction from the Court restraining the Government of Bihar from taking any action in the enforcement of the Act. However, some time later the management of the Buddha Gaya Temple was ultimately entrusted with the Management Committee constituted duly according to this newly enacted Act.

The first formal meeting of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee was held at Gaya on April 26, 1953, wherein some important decisions were taken. One of the most important ones was the appointment of a caretaker to look after the affairs of the Temple. Since the Government of India withdrew its custodian several years ago, the Temple

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had been deprived of a person in authority to look after its needs and prevent thoughtless visitors from damaging the priceless objects of art. The first step taken by the Committee was, therefore, worthy of commendation. Some other important decisions of the Committee were the appointment of two bhikkhus to conduct worship in the Temple—one of whom was to be maintained by the Maha Bodhi Society of India, the placing of a charity box inside the Temple to facilitate offerings, and arrange a thorough cleaning of the Temple and the surrounding areas.

The historic ceremony of handing over the management of the Buddha Gaya Temple to the newly appointed Management Committee took place on May 28, 1953, at 5-30 p.m. The Chairman of the Committee, in this connection, issued out invitations to a large number of eminent persons. With the transfer of the Buddha Gaya Temple from the hands of the Mahanta to the Management Committee immediate steps were taken to improve the amenities available to the worshippers at this place. Mrs. Bianca Moonesinghe, wife of Mr. Nalin Moonesinghe who was the then Secretary of the Maha Bodhi Society of Sri Lanka, had come forward with the generous offer to bear the entire cost of electrifying the Temple and its surroundings. It would not be out of place to mention in this context that in May, 1953 Anagarika Munindra took over the charge of the Buddha Gaya Temple as its first Superintendent after the transfer of the management of the Temple to superintend over its affairs. He continued his assignment up to August, 1957. Brahmachari Jivananda succeeded him and had been looking after the management of the Temple since September, 1957. But in the Volume 4, No. 1 (May, 1976) issue of the *Prajñā* we find the following important announcement regarding an administrative change of the Temple : "We have much pleasure to notify that with the approval of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee Ven. Bhikshu Jnanajagat has been appointed superintendent of the Buddha Gaya Temple

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since March, 1976 Brahmachari Jivananda being away on leave. Ven. Bhikshu Jnanajagat who is a distinguished member of the Bharatiya Bhikkhu Sangha and had his training in Buddhism in Sri Lanka takes keen interest in the affairs of the Temple.”

In 1956 which was marked as the 2500th Buddha Jayanti Year some positive improvements were made to Buddha Gaya as a part of the overall programme launched by the Government. On this blessed occasion the long needed repairs to the Buddha Gaya Temple and its precincts were carried out and a portion of the area round the Temple was acquired and some ugly huts extending almost to the very edge of the compound were removed. A pradakṣiṇapatha or perambulating path round the compound was also opened up. Besides, some amenities for Buddha Gaya as a whole regarding electricity and water-supply were also provided, and a small museum to house the ancient relics lying scattered near the Temple, a commodious hostel with cheap accommodation and a first-class Circuit House where visitors might stay comfortably, were constructed.

We also find that some bye-laws made by the Bodh Gaya Temple Management Committee under sub-section (1) of Section 17 of the Bodh Gaya Temple Act, 1949 (Bihar Act 17 of 1949), having been confirmed by the Government of Bihar were published on February 26, 1957, as required by sub-section (3) of the said Section. The text of such bye-laws include Definitions of the “Act”, “Rules”, “Bye-laws”, “Chairman”, and “Secretary” ; details about the holding of the meetings of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee; some points relating to the preparation of the annual budget of the Committee and financial provision ; notes on the powers and duties of the office bearers ; and some points connected with the miscellaneous affairs. Some of the more important bye-laws are as follows : the meetings of the Committee shall be held at the office of the Committee or at such other place at Bodh Gaya as the Chairman or in his absence, the Secretary may

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decide ; the meetings of the Committee shall be held, as far as possible, at intervals not exceeding three months ; four members shall form the quorum at any meeting ; at the meetings of the Committee efforts shall be made to arrive at decisions by common consent failing which decisions shall be taken in accordance with the majority of votes of the members present and voting and in the case of equality of votes, the Chairman or, in his absence, the members presiding at the meeting, shall have a casting vote ; the annual budget of the Committee shall be finalised every year not later than the 31st January, and, at least, one month before the date of the meeting convened for the purpose of considering and passing the budget ; the Secretary shall, in consultation with the Chairman, prepare an estimated budget of expenditure which may be incurred during the ensuing financial year, a statement showing all expected receipts from all sources during the ensuing financial year, and an estimate of the balances likely to be available for expenditure during the ensuing financial year, and circulate them all with an explanatory memorandum, to all members of the Committee at least 21 days before the date of the meeting ; no expenditure shall be incurred unless it is sanctioned in the budget, provided that, to meet unforeseen and urgent expenditure, the Committee shall, subject to rules, be competent to sanction special grants during the year ; the budget for a financial year passed at the meeting of the Committee referred to in the bye-law 23, shall be forwarded for information to the State Government (i.e. the Government of Bihar) and to such other authority as the State Government may from time to time indicate ; money received whether by way of donation, subscription or in any other manner, shall be credited to the Fund of the Committee ; all bases and contracts shall be made in open public bids held after seven days of proper and public notice ; the appointment or the dismissal of a member of the staff of the Committee employed on a salary of Rs. 50/- a month and above shall rest with the Committee ;

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the Secretary shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Committee, and shall exercise supervision over the staff of the Committee and keep the books of accounts and other principal records of the Committee in his custody ; the Committee may designate the seniormost member of its office staff as its Superintendent who shall have the general charge of the office of the Committee and its day to day work, subject to any general or special direction which the Chairman or Secretary may from time to time give, deal with routine correspondence, examine and sign the cash-books and keep them in order and up-to-date, be responsible for the maintenance of the purity and cleanliness of the Temple and the Temple land, and look after the comforts of visitors and devotees ; and the Committee may from time to time, for any purpose connected with its work, appoint sub-committee consisting of such of its members and any other persons as it may think proper and such sub-committees shall exercise such powers and perform such functions as may be prescribed by the Committee.

Further, in exercise of the powers conferred by the Sub-Section (4) of the Section 15 of the Bodh Gaya Temple Act, 1949, the Governor of Bihar had been pleased to make the Bodh Gaya Temple Advisory Board Rules, 1959 in November of 1959. According to these Rules, the Advisory Board shall consist of not less than 20 and not more than two-thirds of such members shall be the Buddhists and at least half of these Buddhists shall be the residents of foreign countries ; all the members of the Board shall be appointed by the Government of Bihar ; the term of the office of the members of the Board shall be two years from the date of the constitution of the Board ; the members of the Board shall elect a person from amongst their own number to be the President of the Board ; the Commissioner of the Patna Division shall be the *ex-officio* Secretary to the Board ; the Government of Bihar may appoint any other member who is an official of the Government of Bihar to be the Joint Secretary to the Board for assisting the

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Secretary in his duties ; the meetings of the Board shall ordinarily be held at Buddha Gaya ; if any member of a foreign country, other than its diplomatic representative, is unable to attend a particular meeting of the Board, the diplomatic representative of his country in India may participate in the deliberations and proceedings of the meetings in the same manner as a member and if a diplomatic representative of a foreign country is unable to participate in a meeting, he may nominate any person on his behalf and such person may participate in the deliberations and proceedings of the meetings in the same manner as a member ; and the Secretary to the Board may from time to time ask for the report from the Chairman of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee on the action taken on the previous recommendations or suggestions of the Board and place it before the Board.

Accordingly, at a meeting of the Bodh Gaya Temple Advisory Board held on November 23, 1968 at Buddha Gaya the question of membership of the Board was discussed at length and was reported that action had already been taken to include the Ambassador of Japan in India as a member of the Board. Also in this meeting the details of concrete proposals for the works of improvements like the construction of the compound wall round the Temple Compound, plantation programme, meditation park, development of roads, etc. and the proposals envisaged in the Draft Master Plan for Buddha Gaya, the removal of ditches, and construction of the car park were discussed.

A new Buddha Gaya Temple Advisory Board had been constituted for a period of two years by the Political General & Transport Department of the Government of Bihar in January, 1971. It consisted of twenty-one members including the Consul General of the Union of Burma at Calcutta, High Commissioner for Sri Lanka in India, Ambassador of Laos or in his absence Counsellor of the Embassy of Laos in India, a high official of the Ecclesiastical Department of the Government

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of Sikkim, H. E. The Ambassador of Thailand or in his absence the Charge d' Affairs of Thai Embassy, First Secretary of the Royal Embassy of Combodia, a Member of the Board of Revenue of the Government of Bihar, Secretary to the Government of India of the Ministry of External Affairs, Director-General of Archaeology of the Government of India, Chairman of the Bodh Gaya Temple Management Committee, and other ten distinguished persons of Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Ladakh, West Bengal, Buddha Gaya and Gaya, who are nominated by the Government of Bihar. As in the case of earlier Board, the Commissioner of the Patna Division, Government of Bihar will act as the Member-Secretary to this Board and the Embassy of Japan was henceforth entitled to send one of its officials as an 'Observer' to attend the meeting of the Bodh Gaya Temple Advisory Board. The present Board under the rules is only to advise the Bodh Gaya Temple Management Committee which is a body with a much smaller status and works only for the Temple precincts. It was decided that the main function of this Advisory Board was to tender advice to the Government of Bihar and to the Government of India regarding the future planning and development of Buddha Gaya and not to the Temple Management Committee.²⁹

This newly constituted Bodh-Gaya Temple Advisory Board at its meeting held on April, 17, 1973 decided to hold the World Buddhist Conference at Buddha Gaya in 1974 and formed a preparatory Committee to go ahead with the preparations. By another resolution the Board also decided to take up excavation of Sujātā Kuṭir, a historical site, three miles off Buddha Gaya where Lord Buddha was offered rice cooked in milk by Sujātā, daughter of the haedmen of the village. This resolution asked the Archaeological Department of the Government of India to take up the excavation work by the June next. By another resolution the Board formed a 5-man Technical Committee to look into the application filed by different Buddhist countries for the allotment of land for the

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construction of monasteries and temples at Buddha Gaya. Apart from the Commissioner of Patna Division, Collector of Gaya and the Chairman of the Gaya Improvement Trust, one representative each from the Archaeological Department and from the C. P. W. D. would form this 5-man Technical Committee.³⁰

In this connection, it may be remembered that the Draft Master Plan for the development-programme at Buddha Gaya was published on September 15, 1966. It proposed to divide Buddha Gaya into eight sectors and envisaged an expenditure of Rs. 1,70,00,000/- in four different phases, for the acquisition and development of about 300 acres of land for meditation park, deer park, Temple landscape park, major recreational sub-sector, river front and archaeological excavation schemes at the rate of Rs. 6,000/- per acre ; for the compensation for acquired structures in cleared areas ; for the acquisition as well as development of about 250 acres for residential and allied needs at the rate of Rs. 15,000/- per acre ; for the construction of rural industrial estate ; for the construction of business-cum-shopping precincts, transport terminals, parking lots, etc. ; for the construction of schools and neighbouring centres ; for the construction of hospital and health centres ; for the construction of community centre, open air theatre, etc. ; for the construction of tourist homes, camping ground, rest houses ; for the construction of barrage-cum-roadway; flood protection; development of communications and of important sites in the vicinity ; for rehousing and new housing generally on aided self-help basis ; and lastly for agricultural support programme. It was further envisaged that this investment of Rs. 1.70 crores would be met in course of seventeen years, covering third to the sixth 5-year plans till 1981. The Master Plan also indicated the constitution of the Notified Area Committee and the Town Planning Authority to administer these development-programmes at an annual recurring establishment cost of Rs. 1,000,000/-. The Gaya Improvement Trust

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had been entrusted with the work of the Town Planning Authority.

But the above Draft Master Plan, in course of time, became outdated. Not only there were topographical changes but also there were considerable rise in prices. Hence the outlay of the Master Plan had to be revised upwards and the overall estimated cost went up to Rs. 2,01,76000/- distributed among the Southern Sector, Temple Sector, Northern Sector, North-Western Sector, South-Western Sector, River-Front Sector and Bakraur Section. Considering the limitation of funds detailed estimates were prepared worth Rs. 2,56,221/- only for taking up the development-work in the South-Western Sector for the following items : construction of roads and culverts, arboriculture work (tree plantation), construction of parks, demarcation of plots meant for the monasteries to be erected by the foreign countries by constructing boundary as well as pillars, water-supply, and soil sewerage. But unfortunately, a sum of Rs. 1,00,000/- only became available so far as against the aforesaid estimates. The following schemes were taken up out of this fund and this amount had been exhausted for the (i) construction of the approach road to the Japanese Rest House, (ii) construction of soil sewerage along the approach-road, (iii) construction of water-supply along the approach road. (iv) construction of parks (only railing around the park), (v) construction of road along parks, and (vi) construction of brick gabion along the approach road to the Japanese Rest House. Even this modified Draft Master Plan had obviously become completely outdated and a further revision was absolutely necessary before its approval or implementation.

Hence at the request of the Secretary, the Bodh Gaya Temple Advisory Board, it was decided at its meeting held on January 19, 1972 to constitute a Sub-Committee consisting of the District Magistrate of Gaya and Chairman of the Bodh-Gaya Temple Management Committee as the Chairman and

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Convenor, and the Chief Town Planner of the Government of Bihar, Chairman of the Gaya Improvement Trust and Bodh Gaya Town Planning Authority, Superintendent of Archaeology (Mid-Eastern Circle, Patna) of the Government of India, and the Director of the Institute of Industrial Design of Bihar as members for examining the Draft Master Plan and its recommended modifications, for preparing list of schemes in accordance with priority as well as importance and for suggesting ways to execute them. This Sub-Committee finalised its recommendations on September 27, 1972.

Accordingly, the Draft Master Plan had been revised on the suggestion of the Bodh-Gaya Temple Advisory Board and had been submitted to the Government of Bihar for approval. But its implementation was being affected according to the Revised Draft Master Plan and constructions of permanent nature had not been allowed in the areas reserved by the Archaeological Department. Allotments of lands were being finalised on the basis of applications received in respect of areas reserved in the Revised Draft Master Plan for cultural and religious institutions.

The Revised Draft Master Plan of Buddha Gaya incorporated the following basic changes in the original Draft Master Plan : (i) the University area was to be shifted from the western side of the Gaya-Dobhi Road to the eastern side in consideration of the fact that the buildings have already come up in the eastern side in contravention of the original draft ; (ii) the North-Western Sector of Buddha Gaya which was initially earmarked as a green belt had to be developed as an area for the institutions in consideration of the fact that this is the nearest area now available for the growth of various institutions ; (iii) the west central areas which lay almost directly in between the Mahabodhi Temple and the Gaya-Dobhi Road should be earmarked for parks etc., so that the view of the Temple would not be obstructed while approaching from a distance ; (iv) the Revised Draft Master Plan also envisaged

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the expansion of commercial and residential areas in the North-Western Sector extending up to the Gaya-Dobhi Road ; (v) the commercial centre including transport terminals would now be proposed to be developed in the South-Western Sector in between the block campus and University campus adjacent south to the present link road ; (vi) the coverage of the Revised Draft Master Plan had been increased from 1,200 acres to 1,438 acres of land. It had been anticipated that the Revised Draft Master Plan would now have an outlay of about 3 crores of rupees.

However, by the administrative-cum-executive authorities of the Government of Bihar for the developement of Buddha Gaya the following important schemes had ultimately been adopted, namely, (a) consequent upon the suggestions received in the 8th meeting of the Bodh-Gaya Temple Advisory Board held on the 27th September, 1966 a double storeyed Tourist Lodge-cum-Cafeteria-cum-Information Centre was under construction by the P.W.D., under the auspices of the Department of Tourism of the Government of Bihar ; (b) as the Temple Management Committee did not have enough accommodation in the existing building even to run its office, it proposed to construct a building with proper accommodation for the office room, a reading room, and several guest rooms with attached baths, etc. at an estimated cost of Ra. 1,00,000 ; (c) it also proposed to construct a Meditaion Centre at Buddha Gaya for the Buddhist scholars and monks of different countries at an estimated cost of Rs. 80,000 ; (d) it further proposed to construct a building cantainine a Lecture Hall for religious discourses, at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,00,000 ; (e) it desired also to construct a suitable building for the Library and to equip it wth a large number of books and periodicals at the estimated initial cost of Rs. 1,50,000 ; (f) the incomplete compound wall around the Mahābodhi Temple would have to be completed at an expenditure of about Rs. 1,00,000 ; (g) work had then already been undertaken to provide for a suitable car park opposite the

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northern entrance to the Buddha Gaya Temple ; (h) programme had also been undertaken to repair and colour wash of the Temple at the cost of Rs.2,00,000; (i) a plan was being worked out to suitably locate the Pañca Pāṇḍava Temple situated now almost adjacent south-east to the Mahābodhi Temple in a better looking building ; (j) the Temple Management Committee had been considering to take up thorough electrification work along the boundary walls, the Bodhi Tree, and the areas adjoining the Temple ; (k) also it was planning to arrange for the preparation and sale at a profit of some souvenirs like folders, pictures, post cards, greeting cards, mini-models of the Temple, memos etc. ; (l) a scheme had already been taken up by the Government of Bihar for the clearance of the slum colony at the southern side of the Buddha Gaya Temple ; (m) the Temple Management Committee was further considering to construct a suitable market-place and to let out shops on reasonable rent ;³¹ (n) the work relating to the improvement of the Lotus Tank in the precincts of the Buddha Gaya Temple had been taken up—it included the reconstruction of the parapet along the Lotus Tank, construction of the fencing and a foot-path around the Tank at the estimated expenditure of Rs. 20,000/- ; (o) a project was being prepared for lighting of the outer periphery of the precincts of the Buddha Gaya Temple—for the implementation of this project assistance was sought to be obtained from the Bihar State Electricity Board and for financing the development as well as improvement of the precincts of the Buddha Gaya Temple it was proposed to levy parking fees for vehicles coming to Buddha Gaya ; (p) The Conservator of Forests had prepared projects for the construction of a pathway from Tapovana to Buddha Gaya via Bhindus at an estimated expenditure of Rs. 3.3 lakhs, for laying out a Deer Park at Buddha Gaya in accordance with the Master Plan at an estimated expenditure of Rs. 65,000/- and for the development works like road-side plantations along the Gaya-Buddha Gaya Road at an estimated expenditure of Rs. 5 lakhs ;

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(q) the P. W. D. of the Government Bihar had been preparing a draft plan for the construction of a road from Rajgir to Buddha Gaya along the route followed by Lord Buddha with bridges across the rivers Phalgoo, Paimar, Mohane and Niranjana—the construction of this road would also provide access to pilgrims desiring to visit Dogesh-wari and Bakraur ;

(r) the work of constructing a road from the Burmese Temple up to the local market at Buddha Gaya at an estimated expenditure of Rs. 1,20,000/-had already been taken up by the P.W.D. of the Government of Bihar³² ;

(s) consequent upon the suggestion made at the meeting of the Bodh-Gaya Temple Advisory Board held at Buddha Gaya on November 23, 1968 a Committee consisting of the District Magistrate of the Gaya District, Chief Town Planner of the Government of Bihar, Chairman of the Gaya Improvement Trust and Regional Development Officer of the Patna Division, was constituted. This Committee proposed phasing of the First Five Year Plan for the development of Buddha Gaya at the total estimated cost of Rs. 32,27,815/-. The programmes of the first phase of the two years of the First Five Year Plan included the acquisition and construction of 2 acres of land for the approach road to the plot allotted to the foreign missionaries ; general development of 87 acres of land ; acquisition of 3 acres of Dhanhar land and 3 acres of homestead land and 50 houses around the Lotus Tank situated to the east of the Mahābodhi Temple ; construction of a compound wall around the Temple ; colouring of the Temple ; construction of 15'-0" wide metalled footpath around the Mahābodhi Temple with levelling, dressing and car parking ; construction of parks ; construction of shops ; acquisition of 3.5 acres of land between the existing main road and the Mahābodhi Temple, Birla Temple ; construction of concrete benches ; electrification and water-supply ; construction of a stone wall ; and avenue plantation. The second phase of the two years of the said Plan made provisions

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for the acquisition and development of 20 acres of land for rehabilitation of villagers ; acquisition of 11 acres of homestead land and compensation of 200 houses ; construction of spray fountain ; construction of a tank (only excavation) ; construction of 40' wide metalled road ; also construction of 25' wide metalled road ; construction of a cement concrete foot-path ; avenue plantation with levelling, dressing and car parking ; while the third phase of one year of the First Five Year Plan would consider the proposals relating to the acquisition of 25.5 acres of Dhanhar land ; construction of the Meditation Huts ; construction of the Meditation Centre ; afforestation ; construction of moorum foot-path ; construction of the Refreshment Centre ; electrification and water-supply ; and construction of railing, and 60' wide bridge around and on the Tank.

Thus, from the above study, it has become evident that through the introduction of the Bodh-Gaya Temple Act, the framing of the Bodh-Gaya Temple Advisory Board Rules and the preparation of the Draft Master Plan as well as the Revised Draft Master Plan for the development of Buddha Gaya the Government of Bihar, and the Bodh-Gaya Temple Advisory Board as well as the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee have been with full co-ordination endeavouring for the overall uplift and development of the whole area centering round the famous Mahābodhi Temple, now popularly known as the Bodh Gaya Temple, which has, as already observed, a long and colourful history of its own. Even today thousands of devoted pilgrims, earnest scholars, and sympathetic intellectuals of different parts of India as well as of various countries of the World visit this great historic Temple and pay their respectful homage to Gautama Buddha at the place where He attained the Perfect Enlightenment more than two thousand five hundred years ago. The very dust, soil, and broken stones of Buddha Gaya are reminiscent of this great Master and hence the importance of

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Buddha Gaya or Bodh Gaya with its celebrated Temple and sacred ruins of ancient monasteries as well all of caityas in the life of a devoted Buddhist may neither be gainsaid nor exaggerated.³³

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CHAPTER SIX

RECENT ACTIVITIES IN AND AROUND THE TEMPLE

As already discussed, the very position of the Mahābodhi Temple, popularly called the Buddha Gaya Temple, is significant, because this Temple is situated at such a place where Gautama Buddha had attained to the Supreme Enlightenment under the sacred Bodhi Tree on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha. The whole area where the Temple is located suffered from unspeakable destruction in the 13th century A. C. and during the 16th century the management of this great Temple along with its surroundings passed into the hands of the Mahanta who belonged to the Brahmanical faith. Indeed it was through ceaseless moral struggle launched by the Buddhists of India and abroad that ultimately in 1949 the Government of the State of Bihar of India caused to pass the Bodh-Gaya Temple Act (Bihar Act XVII of 1949), which is primarily aimed at making "provision for the better management of the Buddha-Gaya Temple and the properties appertaining thereto." In accordance with this Act the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee had been constituted as early as in 1953 to take charge of this Temple, which was formally handed over by the then Mahanta of Buddha Gaya on the thrice blessed Buddha Purnima Day of May 23, 1953 to the great satisfaction of the Buddhists all over the world.¹ But at the time of this transfer of management of this Temple, the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee had no fund and no resources to carry on the day-to-day administration and to implement some new plans for the development of the Temple in particular and of the whole area in general. But both the Governments of India and the State of Bihar extended their

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helping hands to ease the immediate financial problems faced by the Committee and the Committee itself spared no effort to proceed with its phased programmes of repair and development-work planned for the Temple with such assistance.

The Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee organises every year the Buddha Jayanti Celebrations and public meetings at Buddha Gaya to commemorate Buddha's birth, enlightenment, and demise in the month of May. On this occasion under the auspices of the Committee the Temple and its precincts are beautifully decorated with Buddhist flags ; early in the morning the holy suttas are chanted by the bhikkhus ; a colourful procession led by monks from India, Bangladesh, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Tibet, China, Japan and other countries, and followed by a large retinue of lay devotees with offerings starts from the Office of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee and enters the precincts of the Temple through the northern gate and circumambulates the Temple thrice ; in the afternoon the public meetings to discuss the various points of Buddhism are held ; and in the evening the sacred Bodhi Tree and Temple premises are decorated with multi-coloured electric lamps. Also, the Committee holds religious function on other Buddhist festive occasions throughout the year.

In order to meet with the expenses involved in the organisation of such festivities the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee itself for financial assistance from the public has issued out the following appeal : *Since the historic transfer of the sacred Buddha Gaya Temple (known to the Buddhists as the Mahābodhi Temple) in 1953, the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee constituted by the Government of Bihar, under the Buddha Gaya Temple Act, 1949, has been making its sincerest efforts to develop the Buddha-Gaya Temple and its surroundings with the help of visitors and pilgrims from India and abroad who have generously been contributing towards its*

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development income and it wholly depends on the charity or donations given by the visitors and pilgrims. The Committee has, therefore, been finding it very difficult to execute its plans and programme. We, therefore, appeal to the generous public of home and abroad to come forward with liberal contributions to strengthen our hands in performing the noble duty of executing the following plans and projects relating to the sacred Buddha-Gaya Temple where Lord Buddha attained the Supreme Enlignenment :

Plans and Projects with approximate cost :

- 1. Repairs to the Buddha-Gaya Temple with the replacement of broken images in the niches . Rs. 300, 000/-*
- 2. Colour washing of the Temple building...Rs. 100,000/-*
- 3. Construction of Compound Railing...Rs. 125,000/-*
- 4. Construction of the Replica of old Asokan Railing around the Temple...Rs. 60,000/-*
- 5. Repair to the votive stūpas around the Temple...Rs. 30,000/-*
- 6. Construction of a composite building for the Office, Library, and Guest House...Rs. 300,000/-*

The Bodh Gaya Temple Advisory Board consisted in 1973 of the following 21 members : (1) Consul General of the Union of Burma in Calcutta, (2) H. E. High Commissioner of Sri Lanka in India, (3) Sri Lalit Hewavitharane, Colombo, Sri Lanka, (4) H. E. the Ambassador of Laos in India, (5) H. E. the Ambassador of Thailand in India, (6) H. E. the Ambassador of Cambodia in India, (7) Dayabir Singh of Nepal, (8) Sri Daso Pema Wangchuk of Bhutan, (9) Ven. Lama Kushak Bakula of Ladakh, (10) Sri Sherab T. Gyalsen of the Ecclesiastical Department of Sikkim, (11) Ven. Dharmapal Bhikkhu of the Baddha Dharmankur Sabha or the Bengal Buddhist Association of Calcutta, (12) Sri T. Wangdi of Darjeeling, (13) Sri S. V. Sohani I.C.S., (14) The Secretary to the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India,

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Ex-Officio (15) The Director General of Archaeology, Government of India, *Ex-Officio*, (16) The Commissioner of the Patna Division, Member-Secretary, *Ex-Officio*, (17) The Chairman of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee, *Ex-Officio*, (18) Sri Dwarko Sundrani Secretary of the Samanvay Ashram, Buddha Gaya, (19) Sri Upendra Nath Verma, Manpur, Gaya, (20) Sri Awadh Singh, Gaya, (21) Sri Hans Kumar Tewari, Gaya. Besides, the Embassy of Japan in India will send one of its official as an observer to attend the meeting of the Buddha Gaya Temple Advisory Board. We may mention here that in a meeting on April 2, 1976 under the chairmanship of the Thai Ambassador in India various matters relating to the development of the Temple and its surroundings were discussed and the need for the speedy execution of the projects already announced was much emphasised.

The Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee on the expiry of its term had been reconstituted with effect from February 1, 1975 by the Government of Bihar for the next three years according to the Bodhi-Gaya Temple Act, 1949. It was recorded that in appreciation of the resourceful and progressive activities of the preceding Committee in respect of the affairs of the Buddha Gaya Temple the Government had been pleased to renominate all the sitting members for the next term except Dr. N. K. Roy who had already resigned from the Committee on ground of health. Dr. Roy who served the Temple as a member of the Committee for the three consecutive terms was accorded a hearty farewell on the eve of his retirement from the Committee. In paying tributes to him the members of the Committee recalled his valuable services to the Committee during the tenure of his office. The existing member of the Committee hoped that they would not be deprived of his services in future as well and wished him speedy restoration of health. Dr. Roy was replaced by

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Sri Netra Ranjan Barua who had been nominated as one of the Buddhist members of the Committee to represent the Bauddha Dharmankur Sabha. The present (i. e. in May, 1978) Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee consists of the following nine members, viz. (i) Prem Prakash Sharma, District Magistrate of Gaya, *Chairman, Ex-Officio*, (ii) Sri Ramnandan Prasad Singh, Advocate, *Member-Secretary*, (iii) Sri Shatanand Giri Mahanth of the Bodh-Gaya Math, *Member*, (iv) Ven. N. Jinaratana Mahathera, General Secretary of the Maha Bodhi Society of India, *Member*, (v) Ven. Sasanabangsa Bhikshu, *Member*, (vi) Sri Upendra Maharathi, *Member*, (vii) Sri Netra Ranjan Barua of the Bauddha Dharmankur Sabha or the Bengal Buddhist Association, Calcutta, *Member*, (viii) Sri Dwarko Sundrani of the Samanvay Ashram, Bodh-Gaya, *Member*, and (ix) the Curator of the Archaeological Museum, Bodhgaya, *Member*.

Works of Repair & Development

It is to be noted that the repair of the main building of the Temple involving masonry work was initiated in 1953 and completed in 1956. The inner and outer *parikramās* were also constructed for the convenience of the pilgrims and devotees who would desire to circumambulate the Temple thrice for the religious purposes. The Temple and its precincts thus renovated present a charming scene. In the meantime, the Lotus Tank in which Gautama Buddha is said to have bathed had been reexcavated and a concrete railing around the Tank was constructed, which provided a wide path for walk. The Aśokan Pillar which was originally erected in the centre of the courtyard between the Temple and the Lotus Tank to mark the sacred spot of Sujātā's offering of milk-rice to Ascetic Siddhārtha on the eve of the attainment of his Perfect Enlightenment had been reinstalled because the Pillar itself had been dislodged and carried away by the current of the Niranjana.

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Renovation of the Lotus Tank had also been carried out by providing seats and railings under the Hard Manual Scheme of the Government of Bihar. This adaptation had Further added to the beauty of the Tank. Again in order to prevent pollution of the Lotus Tank by external elements the boundary wall around it had been raised. A suitable garden is now being developed to add to its scenic beauty. The Committee is receiving suggestions for construction of a stone structure in the centre of the Tank displaying an image of Buddha under the spreading hood of Mucalinda Nāga, the serpent king. According to the tradition this serpent king once protected the Blessed One from the torrential rain accompanied by gust of chilly wind by coiling itself around Him and spreading its hood over His head. Also 13 electric flood lamps of 1000 watts had been installed for the illumination of the Temple to meet the demand of the devotees who would become inclined to get the Temple illuminated on payment of electric charges. At the next phase of the development work the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee replaced the main door of the Temple, which was formerly made of iron-rods of ugly appearance, with a beautiful designed door of excellent teak wood by two other doors and just on the top of the door the arch had been covered with grill with the beautiful design of pekul tree being the symbol of the Bodhi Tree with two peacocks on both sides. Within the shrine room a dias for placing worshipping materials and a wooden canopy stand had been provided. Further, the Committee had constructed a railing round the Bodhi Tree with a view to protecting the holy Tree and the vajrāsana from being desecrated by careless visitors and ignorant animals. At the suggestion of the Department of Archaeology the construction work in connection with the old dilapidated Aśokan railings with their concrete replica had been undertaken. The Committee also in course of time had

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stopped the practice of gilding haphazardly and consequently disfiguring the main Buddha Image of the Temple by the pilgrims and worshippers and utilised the services of a band of competent artists who cleared, repaired and gilded the image afresh to suit the artistic taste with gold leaves donated by the Burmese devotees. At present the image bears a resplendent and graceful look. The Committee had also received ungrudging services from Sri U. Maharathi, an artist and a member of the Committee, in respect of art activities. In one of its meetings the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee had decided to replace the four broken stūpas on the top of the Temple. Accordingly, the sculptors had been engaged at the expenditure of Rs. 4,500/- to construct the same.² Again it is interesting to note that an old dilapidated stūpa had been discovered at a village called Bakrone in the vicinity of the Buddha Gaya Temple, which once formed a part of the ancient Senānigāma, a place where Siddhārtha received the milk rice offered by Sujātā, daughter of a noble family. The Archaeological Survey of India had taken up the excavation work of the mound in October, 1973 at the request of the Buddha Gaya Temple Advisory Board. The initial work executed under the supervision of Sri Srivastava, Superintending Archaeologist, had revealed the remains of a wide *pradakṣiṇa* around the stūpa and a small votive stūpa on the eastern gate as well as the abodes of the monks nearby. The work of enamel painting of the main shrine of the Temple, which was undertaken by the Tibetan Monastery of Buddha Gaya had also been completed in 20 days at the expenditure of Rs. 10,000/- approximately with the consent of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee. Also in view of the urgent need of repairing the lower portion of the walls of the Temple a decision was adopted by the Committee in its meeting held on December 15, 1974 to take up repair work as early as possible and the construction work of the compound wall on the

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western side to match up with the northern wall which was completed in 1968. It had since been resolved by the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee to convert the upper shrine of the Buddha Gaya Temple into a meditation cell for the serious meditators who would aspire to carry on their meditational practices in the sacred and serene atmosphere of the Temple. The upper shrine room along with verandah would be painted with plastic paints after necessary repairs for the purpose. With a view to maintaining its sanctity and solitude doors would be fitted to the entrance of the verandah to restrict the entry of the public. Venerable Lord Abbot of the Thai Monastery at Buddha Gaya had graciously undertaken the noble task of bearing the entire cost of renovation required in this connection and to provide with carpets, fans and other requisites for decorating the cell. The task of converting the upper shrine room of the Main Temple into a Meditation Hall for the meditators to carry on meditational practices in the calm and quiet atmosphere of the holy Temple had been completed at an expenditure of over Rs. 25,000/- and on January 28, 1977 in the presence of many meditators headed by the eminent meditation-teacher Sri S. N. Goenka the well-equipped Meditation Hall had been inaugurated amidst chanting the suttas by the Buddhist monks of Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Sri Lanka, Japan, Bhutan, Tibet, and India. It may also be mentioned here that Sri Chhunjela, a Tibetan devotee, caused to erect at his own expense, as a part of the renovation work of the Temple, the western gate. His Holiness the Dalai Lama during his visit to the Buddha Gaya Temple on February 8, 1977 also expressed great satisfaction at the progress of renovation and development work of the Temple.

Also the construction of the compound wall around the Buddha Gaya Temple is one of the important items of development work planned by the Buddha Gaya Temple Manage-

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ment Committee. The construction of the wall on the western side had since been completed at the cost of Rs. 35,000/- only to match up with the northern compound wall already constructed in 1968. The work with regard to the construction of the southern and eastern walls was yet to be undertaken, but the lack of fund was the only obstacle. It may be mentioned that the design of the wall had been taken from the replica of the Aśokan pillar encircling the Main Shrine. But the Vols. V & VI, Feb-May, 1978, Nos. 4 & 1 issue of the *Prajñā* reported that the strenuous efforts of the Buddha Gaya Temple Menagement Committee enabled it to eradicate some nuisances by the completion of the work of construction of the compound wall with fixed iron grill presenting a beautiful look. The three massive gates with iron shutters on the north, east and west added to charms of the environment.

We may also mention here that a group of Tibetan devotees, who volunteered to undertake the repair work relating to the Temple for giving it a new look had been for a certain period engaged in the repair of broken images in the niches and renovation of the outer and upper sides of the Main Shrine. Incidentally it may be reported that they had also undertaken the work of repair and renovation around the Temple earlier. The work of the construction of the boundary wall was taken up by the generous donation from the Thai pilgrims. Much of the work in this connection had been completed with the exception of a little portion of the southern wall. Again with a view to protecting and beautifying the Temple premises including the Lotus Tank it was essential to set three feet high iron grill railing on the boundary walls. A model of such grill measuring ten feet in length would cost Rs. 186/-. An estimate would show that 240 donors paying this amount each were required to complete the same. It may be said here that a full length footpath by the side of the northern boundary wall had

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already been constructed for the safety and comfort of the pedestrians. Also a devout Buddhist from Thailand had caused to erect a magnificent gate filled to the eastern boundary wall, which now facing the river presents a panoramic view.

The Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee had decided to purchase five new model flood lights of super quality recently introduced by Philips India Ltd. for installation at the Temple through the donations of generous devotees³. A Thai devotee had been the first to provide the Temple with such a new model flood light at the cost of Rs. 1,000/-.

Prajñā : Buddha Gaya Quarterly

The Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee resolved to publish quarterly a periodical on Buddhism and Buddhist culture in 1973 as its effective organ. In pursuance of that resolution it has been issuing out regularly the "Prajñā : Buddha Gaya Quarterly" since the Buddha Purnima Day in the month of May of that year under the able editorship of Sri Silananda Brahmachari, a Buddhist scholar. After offering the Pujā Sri U. Maharathi, a member of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee, solemnly announced on the 17th May, 1973 the publication of the first issue of the Prajñā to the joy of all present under the Bodhi Tree. The Prajñā has been published in the months of May, August, November, and February to propagate the teachings of Lord Buddha "with a view to fostering international brotherhood and promoting cultural relationship between India and abroad." So far many renowned scholars had contributed to it their learned papers. Among them mention may be made of Christmas Humphreys (The Saṅgha), Francis Story (Rational Morality), Silananda Brahmachari (Nibbāna), Ven. Dr. U. Dhammaratana (Buddhism in the past and its significance for the present), Dr. Kalyan Kumar Ganguli (The Art of Buddha-Gaya), Dr. Heramba Chatterjee (Sūnyavāda as propounded in

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the Ratnāvalī of Nāgāriuna), Brahmachari Jibananda (Years of Activities of the Buddha-Gaya Temple Management Committee) in the Vol. 1, No. 1 ; Ronald Fussell (Buddhism—The Supreme Therapy), Dr. Beni Madhab Barua (Some Aspects of Early Buddhism), Ven. Piyadassi Maha Thera (Self Mastery), Silananda Brahmachari (Karma in Buddhism), Dr. Shyam Sundar Banerjee (Buddha : A Product of Social Urge) in the Vol. 1, No. 2 ; Dr. Hiranmay Banerjee (Tagore's Homage to Buddha), Dr. Beni Madhab Barua (Some Aspects of Early Buddhism), A. T. Ariyaratne (Inspiration for Sarvodaya from the Buddhist Thought), Silananda Brahmachari (First Noble Truth), Dr. Kanai Lal Hazra. (The Mūlasoma as a source book for Siamese Buddhism in Lodaiya's reign) in the Vol. 1, No. 3 ; Dr. Biswanath Banerjee (Kālacakra School of Buddhism), Dr. Beni Madhab Barua (Some Aspects of Early Buddhism), Dr. Sukomal Chaudhuri (An Introduction to Kālacakra-Yāna), Silananda Brahmachari (Second Noble Truth) in the Vol. I, No. 4 ; Acharya Buddharakkhita Thera (The Day is Blessed Thrice), Dr. Buddhadasa P. Kirthisinghe (The World's Oldest Tree in Sri Lanka), Dr. Binayendra Nath Chaudhury (Pañcanīvaraṇa), Silananda Brahmachari (The Third Noble Truth), Rahul Sankrityayana (Buddhist Dialectics), Ven. Mahathera N. Jinaratana (Revival of Buddhism in india) in the Vol. II, No. 1 ; P. N. Banerjee (Impact of Buddhism on the Japanese Language), Upendra Maharathi (Aśvaghosa—the Star of Mahāyāna Buddhism), Silananda Brahmachari (The Fourth Noble Truth), Ven. Bhikkhu Tri-Khong (Buddhism In Viet-Nam) in the Vol. II, No. 2.; U. Nu (Some Important Aspects of Jainism and Buddhism), Acharya Buddharakkhita Thera (Buddha's Path of Maitrī), Dr. K. L. Hazra (Place of Wat Pavaranivesa in Siam's Buddhist World), Silananda Brahmachari (The Law of Cause and Effect) in the Vol. II, No. 3 ; Ven. Ringu Tulku (The Story of the Sixteen Arahats : Tradition of Tibetan Mahāyāna), U. Nu

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(Some Important Aspects of Jainism and Buddhism), Sm. Kalpana Mondal (Impact of Early Buddhism on Contemporary Art), Amal Barua (Ethical Import of the term 'Right'), Silananda Brahmachari (The Law of Cause and Effect) in the Vol. II, No. 4 ; U Nu (Path to Arahatsip), Dr. Sukumar Sengupta (The Pious Buddhist Kings Leo Thai and Lu Thai of Thailand), Devapriya Barua (A Great Saint of Bangladesh) in the Vol. III, No. 1 ; Ven. Nyanaponika Mahathera (Devotion in Buddhism), Dr. D. R. Das (Buddhist Sites in Orissa), Dr. Dipak K. Barua (Vidyākara—a Buddhist Anthologist of Ancient Bengal and his Subhāsitaratnakōṣa), Dr. Hari Prasad (Some Thoughts on Buddhism) in the Vol. III, No. 2 ; U Nu (Practical Buddhism), Ven. Dhammadhara Mahathera (Netti Pakarana—Book on Theravāda Logic), Silananda Brahmachari (Mind and Mental Faculties), Dr. Dipak K. Barua (Geography of Buddhist Central Asia) in the Vol III, No. 3 ; G. M. Bongard-Levin (Buddhist Studies in the U. S. S. R.), Dr. Dipak K. Barua (Buddhism in Tukharistan and its neighbourhood) in the Vol. III, No. 4 ; Bhikkhu Sangharakshita (The Middle Way), Dr. Dipak K. Barua (Buddhism in Kashgar and Cokkuka), Dr. K. L. Hazra (Reformation of the Buddhist Saṅgha and the establishment of the Siyama Nikāya in Ceylon) in the Vol. IV, No. 1 ; Dr. L. M. Joshi (Prolegomena to Buddhology), Dr. Dipak K. Barua (Buddhist Culture in some States of the Tarin Basin), Daisetz T. Suzuki (The Object of publication of the Tibetan Tripiṭaka) in the Vol. IV, No. 2 ; Dr. R. Nebesky De Wejkowitz (The Introduction of Buddhism into Sikkim), Sri A. K. Hait (The Khaḍga : A Buddhist Dynasty of Eastern Bengal), Dr. Dipak Kumar Barua (Buddhist Remains in Kucha, Karasahr, Aksu, and Turfan), Sri Silananda Brahmachari (Mind and Mental Faculties) in the Vol. IV, No. 3 ; Dr. Shohie Ichimuro & Dr. Buddhadasa P. Kirthisinghe (The Buddhagaya Temple—The Great Center of Buddhism), Dr. Dipak Kumar Barua (Buddhist Art of Central Asia), Sri Silananda Brahma-

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chri (Phenomena of Birth and Death) in the issue of the Vol. IV, No. 4 ; Dr. L. M. Joshi (Buddhist Contribution to Art and Architecture), George D. Bond (The Nettipakarāṇa and the Logic of interpretation), Dr. Sukomal Chaudhuri (On Buddhist Meditation), Sri Amal Barua (The Genesis of Buddhist Philosophy), Dr. Dipak Kumar Barua (Paintings of Buddhist Central Asia) in the Vol V, No. 1 ; Sench Murana (A Short Essay on the Introduction of Buddhism into China), Ven. Dr. H. Saddhatissa (Mahakaruna and Mahaprajna of the Buddha), Dr. Dipak Kumar Barua (Paintings of Buddhist Miran Kucha Kuntura Sorcuq and Turfan), Bamadev Mahapatra (Yama-Dharma—A New Buddhist Archaeological Site in Orissa), Sri Silananda Brahmachari (Bhāvanā—Mental Development) in the Vol V, No. 2 ; Soo Hui Hong (Buddhism in Korea), Dr. Kanai Lal Hazra (King Kyawswa and his Inscription), Dr. Dipak K. Barua (Some Buddhist Paintings of Central Asia) in the Vol V, No. 3 ; and Ven. Ananda Mitra Mahathera (Buddhism—A Religion of Humanity), Prof. Amiya Kumar Hait (The Candras : A Buddhist Dynasty of Eastern Bengal), Sri Silananda Brahmachari (The place of Vipassana in Buddhist Meditation), Prof. Prahlad Pradhan (A Note on Kuruma) in the Vols. V & VI, Nos. 4 & 1 issue of the Prajnā. Besides, the *Buddha Gaya Temple—Its History* of the present author was published from its Vol I, No. 2 to Vol. II, No. 4 issues. Also the *Dhammapada In Words* written by the Editor is being serially published from its Vol. III, No. 1 issue. In the very first issue of the Vol. 1 the Editor of the Prajnā published the following brief note : “On account of unavoidable reason ‘Buddha Gaya Temple—Its History’ could not be published in this issue. It is regretted.—Editor”. The Prajnā also arranges regularly spaces for the ‘Book-Reviews’ and ‘In and Around the Buddha Gaya Temple’. As regards the ‘Book-Reviews’ its Editor has added : “Authors and Publishers on Buddhism in particular and Indology in general are requested to send two copies of

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their publications to our official address for reviewing them in this newly introduced Section—Ed.” Sri Amal Barua of 17A Bediapara Lane, Calcutta-700 050, India, has been appointed its Representative in Calcutta. The title page of this journal includes the following teaching of Buddha : Sabbapāpassa Akaranam Kusalassa Upasampadā/Sacitta pariyodapanam etam Buddhāna sāsanaṃ—Not to do any evil, to cultivate good to purify one’s mind : this is the Teaching of the Buddhas. Its cover-design has been made by Sri Upendra Maharathi. The cover page bears the following verse from the *Dhammapada* : Uttiṭṭhe nappamajjeyya, dhammam sucari-tam care—Arise, awake and follow the perfect path of truth.

The Editorial of the very first issue of the ‘Prajñā : Buddha Gaya Quarterly’ ran as follows and it revealed the aims and objects of this new journal : “To-day is the Full moon-day of Vaisakh blessed by the birth, enlightenment and great demise of the Enlightened One. The celebration of this thrice-sacred day manifests itself in the reverential puja and prayers of millions all over the globe. We too, join hands with them in deep reverence and extend our hearty greetings to all. On this happy and blessed occasion we have immense pleasure to present the first number of ‘Prajñā’ as an outcome of the decision taken by Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee to bring out a journal from the sacred site of the supreme enlightenment of the Lord with a view to fostering international brotherhood amongst His adherents in India and abroad and propagating His message of love and compassion in the present day world torn asunder by discord and dissensions. Apart from anything the issue of such a cultural periodical from an international centre like Buddha-gaya has its own importance in as much as it paves the way to promote cultural relationship between this country and abroad. We hope, our noble venture will be hailed by the intelligensia. The significance of the epithet ‘Prajñā’ which is synonymous with

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‘Bodhi’—the supreme enlightenment to be attained through processes of meditation is obvious...” Again in the ‘Acknowledgement’ of the Vol. 2, No. 1 the editor of the *Prajñā* noted : “It may be recalled that last year on this happy and blessed occasion we had the opportunity of presenting the inaugural issue of ‘Prajñā’ as an organ of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee. We are happy to assert that with the unstinted support and sympathy of our subscribers, contributors, advertisers and well-wishers this new journal has just completed a year round and entered on the second year in its forward march...Although it has been a modest start, our aim is to develop it into a full-fledged cultural magazine by effecting improvement progressively in future publications with a view to fostering international brotherhood amongst the adherents of the Lord...‘Prajñā’ has no ideological difference with them and will go ahead joining its voice with theirs.” Also in the editorial entitled “Acknowledgement” of the Volume 3, No. 1 issue of the *Prajñā* we find the following remark : “We are happy to announce that the journal ‘Prajñā’ introduced by the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee from the sacred site of the supreme enlightenment of the Lord has completed another year and entered on the third year in its forward march. This achievement is due to the unstinted support and sympathy of our subscribers, contributors advertisers and well-wishers. We convey our grateful thanks to them all...The wise thinkers who seek solution feel that the cultivation of love and concord alone can possibly control the situation. ‘Prajñā’ has no ideological difference with them. With a view to joining its voice with theirs it will go on propagating Buddha’s message of love and compassion. We appeal to all our benefactors at home and abroad to strengthen it in fulfilling its noble mission. Sabbe saṅgā sukhitaṁ hontu.” The rate of the annual subscription of the *Prajñā* is as follows :

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India and Bangladesh	...	Rs. 6·00
Burma and Sri Lanka	...	Rs 8·00
U.S.A. and Canada	...	\$ 3·00
Other Eastern Countries	...	\$ 3·00
Europe	...	£ 1·00
Per Copy	...	Rs. 1·50

It is requested that all correspondences regarding the Prajnā should be addressed to the Superintendent, Buddha Gaya Temple, and cash/cheques or drafts should be in favour of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee, Buddha Gaya, Gaya, Bihar, India, Officially the Prajnā has been published and printed by Sri Ramnandan Prasad Singh, Secretary, Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee at Joyguru Printing Works, 13/1 Manindra Mitra Row, Calcutta 700 009.

Library

Considering the eagerness of the pilgrims for spending some days in the calm atmosphere of Buddha Gaya by reading various religious books, the Committee had started a Library with a fair collection of books mainly on religion, philosophy and literature, donated by the learned authors, liberal donors, and philanthropic organisations, in its office building in 1962. Although there is an urgent necessity for a library building and technically qualified staff, the paucity of fund still stands on the way of meeting such pressing demands. Hence the Committee had published the following appeal relating to the assistance for the development of the Buddha Gaya Temple Library in the very first issue (Vol. I, No. 1, Buddha Purnima, 1973) of the Prajnā : *Since the historic transfer of the sacred Buddha-Gaya Temple in May 1953, the Buddha-Gaya Temple Management Committee, constituted by the Govt. of Bihar, under the Buddha-Gaya Temple Act 1949, has been making its sincerest effort to develop the Buddha-Gaya Temple and its surroundings with the help of visitors and pilgrims from India*

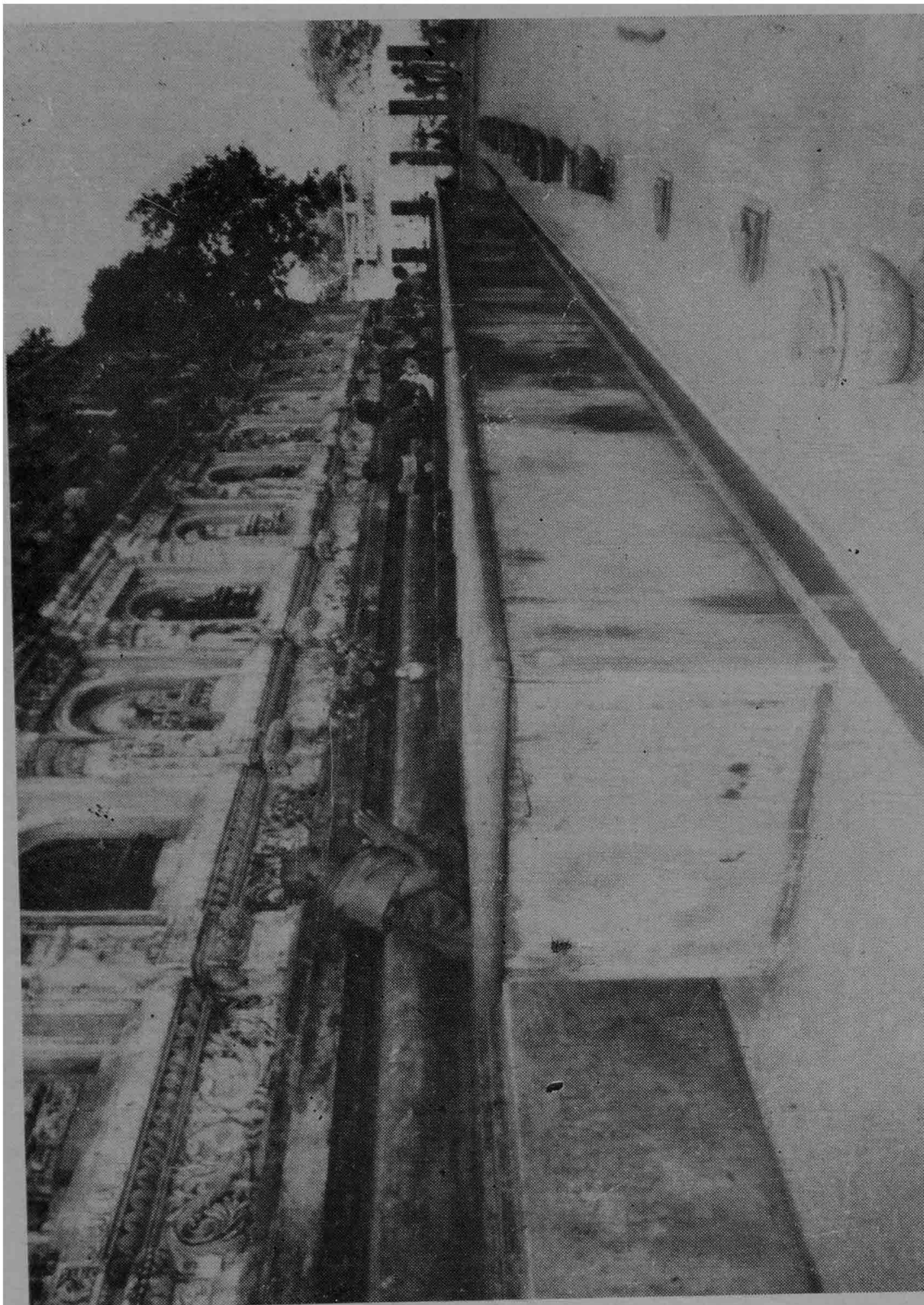
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and abroad who have generously been contributing towards its development. The Committee has got no source of permanent income and it wholly depends on the charity or donations given by the visitors and pilgrims. The Committee, therefore, has been finding it difficult to execute its plan and programme. One of the plans of the Committee is to establish a library of international status. There is a great demand from tourists and visitors from home and abroad who come to spend a few quite peaceful days here for the books on religion, culture and history. With a view to fulfilling their desire and also to strengthening our ageold cultural ties with them we are keen to establish a rich library here. We feel very happy to mention that some generous publishers and individuals have already made favourable response by donating books and magazines to the Temple Library. We shall be very much glad if you, too, would kindly come forward to enrich the Library of the sacred Temple by donating your valuable publications.

Again in this regard the Committee had issued another appeal in the Prajnā (Vol. 2, February 1975, No. 4) with the following words : Since the historic transfer of the sacred Buddha Gaya Temple in May '53 it has been noticed that there is a tendency on the part of an enlightened section of the tourists and pilgrims to spend a few days in the sacred and serene atmosphere of Buddha Gaya. In appreciation of their pressing need for books on religion, culture and civilization the Buddha-Gaya Temple Management Committee felt the necessity of starting a Library and made an appeal to the public for donation of books for the purpose.

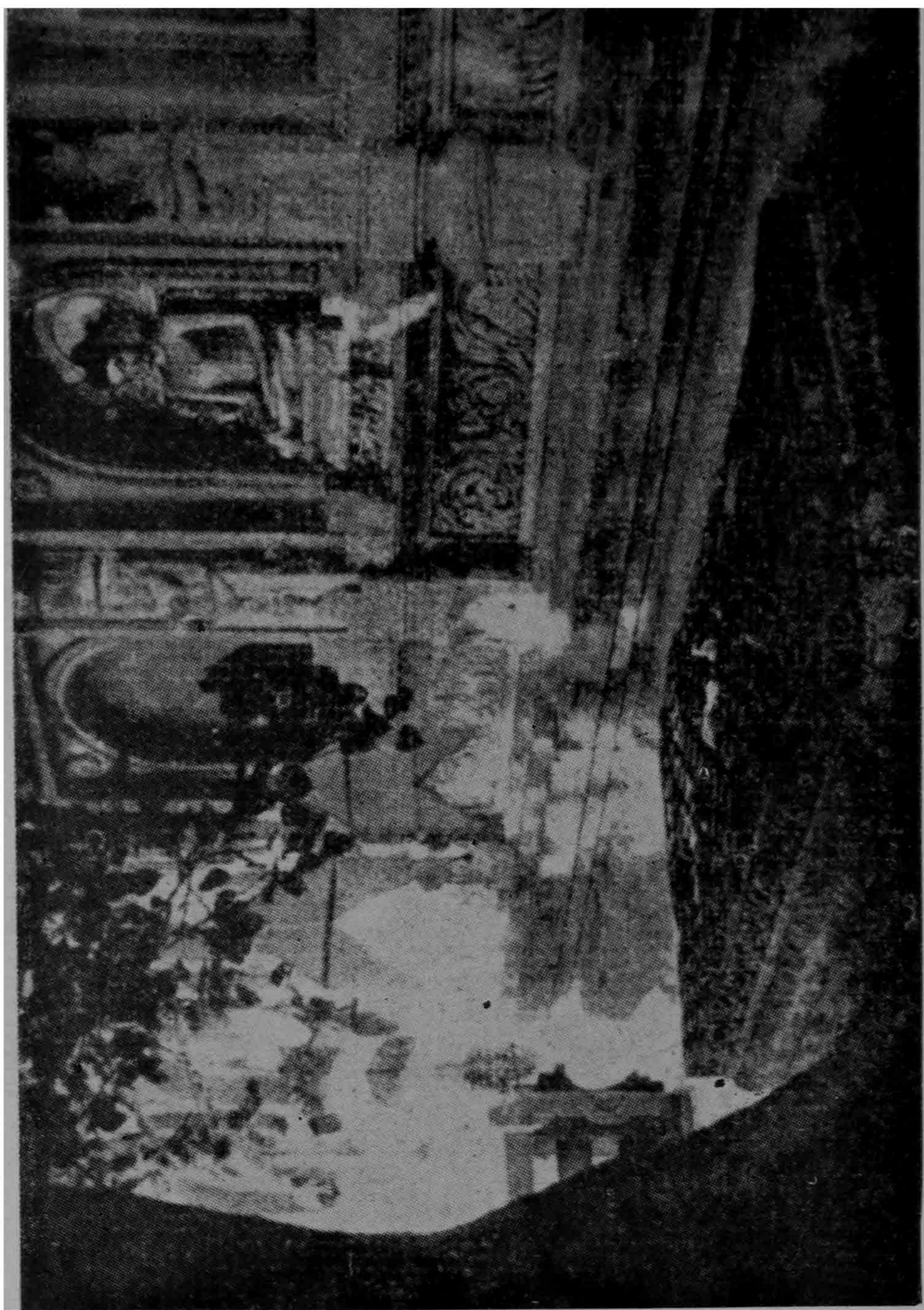
The ready response received from the generous publishers and individuals enabled the Committee to set up the present Library with its limited resources for the benefit of the tourists and pilgrims. The stock of books existing at present can hardly meet the ever growing demand for the books both in quantity and topics. The Committee has, therefore, envisaged in its plans

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A side view of the Buddha Gaya Temple

History: Its Temple Gaya Buddha



Vajrāsana or Diamond Throne under the sacred Bodhi Tree

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and projects the build up of a Library of international standard to cater for the needs of tourists and pilgrims from home and abroad.

We, therefore, appeal to the generous public of this country and abroad to stretch their helping hands to strengthen the hands of the Committee to perform the sacred task of executing the plan.

In response to such an earnest appeal some books on Buddhism and Buddhist Culture and various issues of the World Buddhism of Sri Lanka, Voice of Buddhism of Malaysia, W. F. B. Review of Thailand, Dhamma World of Japan, Buddhist Quarterly of U. K., and the Mahabodhi, Jagajjyoti : A Buddha Jayanti Annual, East and West Series, Right View, Aryan Path of India had been received by the Temple Library. It may be mentioned here that Sri Sailendranath Barua of Calcutta, who is an erudite scholar and a self-less social worker, had made an exemplary donation of a good number of books on various subjects to the Library. The Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee extended its grateful thanks to Sri Barua and desired earnestly that other generous persons and publishers to emulate him in stretching their helping hands to enrich this Library. Also the Maha Mukut Book Shop of Bangkok, Thailand, had donated a good number of books dealing with various aspects of Buddhism and Philosophy to the Buddha Gaya Temple Library. About 10,000 volumes had already been collected in this Library. The Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee hopes to erect a separate library building within its office campus shortly, will make necessary arrangement for religious discourses on every Saturday and Sunday regularly in that library building, and will provide adequate facilities to the foreign pilgrims especially for study in the Library.

Distinguished Visitors

Also several distinguished visitors, apart from innumerable

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pilgrims and devotees, visited Buddha Gaya every year, e.g., Hon'ble Justice Sri N. L. Untwalia, Chief Justice of Patna High Court on June 17, 1973 ; H. E. Sri R. D. Bhandare, Governor of Bihar, on November 9, 1973 ; a delegation of the Boundary Demarcation Committee from Burma ; Sri S. V. Sohani, I. C. S., the first Lokayukta of Bihar and his family members on November 23, 1973 ; H. E. Sri V. V. Giri, President of India on December 8, 1973 ; His Holiness the Dalai Lama between December 25, 1973 and January 15, 1974, who at the end of the ceremony relating to the performance of the Kālacakra Pūjā by him for the welfare of all beings offered Rs. 10,000/- to the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee for the upkeep of the Temple ; Hon'ble U. Nu of Burma on November 16, 1974 in connection with his ordination under the Bodhi Tree, in whose honour the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee arranged a lunch at the local Inspection Bungalow on November 23, 1974 ; Rev. Nichidatsu Fuji Guruji, President of Japan Buddha Society and Founder of the Śānti Stūpa at Rajgir, Bihar, with a large retinue of his disciples on December 10, 1974, in whose honour also the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee arranged a Tea Party ; a delegation of ten members belonging to the Horyyuji Buddhist Group of Kogokita, Hiroshima-Shi Hiroshima-Ken of Japan, who donated Rs. 800/- and \$ 330/- to the Temple on January 9, 1975 ; again Hon'ble U. Nu, former Prime Minister of Burma, for a week from December 17, 1975 ; a sixteen-member Bhutanese delegation headed by Mr. Kaka Dorji on December 27, 1975, who had discussions with the Government of Bihar at Patna as to the purchase of a plot of land suitable for the construction of a Bhutanese monastery in its own style at Buddha Gaya ; Sri A.P. Sharma, Deputy Minister, Government of India, in the last week of March, 1976, who evinced keen interest in the management of the affairs of the Buddha Gaya Temple and expressed deep satisfaction over the condi-

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tion ; Dr. Jagannath Misra, Chief Minister of Bihar, on April 13, 1976, who first paid his reverential homage in the Main Shrine and spent a good deal of time near the Vajrāsana ; again wife and family members of Sri R. D. Bhandare, Former Governor of Bihar, in the first week of June, 1976 ; Sm. Kausal, wife of Sri Jagannath Kausal, Governor of Bihar, in the first week of July, 1976 ; Venerable Kusak.Bakula, a member of the Parliament of India from Ladakh, on October 17, 1976 ; another Bhutanese delegation in the first week of November, 1976 ; the Rājaguru of Bhutan accompanied by a large number of lamas towards the middle of November, 1976 ; Sri Narayan Chandra Parashar, M.P. and a Buddhist leader from Himachal Pradesh, on December 9, 1976 ; His Holiness The Dalai Lama again on February 8, 1977 ; two top level experts of the Small Pox Eradication Programme under the auspices of the World Health Organisation in the first week of April, 1977 and some other distinguished visitors. The list may be endless. But it reveals how this great Temple has been able to attract the very important persons of the world as in the past.

Renovation Donation

It may be mentioned here that Sri Prem Prakash Sharma took charge as the District Magistrate of Gaya and Ex-Officio Chairman of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee in the middle of December, 1976. In order to bridge the gap of deficit in the budget of the financial year 1977-1978 a renovation fee of twenty five paise per head had been introduced by the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee with effect from February 28, 1977 for those persons who would visit the Temple, except the monks and clergy of all religions and sects. The ticket bears, apart from the monogram and name of the authority and the serial number, the following inscription : "For Temple Renovation, 0 = 25 n. p. (Twenty Five Paise). May all beings be happy." Quite relevantly we may mention below

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the resolutions adopted in this regard by the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee : *Item No. 2 (dated February 6, 1977)*—"The Budget estimate of the Committee for the year 1977-78 was discussed and approved. The Committee looked with grave concern the fall of the income of the Committee. It discussed ways and means to improve the financial position and to narrow down the gap of Rs. 90,550/-, the deficit in the budget. In this context it was resolved that the visitors coming in the Temple be made to donate a small amount for the improvement of the Mahābodhi Temple and it was further resolved that a sum of twenty five paise only, per visitor, be charged. In order to enforce this system, tickets should be printed and every visitor be given a ticket, at the time of entrance in the Main Shrine, and money thus received be deposited in a separate charity box kept for this purpose. A notice board requesting the visitors and pilgrims to pay the amount should be displayed at the main gate of the shrine. It was also resolved that it should be brought into effect immediately." *Item No. 1 (dated May 17, 1977)*—"Proceedings of the last meeting held on 6. 2. 77 was confirmed with the following modification : The resolution No. 2 was recasted as 'In this context, it was resolved that every visitor coming in the Temple be requested to donate a small amount of twenty five paise and in place of receipt the donor be given a printed ticket at the gate of the Temple and the amount thus received be deposited in a separate charity box kept for this purpose.'" *Item No. 21 (dated December 17, 1977)*—"The question of raising the entrance donation for pūjā in the Temple was discussed and it was resolved that only 25 paise (Twenty five) which is the present donation, should continue and children below five years, and Lamas and Bhikshus should be excluded from the donation. It was decided to review this after March, 1978." The Buddha Gaya Temple Advisory Board also in its meeting held on April 9, 1978 approved this "Renovation

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Donation.” In that meeting Sri S. V. Sohani, Lokayukta, Bihar, requested the Chairman of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee “to throw light on the levy of a fee of .25 paise on all visitors to the Mahābodhi Temple. The Chairman. . explained the poor financial position of the Temple Management Committee which had necessitated the introduction of a contribution of renovation fee (donation or contribution) of .25 paise per visitor to the Temple. However, all Buddhist Monks, Hindu Sadhus & Sanyasis and other mendicants had been exempted from making this contribution as well as such visitors who refused to make this contribution were also exempted. Simply it was a voluntary contribution and not an obligatory charge or an admission fee. The Chairman. . informed that in one year a sum of Rs. 1,00,000/- had been received which had been spent in beautifying and developing the temple complex, such as the construction of the boundary wall, the repair of the stūpas, the paving of the pathways, cleaning of the Lotus Tank etc. A garden had been developed and the illumination of the Temple itself had been undertaken.” But in order to enrich the fund of the Temple for its further development the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee had adopted in the meeting the following resolution to raise the renovation donation and fixed up the same as fifty paise instead of twenty five paise on July 2nd, 1978 : Item “No. 5(n) —Resolved that renovation donation revised to 0.50 paise from 0.25 paise with effect from October, 1978. It was also resolved that from 5 a. m. to 7 a. m. every day the local visitors and the local devotees be allowed free entrance in the Temple.” The new ticket also besides the number and monogram bears the following inscription : “Buddhagaya Temple Management Committee, Buddha Gaya. No..... For Temple Renovation. 0-50 p (fifty paise). May all beings be happy.” But Ven. Dr. Rastrapal Bhikshu filed a petition against the State of Bihar and others for the

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introduction of such "Renovation Donation" to the Hon'ble High Court of Judicature at Patna (ref. C. W. J. C. No. 25940F of 1978). The Order dated October 6, 1978 in this respect runs as follows : "It is stated by learned Counsel for the State that the Collector of Gaya, who is the Ex-Officio Chairman of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee in his Memo No. 2759/C dated the 29th September, 1978, has stated that the levy is not compulsory. Learned Counsel has produced a copy of that letter and the following lines from the same to support his contention—'However, Buddhist monks, Hindus (Hindu Sadhus) and Sanyasis and other meditants (mendicants) have been exempted from paying fee. Then again, such visitors who refuse to pay this fee and are prepared to state that they are not in a position to make this token contribution, are allowed to enter without payment of the renovation fee. This position very well indicates that this is not a compulsory imposition and so the question of restricting entry of *visitors to the Temple* dose not arise.'

From the aforesaid letters of the District Magistrate and Collector of Gaya, it is apparent that the levy in question is not compulsory and even those who do not pay are not prevented from entering the temples. In view of this position, Learned Counsel for the Petitioner prays for permission to withdraw this application.

This application is accordingly permitted to be withdrawn with the above observation." (Memo No. 6833 dated 8. 11. 78).

Technical Sub-Committee

In the meeting of the Bodh-Gaya Temple Advisory Board held on April 9, 1978 the Commissioner, Patna Division, Bihar, and Secretary to the Board summarising the action taken in pursuance of the decisions of the last meeting reported the proceedings "of the meetings of the Technical Sub-Committee of the Advisory Board held on 7. 8. 77 and again on 24. 9. 77

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and the decisions taken on the revision of the norms earlier adopted by the Technical Sub-Committee at its meeting held on 18. 10. 75 [which had decided to levy development charges at the rate of 15 times the annual rental of the land which should be equal to the over and above the salami and the annual rental to be paid by the allottee.] The Technical Sub-Committee had now decided to reduce the charges to be levied for the settlement of land at Bodh-Gaya with Buddhist institutions and organisations in the light of the experience gained and representations received from the various Buddhist Institutions at Bodh-Gaya, to Rs. 20,000/- only from Rs.-60,000/- while maintaining the old rate for commercial purposes and residential purposes. This was approved by the Board.

2. After discussion it was resolved that the settlee shall in addition contribute to the development charges at the appropriate time on a *prorata* basis, in such instalments as may be deemed fit and proper by the State Government or Development authorities, after taking into consideration the actual expenditure on development and the subsidy, if any, received from the Central or State Government."

International Seminar on Buddhist Meditation

Mention may also be made here of "a three-day international seminar on Buddhist meditation sponsored by the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee" held at the Mahabodhi Hall at Buddha Gaya between April 7 and 9, 1978. The Seminar was inaugurated with the welcome address by Prof. Tan Yun Shan, founder of the China Bhavan, Santiniketan, Visvabharati, West Bengal, and followed by a learned discourse by the Venerable High Priest of the Japanese Temple, Buddha Gaya. Ven. Dr. U. Dhammaratana Mahathera of Sri Lanka presided. Some eminent scholars on Buddhism

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presented during these three days interesting papers dealing with various aspects of Buddhist Meditation.

Miscellaneous

Among other activities in and around the Buddha Gaya Temple mention may further be made of many others. As for example, a religious function was held under the Bodhi Tree and the Kathinadāna Ceremony was performed with the recitation of the Kammavācā by the monks of the Bharatiya Bhikkhu Saṅgha on November 16, 1974, wherein the First Secretary of the Royal Thai Embassy was present.

Ven. N. Jinaratana Naya Mahathera, member of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee and General Secretary of the Mahabodhi Society of India, had been entrusted by the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee with the sacred duty of carrying five Bo saplings on its behalf to Japan during his tour to that country as a token of love and goodwill with the expectation that these Bo-saplings would be planted in different monasteries for providing scope to many devotees there to pay their homage. This was undoubtedly a step forward in cementing the friendly relations already existing between Japan and India. Ven. N. Jinaratana also carried on four Bo-saplings from Buddha Gaya to Sri Lanka during his last visit to this country. We also note that a resolution adopted in the meeting of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee held on April 10, 1976 to explore the possibility of raising funds in the Buddhist countries for the execution of plans and projects relating to the Temple. Ven. Bhikshu Jnanajāt, Superintendent of the Buddha Gaya Temple, proceeded to Sri Lanka on May 17, 1976. During his short stay there he visited various religious organisations and met the Venerable Mahānāyakas of different Buddhist sects as well as the Secretary of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Government of

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Sri Lanka, for stressing the need of developing the Temple. It had since been resolved that a Central Committee should be entrusted with the task of raising funds. Again in a meeting of the Bodh-Gaya Temple Advisory Board held on April 9, 1978 at Buddha Gaya at 10 a. m., which was presided over by His Excellency Dr. Suchati Chuthasmit, Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary, Royal Thai Embassy, the Chairman of the Buddha Gaya Temple Mnnagement Committee informed the members that the Master Plan for Buddha Gaya initiated by the Government of Bihar during 1955-56 had remained largely unimplemented mainly because of the lack of financial resources to execute the various schemes incorporated in the Master Plan. In the month of January, 1978 the Union Minister for Tourism, Government of India, had visited Buddha Gaya and thereafter the Town and Country Organisation of the Government of India had been entrusted with the task of formulating another Revised Master Plan for Buddha Gaya keeping in view of various changes which had taken place since the last plan. In this connection in the same meeting with regard to the implementation of the Master Plan the Commissioner of Patna Division informed the members that recently the Town Planning Organisation of the Government of India had carried out a detailed survey and was in the process of revising again the Master Plan and it was resolved that the State of Bihar as well as the Government of India be requested to allot funds on an annual basis for the purpose of implementing the Master Plan. In this connection Sri S. Shahabuddin, Joint Secretary(S), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, suggested that information regarding the availability of land at Buddha Gaya for settlement should be circulated through the Indian Missions abroad as well as foreign missions in India. The Secretary of the Board while agreeing with the suggestion

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felt that this information could be compiled in the form of an attractive brochure and the matter of circulating the brochure may be entrusted to the M. E. A. This was agreed to. Sri Dwariko Sundarani requested that pending the final decision applications for the settlement of land should be processed quickly and a recommendation to this effect may be made to the Government of Bihar. This suggestion was also unanimously adopted. Sri S. V. Sohoni, Lokayukta, Bihar, informed the members present in that meeting that in the early years Burma had contributed a sum of Rs. 50,000/- for the development of the Mahābodhi Temple Complex. Further, the Chairman of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee intimated to the Advisory Board the schemes for the beautification of the Temple complex, the construction of the Guest House-cum-Office of the Committee, the construction of a Library-cum-Auditorium and a Mini-Market opposite the main entrance to the Temple. In the same meeting Sri S. V. Sohoni suggested that the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee should organise a *Sonet-Lumiere* (Sound and Light Show) of the Mahābodhi Temple. The Chairman agreed to this proposal and said that the Committee would take necessary steps for materialising such a project.

In the foregoing pages an attempt has been made to present an account of the recent activities centering round the Buddha Gaya Temple and of the successes and failures of the Buddha Gaya Temple Management Committee from its inception to its adolescent period. Undoubtedly its achievements are glorious and to its present glory its sincere Chairman, Secretary, and members have so far contributed much. Still the members of the Committee aspire that in the coming years they will endeavour more hardly for the development and preservation of this historic Temple, the sacred object to all the Buddhists. But they think that "without the help of the

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devoted ones it (the Temple) cannot flourish as it did in its early periods” and they “believe that all—whether they are Indians or foreigners—would extend their helping hands for the better management of the Buddha Gaya Temple.”⁴

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CHAPTER SEVEN

ART AND ARCHITECTURE AROUND AND OF THE BUDDHA GAYA TEMPLE

Buddha Gaya with its historic Temple has become one of the prolific centres of artistic activities during the early classical period. The present concluding chapter of this monograph is, therefore, concerned with the study of the bas-reliefs, images, sculptures and architecture around and of the famous Mahābodhi Temple of the place.

The remnants of the square railing which encloses the Mahābodhi Temple at Buddha Gaya presents an important landmark in the history of early Indian art. As to its date, among its donors appear the names of Kuṇḍī and Nāgadevā, wives of the kings Indrāgnimitra and Brahmamitra, who have to be ascribed to about the first half of the first century B. C. The carvings on this rail are in the Barhut style, but more advanced in technique as well as in visual and plastic effects. Besides, the narrative reliefs on it are free from all unnecessary details—the indispensable and essential elements being retained to convey the full import of the stories depicted. This fact is evident also from a comparative study of the representations of the purchase of the Jetavana at Barhut and Buddha Gaya, because instead of being scrupulously exhaustive as at Barhut, the Buddha Gaya version of the same incident is more suggestive and aesthetically more appealing. Also, in three-dimensional extensiveness this composition of Buddha Gaya is more advanced than that of Barhut and results in an easier movement of the planes and more harmonious spatial relations. In fact, the art of Buddha Gaya being inseparably linked up with the

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Barhut tradition represents a convincing advance on the previous achievements.

But, on the whole, the objects of art at Buddha Gaya belong chronologically to two different dates and are carved on sandstone as well as on granite. Among them, however, those of the earlier period are represented by the smaller sandstone railing erected on a much wider plinth around the Budddha Gaya Temple under the auspices of king Pūrṇavarmā during the seventh century A. C. and out of all the sculptures describing the Jātaka stories, which still survive only one belongs to the later period, and the rest to the first ¹

Of those sculptural representations the bas-reliefs are those which are carved on the upper covering stone-slab of the Old Diamond-Throne, some of the pillars of the Jewel-Walk Shrine and the component parts of the Old Stone-Railing and later granite additions ; the images are those which may be obviously supposed to have been installed before the visit of Fa-hien, the Chinese pilgrim of the 5th century A. C. ; and the objects of sculpture as well as architecture are those which relate to the Old Diamond-Throne, and the Diamond-Throne Temple, the Jewel-Walk Shrine, two figures of the Buddha-Bodhisattva, the railing of the Mahābodhi Temple and its numerous bas-reliefs.

The Old Diamond-Throne which is obviously made on the Barhut design is a solid cubical seat set up as an altar inside the Old Diamond-Throne Temple. It shows two covering stone-slabs — one placed over the other, the lower one being highly polished and the upper one, beautifully ornamented on its upper surface and four faces. The upper covering stone-slab is ornamented on its upper surface with a geometrical pattern, probably without any mystical meaning, apparently designed to prevent it being slippery, while on its four faces it bears an ornamental design of acanthuses and on one of the four faces acanthuses are alternated with pigeons symbolising

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emancipation. The Old Diamond-Throne Temple appears to have been an open-pillared square shed, the flat or gabled roof of which rested on four small pillars, characterised each by a bracket on the top. Each of these four pillars show an octagonal shaft and presumably the capital of each resembled that of an Aśokan monolithic pillar. Obviously, the structure modelled on the Barhut design presents the scene of worship of the Bodhi Tree by Śākyamuni Buddha.

The Jewel-Walk is represented by a platform of brick, 53' feet long, 3' feet 6" inches broad, and a little more than 3' feet high, bearing upon its upper surface 18 lotus flowers arranged serially in a row, each symbolising a footstep of Buddha. It is also designed on the model of Barhut. One should note that the Jewel-Walk is built up in the shape of a platform inside an open-pillared rectangular hall with a flat or gabled roof which once rested on two rows of pillars, each of which was nailed into a fixed pillar base. The only pillar which still survives shows an octagonal shaft with a female figure on it, which is an ornamental device rather than a human form of a yakṣiṇī or a demi-goddess. In the upper portion is seen the lotus ornament of the capital of an Aśokan monolithic pillar surmounted by two crouchant lions and a bracket above them.

Two images of Buddha representing that stage of his life when he was a Bodhisattva who was vigorously striving for attaining Buddhahood have also been discovered at Buddha Gaya. The inscription on the pedestal of one of them records that both the images were installed in Samvat 64 of the Śaka or certain other then current era and during the reign of one king Trikamala in a monastery called Amātyadhura Vihāra. It describes them as śailikā Bodhisattava-pratimā sīharathā, the (two) lion-vehicled stone images of the (Buddha) Bodhisattva. These figures are carved on Mathura sandstone and the general wording and style of the inscription also reveal the characteristics of the images

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carved and installed at Mathura during the reign of Kanishka and other Kushana kings. According to the information furnished by the aforesaid inscription the pedestal of each of the above images rested on the back of two lions, although at present one of them is seen in a sitting and the other in a standing posture, and both with the abhayamudrā. The drapery on these figure differs from that of a figure of Buddha in that it covers both the shoulders and the body instead of covering one shoulder and passing across the breast. Thus these two figures of Buddha-Bodhisattva mark a stage of development following immediately from that represented by the Buddhist figures set up at Mathura during the Kushana period. But according to Stella Kramrisch the two figures of Buddha-Bodhisattva are carved in buff sandstone from Chunar, which is the material of all sculptures of Sarnath. In these two, the attitude is standardised with the right hand with Abhayamudrā ; the plastic treatment is of mediocre quality, and is related to the tradition of Mathura in details, e.g. the heavy ridges for the eyebrows and lesser ridges to demarcate the eyelids. That is why about them she again remarks : "While physiognomical type belongs to Mathurā, the face with its stern and coarse cast of features is given a new attitude. It is held with the chin pressed against the throat, and this is not an attitude of extravert case as in images from Mathurā. The modelling of the body is of the Sārnāth school."² Thus on the whole, the Buddha Gaya images represent a happy and successful combination of the solid dignity of the Kushana style with restrained grace and inner spiritualism of the Gupta Period. They acquire an easy and reposeful attitude born of an inner peace resulting from the conquest of the mind, already achieved and naturally taken for granted. Thus with a smooth and luminous body, apparently weightless in existence, these images seem to breathe the enjoyment of supreme bliss arising out of an inner serenity of the mind. But, although the

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Buddha-Bodhisattva images of Buddha Gaya are evidently of Mathura origin, they supply the prototypes to the artists of Sarnath.³

The composition of the Old Stone-Railing was probably originally as follows : the railing was quadrangular and made of sandstone with 64 pillars arranged on a plinth of 246' feet 9" inches leaving an opening of 6' feet to 8' feet for a gate on the east side ; corresponding to the entrance on the east side was obviously a false gate on the west side, the appearance of which was sought to be created by two intermediate pillars in the middle, one bearing on its outer face the standing figure of a yakṣa and the other, the climbing figure of yakṣiṇī or devatā ; each side of this Railing was composed, like the Inner Railing of Barhut, of a set of ornamented pillars or uprights arranged in a row, needled by three rows of convex shaped rail-bars and covered by a massive coping. The Later Railing which is the stone-hedge known to have been set up by king Pūrṇavarmā of Magadha in about the beginning of the 7th century A.C., pre-eminently as an enclosure for the great Temple and the later Bodhi Tree reared up by this pious monarch, is described as nothing but the Old Stone-Railing re-erected on a much wider plinth around the Mahābodhi Temple and the later Bodhi Tree with some granite additions adjusted within the framework of the earlier railing in sandstone and as a quadrangular structure, about 10 feet high, with two separate sections on each side, one in sandstone and the other in granite, adjusted according to a definite rule of symmetry and proportion and designed somehow to keep up the general appearance of the earlier railing dismantled at the time of the building of the Buddha Gaya Temple. This Latter Railing was originally provided with four gates on its four sides, each looking like a railed way through the middle of each side of the stone-enclosure. In front of the eastern gate and midway between the Stone Railing and the outer brick wall was erected a toraṇa or arched gate-

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way so that a person desiring to reach the Temple from the eastern side had to enter first the enclosed sacred site by the east entrance of the outer brick wall and then proceed towards the east gate of the Stone-Railing through the arched gateway in the middle and as the gate-pillars of the earlier railing sufficed for only one gate, namely, that on the south, three pairs of new granite pillars had to be supplied for three additional gates on the east, the west and the north. On the other hand, the present Railing surrounding the Mahābodhi Temple is substantially the Later Railing with some minor additions and alterations that had to be made after the advent of the Muslims. Such additions and alterations were undoubtedly made during the Burmese repairs of the sacred shrines at Buddha Gaya.

As to the carvings on sandstone pillars, those on the pillars of the Old Stone-Railing are nothing but some ornamental devices in the shape of half or full lotus flowers, the half lotuses being represented either in full or in bare outline and and the full lotuses appearing either with or without some additional designs in their pericaps ; and in the forms of some astronomical representations a demigod and a few demi-goddesses, some auspicious symbols, some sectional representations of the shrines reminding one of the four memorable events in the life of Buddha, a representation of the miraculous growth of the Bodhi Tree, a demonstration of the reign of the Bodhi Tree, a scene of worship of a woodland shrine by a herd of elephants, and a few bas-reliefs describing select scenes from the life of Buddha are also found here. It is interesting to note that the astro-nomical representations thereon include a powerful figure of the Sun, the figures in duplicate symbolising the sign of the Solar Zodiac and Nakṣatras or the Lunar Zodiac as well as the figures of some of the individual stars ; that the demi-god is no other than the Yakṣa figured on the outer face of the Yakṣa-pillar ; and that among the three demi-goddesses may be counted the

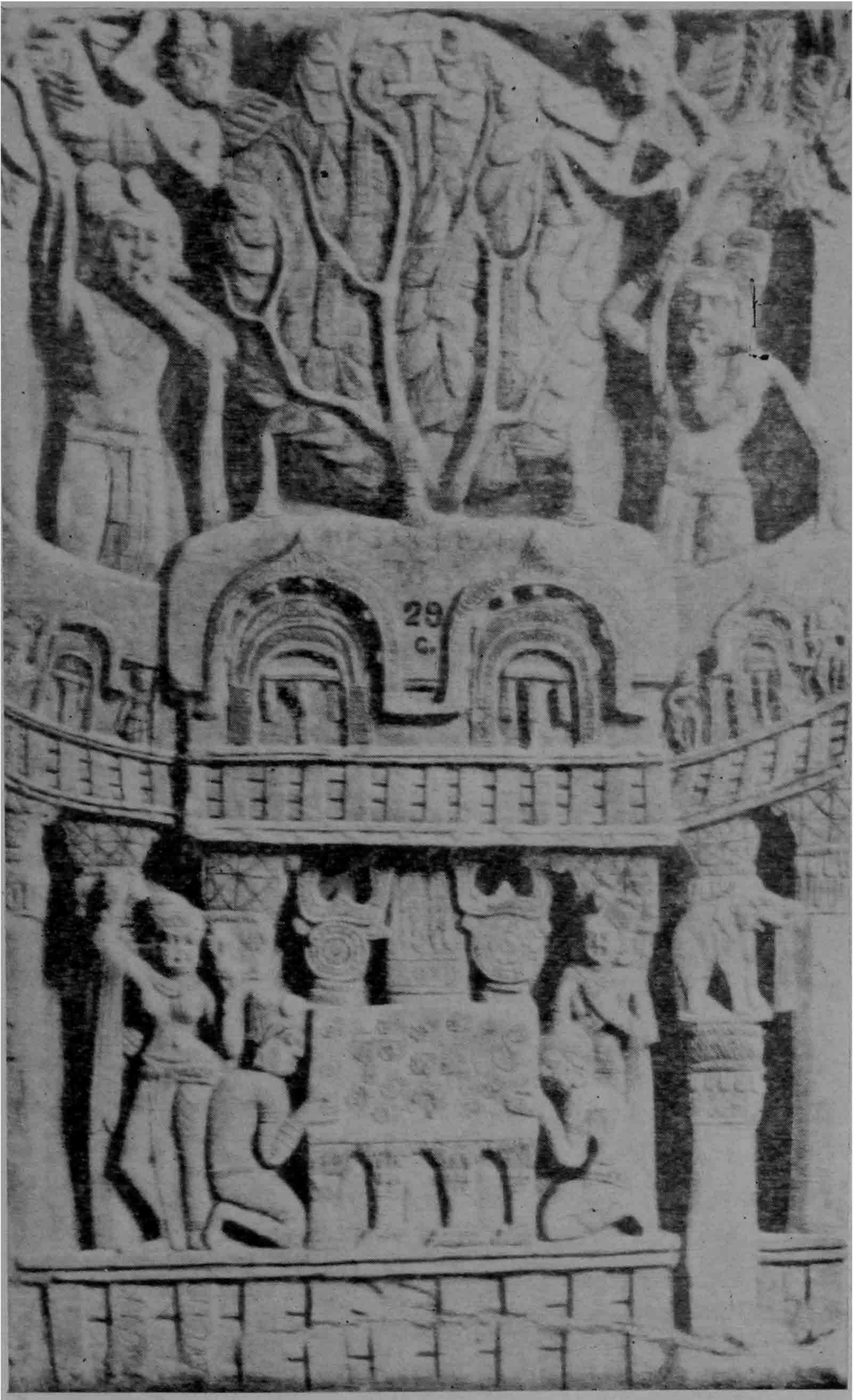
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Yakṣinī or Devatā figured on the outer face of the Yakṣinī-pillar and the remaining two demi-goddesses are no other than Śrī and Gaṅgā, the former figuring in several examples and the latter in just two test-tube panels.

The sculptural representation of Sūrya or the Sun is contained in one of the quadrangular panels on a face of the picture of an one-wheeled war-chariot drawn by four horses, two going to the left and the two to the right; the chariot reveals a high frame in front, and a similar frame on each side; the horses have waving plumes are represented in prolific or three-quarter view; the driver with a turban as his headdress remains standing on the forepart of the chariot, holding the upper edge of the front frame with his left hand, and holding up his right hand in a manner which is clearly indicative of the attitude of a charioteer holding the reins. Behind the charioteer and at some distance is a big disclike object under an umbrella. Although A. Cunningham takes this object to represent the second umbrella, R. L. Mitra considers it to be a nimbus formed by the back framing of the chariot. But B. M. Barua remarks that "the correct reading of the object would be to take it as a rayed disc kept vertically under an umbrella." In this sculpture A. Cunningham finds a representation of Sūrya driving a four-horsed chariot with two attendant archers shooting his rays like arrows upon the earth in imitation of "the well-known classical representation of Phoebus Apollo in his chariot drawn by four horses,"⁴ while R. L. Mitra

Observes a representation of "an Indian war-chariot drawn by four horses, two going to the left and two to the right."⁵ On the other hand, J. N. Banerji strongly maintains that the number of horses is no argument at all in deciding the point at issue because "the Rig-Vedic description of the Sun-god which is certainly the background of the human representations of this divinity in Indian art pointedly refers to the fact of his

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An early sculptural representation of the Bodhi Tree of Śākyamuni Buddha with the railing, the Vajrāsana or Diamond Throne and the Aśokan Pillar

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Figure of God Sūrya on the chariot in the Aśokan railing round the Buddha Gaya Temple

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riding a chariot drawn by one (the horse Etasa), 3, 4 or 7 horses, and there cannot be any doubt that this conception of this divinity is a purely Indian one." B. M. Barua also remarks ; "It will be noticed that in the Greek representation, the chariot of Apollo has no charioteer and the standing figure of Apollo has a halo of ray radiated from its head, while in the Bodh Gaya relief the chariot of Sūrya has a charioteer, and Sūrya himself has been represented not by a human figure but by a rayed disc, or spoked wheel, which is the visible form of the Sun."⁶ But as to the interpretation regarding this sculptural representation K. K. Ganguli asserts : "In every possibility the figure found at Bodh-Gaya as in the case of the figure at Bhaja or in the Lucknow Museum did not really represent Sūrya, the well known Sun god of early Vedic tradition, but represented the God Mitra who along with Varuṇa had been widely popular to middle Vedic traditions and had emerged as a deity commanding increasing popularity during the time of the Brāhmaṇa and the Upanishads".⁷

Also the motifs representing the Rāśis or the Signs of the Zodiac may be found out among the full lotus medallions or bosses. According to the Sanskrit treatises on Astrology there are the following twelve Rāśis, more precisely Saura Rāśis or Signs of the Solar Zodiac, viz. Meṣa or Aries, Vṛṣa or Taurus, Mithuna or Gemini, Karkāṭa or Cancer, Simha or Leo, Kanyā or Virgo, Tulā or Libra, Vṛścika or Scorpio, Dhanu or Sagittarius, Makara or Capricornus, Kumbha or Aquarius, and Mīna or Pisces. In the absence of all the rail-bars and rail-pillars, it is difficult to remark whether all these twelve Rāśis were originally represented on them or not, especially whether they were represented symmetrically to maintain the usual order of enumeration. Still the carvings which are found on a piece of the Old Stone-Railing *in situ* present the Tulā beside the Simha and the Kanyā beside the Tulā, while to maintain harmony with the usual order of enumeration, the figure of

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Kanyā ought to have been placed to the right of that of Simha and the figure of Tulā to the right of that Kanyā. Also it is to be noticed that the Sign Vṛṣa has been represented there by the standing figure of a bull, the Sign Simha by that of a lion, and the Sign Makara by that of an elephant-faced makara, precisely as prescribed in the Indian treatises on Astrology. Again the Sign Kanyā has been represented in the Buddha Gaya medallion not by the figure of a damsel in a floating boat, holding a lamp in her hand, but by the bust of a garland-crowned and garland-wearing damsel. The Sign Tulā figures as a typical Hindusthāni tradesman with a pillow before him, showing a posture of his body as is commonly seen when he is engaged in the act of weighing though without the balance. As to the Sign Dhanu in the motif here the tail of the antelope is unusually lengthened and upstretched so as to present the appearance of a bow, which the Bowman holds by his left hand, while the posture of his right hand presents the characteristic attitude of an archer in readiness to throw an arrow. Also in the Buddha Gaya motif describing the Sign Mithuna there is a nearer approach to the ancient representation, the medallion presenting a human couple in love, the man holding up flowers in his right hand and a mace lying at the back of the woman. Here another medallion displays a totally different kind of representation made not by a pair of human beings, a man and a woman in love, or by the twin brothers but by a pair of animals—a lion and a doe. A. Cunningham describes this motif as presenting a scene of “a lion in pursuit of a deer.”

Only two representations which still survive at Buddha Gaya among the lingering remnants of the Old Stone-Railing are one in the form of a horse and the other in that of an antelope. They show that the Nakṣatras or Lunar Asterisms themselves are the subject of representations and not the head-stars belonging to them.

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Among other mythico-astronomical plastic figures found at Buddha Gaya, mention may be made of the figures of a winged elephant, of a buffalo, of a flying bull on a later granite pillar which may be either a representation of the second Sign of Zodiac or a mere ornamental device of a peacock, of a fish-tailed makara with a female bust that stands out of its mouth and bends down round the pericarp of a lotus-blossom as if to hold it in the centre of a coil formed by the human head and the makara tail tending to meet each other, of a seated bear which symbolises a constellation, and lastly of the Kīrtti-mukhas. But it is to be noted that conclusive explanations of symbolism of those figures are not definitely known yet.

The figures of some popular Brahmanical divinities also decorate the Old Stone-Railing of the Buddha Gaya Temple. Thus Śiva is represented here with a snake hanging down from the visit of his right hand and the sceptre-like trident held up at full length on his left side. Further, on the outer and inner faces of the western pillar of the Jewel-Walk Shrine appears the healthy figure of a female deity carved in one half of the shaft. The outer face of one of the two false-gate pillars bear the imposing figure of a demi-god which appears to be life-size. The demi-god is represented as standing characteristically on a ram-like quadruped and holding a big bunch of water lilies with stalks. And, on the outer face of the other pillar of the same false gate one may see the interesting figure of a yakṣiṇī or demi-goddess. Her head is markedly adorned with thick-grown long hair arranged in the form of a headdress over her left ear. The Old Stone-Railing of Buddha Gaya Temple also presents two figures of the river-goddess, Gaṅgā-devatā, who is found riding on the back of an animal faced makara with her right hand肘ed towards the right side of her body. In this motif the makara figures as a vehicle with its head lifted up and turned over its neck and it has rather the face of a lion than that of an elephant, and

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further it is rather stationery than dynamic. Again, in the upper panel of one of the rail-posts a goddess may be seen seated not cross-legged but rather in a strange fashion, with her feet closely drawn towards each other and knees kept a little above the ground. She holds up a blossoming lotus-bud in her left hand which she keeps upraised turning it upward and resting the elbow on her left thigh, while she restfully holds a small bundle of lotus-stalks cut into span-size pieces in her right hand which is placed across her right thigh. Obviously, she is a Siri-devī of the Sirimā type distinguished in the Buddhist literature from Siri. Two different kinds of representation of Śrī of the Grace or Gajaiakṣmī type are found among the ornamental and auspicious devices filling the upper panels of some of the gate, corner and intermediate pillars of the Old Stone-Railing. In the first one, the goddess is seen standing gracefully on the pericarp of a lotus flower, keeping her two feet drawn close to each other and in the second one, the goddess stands on the pericarp of a lotus blossom, keeping the heels of her feet in touch with each other and the toes wide apart. Thus the two representations differ from each other primarily with regard to the details of (a) the drapery of the goddess and (b) the depiction of the lotus plant.

As regards the representations of the four types of caityas or cetiyas erected here : (a) where Tathāgata was born, (b) where He attained the Perfect Enlightenment, (c) where He turned the Wheel of the Law, and (d) where He attained to Parinirvāṇa, it is found that in the upper panel of the present south-west corner-pillar of the Stone-Railing of the Buddha Gaya Temple may one observe a representation of the incident of Siddhārtha's birth by the device of two mansions one placed over the other. Again, at Buddha Gaya there survive still as many as four different representations of the incident of Buddha's enlightenment—the first three of them having filled in

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the upper panels of rail-posts and the fourth one having filled in the upper panel of one of the corner-pillars. In the representations witnessed at Buddha Gaya the Bodhi Tree, the Diamond-Throne and the Railing, with or without a gate-chamber and a detached pillar, which supply the complete idea of the shrine of the enlightenment may be had their sectional or analytical treatment. There are no less than six slightly different representations of the incident of Buddha's first preaching of his teaching, one of which fills in a medallion in the middle row, three the upper panels of three rail-posts and two the panels of two corner-pillars. Again, there are as many as eight different representations of Buddha's great decease, six of which are available in sandstone and two in granite and the models of mound in granite record some structural details which are far beyond the scope of the earlier designs.

Also, in the upper panel of a rail-post is one may find a bas-relief presenting the Bodhi Tree surrounded by a quadrangular railing, which has on each side an umbrella planted on the ground; garlands may be observed hanging from the top by the sides of the upper part of the Bodhi Tree. This Tree appears as a well formed one with a beautiful foliage grown proportionate to the height of the trunk. It is adorned with flowers blossoming over it and displays three main branches—one in the middle and the two on two sides. This design is caused to present the glorious reign of the Bodhi Tree after its enthronement on a rare spot which is thought by the Buddhists as the "navel of the earth." Such a representation of the Bodhi Tree enthroned in the centre of a quadrangular railing without any gateway and pillar may be accounted for by the earlier mode of honouring. In this bas-relief R. L. Mitra finds "an enclosure with several Bodhi-trees, surrounded by the typical Buddhist railings and some vessels for watering the trees."

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The representations of the Jātakas at Buddha Gaya include also the Mahāpadāna stories of the seven Buddhas, the life story of each of them being intended to be symbolised by a Bodhi Tree. When on the Barhut Railing the representations of them are appropriately labelled with brief inscriptions, on the Buddha Gaya Railing the Bodhi Trees are made to figure so many familiar symbols without labels, many of the details in earlier representatations being dispensed with. Further, on the Stone-Railing at Buddha Gaya there survive only four bas-reliefs which illustrate the narratives of the present, namely, (a) the narrative of the purchase of the Jetavana by Anāthapiṇḍika for its dedication to the Saṅgha, (b) that of the heavenly harper Pañcaśikha deputed by Śakra to the Indraśāla Cave to make an appointment with Buddha, (c) that of the Dragon-chief Elāpatra paying homage to Buddha, and (d) that of Buddha and a ploughman. The scene of the purchase of the Jetavana, as already mentioned, is carved in the upper panel of a rail-post.⁸ It narrates that point of the story where the site has to be covered with a layer of crores in fulfilment of the terms of sale and purchase. Herein the banker appears to be absent from the scene and his employees only are shown busy spreading out the bed of coins. The Buddha Gaya carving relating to Pañcaśikha's wait on Buddha is desired only to offer a plastic representation of that of point in the narrative where in being deputed by Śakra to make an appointment with Buddha who was then staying in Indraśāla Cave of the Vedyaka mountain, the heavenly minstrel Pañcaśikha remained lost in the music of the song which he began to sing conveying a double meaning, one of which was applicable to the Blessed One whom he was to wait upon. In the bas-relief of Elāpatra's homage A. Cunningham finds a deva flying over the battlements of a city, with a garland in his outstretched hand towards the Bodhi Tree before which a man is kneeling in adoration, while R. L. Mitra observes the Bodhi

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Tree on a high pedestal, to which a devotee is paying his homage ; and an aerial spirit in the form of a human being with a peacock's tail is approaching from a hill to offer a flower garland to the Tree, the flying figure being nothing but a conventional form of Garuḍa. According to B. M. Barua, the Tree shown with the vacant seat at its foot is not technically the Bodhi Tree of Buddha Śākyamuni with whose life the scene is connected and if it is a śirīṣa or acacia, the scene is no other than that of homage paid by the Nāga-king Elāpatra to Buddha and the Tree itself is no other than the lordly acacia on the bank of a river, and that if it is a nyagrodha or banyan, the scene is no other than that of the supplication of Brahmā to Buddha for the proclamation of the new truth to the world at large and the Tree is no other than the Ajapāla-nyagrodha at the foot of which the incident happened. The scene of meeting between Buddha and a ploughman presents the field in its natural surroundings. In it one may note that the ploughman is engaged in ploughing with the goad held up in his right hand ; in front of the bullocks yoked to the plough one can see a vacant seat with two bushes of corn and a watery area nearby ; and the vacant seat may be taken to indicate the presence of the Blessed One. B. M. Barua suggests that it "is not only a village ploughing scene but a representation of definite story of Buddha and a ploughman. There are several stories of Buddha and the ploughman, and the one which suits the Bodh-Gayā *motif* is a story contained in the Suttanipāta-Commentary."

Side by side of the representations of the narratives of the present there are still at Buddha Gaya some scenes relating to the stories of the past and all but one of them are found carved on the earlier components of the present Railing of the Buddha Gaya Temple and the only Jātaka scene which adorns the upper panel of a later granite pillar relates to the birih-story entitled the Kumbha Jātaka.

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Among the miscellaneous representations mention may be made of (a) the representation of the narrative of Parantapa's son and the magical harp, (b) that of auspicious sights, and (c) that of later ornamental designs. In the relief of Parantapa's son and magical harp may one observe a mighty elephant approaching by long strides and a man who stands on his toes facing the elephant and holding out a harp. The scene of action is laid in a place enclosed by a railing, and the action itself represents the most striking feature of the study of Parantapa's son and the magical harp as narrated in the Udenavatthu of the Dhammapada-Atthakathā. Two types of auspicious sights are found on the present Railing of the Buddha Gaya Temple—the first one is represented by the figures of Kīrttimukhas, only one or two of which appear on the sandstone and the rest on the granite pillars and the second type is represented by the figure of a cow with a milking calf which is carved in the upper panel of a granite pillars. The later ornamental designs on the granite pillars consist of the female busts in the middle row of lotus-medallions, the figures of bulls, makaras and the like in the upper panels, and those of amorous couples on some of the gate-pillars. Mention may also be made of a figure of a damsel on the pūrṇakumbha on the first pillar of the Jewel-Walk Shrine. This figure standing upon the giant size vase is full and mature in physical form, yet unostentatious exuding a warmth and vivacity which could only be possible in a society that had been able to solve many of the mundane problems to the satisfaction of the average people for whom the monuments are meant. Undoubtedly such a figure marks the turning point in the art of physical rendering of the human. Again, two fragmentary figures of the yakṣas with their hard lines, flattened treatment, exaggeratedly large and protruding eyes, and heaviness of dress and ornaments represent an art, probably slightly mature than the Barhut style, but less advanced than the easier and more refined con-

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ceptions at Buddha Gaya. Here we further find many varieties of mithuna motif particularly interesting among which is one of a newly wedded bride slipping away bashfully as the lover holds her by the hem of her garment and another, a lover helping the feet of his beloved to climb a branch to gather flower.⁹

Last of all, but not the least, we should mention here that inside the Buddha Gaya Temple there is still a cella in which is placed a statue of Buddha, seated cross-legged, with one hand pointing to the earth, i.e., in the attitude of the *Bhūmiś-parśa mudrā* in which Śākyamuni sat when he attained to the supreme knowledge. This sculptural representation of Buddha is indeed unique with its calm facial expression and superb physical beauty.

As to chronology, the sculptural representations of the Buddha Gaya Temple presuppose those on the Railing and its Returns and Gateways of Barhut as well as the monoliths of Aśoka with their reliefs and crowning animal figure. The two Buddha Gaya statues of Buddha-Bodhisattva, installed during the reign of King Trikamala, as already observed, may be taken to represent just the second stage of development from the figures set up at Mathura during the early Kushana reign. Thus the sculptures of Buddha Gaya are earlier only by a few years than the earliest among the sculptures in the caves of the Udayagiri and Khaṇḍagiri hills of Orissa, and earlier by at least half a century or so than the carvings on the gateways of the Great Stūpa at Sanchi. It is to be noticed that the legacy of Aśokan art and architecture to old shrines at Buddha Gaya is indirect rather than direct. On the other hand, considering the old shrines at Buddha Gaya with their art and architecture in the lump and comparing them with the Barhut monument with its round, inner railing, returns gateways, and art and architecture, it may be presumed that the latter served as the scriptural authority. Thus in the erection of the Jewel-Walk and

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the Jewel-Walk Shrine and that of the Diamond-Throne and the Diamond-Throne Shrine, we find that the Barhut designs are sincerely carried into effect at Buddha Gaya. Also, similar designs with some minor omissions and alterations are adopted in a few other cases, e.g. representations of the Bodhi Trees of the Buddhas, the scene of fulfilment of the terms of purchase of the Jetavana by Anāthapiṇḍika, that of the episode of the Indraśāla Cave, that of the hermit receiving hospitality from two mysterious hands, the climbing figure on a false-gate pillar, that of a type of Sirimā goddess, the figures of Gaṅgā and those of Gajalakṣmī. Still there are some differences between Barhut and Buddha Gaya, to mention a few, the imposing gateways with their ornamental arches, the creeper-work on the coping with its serpentine folds or panels alternately presenting the scenes of effort and those of fruition, the formidable array of guards or wardens of the sanctuary and the scenes of relic-procession witnessed at Barhut are missed at Buddha Gaya. Also, the Barhut railing which was originally circular, being an enclosure for a mound with a cylindrical base, became afterwards a svastika in shape and general appearance with the addition of the angle-shaped returns, while the Buddha Gaya railing is quadrangular, being an enclosure for the Bodhi Tree with a square Diamond-Throne Temple before it. That is why B. M. Barua remarks : "One might say that the Bodhi-Gaya is nothing but a combination of the four returns or outer arms of Barhut railing." In short, in some cases the sculptors of Buddha Gaya omitted, while in some other cases they supplemented the Barhut plastic representation.

As considered from the artistic point of view, the main tendency of Buddha Gaya sculpture is not to make Indian art free from its earlier bias for narration of stories, noticed in the bulk of reliefs on the rail-posts and cross-bars of Barhut railing and consequently there is more spacing in the sense that there

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is less of narration by stages which necessarily involves different groupings of figure in one and the same panel. Indeed what was necessitated by the dearth of space at Barhut becomes the normal procedure of art-delineation at Buddha Gaya. Hence the movement which is only on the surface at Barhut goes to the very depth at Buddha Gaya. Likewise, comparing the quadrangular panels of the corner-pillars of the Buddha Gaya Railing with those of Barhut Returns, it is noticed that the representation in the former is ostensibly more scenic and the action more dramatic than in the latter. So also the scene of detection of kinnari's love-intigue by King Kaṇḍari is symbolically represented at Barhut by two human figures, one male and the other female both placed side by side; the male figure standing with a hawk and the female figure with a pigeon in the left hand and at Barhut there is not a single instance of the figures appearing in each other's arm. But at Buddha Gaya the artist delineates amorous scenes with fondness and greater sense of freedom in the matter. Hence on this point B. M. Barua concludes: "Upon the whole, one may hold that the art of Barhut is more narrative and less dramatic and that of Bodha-Gayā is more dramatic and less narrative, while that of Nāgārjunikoṇḍī is ostentatiously presentative."¹⁰

As an architectural representation the Mahābodhi or the Buddha Gaya Temple-complex having the main sanctum built probably in the 3rd century B.C., comprising a vast rectangular enclosure, and occupying a wide area appears to be an unmistakable artistic wonder and to be a solitary instance.¹¹ It puts up an imposing sight which draws forth praises from the composers of the ages. Indeed, the architectural designs of this pristine Temple because of its uniqueness has been adopted in many later temples erected in India and countries of Eastern Asia. As for instance, at Pagan in Burma there is a miniature of the temple founded in the 13th century A. C. Likewise, there are similar temples in Nepal and Thailand.

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Even in the modern period it is witnessed that one Temple was established at Rangamati in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh by the chief Raja Bhuban Mohan Roy on the model of the Buddha Gaya Temple. About the distinction of this massive hoary Temple in the field of architecture J. Fergusson has remarked : "The changes in detail, as well as the introduction of radiating arches in the interior, must belong to the Burmese restorations in the beginning of the 12th and end of the 13th centuries. Though these, consequently, may have altered its appearance in details, it is probable that, until the 'restoration' in 1880-81, we still had before us a straight lined pyramidal nine storeyed temple of about the 6th century, retaining all its essential forms — anomalous and unlike anything else we find in India, either before or afterwards, but probably the parent of many nine storied towers found beyond the Himalayas, both in China and elsewhere."¹² Also the Railing of the Buddha Gaya Temple is a simple structure when compared with than of the Stūpa Barhut¹³ and the models of the stūpas exhibited at Buddha Gaya are all brick mounds with hemispherical domes and cylindrical bases. They are far less imposing than the examples witnessed in the two Barhut scenes of Buddha's Mahāparinibāna and are on a par with the Barhut models on the eastern gateway. Further the caves, mansions and cottages at Buddha Gaya are far inferior in design to those of Barhut. As for example, the Vaijayanta Palace and the Sudharmā Devasabhā bear a vivid testimony to the superior architectural designs of Barhut. But the Mahābodhi Saṅghārāma erected under the auspices of King Meghavarṇa of Sri Lanka is indeed a remarkable form of monastic architecture. Also the style of architecture developed at Buddha Gaya is noteworthy. Again the votive stūpas in the courtyard of the Buddha Gaya Temple draw serious attention by supplying models for the construction of the temples at Ekāmraavana near Bhuvaneswar in Orissa.

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In connection with a comparative study between the Buddha Gaya Temple and the Nalanda Temple A. Cunningham observed : "Amongst all this confusion it is pleasant to turn to the simple narrative of the Chinese pilgrim (i.e. Hiuen-*tsang*), from whom we learn that the original temple of Aśoka being a small one, it was rebuilt on a grand scale by a Brahman. No clue is given as to the date of the new temple, but I am inclined to think that it may be assigned with some probability to the first century B.C. In his account of the great temple of Bālāditya at Nalanda, which was 200 feet high, Hwen Thsang expressly states that in size and magnificence it resembled the great temple near the Bodhi-drum. Now, this temple of Bālāditya, which was identified by me in 1861, was partially excavated at my recommendation in 1863, and afterwards more completely by Mr. A. M. Bradley in 1871. I visited Nalanda in January 1872, and made a careful examination of this great ruined temple, the walls of which are still standing to a height of more than 50 feet. Large masses also of the fallen walls are still intact. From all these remains I am unable to vouch for the accuracy of Hwen Thsang's statement that the Nalanda Temple, with respect to size and magnificence, was comparable to the great temple near the Bodhi-drum. Both temples are square in plan, both rise from a raised terrace or platform, both are built of bricks faced with stucco, and both are ornamented with rows of panels containing figures of Buddha. But the agreement with Hwen Thsang's description goes still further. The height of the Nalanda temple, he says was 200 feet. Now we know both the breadth and height of the Buddha Gaya temple ; and, as the Nalanda temple resembled it, we may conclude with some confidence that it was built in the same relative proportions of height to base. The base of the Nalanda temple is 63 feet square, and that of the Bodhi-drum temple is just 50 feet, its height being 160 to 170 feet. According to this proportion the height of the temple of

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Bālāditya at Nalanda would have been a little over 200 feet, which agrees exactly with the measurement given by Hwen Thsang." But R. L. Mitra concluded : "It is undeniable that there are some weak points in this identification ; but it is the best under the peculiar circumstances of the case. The main fact, the similitude of the Nalanda temple to that of Buddha Gaya, is unquestionable, and the assumption, therefore, that they are of, or of about, the same age may be fairly received as probable. The materials now available cannot help us to any more positive conclusion, and by accepting it we do not exceed the limits—first century B.C. to close of first century A.C.—within which we have to look for the date of the temple. The tradition about the Brahman brothers (mentioned by Hiuen-ṭsang) is one of those which are not much open to the charge of fabrication, inasmuch as it is on the face of it not an interested one".¹⁴ On this point, A. Cunningham further noted : "With regard to the style of the Great Temple of Mahābodhi, we have the distinct testimony of Hwen Thsang himself that the Temple of Bālāditya at Nalanda resembled the Great Vihāra built under the Bodhi Tree in magnificence, in size, in and the style of the enshrined statue."¹⁵

The Mahābodhi Temple is approximately 180 feet high, while its base is 50 feet square. It consists of a straight pyramidal tower surmounted by a stūpa, complete with the harmikā and the hti—with a fluted āmalaka-like lower portion. The tower has angle āmalakas at the corners, demarcating its different stages. Its entrance porch, comparatively later than the original Temple, is on the east. Each of the four sides of the tower presents several tiers of niches, while the front face has a tall lancet opening for the admission of light into the sanctum and at the base of the tower there rises a turret at each of the four corners—a miniature replica of the main spire. The Temple is built of bluish bricks, with a coating of plaster. The main entrance to the Temple is from the east. In front of

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this entrance there is an imposing gateway decorated with delicate carvings. The entrance on the eastern side was certainly an addition to the original building as its coarse bricks do not correspond with those of the main body of the Temple. In front of this gateway is an elegant stone votive stūpa of small proportions. The niches on both sides of the main entrance to the Temple contain images of Buddha which are painted in gold by the Tibetan pilgrims. The central shrine room of the Temple, which is situated at the ground floor is reached after passing through a vaulted passage. The pillars and the main door are made of stone. Above the inner door there was an inscription mentioning the date of the repair work completed by the British Government, but it was removed when the latest repair work was undertaken. The shrine room at the ground floor is very dark as it has no window ; sunlight can enter into it only through the main entrance. As already said, the Temple has an upper storey which is reached by means of two steep stone staircases on either side of the outer hall near the entrance. On the first floor there is a wide and open promenade for enabling one to walk right round the main tower, at the four corners of this floor ; four smaller towers add much to the symmetry and grandeur of the whole structure ; two towers on the west side contain small shrines with images of the Bodhisattvas, while the other two shrines in the east contain the landings of the staircase ; on the two landings there are also two large images of the Blessed One. The parapet along the passage consists of numerous votive stūpas, some of which are exquisitely carved and especially those in the east are simply superb. Under the main tower on the first floor there is a fairly large shrine with a figure of Bodhisattva installed on the altar. It was in this shrine room that Anagarika Dharmapala enshrined the sandal wood image of Buddha, which he had received from the Japanese worshippers. The outer wall of the Mahābodhi Temple is

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plastered with chunam and consists of innumerable niches, carvings, and images. It should be noted that the main niche on its west wall contains an unusually fine image of Buddha, which has been gilded by the Tibetans. However, the best view of the Temple may be had from the north. On the northern side of the Temple, there is a narrow masonry platform raised about four feet above the ground. It is called the Jewel Shrine of the Walk or Buddha's Caṅkamana or Promenade, where after attaining enlightenment the Master is said to have spent a week walking to and fro in deep meditation. Now at the points where he set his feet there are sculptured ornaments representing the miraculous blossoms which sprang up in his footsteps. Proceeding along this Promenade and to the west of the Temple one may see the Bodhi Tree and the holiest spot of enlightenment, at present marked by a red sandstone slab, representing the Vajrāsana. The original Mahābodhi Temple as found in the early reliefs, is portrayed as enclosing this holy spot including the Bodhi Tree. Probably the idea of erecting a temple with a lofty conical tower necessitated its erection a little to the east of this holy spot so the holy spot and the Bodhi Tree now exist at the back of the Temple. Besides, around the Mahābodhi Temple lie innumerable remains, of which the most important are portions of the stone railing, which represent two different periods of construction, the earlier going back to about the 2nd century B.C. and the latter to the early Gupta period. Artistic carvings are still to be seen on these railings, and of these the figure of Indra as Śānti and that of Sūrya, the Sun god, drawn by a four horsed chariot, are significant. Also beautiful sculptures and finely decorated votive stūpas, scattered all round, still continue to earn admiration from the devoted pilgrims and sympathetic visitors. Close to the gate Temple, even in the residence of the Mahanta who was for a long period in charge of the Temple precincts, is a storehouse of fine sculptures and

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other relics which once embellished this holy locality. About the arches of the Temple A. Cunningham observed : "In the Mahābodhi Temple there are three different kinds of arches used, two of which are pointed and one semicircular. The last is found only in the small spans of the narrow staircases. Its voussoirs are arranged face to face as in European arches. But the pointed arches are quite different, as their voussoirs are placed edge to edge, and not face to face. It is this difference in the arrangement of the voussoirs that distinguishes the Indian style of arch from all others. In the Mahābodhi Temple there are two different arrangements which may be called respectively the Indian 'Bondless Arch' and the Indian 'Bonded Arch'. The Bondless Arch is used only for small spans, as seen in the three small openings of the second storey of the Temple. The Bonded Arch is used in the greater span of 20 feet, which is seen on both sides of the three small openings."¹⁶ From the point of view of its architectural peculiarities the Buddha Gaya Temple is indeed a singular monument. Its ground plan is also to some extent unique. That is why A. Cunningham had further remarked : "On a consideration of the dimensions of all the different parts of the Mahābodhi Temple I believe that the ground plan was laid out, after the usual Hindu fashion, on a diagram of squares. As well as I could ascertain, the side of the square, or modulus, was about 6 feet 9 inches. This was one of the ancient measures of India known as the *dhanu* or *daṇḍa*. The ruling measure, or modulus, of the Mahābodhi Temple, as derived from the different parts of the building is about 6 feet 9 inches, which would give a cubit of 20·25 inches and a *Koś* of 6,750 feet, or a little more than one mile and a quarter [6,600 feet]... The measure which I have assumed as the modulus of the plan on which the Mahābodhi Temple was built is perhaps best represented by the monolith pillars of the stone colonnade, or Buddhist railing which surrounded the Temple. Four well

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preserved examples gave an average of 6 feet 9 inches. A few measured nearly 7 feet, but, as some part near the foot of each was rough, a few inches of each must have been sunk in the brick plinth on which they stood.”¹⁷

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APPENDIX ONE

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS OF THE INSCRIPTIONS DISCOVERED AT BUDDHA GAYA

*The Inscription on the covering stone-slab of the Old
Diamond-Throne*

Text

...mātā-(pituno kā) rito (.)

Translation

...caused to be made for the benefit of mothers and
father.

*Fifteen Inscriptions of Kuraṅgi on the fifteen pillars of the
Old Stone-Railing*

a. Nos. 1—14

Text

Ayāye Kuraṁgiye dānam (.)

Translation

The gift of the Noble Lady and Matron Kuraṅgi.

b. No. 15

Text

Ayāye Kuraṁgiye dinam (.)

Translation

Donated by the Noble Lady and Matron Kuraṅgi

*The Inscription of Sirimā on a mutilated pillar of the Old
Stone-Railing.*

Text

Rāño Im(dāgimitrā) (...) (S)irimāye— (.)

Rāño Imdāgimitrā (sa prāsādā-
cetika-) Sirimāye (dānam)

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Translation

(The gift) of Sirimā, a female donor from the Indrāgni-mitra-prāsāda.

The Inscription of Nāgadevī on a pillar of the Old Stone-Railing.

Text

Rāño Brahmamitrassa pājāvātiye Nāgadevaye dānaṃ (.)

Translation

The gift of Nāgadevī, the wife of King Brahmamitra.

The Inscription of Amogha on a rail-bar of the Old Stone-Railing

Text

Amoghāsa dānaṃ (.)

Translation

The gift of Amogha.

The Inscription of Bodhirakṣita on a rail-bar of the Old Stone-Railing

Text

Bodhirakṣitaṣa Ta(m)bapa(m)nakasa dānaṃ (.)

Translation

The gift of Bodhirakṣita, a man of Tāmraparṇi (Ceylon or Tinnevely region).

The Inscription of a donor on a rail-bar of the Old Stone-Railing

Text

Pāṭihāra...Nā...dānaṃ (.)

Translation

The gift of a donor of (?) Pratihāra, the initial of whose name or designation is Nā.

Appendix One

Two Coping Inscriptions of Kuraṅgi and Sirimā

a. No. 1

Text

(Rāṇo Kosi) ki-putrāsa Imḍāgimitrāsa pājāvātiye jivā-putrāye Kuraṅgiye dānam [:] rājā-pāsādā-cetikā-(Siri)mā(ye) [dānam].

b. No. 2

Text

[Rāṇo Ko]siki-putrāsa Imḍāgimitrāsa pājāvātiye jivā-putrāye Kuraṅgiye dānam (:) rājā-pāsādā-cetikā Si[rimāye dānam.]

Translation

The gift of Kuraṅgi, the wife of King Indrāgnimitra,—[Kuraṅgi who is] the mother of living sons : [the gift as well] of Sirimā (Śrīmatī), a female donor from [the monastic abode] —“Indrāgnimitra’s palace.”

The Buddha Gaya Image Inscription

Text

(Line 1.)—Mahārājasya Tr(i)kama(l)asya s(aṃ) 60 4 gri(3) di 5 ? ? syā pūrvvaya bh(i)—kṣu-vinayadharasya vihārasya sadhevihāri vitā...kṣu...

(Line 2.)—Amātya-dhurvihāre svakena samartho śa ? ? ? ? ? Śailikā bodhisatva-paṭimā sīharathā pratisthāpayati 2 (.) Upāsikāya arthadharma-sahāyetiye dhat ? ... ? kṣu...ye sarvā...

(Line 3.)—...(sa) hāyatā dharmakathikena ? ? tā (.) lmenā kuśala-mūleṇā mātāpitṛṇā(m) pūjāye bhavatu upādh...jāye...

(Line 4.)—...ye ? vva... (.)

Translation

The saṃvat 64, the 5th day of the 3rd summer month, during the reign of the great king Trikamala, [just] prior to this, the fellow monk who was the upholder of the Vinaya discipline...set up on his own strength two lion-vehicled

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stone-images of the Buddha-Bodhisattva. With the aid of the Buddhist lay woman who was a helper of the noble cause of piety... (something) was done by a preacher of the Law. Let the merit springing from this act of piety be the share of mother and father (to begin with), of the preceptor...

A Mediaeval Inscription on the Coping of the Old Stone-Railing

Text

(Line 1.)—...kārīto yatra Vajrāsana-vṛhad-gandhakūṭi (.)
Prāsādamarddha-trikair-dināraśatais-sudhā-lepya-punar-
navīkaraṇena saṃskṛtaṃ (.) Atraiva ca pratyahaṃ
ācandrārkkātārakaṃ Bhagavato Buddhāya go-śata-
dānena gṛta-pradīpaḥ ākārītaḥ (.) Prāsāde khaṇḍa-
sphaṭita-pratisamārādhane tat-pratimāyāṃ ca praty-
ahaṃ gṛta-pradīpo go-śatenā-pareṇa ākārītaḥ (.)
Vihārepi Bhagavato raitya-Buddha-pratimāyāṃ go-
śatena gṛta-pradīpaḥ...(.)

(Line 2.)—...(gṛta)-pradīpākṣayanīvi-nibandhaḥ vihāro-
payogāya kārītas-Tatra-pi...bhikṣusaṃghasya (ārya)-
sya (u)payogya mahāntam-ādhāraṃ khānitaṃ (.)
tadanupūrṇaṃ caprahataka-kṣetram-utpāditaṃ (.)
Tad-etaṁ sarvvaṃ yan-mayā puṇyopacita-sambhāraṃ
kṣtvā...(.)

Translation

(Line 1.)—(A shrine) has been made (where the great Diamond-throne temple) is. The temple has been adorned with a new coating of plaster and paint at the cost of 250 dināras. And in the temple a lamp of ghee has been provided for the Lord Buddha by the gift of a hundred cows, for as long as the moon, sun and stars shall endure. Also by another hundred cows in addition to the cost of small, perpetually recurring repairs to the temple, provision has been

Appendix One

made for another lamp of ghee, to be burnt daily before the image inside the temple. By another hundred cows provision has been made for having a lamp of ghee burnt before the brass image of the Lord Buddha in the monastery (vīhāra)...

(Line 2.)—...a perpetual endowment of a lamp of ghee has been made for the benefit of the monastery. There also...a large water reservoir has been dug out for the use of the noble congregation of monks and to the east of it a new field has been laid out. Whatever merit may have been aquired by me by all this, may this be for the benefit of my parents at first...'

The Inscription of Prakhyātakīrtti on the Coping of the Old Stone-Railing

Text

(Line 1.)—Laṅkādvīpa-narendrāṇaṃ śramaṇaḥ kulajo'-
bhavat (I)

Prakhyātakīrttir-ddharmātmā svakulāmbara-candra-
māḥ (II)

Bhakyā tu bhikṣuṇā-nena buddhatvam-
abhikāṃkṣatā (I)

kārā ratnatraye samyak-kāritā śāntaye nṛṇāṃ (II)

Tato mayā yat-kuśalaṃ hyupārjjitaṃ
tad astyupādh(yā) ya v— v — v — v —

v — v — — v v — v —

(Line 2.)—Śubhena tenaiva (pha)lena yujyatām (II)

Translation

The virtuous Śramaṇa Prakhyātakīrtti having been a descendant of the rulers of the Island of Laṅkā (Sri Lanka) (has become) moon to the firmament of his family (v. 1).

This monk, through devotion, desirous of attaining

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Buddhahood, caused to be performed acts of worship at the Ratna-traya (the Buddhist Hoiy Triad) for the peace of mankind (v. 2).

Whatever merit has been aquired by me through this, let that be for the enlightenment of... Let that every auspicious reward be shared by (v. 3).

Spurious Gayu Copper-plate Inscription of Samudragupta The Year 9

Text

1. Om Svasti Mahā-nau-hasty-aśva-jayaskandhāvārāj(d)
=Ā(a)yoddhyā-vāsakāt-sarvva-rāj-occhettu(h) pr—
2. thivyām=a-pratihatihasya catur-udadhi-salil-āsvādita-
yaśa(so) Dhanada-Varuṇ-Endr-Ā-
3. ntaka-samasya kṛtānta-paraśor-nyāy-āgat-ānēka-gō-
hiraṇya-koṭi-pradasya ciroccha—
4. nn-āśvamēdh-āharttu(h) mahārāja-śrī-Gupta-pra-
pauttrasya mahārāja-śrī-Ghaṭōtkaca-pauttrasya¹
5. mahārājādhirāja-śrī-Candragupta-puttrasya² Licchivi-
daubhittrasya³ mahādevyā(m) Ku-
6. māradevyām=utpanna(h) paramabhāgavato mahā-
rājādhirāja-śrī-Samudra-
7. guptaḥ Gayā-vaiṣayika-Revatīkā-grāme vrā(brā)
hmaṇa-puroga-grāma-vala-
8. tkausabhyām=āha l Eva c=ārtha(m) viditam=bo(vo)
bhavatv=eśa(ṣa) grāmo mayā mātāpitrōr=ā-
9. tmanaś=ca puṇv-ābhivṛ-ddhaye Bhāradvāja-sagottrāya
Va(ba)hvṛcāya sav(r) a (bra)-hmacā-
10. riṇe vrā(brā)hmaṇa-Gopa-devasvāmīṇe s-oparikar-
oddeśen=āgrahāratven=
11. ātiśṛṣṭaḥ (.) tad=yuṣmābhir=asya śrotavyam=ājñā
ca karttavyā sarvve ca samucita grāma-pra-
12. tyayā meya-hiraṇy-ādayo deyaḥ (.) na c=e (ai)-tāt-
prabhṛty=etad-āgrahāri-keṇ=(ā) nyad-grā-

Appendix One

13. m-ādi-karada-kuṭumbi-kāruk-ādayaḥ praveśayitavyā
ma(a)nyathā niyatam=ā(a)-gra-
14. hār-ākṣepa(h) syād=iti (.) Samba(mva)t 9 Vaiśākha
di 10 (.)
15. Anya-grām-akṣapaṭa-lādhikṛta-Dyūta-Gopasvāmy-
ādeśa-likhitah (.)

Translation

Om ! Hail ! From the victorious camp, full of great ships and elephants and horses, situated at (the city of) Ayodhyā,—the most devout worshipper of the Divine One, the Mahārājādhirāja, the glorious Samudragupta,—who is the exterminator of all kings ; who has no antagonist (of equal power) in the world ; whose fame is tasted by the waters of the four oceans ; who is equal to (the gods) Dhanada and Varuṇa and Indra and Antaka ; who is the very axe of (the god), Kṛtānta ; who is the giver of many millions of lawfully acquired cows and gold ; who is the restorer of the aśvamedha-sacrifice, that has been long in abeyance ; who is the son of the son's son of the Mahārāja, the illustrious Gupta ; who is the son's son of the Mahārāja, the illustrious Ghaṭotkaca ; (and) who is the son of the Mahārājādhirāja, the glorious Chandragupta (I), and daughter's son of Licchivi, begotten on the Mahādevī Kumāradevī,—says to the two village Valatkaṣaṇas, together with the Brāhmaṇas, at the village of Revatikā belonging to the Gayā viṣaya :—

(Line 8.)—“Be it known to you ! For the sake of increasing the religious merit of (my) parents and of myself, this village is granted by me, as an agrahāra, with the assignment of the uparikara, to the religious student, the student, the Brāhmaṇa Gopasvāmin, of the Bhāradvāja gotra (and) the Bahvṛca (śākhā).

(Line 11.)—“Therefore attention should be paid to him by you ; and (his) commands should be obeyed ; and all the customary tributes of the village, consisting of that which is

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to be measured, gold, etc., should be given. And, from this time forth, the tax-paying cultivators, artizans, etc., of other villages etc., should not be introduced by the Agrahārika of this (village) (for the purpose of settling in it and carrying on their occupations) ; (for) otherwise there would certainly be a violation of (the privileges of) an agrahāra. "The year 9 ; (the month) Vaiśākha ; the day 10.

(Line 15.)—(This deed) has been written by the order of Dyūta-Gopasvāmin, the Akṣapatalādhikṛta of another village.⁴

Buddha Gaya Inscription of Mahānāman The Year 269

Text

1. Om (II) Vyāpto yen=ā-prameyaḥ sakala-śaśi-rucā
sarvvataḥ sat(t)va-dhātuḥ kṣuṇṇāḥ pāṣaṇḍa-
yodhas=sugati= patha=rudhas=tarka=śāstrā-
bhiyuktaḥ sampūrṇo
2. dharmma-koṣaḥ prakṛti-ripu-hṛtaḥ sādhiṭo loka-
bhūtyai | śāstuh Śāky-aikava (ba)ndhor=jjayati
ciraṭaram tad=yaśas-sāra-tanṭram || Nairodhim
śubha-bhāvanā-
3. m=anusṛtaḥ saṃsāra-saṃkleśa-jin = Maitreyasya kare
vimukti-vaśitā yasy=ādbhuṭā vyākṛtā | nirvāṇ-
āvasare ca yena caraṇau dṛṣṭau muneh
4. pāvanau | pāyād=vaḥ sa maṇindra-śāsana-dhara
stutyō Mahā-Kāśyapaḥ || Saṃyukt-āgamino viśuddha-
rajaśaḥ sat(t) v-ānukamp-ōdyataḥ śiṣyā
5. Yasya sakṛd=vicerur=amalām Laṅk-ācal-opatyakām
tébhyaḥ śīla-guṇ-ānvitāś=ca śaṭaśaḥ śiṣya-praśiṣyāḥ
kramāj=jātās = tuṅga-narendra-
6. Vaṃśa-tilakāḥ prostrjya rājya-śriyam || Dhyān-ōday-
āhiṭa-hiṭaḥ śubh-āśubha-vivekṛd=viḥata-mohaḥ sad-
dharmm-ātula-vibhavō Bhavo va (ba) bhūva
7. śramaṇas=tataḥ || Rāhul-akhyāś=ca tac-chiṣya

Appendix One

- Upasenō yatir—yataḥ Mahānāmā kramād=ēvam=
Upssenas=tato—paraḥ ॥ Vāṭsalyam śaraṇ-ā-
8. gatasya satatam dīnasya vaiśeṣikam vyāpat-sāyaka-
santati-kṣata-dhṛtēr=ārttasya c=āpatyakam | krū-
rasy=āhita-kāriṇaḥ pravitatam va(ba)ndhōr=yathā-
9. bhāvataḥ evam sac-carit-odbhavana yaśasa yasy=
ācitam bhūtalam ॥ Āmradvip-ādhivāsī prthu-kula-
jaladhis=tasya śiṣyo mahīyān
10. Laṅkā-dvīpa-prasūtaḥ parahita-nirataḥ san-Mahānāma-
nāmā | ten=ocair-Vvo(bbo) dhimaṇḍe śaśi-kara-
dhavalaḥ sarvvato maṇḍapena |
11. Kāntaḥ prāsāda eṣa Smara-va(bb)la-jayinaḥ kāriṭō
loka-śastuḥ ॥ Vyapagata-viṣaya-sneho hata-ṭimira-
daśaḥ pradīpa-vad=a-saṅgaḥ
12. kuśalēn=ānena jano vo(bo)dhi-sukham = anuttaram
bhajatām ॥ Yāvad = dhvānt-āpahārī pravitaṭa-
kīraṇaḥ sarvvaṭo bhāti bhāsvān=yāvaṭ=pūrṇṇō=
mvu (mbu)-
13. rāśiḥ phaṇi-phaṇa-kuṭilair = ūrmī-cakkrais=samantāt
yāvac = c=Endrādhivāso vividha-maṇi-śilā cāru-
sṛngaṇ Sumerāḥ śōbh-ādhyam
14. tāvad=ēṭad=bhavanam=uru-muneḥ śāśvaṭatvam=
prayātu ॥ Samvaṭ 200 60 9 Caitra śu di 7 ॥

Translation

Om ! Victorious for a very long time is that doctrine, replete with fame, of the Teacher, the chief kinsman of the Śākyas, by which, lustrous as the full-moon, the inscrutable primary substance of existence has been pervaded in all directions ; by which the warriors, who are heretics, obstructive of the path of beautitude, have been broken to pieces, being assailed with the weapon logic ; (and) by which the whole treasure of religion, that had been stolen by the enemy which is original in nature, has been recovered for the welfare of mankind !

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(Line 2.)—May he, Mahā-Kāśyapa, who is worthy of praise, protect you,—he who observed the precepts of (Buddha) the chief of saints ; who practised that auspicious habit of abstract meditation which is of the nature of a trance ; who overcame the anguish of successive states of existence ; whose wonderful subjugation of the passions in final emancipation (is to be) displayed in the hand of Maitreya ; and by whom the two pure feet of (Buddha) the saint were beheld at the time of attaining Nirvāṇa !

(Line 4.)—His disciples, endowed with a connected tradition of doctrine, purified as to (their) emotions, (and) active in compassion for existing beings, roamed at one time over the stainless country at the feet of the mountains of Laṅkā ; and in succession from them there were born, in hundreds, disciples and disciples' disciples, possessed of the virtue of (good) character, who, without the glory of (actual) sovereignty, were the ornaments of a lofty race of kings.

(Line 6.)—Then there was the Śramaṇa Bhava, whose welfare was effected by the development of abstract meditation ; who discriminated between good and evil ; who destroyed error ; (and) who possessed an unequalled wealth of true religion.

(Line 7.)—And his disciple (was) he who had the name of Rāhula ; after whom (there came) the ascetic Upasena (I) ; then in succession (there was) Mahānāman (I) (and) after him another Upasena (II), whose special characteristic of affection, of the kind that is felt towards offspring,—for any distressed man who came to him for protection, and for any afflicted person whose fortitude had been destroyed by the continuous flight of the arrows of adversity,—extended, in conformity with the disposition of a kinsman, (even) to any cruel man who might seek to do (him) harm ; (and) by whose fame, arising from good actions, the whole world was thus completely filled.

Appendix One

(Line 9.)—His disciple, greater (even than himself), (is) he who has the excellent name of Mahānāman (II) ; an inhabitant of Āmradvīpa ; a very ocean of a mighty family ; born in the island of Laṅkā ; delighting in the welfare of others ;—by him this beautiful mansion of the teacher of mankind, who overcame the power of (the god) Smara,—dazzling white as the rays of the moon, with an open pavilion on all sides,—has been caused to be made at the exalted Bodhimaṇḍa.

(Line 11.)—By means of this appropriate (action), let mankind,—freed from attachment to worldly things ; having the condition of (mental) darkness dispelled ; (and), like (the flame of) a torch, having no adhesion (to material objects),—enjoy the supreme happiness of perfect wisdom !

(Line 12.)—As long as the sun, the dispeller of darkness, shines in all directions with diffused rays ; as long as the ocean (is) full on all sides with its circles of waves that are curved like the hoods of hooded snakes ; and as long as (the mountain) Sumeru, the abode of (the god) Indra, has its summits made beautiful by various jewelled slabs, in such a way as to be full of lustre,—so long let this temple of the great saint attain the condition of being everlasting !

(Line 14.)—The year 200 (and) 60 (and) 9 ; (the month) Caitra ; the bright fortnight ; the day seven.⁵

Buddha Gaya Image Inscription of Mahānāman

Text

Om Dēya-dharmmō = yaṁ 'Śākya-bhikṣoḥ Āmradvīpa-
vāsi-sthavira-Mahānāmasya (II) Yad = atra puṇyaṁ tad =
bhavatu sarvva-sat(t)vānām = anuṭtara-jñān-āvāptayē =
stu (II)

Translation

Om ! This (is) the appropriate religious gift of the Śākya Bhikṣu, the Sthavira Mahānāman, a resident of

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Āmradvīpa. Whatever religious merit (there is) in this (act), let it be for the acquisition of supreme knowledge by all sentient beings !⁶

Buddha Gaya Stone Image Inscription

Text

Om Dēya-dharmmō=yaṁ Śākya-bhikṣōḥ — Tiṣyāmratīrtha-vāsika-Dharmmagupta-Daṁṣṭrasenayor — Yyad — atra puṇya(ṁ) tad=bhavatu mātāpiṭṭa-rāv=ācāryy-opādhyāyau pūrvvaṅgama(ṁ) kṛtvā

2. sarvva-satvanām=anuttara-jñānavāptayē — stu ॥

Translation

Om ! This (is) the appropriate religious gift of the two Śākya Bhikṣus, Dharmagupta and Daṁṣṭrasena, residents of Tiṣyāmratīrtha. Whatever religious merit (there is) in this (act), let it be for the acquisition of supreme knowledge by all sentient beings, after (their) Acārya and Upādhyāya.⁷

Two Inscriptions from Buddha Gaya

Text I

1. Om namo Vuddhāya.⁸ Ye dharmmā hetuprabhavā hetuṁ teṣāṁ Tathāgato' hmvadat, teṣāṁ ca yo nī-
2. rcdha evaṁvādī mahīśravaṇaḥ⁹. Deyadhammoryaṁ pravaramahājānājāyipaḥ¹⁰ para-
3. mopāśakasamastatyaprakṛyo¹¹petamahārājaśrīmadaśokacalladevasya, yadatra
4. puṇyaṁ¹² tadbhavatu, mātāpitṛpūrvvaṁ-gamaṁ kṛtyā śakalasatvarāśer¹³nuttarjñāna-
5. phala, vāptaya iti. Kāśmīrapaṇḍitabhadantagucapatho¹⁴, rājagura¹⁵paṇḍitabhūśala,
6. pātraḥamṅkaradeva¹⁶, pātra-trailokyabrahmākādibhiḥ Śrīmadrājānam vodha-
7. yitvā¹⁷, Bhaṭṭadāmodaram¹⁸, bhaṭṭapaduma, śiṣṭarāghavama-hipūkāla prahitya¹⁹

Appendix One

8. vihāriyaṃ Vuddha²⁰pratimāsahitā kārītā, yadaparam,
naivedyātham tāṃpai-
9. taṃ paittakatrayaṃ²¹ dīpasahitaṃ ācaṃdrārke ye
kecit²² Śrīmanmahābodhou siṃ-
10. ghalasaṃghādayestaiḥ²³ pratyhaṃ deyaṃ, naivedya-
midam satyadvārittakalpi-
11. takāraharicaṃttaśupakārī māmakayoparikalpitaṃ²⁴.
12. Śrīmallakhvaṇa²⁵senasyāṭṭitarājye saṃ 51
13. Bhādradīne 29

Text II

1. Oṃ namo Vuddhāya²⁶. Dēyadharmmoyaṃ pravra-
mahāyānayaīnaḥ paramopāsakasya hevajracaraṇāra-
vindamakaranda-madhukaraphalakārabhūpālave-
2. syābhūjṅgaparaṇṇpatigarūḍanārāyaṇa-ripurājamatta-
gajasiṃhanikhilamahīpalajanaketyādi nijanikkilapra-
śasti-samalaṅkṛ-
3. tasapādalakṣaśikhasadeśarājādhirājaŚrīmadśokacalla-
devakaṇiṣṭha²⁷-bhrātṛśrīdaśaratha nāmadhe-
yakumārapā-
4. dapadmopajīvibhāṇḍāgarika-satyavrataparāyaṇādinivar-
tanīyavodhi²⁸sattvacariṭakṣatriyakula-dīpaśrīsaḥaṇa-
pālanāmodheya-
5. sya mahattakaśrīcāṭabrahmasutasya mahāmahattaka-
śrīmṛsibrahmapoutrasya, yadanna puṇyaṃ tadbhavat-
vācāryopadhyāyamātāpi-
6. tṛpūrvvaṅgamaṃ kṛtvā sakala-sattvarāsīranuttarajñāna-
phalā-vāptaya iti. Śrīmallakṣmaṇa-senadevapādā-
nāmatotarājye
7. saṃ 74 Vaiśākha vadi 12 gūrou²⁹— .

Burmese Inscription at Bodh-Gaya

Text

1. Purhāthikhin thāthanā 218 lunlie-pyithaw akhāhnaik
sambuteik kyungo asoyathaw Si-

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2. ridhammasoka myithaw Mingyi seti shaṭṭhaung 4
daung aphaw hnaik
3. sumtaw phonpierā Pāyātha i-tango akhā liemyin
pyet
4. rwe myinthaw ṭhikhin Pinthakūgyi tayauk. Thopyiy
tacet py-
5. etkheraga Thadōmin pyu-i. Thopyi (y) tacet
pyetkhedōn
6. ragā Sinbyuthikin Trā Mingyi mimi kosa sira
siridhamma-
7. rājakurugo siytaw mulātthaw akhāhnaik pā-la-
8. ṭ thaw tabethā Sirikassapasa thi lōk antha utsā hilyet
9. malōk radat ragā Varavāsi ṭhikhin therago sum kham
siyragā Pu-
10. ṭathin min hu-i lok siykāmu ṭhikhin nge ko myatkyi
The(ra) ko
11. akhwin puragā Sakarac 657 khu pyatholazan 10 rak
thaukkyaniy pyudōn-i
12. Sakarac 660 Tazaungmonlazan 8 rak tahninganu ni(y)
hlū sathaw
13. takhunkukā ṭakhunpyādoko le pusao-i. Thinbōk
thaung simi
14. ṭhaudgdo akyein myaswa hlin pusao-i. Thāthami
hu hmat rwe thunge 2
15. yauk shwepen ngwepan khwet paso swethaw padetha
le pu-
16. sao-i. Akhākhapṭhein hlin thinbōkwut mapyat
tisinthaw
17. kraung mrie kyun nwado ko le way ruy hlūkhe. I
ngā pyu
18. ṭhaw kaunghmugā *Nippan* pyitsi athauk apin
phyitchin tha-
19. ṭe. Yat (meik) ti purbāṭhikhin leṭthet hlin rahandāsu
loṭhate.

Appendix One

Translation

1. When 218 years of the era of the Religion of the Lord Buddha had passed away, Siridhammāsoka, the Ruler of Jambudīpa,

2. built 84,000 chaityas, one of which was situated on the site,

3. where the Buddha took a meal (of rice porridge offered by Sujātā before attaining Enlightenment). This shrine, owing to the effluxion of time, fell into ruin,

4. and was repaired by the Mahāthera Pinthagugyi. Subsequently,

5. it was repaired by Thadomin. It again fell into disrepair,

6. and king Sinbyuthikhin deputed the Royal Preceptor,

7. Siridhammarājaguru to undertake the work of repair.

8. Sirikassapa, the disciple of the Preceptor, had sufficient funds,

9. but could not take the work in hand (owing, probably, to the absence of skilled artisans)—

10. He, therefore, sent Varavāsi, a junior *Thera*,

11. to King Pyutathin Min, who complied with the solicitation for assistance.

12. The work of repair was begun on Friday, the 10th, waxing of Pyatho 657 B.E. (January 1295 A.C.),

13. and was completed on Sunday, the 8th, waxing of Tazaungmon 660 B.E. (November 1298 A.C.).

14. The following offerings were dedicated to the shrine : flags and streamers, 1,000 bowls of rice and 1,000 lamps (for several times), 2 boys in the place of the donor's own children

15. and gold and silver flowers and cloth hung on bamboo framework.

16. In order to provide for the daily offering of rice at the shrine, at all times,

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17. land, slaves, and cattle were purchased and likewise dedicated. May this
18. meritorious deed of mine lead me on to Nibbāna !
19. May I become a disciple of Metṭeyya, the coming Buddha ! ¹

An Old Burmese Inscription of King Kyawswa

Text

1. īl īl purhā skhiñ sāsana 218 lwan liy pri so akhā nhuik/
camputip klwan kuiw acuiw (mi) ra so si-
2. ridhammasoka mañ so mañkrī ceti yhat soñ 4 thoñ a
(thai) nhuik
3. chwa(m)tau phun (ph)iy rā pāyā(sa)ī than kuw akhā
liy mlañ pyak
4. ruy (p)lañ so skhiñ pañsakū krī ta yok thuiw priy ta
khyak pya-
5. k khay rakā saṭuiw mañ plu e thuiw pri ta khyak pyak
khay tum
6. rakā chan phlu skhiñ tryā mañ kri mimi kuiwcā chirya
siri dhamma-
7. rājākuru kuiw ciy t(au)mu lat so akhā nhuik pā la-
8. t so tape' sā siri Kassapa sañ lu(p)am (sa) uccā hi lyak
9. ma lup ra tat rakā wanawasi skhiñ thera kuiw chwañ
khaim ciy rakā pu-
10. tasin mañ hu e lup ciy kamu skhiñ nai kuiw mlat
krī the kuiw
11. akhwañ mū rakā sakarac 65(7) khu plasuiw l - chan 10
ryak 6 niy plu tu(m)e
12. sakarac (6)60 tanchonmhun l = chan 8 ryak tanhañkanū
ni (Iha)ce so
13. tamkhwan kukā tamkhwan myā tuiw kuiw le pucaw e
sañput th(o)ñ chi mi
14. th(o)ñ tuiw akrin myā cwā Ihya(ñ) pucaw e sā sami
hu mhat ruy suñai 2

Appendix One

15. yok rhuy pan ñuy pan khwak pu(ch)uiw chway so
patañsā le pu-
16. caw e akhā khapsim Ihyañ sañpu(t) wat (m)a prat tañ
cim so
17. kroñ mliy kywan nwā tuiw kuiw le way ruy thu khay
iñā(m)u
18. so koñ mhu kā nippan paccañ athok apañ phlac
khyāñ sa
19. te lll myattañ purihā skh(i)ñ...lakthak Ihyam rahantā
chu luiw sate¹

Translation

After 218 (years) of the Lord Buddha's religion had elapsed, one amongst the 84,000 ceti of the king called Siri Dhammasoka, ruler of the Island of Camputip (Jambudīpa)—the one at the site of the giving alms of Milk-rice (pāyāsa), fell into ruin through age and stress of time. It was repaired by a Senior pañsakū monk (wearing rags from a dust-heap, pāñśukūla). Thereafter, when it had again fallen into ruin, Satuiw Man ('Our Lord the King') rebuilt it. Thereafter, when it had once more fallen into ruin, the King of the Law (tryā mañkri = dhammarāja), Chañ-phlu-skhin ('Lord of the White Elephant') sent, as his proxy, his teacher (chiryā = ācārya) Siri Dhammarājākuru, who took with him his pupil (tape' sā) Siri Kassapa. With the funds they had for doing the work, they were unable to do it. So on the occasion of giving almsfood to the Lord Thera Vanavāsī, Putasiñ Mañ ('Prince Putasin') granted permission to the junior monk (Kassapa) and the Venerable Thera (Dhammarājāguru) to carry on the work (?). On Friday the 10th waxing of the month of Pyatho in the year 657 (Friday, 16th December, A.C. 1295) they resumed the work. When (final) dedication was made on Sunday the 8th waxing of the month Tazaungmōn in the year 660 (Sunday, 12th October, A.C. 1298), there was offering of many flags and flag-streamers, many offerings, time after time, of rice-alms by the

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thousand ; oil lamps by thousand ; also two children styled as 'son' and 'daughter' ; the offering also of a patañsā (kalpavṛkṣa tree) hung with gold and silver flowers with cups and garments. In order that rice-alms may be offered without a break for ever and ever, land, slaves and cattle were also brought and dedicated. As for this good deed done by me, I want it to be a means and support for the attainment of Nirvāṇa. At the time when Myattañ (Maitreya)—as the Lord Buddha, I pray for the boon of Sainthood. ¹

The Inscription of Jinadāsa on a pillar of the old Stone-Railing.

Text

- Line 1. Namō Buddhāya
- Line 2. Parvatād-āgata-pa-
- Line 3. ṇḍita-Jinadāsa te-
- Line 4. na Śrīmān-Mahābodhi-
- Line 5. bhṭṭāraka-darśana-
- Line 6. kṛta-yad puṇyaṃ ta-
- Line 7. d-bhavati mātā-pi-
- Line 8. tṛ-pūrvagamaṃ kṛtvā-
- Line 9. etat-puṇyaṃ likhā-
- Line 10. pitam Saṃgatta

Translation

Salutation to the Buddha

The merit which is aquired by the Jinadāsa, a learned (Buddhist pilgrim) hailing from Parvata, by means of having a view of the deity of Mahābodhi reigning in his glory as the supreme lord falls, first of all, to the share of the parents. Having done this, it is (here) caused to be written.

Saṃgatta

REFERENCES

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- 2. putrah.

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5. Fleet, John Faithfull. *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, vol. iii (1963 ed.), pp. 276—278.
6. Fleet, J. F. *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, vol. iii (1963 ed.), p. 279.
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8. Buddhāya.
9. mahāśramaṇah.
10. mahāyānayaīyah.
11. mopāsakasamastasyaprakriyo-.
12. puṇyam.
13. kṛt ā sakalasattva-.
14. Abhaya Śrīrāja-.
15. guru-
16. Śaṅkaradeva.
17. bodhayitvā
18. Dāmodara.
19. -pravṛtyā *instead of* prabhṛtibhiḥ.
20. Buddha-
21. rtham taccaitaccaityakatrayaṃ.
22. kecicchrīmanmahābodhou.
23. -dayastaiḥ.
24. It is not quite intelligible.
25. Śrīmallakṣmaṇa— .
26. Buddhāya.
27. —kaniṣṭha.
28. —bodhi—
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APPENDIX TWO

BODH-GAYĀ FROM BUDDHIST POINT OF VIEW

and

BODH-GAYĀ FROM HINDU POINT OF VIEW

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BODH-GAYĀ FROM BUDDHIST POINT OF VIEW

In dealing with the ancient tract of Uruvelā as a whole we had had an opportunity of inviting the reader's attention to a number of spots which acquired special sanctity in the estimation of the Buddhists from their association with the movements and achievements of the Buddha, both before and after the great Enlightenment. Here our endeavour will be to make an intensive study of the historical development of that remarkable spot in the neighbourhood of Senānī-gāma which was destined to be viewed and venerated by the Buddhists as the pre-eminent place of pilgrimage, reigned over by the lordly Bo. We might recall that this spot was nestled in a calm retreat within a few paces from the bank of the Nerañjarā of crystal flow and glistening beach and with a luxuriant frontage of a *Sāl* grove. The selection of this very spot in preference to the Prāgbodhi hill and its fearful surroundings was no mere accident ; it was a deliberate choice for the place had a special appeal to his imagination and proved peculiarly congenial to his temperament.

Obviously the city of Gayā through which he had passed had no attraction for him. That crowded urban areas like the cities of Rājagṛha, Benares, Vaiśālī, Kapilavāstu and Kauśāmbi had no fascination for him is too clearly borne out

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by the history of Buddhism. In all these instances we find that the sites selected for planting the centres of the new religion have always been pleasant woodlands and picturesque pleasaunces with open prospects and delightful surroundings as offered by the famous Deer-park at Rishi-pattana in the vicinity of Benares, the Bamboo-grove of King Bimbisāra and the Mango-grove of Jīvaka in the vicinity of Rājagṛiha, the magnificent woodland Mahāvana near Vaiśālī, the sombre Banyan grove adjoining Kapilavāstu and the Bhesakalāvana within the purview of Kauśāmbī.

All these premises may lead us to think that neither the crowded cities nor the dense forests and like other fearful places appealed really to his imagination or suited his temperament. Fa Hian and Hwen Thsang have left, almost in equal terms, an interesting description of circumstances that impelled the Buddha to avoid the dangerous crags and fearful forests of the Prāgbodhi hill (*Po-io-ki po-ti*), situated some four or five miles north-east from Bodhi-Gayā, and to select the spot noted above. We feel tempted to quote below the description of Hwen Thsang as being the more effective one :

“To the east of the place where Gayā-Kāśyapa sacrificed to fire, crossing a great river, we come to a mountain called Prāgbodhi (*Po-lo-ki-po-ti*). Tathāgata after diligently seeking for six years and not yet obtaining supreme wisdom, after this he gave up his penance and accepted the rice-milk (of Sujātā). As he went to the north-east he saw this mountain that it was secluded and dark, whereupon he desired to seek enlightenment thereon. Ascending the north-east slope and coming to the top, the earth shook and the mountain quaked, whilst the mountain *deva* in terror spake thus to Bodhisattva :

“This mountain is not the fortunate spot for attaining supreme wisdom. If here you stop and engage in the *samādhi* of Diamond, the earth will quake and gape and the mountain be overthrown upon you.’ Then Bodhisattva descended,

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and half way down the south-west slope he halted. There backed by the crag and facing a torrent, is a great stone-chamber. Here he seat down cross-legged. Again the earth quaked and the mountain shook. Then a *Deva* of the Pure Abode (*Suddhāvāsa*) cried out in space, 'This is not the place for a Tathāgata to perfect supreme wisdom. From this south-west, 14 or 15 *li*, not far from the place of penance, there is a *Pippala* (*Pi-po-lo*) tree under which is a Diamond-throne. All the past Buddhas seated on this throne have obtained true enlightenment, and so will those yet to come. Pray, then, proceed to that spot.' Then Bodhisattva rising up, the Dragon dwelling in the cave said, 'This cave is pure and excellent. Here you may accomplish the holy (aim). Would that of your exceeding love you would not leave me.' Then Bodhisattva having discovered that this was not the place for accomplishing his aim, to appease the Dragon he left him his shadow and departed. The *Devas* going before, led the way, and accompanied him to the Bodhi-tree."¹

As for the uncongeniality of dense forests and like other fearful tracts to his temperament, we have a much earlier and more authentic account in the Bhaya-bherava-Sutta of the Majjhima-Nikāya. In connection with the suggestion that in the opinion of the Brahmin Jānussoṇi (Jānaśruti) the forest regions and arid tracts are highly difficult of habitation, the much-needed inwardness of self is hard of accomplishment, and equally difficult it is to find comfort in such loneliness, the forest, as it seems, distracts the mind failing to attain due composure, the Buddha is represented as emphatically endorsing it in terms as follows :—

Evam etaṃ, Brāhmaṇa, evam etaṃ Brāhmaṇa.

"Even so 'tis, O Brāhmaṇa, so 'tis." In the same strain he goes on to say that this very thought occurred to him

1. Beal's *Buddhist Records* Vol. II, pp. 114-115. Cf. *Ibid.* Vol. I, pp. lxi-lxii.

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prior to his attainment of perfect wisdom, when he had not as yet seen the great light and was still pursuing his career as Bodhisattva.¹ Further on, he gives out his reminiscences how he had spent there his days and nights in dreadful suspense.

“While I dwelt there (sometimes) a beast would be heard approaching, or a bird would drop down a dried twig, or the wind would ruffle the leaves. That would set me athinking : “There, forsooth, comes the very dreaded horror (*bhaya-bherava*). Then, O Brāhmaṇa, this thought occurred to me : A seeker of truth that I am, should I be caring for the fear (that is false). Now will I meet the awful foe as it comes from any position I may be in.”²

In another *Sutta*, viz., the Mahāsīhanāda, he endeavours to show that he could willingly face all these apprehended troubles only so long as he maintained to live up to the fruitless penances of the extreme ascetics as the Śaivas and Ājīvikas.³ To quote him in his own words :

“I used to live then, O Sāriputta, entering into a fearful woodland. That was indeed the most dreadful part of the dreaded woodland. Whoever, not free as yet from passions, dares enter such a tract, horripilation overtakes him all the more causing the hair of his body to stand erect. Throughout the autumn and winter months and even during the dewy first four days of the month following the winter-season I used to spend the night under the open sky and the day in the heart of the wood, while during the last month of summer I followed a reversed course, giving utterance to the following stanza of unprecedented fame :

So tatto, so sīno, eko bhimṣaṇke vane |

Naggo, na eh’ aggim āsīno, esanā-pasuto muni ||

1. *Majjhima-Nikāya*, p. 27 ; *Mayham pi kho Brāhmaṇa pubbe va sambodhā anabhisambuddhassa ‘bodhisattass’ eva sato etad ahosi.*

2. *Majjhima-Nikāya* pp. 20-21.

3. *Majjhima-Nikāya*, pp. 77-79, Cf. *Lomahaṃsa-Jātaka* (Fausböl, No.)

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“Bescorched, befrozen alone in fearful wood,
Nude, no fire beside, all afire within,
Up and doing the *muni*, bent upon highest good.”

It is clearly suggested in the Bhaya-bherava-Sutta that a dense and fearful forest generally suits those of dark mentality,¹—the Śaivas and the Ājīvikas who find it difficult to cope with their own nature which is turbulent and rebellious, while to those who like the Buddha are of serene mind by their natural disposition the locality which appeals is a calm retreat with open prospects and delightful surroundings, neither in the heart of a crowded city nor at the same time far from it. We have noticed how deeply impressed was the Buddha at the lovely sight of the village of Sanānīgāma on his first arrival there and how most felicitously he described his first impressions :

“Pleasantly picturesque is this part of land. Delightful is the sight of the grassy woodland. The river (Nerañjarā) is flowing on in a glassy stream, showing the bathing places with gradual descents of step presenting a charming landscape, and affording glimpses into the neighbouring hamlets easy of access. This must needs be the fitting place for a scion of a noble race strenuously striving after the highest attainment.”

The calm retreat in Uruvelā, finally selected and resorted to by the Buddha for his last efforts towards the realisation of supreme wisdom, is popularly known now-a-days by the name of *Bodh-Gayā*. The other term *Budaha-Gayā* which occurs for the first time in the apocryphal inscription of Amaradeva² has gained currency in modern literature, particularly due to its adoption as title for the classic of Dr. Rajendralala Mitra. The advantage of the rare name *Buddha-Gayā* over the popular is that it enables us to conveniently distinguish the area with

1. *Majjhima-Nikāya*, p. 23 ; *avītarāgo avītadoso avītamoho tasmā araṇṇe vanapatthāni pantāni senāsanāni paṭisevati*.

2. *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. I, p. 84.

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the predominance of Buddha-worship from the Gayā proper which Abul Fazl, the court-historian of Akbar, calls *Brahma-Gayā*, meaning thereby a place of Hindu worship sacred to Brahmā.¹ But the popular name *Bodh-Gayā*, signifying, as it does, a sacred area predominated by the Bo-tree is more in accord with the earlier traditional name *Mahābodhi*. As attested by Cunningham, the lofty temple at Bodh-Gayā continued to be known by the name *Mahābodhi* even as late as the year 1877.² Cunningham has succeeded also in showing that Bodh-Gayā temple was known to Hwen Thsang as *Mahbodhi* (*Mo-ho-pu-ti*) *Vihāra* and monastery by the name of *Mahābodhi Saṅghārāma*,³ nay, that the same name *Mahābodhi* was used by all the Chinese pilgrims who visited the place in the 7th Century A.D.⁴ The name of *Mahābodhi* also occurs in the inscription of Keśava recording the installation of a *Chaumukh Mahādev* during the reign of King Dharmapāla.⁵ The same name is to be found also in the votive inscriptions of King Aśokavalla who reigned in the 13th century A.D.⁶ Even coming to still later times we find that this name was current when Jinadāsa caused his votive record to be inscribed on one of the pillars of the old Stone-railing.⁷ We need not be astonished at this. For the English Rock Edict of King Aśoka bears clear evidenee to establish that the holy site was known as far back as the 3rd century B.C. by the name of *Sambodhi*,⁸ a term corresponding to *Mahābodhi* of the later

2. Gladwin's *Ayin Akbari*, III, p. 25.

1. Cunningham's *Mahabodhi* p, 2.

2. Beal's *Buddhist Records*, Vol. II, p. 133.

3. IA, X. Beal's article on the *Pilgrims from China to India*.

4. Passim.

5. *Journal, Bombay Asiatic Society*, Vol. XVI, p. 359

6. Passim, Bk. III.

7. Cf. the expression *ayāya Saṃbodhiṃ, nikrami Saṃbodhiṃ*, "proceeded towards Sambodhi." This is almost on a par with the Jātaka expression *nahāyitvāna Saṃbodhiṃ*, the term *Sambodhi* signifying *Bodhi* or *Mahābodhi-maṇḍa*. See the *Kālingabodhi-Jātaka* (Faustöll, No. 479)

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inscriptions. Whether the term be *Sambodhi* or *Mahābodhi*, we cannot but admit that it primarily denotes the Great Bo-tree and secondarily the place of Buddha's Enlightenment, the far-famed spot where the Bo-tree lords it over. We mean that *Sambodhi* or *Mahābodhi* is the same term as *Bodhi* of the Barhut labels, *Bodhi-vṛiksha* of Buddhist literature and *Mahābodhi-taru* of the *Gayā-māhātmya*.

Thus it is clear that Bodh-Gaya is essentially the spot of the Bo-tree, which is to say that the Bo-tree has lent its name to the sacred site. The tree is in reality but a lordly *Aśvattha* or *Pippala*, the Indian Fig. The Buddhist legends make it manifest, however, that the Bo-tree was not *Aśvattha* in all cases, the different Buddhas having different Bo-trees. Consequently, the proposition stands that the tree itself has derived its distinctive epithet from its association with the Buddha's signal achievement, the attainment of Buddha-hood, the term *Bodi-rukka* being explained by Buddhaghosha as denoting a tree under which a Buddha attains Enlightenment. From this it follows that to view the history of Bodh-Gayā from the Buddhist point of view is to visualise the gradual process of geographical extension and enhancement of the historical importance of the spot of the Bo-tree.

Now the spot of the Bo-tree in its narrower range has been known by the well-known name of *Bodhi maṇḍa* or *Mahābodhi-maṇḍa*, a term signifying a terrace surrounding the foot of the Bo-tree. The *Kāliṅgabodhi-Jātaka* (Fausböll, No. 479) furnishes us with an artistic description of the *Bodhi-maṇḍa* and its surroundings prior to the advent of the Bodhisattva on this spot. As this *Jātaka* gives us to understand, the *Bodhi-maṇḍa* was just at that time a small silver-white sandy ridge around the Bo-tree with a radius of eight *karisas* and without a single blade of grass growing upon it. This was, then, encircled by the creepers with their serpentine courses and surrounded by a grassy woodland with

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the lordly trees inclining all towards the Bo-tree that stood on the central spot.

The lordly *Aśvattha* at the centre with a silver-white terrace of sand at its foot. The terrace a bare ground bereft of grass and approached on all sides by the encircling creepers with their serpentine courses. The *Aśvattha* with the terrace standing in the midst of lofty trees with tops sloping towards the central height and marked out by a long vista opening out towards the east through an avenue of *Sāl* trees as far as the wide expanse of the glistening beach of the Neranjarā of crystal flow. Yonder, in the immediate neighbourhood, stood the Neat-herd's Banyan, the Rājāyatana of royal fame and the Muchalinda tree growing on the bank of the Muchalinda lake, all redolent with living associations of movements and joyous ponderings of the Enlightened One. The river lively at mid-day with dancing steps of the mirthful Nāga damsels. The sombre site gay with carols of *Kalaviṅka* and other sweet-singing birds. The tree-tops swayed to and fro by the wind. The whole atmosphere arousing a sense of presence of the divinities and benevolent spirits.

Such is the spot of the Bo-tree with its natural surroundings which the Buddhists of later ages have invested with a mark of hoary antiquity describing it as *sabba-buddhānaṃ jaya-pallaṅka*, the seat of signal victory of all the Buddhas, the locality bearing the Diamond-throne seated on which all the past Buddhas have obtained true enlightenment, and so will those yet to come'. Such is indeed the remarkable spot which they have viewed and entertained as the navel of the extensive earth (*paṭhaviyā maṇḍo*, *paṭhavi-nābhimaṇḍala-bhūta bhūmibhāga*),—the very centre of the cultured universe, unmoved, unshaken and unconquered for all times. Such is undoubtedly the great hold of the place on affections of the votaries of the Buddha! And as for the Attainment itself, they have viewed it as so signal an achievement that

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every step towards it and every subsequent move therefrom have been extolled in the glowing terms of praise, rejoiced over, as though, by the whole of nature and the whole world of gods and angels.

It is on such a lovely spot of the Bo-tree that the princely ascetic Siddhārtha sat down at last cross-legged with his face turned towards the eastern quarter, determined to do or die, with a firm resolve not to move from his seat until he attained his goal even if his body withered away and his skin, bones and flesh underwent dissolution, even if the sky rent asunder or the earth left her fixed station (*nabham phaleyya, paṭhaviṃ chaleyya*). Thus this spot became primarily noted for the enthronement of a triumphant human will, and no less for the display of the undaunted moral courage to break away with the past tradition and the grand achievement of enlightenment of the human mind. Now we are to follow, step by step the course of historical development of this thrice-blessed spot the time of the advent of the Buddha down to the eve of the Muhammadan conquest of Eastern India noting all the points of interest and importance.

To proceed with this onerous task we may observe at the very outset that the Buddha left the spot of the Bo-tree after the attainment of Buddhahood and the tract of Uruvelā after the conversion of the Jaṭilās never to revisit these places thereafter. This is not, however, to say that he actually did or could forget the happy reminiscences of the spots in Uruvelā redolent with historical associations of his great achievement, movements and *ponnerings*. As a matter of fact, the Buddhist canonical texts speak of various occasions when he rejoiced to recount the experiences of the early days of his glorious career. While he lay on death-bed at Kusīnārā he specifically mentioned the spot of the Bo-tree recommending it in the following terms as one of the four memorable places worth seeing by a man of faith for inspiration :

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*Idha Tathāgato anuttaram sammā-sambodhim
abhisambuddho'ti, Ānanda, saddhassa
kulaputtassa dassaniyam samvejaniyam thānam.*

“By reason of the fact, Ānanda, ‘Here did the Tathāgata intuit the unsurpassed intuition of true enlightenment,’ the place of the Tathāgata’s enlightenment,’ *the place of the Tathāgata’s enlightenment* is worth seeing by a man of faith for inspiration.”

And yet, strangely enough, there is no authentic record to prove that either in his life-time or during the two centuries following on his demise any one among his immediate followers and lay-admirers visited the spot viewing it as a place of regular pilgrimage. The present anecdote of the Kālingabodhi-Jātaka contains, no doubt, an interesting account of the planting of a Bo-tree in the compound of the Jetavana monastery or providing the lay devotees with a place of worship and that in the very life-time of the Buddha. But as may be seen from the *narration* itself, the importance was attached directly to the Bo-tree considered as a living symbol of the Master’s presence and only indirectly to the spot graced by it. We think it necessary to quote below the relevant part of the episode to enable the reader to form his own opinion about the actual fact :

“When the Tathāgata had set forth on pilgrimage, for the purpose of gathering in those ripe for conversion, the citizens of Sāvatti proceeded to Jetavana, their hands full of garlands and fragrant wreaths, and finding no other place (*thāna* or local symbol) to show their reverence, laid them by the gateway of the perfumed chamber and went off. This caused great rejoicings. But Anāthapiṇḍika got to hear of it ; and on the return of the Tathāgata visited Elder Ānanda and said to him, “This monastery, Sir, is left unprovided while the Tathāgata goes on pilgrimage, and there is no place for the people to do reverence by offering fragrant wreaths and

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garlands. Will you be so kind, Sir, as to tell the Tathāgata of this matter, and learn from him whether or no it is possible to find a place for this purpose.' The other, nothing loth, dis so, asking: 'How many shrines are there?' Three, Ānanda; 'Which are they?' 'Shrines of a relic of the body, a relic of use or were, a relic of memorial.' 'Can a shrine be made, Sir, during your life?' 'No, Ānanda, not a body-shrine; that kind is made when a Buddha enters Nirvāṇa, a shrine of memorial (such as a Buddha-image, *Buddha-paṭimā*) is improper because the connection depends on the the imagination only (*avatthukam manamattakam*). But the great Bo-tree used by the Buddhas is fit for a shrine, be they alive or be they dead.' 'Sir, while you are away on pilgrimage the great monastery of Jetavana is (*nippaccaya*, without a visible symbol), and the people have no place where they can show their reverence. Shall I plant a seed of the great Bo tree before the gateway of Jetavana.' 'By all means so do, Ānanda and that shall be as it were an abiding place for me. The Elder said this to Ānāthapiṇḍika, and Visākhā, and the king. Then at the gateway of Jetavana he cleared out a pit for the Bo to stand in, and said to the chief Elder Moggallāna, 'I want to plant a Bo-tree in front of Jetavana. Will you get me a fruit of the Bo-tree.' The Elder, well willing, passed through the air to the platform under the Bo-tree. He placed in his robe a fruit that was dropping from its stalk but had not reached the ground, brought it back, and delivered it to Ānanda."

The anecdote proceeds further to narrate the details of ceremonial planting of the Bo-seed and miraculous growth of a full-grown Bo-tree and formal worship of the same, all combining to give rise to a new Bodhimaṇḍa at the gateway of the Jetavana monastery. Though the idea of its actual spot remained always bound up with the Bo-tree, primarily the tree itself was regarded as the living symbol of the Master's presence, and as such, the real object of Buddhist worship.

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But it does not appear from the narration that either the Elder Ānanda or the lay-devotee Anāthapiṇḍika desiring to instal the living symbol of the Master's holy presence went on pilgrimage to Bodh-Gayā. The errand which the chief Elder Moggallāna was commissioned to fulfil was just to fetch a seed of the Bo-tree. In point of fact, so far as recorded evidence goes, the word of the Buddha recommending the Bodhimanda as one of the four main places worth visiting by a lay devotee, full of faith, had remained just a pious wish till the throne of Magadha was occupied by King Aśoka of immortal fame. We mean that the task of giving practical and significant effect to the Buddha's word and actually raising Bodh-Gayā into a distinct place of regular Buddhist pilgrimage was really left to be accomplished by the greatest known Buddhist emperor of India.

His Gifted Majesty and Grace the King, when he had been consecrated ten ysars, went out to Sambodhi, the spot of the great Bo-tree, the place of Buddha's enlightenment. This fact has been recorded in the Eighth Rock Edict as the earliest and most notable instance of pious tours (*dharmayātrā*) meant to be substituted for the thoughtless pleasuretrips (*vihārā-yātrā*) indulged in by the former kings. It might be shown indeed, say, for instance, on the evidence of the Vibhaṅga, the second book of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka, that the term *Sambodhi* was employed to mean just the totality of *bodhipakkhika-dhammā* or categories of the system of knowledge leading towards enlightenment. It might also be shown on the evidence of other texts that the term was employed in certain passages to mean nothing more or less than the enlightenment itself. We do not certainly deny that in the Vṛihat Svayambhū Purāṇa which is a comparatively modern Nepalese Buddhist legendary work of great authority Aśoka's phrase "went out to Sambodhi" (*ayāya Saṃbodhiṃ, nikrami Saṃbodhiṃ*) has been interpreted as implying that the great Buddhist emperor intended to

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proceed towards Buddhahood or condition of enlightenment by following the Bodhisattva or Mahāyāna path. Reading, however, between the lines we can easily ascertain that in the account of the Buddhist Purāṇa, precisely as in the Buddhist edict, the intended meaning of the phrase is to be realised rather in the concrete. The idea of "a physical process", of pilgrimage to the actual place of Buddha's enlightenment, the spot of the Bo tree, or to a shrine, such as the great attainment is there. Further, as we have sought to show, the *gāthā* in the Kālingabodhi-Jātaka is conclusive as to the term *Sambodhi* meaning directly the great Bo-tree and indirectly its holy spot, the Bodhimaṇḍa.

So far as the first pious tour of King Aśoka is concerned, Sambodhi or Bodh-Gayā is the only place hitherto known to have been visited by him. And from his statement in the Eighth Rock Edict it does not appear that he set up any work of art at Bodh-Gayā to commemorate his visit thereto. The Rummindei and Nigāli Sāgar Pillar inscriptions go, however, to show that he undertook a second pious tour when he had been consecrated twenty years. At Lumbinī, known, to him as the birth-place of the Buddha Śākyamuni, he set up a stone-pillar and some other work in stone (*silāvigadā*), apparently to mark out the holy spot and commemorate his visit thereto. At Nigāli Sāgar, too, he set up another stone-pillar to commemorate his visit to a *stūpa* of Buddha Koṇāgamna which he had caused to be enlarged six years back. The evidence of these two inscriptions seems to wonderfully tally with the Divyāvadāna account of his pilgrimage to all the then known sacred places of the Buddhists. The twofold object of the royal pilgrimage, as clearly stated in the Divyāvadāna, was to pay worship at the spot associated with the life of the Buddha and to mark each of them with a visible sign as a mark of favour to future visitors. The places visited by the king in course of this tour included Lumbinī, Bodh-Gayā, Sārnāth

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and Kusīnārā among others, Lumbinī being the first place of pilgrimage. The edifying legend expressly mentions that at each of these places the pious king set up a commemorative shrine and made an appropriate gift of money.¹

If it can be established thus that King Aśoka went again on pilgrimage to Bodh-Gayā, besides the gift of money, he may be expected to have set up a commemorative shrine standing as a permanent work of art and architecture. And taking clue from what he actually did at Lumbinī and Nigāli Sāgar, we can suggest that at Bodh-Gayā, too, he erected a monolith along with some other piece of artistic construction, both of which are unfortunately missing leaving us in a world of conjecture. Looking out for further light on this point we come across two important bas-reliefs on the Barhut stone-railing, one representing the famous scene of enlightenment of Buddha Śākyamuni. In both of these, prominently figures an Aśokan monolith distinguished by its round soft and elephant capital, and in both, the monolith stands in front of the Bo-tree and just to the north-east at a short distance from it. None can reasonably doubt that here we have a faithful representation of an Aśoka monolith at Bodh-Gayā or otherwise the stone-pillar would have shown an octagonal shaft and an ornamental bracket as an additional feature. Thus if any historical inference can be legitimately drawn from the Barhut bas-relief of the 2nd century B.C., it will be that at Bodh-Gayā, too, the Buddhist emperor erected a remarkable monolith surmounted by the figure of a standing elephant.²

As for the other piece of artistic construction, Hwen Thsang credits Aśoka with the erection of a small *vihāra* or temple in front of the Bo-tree, which was reconstructed afterwards on a larger scale. This tradition must not, however, be entertained without due caution. We cannot expect from

1, 2. Cunningham's *Stūpa of Bharhut*, Pl. xxx. 3.

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Aśoka any more than a work in stone symbolising the Diamond-throne of the Buddha and serving as an altar before the Bo. And none need be surprised if the polished sandstone slab² appearing on one of the three *vajrāsanas* inside the present temple is the whole or part of the extra piece of work with which the Maurya king honoured the holy spot of the Bo-tree.

The Divyāvadāna further states that after his first visit to the Bo-tree King Aśoka became so much attached to it that it roused the jealousy of his then chief but wicked queen Tishyarakshitā who had a spell cast upon the tree to destroy it,—a calamity which could not have been averted without some difficulty. The Great Chronicle of Ceylon which substantially corroborates the truth of the above legend places the date of occurrence of this unhappy incident definitely in the thirty-second or thirty-third year of Aśoka's reign.

An earlier but momentous incident is recorded in the chronicles of Ceylon and Buddhaghosha's commentary on the Vinaya-Piṭaka, namely, the ceremonial despatch by King Aśoka of a branch of the Bo-tree for the planting on the soil of Ceylon. The sending of an envoy by the contemporary ruler of Ceylon to the Maurya emperor, the cutting of a branch of the Bo-tree with roots, the return of the envoy with the graft, the great rejoicings of the king and people of Ceylon at the arrival of the awe-inspiring object of worship and the ceremonial planting of the same in the heart of the island are the important details vividly narrated with the joy of the poet's heart. As subsequent history bears out, even apart from symbolising the formal engrafting of Buddhism on the soul of Ceylon, the transplantation of the Bo-tree served to provide a living and growing symbol of friendship and cultural relationship between India and Ceylon ; nay, it served as well to entitle the Buddhists of Ceylon to the unquestioned right of devoting all their energies and benefaction to the great cause of protec-

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tion and glorification of the shrine of Mahābodhi, here in India as well as in their own island.

One may proceed thus to show how the entire historical process with the impetus given to it by King Aśoka went towards bringing the lordly Bo into high prominence as symbol of Buddhahood and special object of worship, heightening the glory of Bodh-Gayā as the Buddhist Holy Land and embellishing the sacred site with numberless votive offerings, all serving as so many spontaneous and tangible expressions of the Buddhist faith. It is interesting to watch how within a century and a half from the reign of Aśoka the craftsmen or artists employed to execute Buddhist carvings on the Barhut stone-railing during the reign of the Sungas of Magadha helped forward this process.

We might observe that in delineating in stone various scenes from the life of the Buddha on the basis, more or less, of the current Buddhist legends supplied to them, the Barhut craftsmen skilfully employ their tools to produce the best possible work of art. In depicting the scene of Buddha's enlightenment they eventually got hold of their familiar and favourite subjects, namely, the tree *Aśvattha* which they made to stand majestically at the centre in the symmetry of its height and the beauty of its foliage with a monolithic standard on its left side. The tree is surrounded by an ornate stone-railing, and stands garlanded with hanging wreaths, crowned with umbrellas, graced by the *Triratna* symbols, approached by the flying angels, watched by the tree-spirits and confronted by a pillared hall of worship with the enbical seat of the Buddha serving as an altar for offerings. The hall of worship is so devised as to make it appear also as a gate-chamber of the circular railing making an imposing entrance to the hall itself.

In another remarkable carving the Barhut artists have sought to produce a design of the Jewel-walk-shrine commemorating the spot on which the Buddha is known to have

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spent the second or third week after his Buddhahood by walking to and fro, from west to east. The shrine appears here as a long and open pillared shed with a gabled roof and several small pinnacles. Inside one can see a raised platform with two rows of lotus-flowers, each of the flowers symbolising a footstep of a great Master. The platform shows on its front side the palms of human hands indicating its sanctity as an object of worship¹

There were probably other designs as well of the shrines commemorating other spots on which the Buddha spent the remaining five weeks. All of them are now irrevocably lost. The two designs which survive suffice to indicate that these (considered apart from the Aśokan monolith) are far from being faithful reproductions of any pre-existent shrines of the above description. These were intended rather to serve as patterns for future erections than to represent actual facts, and such, their historical connexion lies with developments which rather followed than preceded.

We may now pass on to take note of the votive erections at Bodh-Gayā which were based on the Imaginary Barhut designs and accomplished during the reign of one of these two neo-Mitra kings: Kauśikīputa Indrāgnimitra and Brahmamitra, both of whom appear to have been the immediate predecessors of Brihaspatimitra (Bahasatimita) alluded to in the Hāthigumphā inscription as a contemporary king of Magadha subdued by King Khāravela of Kalinga. The erections of which we have actual remnants comprise: (1) a sculptured Buddhist railing of sandstone of quadrangular shape (not circular as depicted at Barhut), serving as an enclosure for the Bo-tree; (2) a small pillared open stone-chamber built to the east and just in front of the original Bo-tree with a cubical Throne of the Buddha serving as an altar, the whole stone-edifice standing as the first temple at Bodh-Gayā; and (3) a

2. Cunningham's '*Stūpa of Bharhut*, Pl. xxxi 4.

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pillared open shed with a flat or gabled roof containing a high platform of brick with lotus-representations of Buddha's footsteps, the whole structure standing as the transitional Jewel-walk shrine (*Ratana-chaṅkama-chetiya*). As some of the old votive labels clearly indicate, the Noble Lady and Matron Kuraṅgi erected also costly retreats of royal fame, providing evidently for two monastic abodes, one for herself and other female devotees, and the other for the accommodation of the Buddhist monks,—the abodes perpetuating the memory of her husband King Indrāgnimitra and appropriately called *Imdōgimitrāsa rājā-pāsādā*.

All these structures, as far as we can ascertain in the light of the lingering old Brāhmī inscriptions on different parts of the ancient stone-railing, were 'memorable erections of the Noble Lady and Matron Kuraṅgi, wife of King Indrāgnimitra, Sirimā, a female attendant of the queen mother in her retired life, and Nagādevi, wife of King Brahmamitra and probably daughter-in-law of Kuraṅgi. And as such, these stand as permanent and remarkable expressions of Buddhist female devotional piety. These were accomplished mainly on donations of Kuraṅgi. Fa Hian and Buddhaghosha writing their accounts in the 5th century A.D., speak of commemorative shrines erected by "men in after ages" (*pachchhimā janatā*) on all the sacred spots associated with Buddha's life. Seeing that the sand-stone railing, the pillared shrine and the promenade are all erections of the same age, it may not be unreasonable to think that the pious lady Kuraṅgi did not stop short at three constructions but constructed other shrines as well.

Four centuries later Fa Hian visited the famous site of Bodh-Gayā. He had not only witnessed the Bo and the memorial shrines for worship. He found, moreover, three *saṅghārāmas* in existence close by the spot of the Bo-tree, in all of which Buddhist monks were accommodated. These monks scrupulously observed the rules of the Vinaya with

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respect to decorum,—the rules which the holy congregation observed even during Buddha's life-time. The local lay supporters supplied them with all necessaries, so that there was no lack of anything.¹

The Buddha-images alluded to by Fa Hian must have been added during the reign of the Kushāna kings and subsequently, and all before the reign of Chandragupta II. Of the three monasteries seen by him, one at least must have been a notable erection of "a former king of Simhala (Ceylon)."

Here we must note that Fa Hian does not give precise location of the three monasteries, while Hwen Thsang speaks of just one large monastery, the Mahābodhi Saughārāma, as noticed by Hwen Thsang had six halls, with towers of observation (temple towers) of three storeys. It was then surrounded by a wall of defence thirty or forty feet high, and tenanted by upwards of 1000 Buddhist priests who studied the Mahāyāna vehicle in spite of the fact that they belonged to the orthodox sect of the Sthaviras. Hwen Thsang agrees with the earlier pilgrim when he says that the inmates of this monastery carefully observed the *Dharma*, *Vinaya*, and that their conduct was pure and correct. But certainly he differs from Fa Hian in according the whole credit to a former king of Ceylon for the erection of this magnificent edifice.²

"The position of the Great Monastery to the north of the Great Temple corresponds (according to Cunningham) exactly with the extensive mound known as Amar Sinh's fort. The lofty walls of the monastery, from 30 to 40 feet in height, would naturally have led to its occupation as a fort after the decline of Buddhism, in the 11th century.....Buchanan mentions that the mound was called *Rājsthān* or the Palace, a name confined to the group of buildings at the north-west corner of the monastery enclosure. Other buildings at the

1. Beal's *Buddhist Records*, Vol. I, p. lxiii

2. Beal's *Buddhist Records* Vol. II, p. 133.

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north-east corner are also called *Rānivās* or the Rāni's Palace."¹

Here perhaps lies the clue to a right explanation for the discrepancy between Fa Hian and Hwen Thsang as to the number of monasteries. It is easy to imagine that the name of Mahābodhi Saṅghārāma was applied by Hwen Thsang to designate indiscriminately the whole of the monastic abode which was occupied by the Theras from Ceylon, the Singhalese order of monks, and which comprised three separate groups of buildings, viz., (1) the central edifice erected by the king of Ceylon, (2) the group of buildings at its north-west corner known as *Rājsthān*, the Royal Palace. and (3) the group of buildings at its north-east corner known as *Rānivās*, the Queen's residence.

The distinctness of the edifice constructed by the king of Ceylon for the accommodation of the monks and pilgrims from Ceylon is proved by the clear traces of its separate enclosure. As for the remaining two groups of buildings, these were situated outside this enclosure and at the north-west and north-east corners of the Ceylon monastery proper. And as regards the names *Rājsthān* and *Rānivās* by which the two groups of buildings were known as late as the time of Buchanan Hamilton, Cunningham thinks that perhaps these may refer to "the period of Amar Sinh's rule."² But we are inclined to think that for the origin of these names one has to go back to the inscriptions of the Noble Lady and Matron Kuraṅgi and her female attendant Sirimā alluding to the monastic abodes *Imdāgimitrāsa rājāpāsādā*, the Royal Places erected to perpetuate the memory of King Indrāgnimitra, one of them serving as a retreat for the monks and the other as a retreat for the queen herself in her retired life. The two abodes were comprehended and distinguished in the same term *Rājāpāsādā*

1. Cunningham's *Mahabodhi* p, 43.

2. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 43.

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precisely as the two groups of buildings in the common term *Rājsthān*.

It may be held almost as conclusive from the history composed by the Chinese writer Wang-Hiuen-t'se about the middle of the 7th century A.D. that Hwen Thsang's former king of Ceylon¹ was no less a personage than King Meghavarmā (or more accurately Meghavarna), and that Samudragupta was the contemporary powerful king (*mahāśrīrāja*) of Northern India to whom the king of Ceylon sent envoys with valuable presents for obtaining his permission to erect a monastery for the residence of Ceylonese pilgrims at Bodh-Gayā.¹ According to Hwen Thsang, the king of Ceylon sent just one pilgrim, a brother of his who took to monastic life, to visit the sacred places of Buddhism in India, and it is on his report that the king undertook to erect the monastery.² On the other hand, Wang-Hiuen-t'se expressly says that King Meghavarmā sent two monks on pilgrimage, named Mahānāma and Upa—(?Upasena),³ both of whom are mentioned in the inscription of Mahānāma II dated *Samvat* 269 (=587 A.D., interpreted in terms of the Gupta era).⁴

The story of Mahānāma I and Upasena as Ceylonese pilgrims sent to India by King Meghavarmā or Meghavarna would seem to have grown out of references to them in the inscription of Mahānāma II. It is difficult, as convincingly shown by Dr. V. A. Smith, to establish the identity of Mahānāma I of this inscription with Mahānāma, the author of the *Mahāvamsa*. Among the votive labels of the Bodh-Gayā stone-railing, there is one which records a railbar to be a gift from Bodhiraksh'ta of Tāmraparni or Ceylon : *Bodhirakhitasa*

1. The credit of bringing the passage in the writings of Wang-Hiuen-t'se to light is due to Prof. Sylvan Levi. See *IA*, Vol. XXXI, p. 194.

2. Beal's *Buddhist Records*, Vol. II, pp. 133-134.

3. *IA*, Vol. XXXI, p. 194.

4. Fleet's *Corpus Inscriptionum*, Vol. III, pp. 277-278.

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Tambapamnakasa dānam. This rail-bar, as well as two others donated by Amogha and a Pāṭihāraka, could not have been added long after the construction of the stone-railing by Kuraṅgi, Sirimā and Nāgadevī. Bodhirakshita is indeed the earliest known Ceylonese pilgrim to Bodh-Gayā. But judged by the alphabet and language of his votive record, he can by no means be regarded as a contemporary of King Meghavarmā-Meghavarna. If King Meghavarna had really sent any pilgrim or pilgrims from Ceylon during the reign of Samudragupta, they must be personages other than Bodhirakshita.

Whether all the Buddha-images seen by Fa Hian at Bodh-Gayā exist now or not and how many of them actually survive and how many do not are still a matter of conjecture. But there is one image which may be safely relegated to the later Kushāṇa or early Gupta age. This is in the opinion of Cunningham "the earliest figure of Buddha which has yet been found at Mahābodhi."¹ It bears on its pedestal an inscription of four lines which is written rather in the Kushāṇa style.² The Sanskrit of its text is not entirely free from such Prakrit forms as *upāsikāye*, *Achādhammasahāye*, and *mātā-pituno*. The image was installed in *Samvat* 65 (=143 A.D. or 383 A.D.) and during the reign of Mahārāja Turāmala or Tukāmala who is described as a Sarpaputra. The work of installation was done by a Buddhist monk with the aid of a Buddhist laywoman named Achādhammā. The image was set up in a shrine erected by a courtier of the king (*amātyabaravihāre*). The inscription has for its concluding words such familiar Buddhist expressions as *yā me Kuśalā uditā-pituno prajāye bhavata upā(dhyāya-)* and so forth.

When Fa Hian passed through the city of Gayā it was desolate and deserted. At Bodh-Gayā, too, the great temple had not then come into existence, and the sacred area with

1. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 53

2. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, Pl. XXV.

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the growing shrines presented but a simple and decent show.

Two and a half centuries later came in Hwen Thsang to succeed in drawing up a mighty picture of the holy site and its immediate and distant surroundings, which is at once full of details excelling in the wealth of variety verging almost on clumsiness due to overcrowding. The picture left by him is, for all practical purposes, the same as that which we can imagine to ourselves with the aid of all that we may still see on the sacred site and all around. He has described the sacred area of the Bo-tree in no better terms than the following :—

“It is surrounded by brick-wall of considerable height, steep and strong. It is long from east to west, and short from north to south. It is about 5000 (?1500) paces around. Rare trees with their renowned flowers connect their shade and cast their shadows, the dedicate *sha* herb (? *Kuśa* grass) and different shrubs carpet the soil. The principal gate opens to the east, opposite the Nirañjanā river. The southern gate adjoins a great flowery bank. The western side is blocked up and difficult of access. The northern gate opens into the great *saṅghārāma*. Within the surrounding wall the sacred traces touch one another in all directions. Here there are *stūpas*, in another place *vihāras* (temples). The kings, princes and great personages throughout all Jambudvīpa (India) who have accepted the bequeathed teaching as handed down to them have erected these monuments.”¹

Hwen Thsang saw not only the high wall of stone, the old Stone-railing, encircling the Bo-tree² and the Jewel-walk shrine to the north of the Bo³ but the great temple at Bodh-Gayā as well, of which he has left a vivid description.⁴ Among other

1. Beal's *Buddhist Records*, Vol. II, p. 115.

2. Beal's *Buddhist Records*, Vol. II. p. 118.

3. Beal's *Buddhist Records*, Vol. II p. 122.

4. Beal's *Buddhist Records*, Vol. II, pp. 118-119.

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notable objects noticed by the great Chinese pilgrim, the figures of two Mahāyāna deities, Avaikiteśvara Bodhisattva and Maitreya Bodhisattva, installed in the niches like chambers to the right and left of the outside gate of the Bodh-Gayā temple deserve special mention.¹

At the time of Hwen Thsang's visit the Mahābodhi Saṅghārāma entertained many Buddhist priests of Ceylon. To the south of the Bo-tree 10 *li* or so, the sacred traces were so numerous that they could not be each named. Every year when the *bhiskhus* broke up their yearly rest of the rains, the votaries of Buddhism came here from every quarter in thousands and myriads, and during seven days and nights they scattered flowers, burned incense, and sounded music as they wandered through the Buddhist Holy Land and paid their worship and presented their offerings.² At this season of the year they visited also the Prāgbodhi-hill for the purpose of making religious offerings to the faithful, and departed after stopping there for one night.³ It appears from Hwen Thsang's⁴ account as if the two tracts of Nadī and Uruvelā came under the sole sway of Buddhism,

The famous Bodh-Gayā inscription of Mahānāma was engraved on a stone-tablet in *Samvat* 269, which, interpreted in terms of the Gupta era,⁵ corresponds to A.D. 588-89. Its 'characters belong to the northern class of alphabets.' Its language is Sanskrit; and, except for the opening symbol

1. Beal's *Buddhist Records*, Vol. II, p. 119.

2. Beal's *Buddhist Records*, Vol. II, pp. 135-136.

3. Beal's *Buddhist Records*, Vol. II, p. 115.

4. We are entirely at one with V. A. Smith (*IA*, Vol. XXXI, p. 197) in repudiating the Śaka or the Kalachuri era and in maintaining that the date 269 cannot be reasonably interpreted in an era other than the Gupta.

5. Fleet has sadly missed the real import of the expression *Samyuktāgamino* in translating it; "endowed with a connected tradition of doctrine." See *Barhut Inscriptions* (Barua and Sinha's edition), note on *Bhānaka* for reasons why the disciples of Mahā-Kāśyapa are called *Samyuktāgamino*.

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representing Om, and for the date at the end,' it is 'in verse throughout.' The stone-tablet appears to have been 'originally set in a socket about three inches deep, and morticed at the sides into a building.' Mahānāma, the author of the inscription, has been introduced in it as Mahānāma II, a far-famed senior disciple (*śiṣya*) of Upasena II; 'an inhabitant of Āmrāvīpa, a very ocean of a mighty family; born in the island of Laṅkā, delighting in the welfare of others.' Upasena II flourished in succession to Mahānāma I, who in his turn came after the saintly Upasena I. The last-named Śāstava Rāhula in seniorship, while Rāhula himself was just a disciple of the Śramana Bhava. And Bhava saw the light of the day in long line of succession of disciples and disciples' disciples, born in hundreds, all upholding the tradition of the Samyuktāgama of Samyukta-bhāṣaka school and tracing their descent back to Mahā-Kāśyapa, worthy of praise.¹ The record is composed in high praise of an act of merit done by Mahānāma II in erecting a beautiful temple of the Buddha with an open pavilion on all sides at the exalted Boṭhi-maṇḍa or the site of the Bo-tree.²

Along with this we may take into our consideration another inscription which records the presentation of a statue of the Buddha by a Śāstava named Mahānāma. Its characters are 'of precisely the same type with those of the preceding inscription of Mahānāma. Its language is Sanskrit and written in prose. Mahānāma of this inscription, precisely like that of the preceding one, is described as an inhabitant of Āmrāvīpa in the island of Laṅkā :

Om Deyā-dharmamoyam Śākya-bhikṣoh

Āmrāvīpavāsi-Śāstava-Mahānāmayā.

1. Fleet's *Corpus Inscriptionum*, Vol. III, p. 275; *सर्वत्र मर्यादयन्तं लंकाय प्रसूता एते लोकाः*.

2. Fleet's *Corpus Inscriptionum*, Vol. III, p. 279.

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“Om’ This is the appropriate religious gift of the Elder Mahānāma, a Buddhist monk, an inhabitant of Āmradvīpa.”¹

Although opinions differ on the question of identity of the Mahānāma of Āmradvīpa who dedicated the shrine or temple with the Sthavira Mahānāma of Āmradvīpa who dedicated the image, there is a general agreement among the scholars as to the two documents being nearly contemporaneous.² Dr. Vincent A. Smith, in whose opinion the two documents are ‘records not of one donor but of two donors’, inclines to believe that ‘the dedication of the image is earlier than that of the temple.’ To us the Mahānāma of one record is the same person as the Mahānāma of the other. The use of precisely the same local epithet *Āmradvīpavāi* raises presumption in favour rather of identity than of difference. The Mahānāma of the first document, although not expressly styled *Sthavira*, he is *ipso facto* a Buddhist *sthavira* and omission is rather due to *metri causa*. Instances are not rare where in the same set of inscriptions the same person has been represented differently. In the Bodh-Gayā stone-railing inscriptions, for example, Kuraṅgi is described in some of them as *Ayā Kuraṁgi* and in some as *Imdāgimitrāsa pājāvāti Kuraṁgi*.³

We may endeavour thus to show that in somewhat less than two centuries after Fa Hian’s visit the Elder Mahānāma II of Ceylon erected a beautiful temple for the installation of a Buddha-image on the exalted site of the Bo-tree, the temple which is different from the great temple at Bodh-Gaya. We have the dedication of two other Buddha-images at Bodh-Gaya by three other Buddhist monks of Ceylon, Dharmadāsa, Dharmagupta and Daṁṣhṭrasena, who appear to have come on pilgrimage to the holy site together with Sthavira Mahānāma II

1. *JA*, Vol. XXXI, p. 197.

2. *Passim*, Book III.

3. Fleet’s *Corpus Inscriptionum*, Vol. III, pp. 281-82.

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of Āmradvīpa. One image was jointly dedicated by Dharmagupta and Daṃshṭrasena, both of whom are described as *Tishyāmratīrthavāsika*, "residents of Tishyāmratīrtha" :

Om Deya-dharmmoyam S'ākya-bhikshavos-Tishyāmratīrthavāsika-Dharmmagupta-Daṃshṭrasenayor.

"Om' This is the appropriate religious gift of the two Śākya bhikshus, Dharmagupta and Damsṭrasena residents of Tishyāmratīrtha."

Tishyāmratīrtha is evidently a place in the island of Laṅkā, and Daṃshṭrasena, too, is just a Singhalese name. We are aware that the provenance of the Buddha-image bearing the inscription of Dharmodāsa is unknown. But there can be little doubt that like Damsṭrasena, Dharmadāsa is a Singhalese Buddhist name. Further, the same wording of the inscription and the same characters cannot but lead one to imagine that Bodh-Gaya is the place where the image was installed by Dharmadāsa :

Om Deyadharmmoyam S'ākyabhikshor Dharmadāsasya.

"Om' This is the appropriate religious gift of the Śākya bhikshu Dharmadāsa."

The dedication of these two images must have taken place along with the erection of two other shrines or temples, which, too, like that erected by Sthavira Mahānāma, were different from the great temple at Bodh-Gayā.

Hwen Thsang credits a Brahmin votary of Śiva-Maheśvara with the costly erection of the Bodh-Gayā temple and his younger brother with the excavation of the tank with 'a flowery bank' on the south side of the great shrine, we mean, the tank now known by the name of *Buddhokhar* or *Buddha pokhar*.¹ The Buddha-image enshrined in the main hall of worship is praised as the handiwork of a skilled Brahmin artist employed by the builder of the great temple.² It is said that the pious

1. Fleet's *Corpus Inscriptionum*, Vol. III, p. 280.

2. Beal's *Buddhist Records* Vol. II, p. 119. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 39.

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Brahmin obeyed just a holy communication from his deity Śiva-Maheśvara, the Lord of the Himalayan mountain, in erecting this temple to the Buddha.¹ The object of the undertaking was primarily but the fulfilment of a worldly desire, namely, his appointment to the post of minister to a reigning king. His wish was duly fulfilled, although the account is dead silent over the name of the king.² While Hwen Thsang praises this temple as a most laudable erection of devotional peity of the Śaivite Brahmin minister, he is reticent as to the acts of destruction necessitated by the work of construction of the great shrine. In a somewhat different connection he mentions a few instances of destruction, such as the demolition of certain religious structures miscalled 'convents' and the cutting down of the Bo-tree, all of which are alleged to have been perpetrated as unholy acts of desecration by the wicked King Śaśāṅka of Bengal through envy, since he happened to be a believer in heresy, a staunch supporter of the religion of Śiva-Maheśvara.³ "In late times", says the Chinese pilgrim, "Śaśāṅka-rāja (She-shang-kia) being a believer in heresy, slandered the religion of Buddha. and through envy destroyed the (?) convents and cut down the *Todhi*-tree, digging it up to the very springs of the earth ; but yet he did not get to the bottom of the roots. Then he burnt it with fire and sprinkled it with the juice of the sugar-cane, desiring to destroy it entirely, and not have a trace of it behind."⁴

In the same connection he has extolled Pūrṇavarmā (*Pu-la-na-fa-mo*), the king of Magadha, as 'the last of the race of Aśoka-rāja' who, deeply grieved at the destruction of the Bo-tree, tried successfully, some months after the tragic and sudden death of Śaśāṅka, to bring the Bo-tree back to life,

1. Beal's *Buddhist Records*, Vol. II p. 120.

2. Beal's *Buddhist Records*, Vol. II, p. 119.

3. Beal's *Buddhist Records*, Vol. II, p. 119.

4. Beal's *Buddhist Records*, Vol. II. pp. 118, 121.

5. Beal's *Buddhist Records*, Vol. II, p. 118

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enabling it to grow anew from the roots that had yet remained after bathing them with the milk of a thousand cows. And when it grew to the height of some ten feet, fearing lest it should be again cut down, "he surrounded it with a wall of stone some 24 feet high." At the time of his visit the Chinese pilgrim found it encircled with a wall about 20 feet high (the length of the gateway pillars determining the height, no doubt).¹

Hwen Thsang wants us to believe as if the great temple had been built long before the reign Śaśāṅka and the sole purpose of Śaśāṅka in his coming to Bodh-Gayā was to establish the supremacy of Śaivism even in the very heart of the Buddhist Holy Land by ruthlessly destroying certain religious structures, cutting down and uprooting the Bo-tree and breaking the main image of the Buddha inside the temple. But in the same breath he informs us that the exquisite figure of the Buddha filled his heart with so much awe that he was compelled at last to abandon his iconoclastic project and order just the replacement of that image by a figure of Śiva-Maheśvara. The King's officer who was entrusted with this unholy work of humiliation of the statue of the Buddha skillfully managed to save the impending calamity by calling in the aid of a Buddhist devotee who raised a wall across the chamber to throw the Buddha-image into a dark background and drew a figure of Śiva-Maheśvara on this wall which was removed immediately after the death of Śaśāṅka.²

The simple-minded Chinese pilgrim has thus created a curious position for Śaśāṅka with regard to the Bodh Gayā sanctuaries of the Buddhist. The erection of the Bodh-Gayā temple by a Śaivite Brahmin minister is praised as a great act of piety without paying any heed to the demolition, dismantling, destruction and removal of certain structures and shrines

1. Beal's *Buddhist Records*, Vol. II, p. 118

2. Beal's *Buddhist Records*, Vol. II, pp. 121-22.

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which it involved. While the credit of the costly erection is given to the Brahmin minister, the sin of desecration is laid entirely at the door of King Śaśaṅka. Similarly in the second instance the king is calumniated for issuing the unholy order and his non-Buddhist minister is thanked for divining a clever device to hoodwink his royal master. There must be something wrong somewhere. Three points are certain : (1) that the Bodh-Gayā temple appears to have been built at a date which is almost synchronous with the reign of Śaśaṅka; (2) that King Śaśaṅka did by no means contemplate to destroy this temple ; and (3) that he did not cause any trouble to the inmates of the Mahābodhi Saṅghārāma. The historical truth behind Hwen Thsang's garbled account would seem to lie other way about. Anyhow, it is pious builder of the great temple who must be held responsible for all the acts of desecration alleged to have been committed by the wicked Śaśaṅka. In point of fact, the most plausible way of making all the statements of the credulous Chinese traveller historically sound and truly intelligible is to presume that the powerful Śaiva Śaśaṅka is the benevolent king of Bengal under whose auspices and under the personal supervision of whose Brahmin ministers the great shrine at Bodh-Gayā was built, the *Buddha pokhar* excavated, and the exquisite Buddha-image carved and consecrated. And what leads us to say so ?

When the temple proper was built on a much larger scale, it had to be built precisely on a site in front of the then living Bo-tree. Before making any headway, as the very first step towards the building of the present temple, the site had to be cleared of the thorns and weeds and stumps, even not sparing the stump and roots and branches of the original Bo-tree if it was still standing upon it. Although a plan was made to accommodate the *vajrāsana* set up by Kuraṅgi leaving it where it was, the roof and upper halves of the pillars of the earlier small temple had to be demolished. The sandstone railing of

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Kuraṅgi had to be dismantled and removed. The erection of the great temple also necessitated the removal of the roof and southern row of pillar of the Jewel-walk-shrine. The monolith of Aśoka, too, had to be removed from its original place. If one is to locate the actual spot of the original Bo-tree, it must be done by looking for it under the basement of the present temple and just behind the ancient *vajrāsana*.¹ The whereabouts of Aśoka's monolith are yet unknown. But the ancient *vajrāsana* and lower part of the original small temple erected by Kuraṅgi still exist.² As actually witnessed by Cunningham during repairs of the present temple in A.D. 1818, the plinth of the earlier sandstone railing and the southern row of fixed pillar-bases of the Jewel-walk-shrine lie still buried and hidden under the basement of the great shrine.³

As for the original Bo-tree, it is impossible to believe that it managed to keep itself alive for twelve centuries that elapsed between the Enlightenment of Buddha and the reign of Śaśāṅka, especially in view of the fact that the Aśvattha is not a long-lived tree. There may be some truth in the Buddhist legends stating that Tishyarakshitā, the wicked second chief-queen of King Aśoka, tried to destroy the original Bo-tree. If it be true that King Aśoka enabled the holy Bo to grow again, how can one reasonably believe that the same old tree was in existence and vigour of life as late as the 7th century A.D. ? The only concession we can make to Buddhist legends is that efforts were made from time to time to maintain the living identity of the sacred tree by making it grow either from its stump, or from its branch, or from its seed.⁴

1. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 6 : "The position of the Bodhi-tree must have been inside at B, immediately behind the Vajrāsana throne (See Pl. II).

2. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, Pl. VI See Book V, Fig. No.

3. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, pp. 5-7. See also Pl. II.

4. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 31 : "As the Pipal is a quick growing and short-lived tree, there must have been a long succession of fresh trees

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It is not difficult to imagine that the original Bo-tree died long before the reign of Śaśāṅka, although the withered tree still obstinately standing on the spot. In clearing the site for the building purpose the withered tree had to be cut down at the very level of the ground, and its stump, too had to be dug up and burnt to certain depth, and even the juice of sugar cane had to be poured in to help the process of decomposition.

We may proceed in this manner to show that the alleged acts of desecration were but the unavoidable exigencies of the laudable work of construction of the great temple. If King Śaśāṅka be held responsible for these acts of destruction, he must at the same time be credited for the construction of the important shrine. The great Chinese pilgrim recorded the facts as these were related to him. In this respect we do not doubt the veracity of his statements regarding the destruction of certain religious structures, the cutting down of the Bo and the throwing of the *vajrāsana* with the image installed on it into the background. But sacrilege was never the motive behind all these alleged acts of desecration. For looking to the other side of the matter we find that a good deal of pain was taken to spare the earlier constructions as far as possible. The ancient *vajrāsana* was with difficulty left where it stood before. As for the jewel-walk-shrine, the platform of brick bearing the lotus representations of Buddha's footprints was narrowly spared together with the northern row of ornamented stone-pillars.

With Hwen Thsang we may readily credit King Pūrṇavarmā of Magadha for helping the growth of a new shoot of the Bo-tree behind the great temple and enclosing the same with a high wall of stone. It is easily conceivable that in improvising the later railing, the remnants of which have

raised from seed, from the time of Aśoka down to the present day." The same observation applies equally well to the *Akshayaṇa* of the Gayā city.

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survived to the present day, King Pūrṇavarmā utilised all the available materials of the earlier standstone railing dismantled at the time of construction of the present temple. The earlier railing being, however, insufficient for the extended plinth, substantial additions of granite stuff had to be made. The western half of the south side and almost the whole of the west side were filled with granite mouldings utilising the two corner-pillars of the earlier railing as if to make the later railing appear as a larger replica of the earlier one. One may also observe that the new railing was adapted to the altered situation, being provided with gateways on all its four sides. But these boasted acts of piety on the part of the acclaimed Buddhist king Pūrṇavarmā were but a natural sequel to the erection of the great temple. To extol the great temple as a manumetal erection of piety the sober historians must be prepared to readily excuse certain unavoidable acts of destruction. And strangely enough, the more we ponder over Hwen Thsang's story of Śaśāṅka and Pūrṇavarmā in relation to the Buddhist sanctuaries at Bodh-Gayā, the stronger grows our conviction that the decried Śaiva Śaśāṅka of Bengal is the benevolent king under whose patronage the Bodh-Gayā temple was built and the *Buddha-pokhar* excavated with a flowery bank.

‘During the 7th century, as we learn from the Chinese records, there was frequent intercourse between India and China, beginning with the long sojourn of Hwen Thsang, from A.D. 629 to 642,’¹ and the Buddhist shrines at Bodh-Gayā visited by a good many Chinese pilgrims. About the middle of the 7th century A.D., Wang-Hiuen-t'se composed his history of China referring to the interesting incident of despatch of the two Buddhist monks Mahānāma and Upa(sena) with valuable presents by King Meghavarmā (Meghavarna) of Ceylon as

1. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 68.

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envoys to King Samudragupta of Northern India for the latter's permission to build a suitable retreat at Bodh-Gayā for the accommodation of the Ceylonese Buddhist pilgrims. It is apparently the famous Bodh-Gayā inscription of Mahānāma II which is accountable for the mention of Mahānāma and Upasena, none of whom was or could have been a contemporary either of Samudragupta or of Meghavarṇa.

In the 7th or 8th century A.D. some pious donor, as stated in a Sanskrit inscription engraved on the coping of the old Stone-railing, adorned the great temple at Bodh-Gayā, 'with a new coating of plaster and paint at the cost of 250 *dināras*.' In the temple itself he provided a lamp of *ghee* for the Lord Buddha 'by the gift of a hundred cows.' 'By another hundred cows.' 'By another hundred cows, in addition to the cost of small perpetually recurring repairs to the temple,' he made provision for 'another lamp of *ghee* to be burnt daily before the image insine the temple.' 'By another hundred cows' provision was made 'for having a lamp of *ghee* before the brass image of the Lord Buddha (*raitya-Buddha-pratimā*).' 'A large water reservoir (*mahantam ādhāram*)' was dug up 'for the use of the noble congregation of monks.' And to the east of it a new field was laid out.¹

We have another Sanskrit inscription engraved on the coping of the same old Stone-railing, This is a simple votive record in verse and its main historical importance lies in the fact that it immortalises the name of the distinguished Ceylonese pilgrim Prakhyātakīrtti, the virtuous Buddhist recluse of royal descent who visited the Buddhist Holy Land in the 7th or 8th century A.D., for the worship of the Holy Triad believing it to be the right royal way to the attainment of Buddhahood.²

1. See Book III, *Uttara-Pāshāṇa-Lekhā*, No. 1.

2. Book. III, *Uttara-Pāshāṇa-Lekhā*, No. 2.

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The votive inscription of Udayaśrī, written in two lines on the pedestal of a Buddha-image, 'now kept inside the sculpture shed to the north of the (great) temple,' yields one more interesting record of Sinhalese pilgrimage to the Buddhist Holy Land. The text of this inscription, precisely like the first two lines of the inscription of Prakhyātakīrtti, is composed in an *Anuṣṭubh* metre, and written undoubtedly in characters of one and the same age.¹ Another point of similarity between the two texts is that both are undated. None need be surprised if the pious monk Prakhyātakīrtti was accompanied by Udayaśrī who was evidently a Buddhist *upāsaka* or layman. The record shows that the Buddha-image, honoured as the Lord himself (*Bhagavān-ēsha*), was caused to be carved and installed by Udayaśrī, 'the Sinhalese Udayaśrī.'² It may be easily inferred from a kneeling male figure holding the garland and a figure of a female with boy, both carved on the pedestal of the image, that Udayaśrī came on pilgrimage to Bodh-Gayā together with his wife and son.

The whole of the Gayā region north and south, was not so richly endowed at any other period of the early history of India than the Pāla. So far as Bodh-Gayā is concerned, "the great mass of the sculptures," says Cunningham, "belongs to the period of the Pāla kings, who reigned from A.D. 813." "In the sculptures of this period..... there are numberless figures of the Buddha Śākyamuni sitting under the Bodhi-tree..... The figures of Padmapāṇi (Bodhisattva) are also numerous.

The dated specimens of these sculptures enable us to set them in a chronological order. There is one inscription

1. In the opinion of Dr. Bloch, however, the inscription of Udayaśrī is written in characters of about the 9th or 10th century A.D., while the characters of the inscription of Prakhyātakīrtti agree with those of a record of the 6th or 7th century. See *Note on Bodh-Gayā* in *Archæological Survey of India*, Report for 1908-9, pp. 152-157.

2. *Kārīto Bhagavān-ēsha Saimhaleṇ-Odayaśriyā*.

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recording the dedication of a statue of the Buddha during the reign of Śrī Gopāla-deva.¹ There is another inscription which records the installation of a Mahādeva-Chaturmukha (Śiva-Brahmā) in the Bodh-Gayā temple by a stone-cutter named Ujjvala in the 26th year of the reign of King Dharmapāla, the son and successor of Gopāla-deva². One of the remaining inscriptions happens to be a record of the time of King Nārāyaṇapāla-deva, who was the fourth in descent from Gopāla³. Mahīpāla-deva, a king of the same Pāla dynasty, is eulogized in an inscription, dated in the 10th year of his reign' as *Parama-Bhaṭṭārāka*, *Parama-Saugata*, *Śrīman Mahīpāla-deva*, "the supreme sovereign, the pre-eminent Buddhist, the fortunate Mahīpāla-deva."⁴ There is yet another inscription on a long slab, which is a short record of the reign of King Rāmapāla-deva whom the Tibetan historian Tāranāth mentions as the grandfather of the last Pāla king, named Yakshapāla.⁵

It is probably during the reign of the Pālas of Bengal that the Buddhist king Śrī Pūrṇabhadra of Sindh erected a *gandhakuṭi* (temple) at Bodh-Gayā installing three Buddha-images therein⁶ and another *gandhakuṭi* was erected, 'like upto a flight of steps into heaven,' by King Tuṅga of the Rāshtrakūṭa family in the 15th year of his reign.'

The second great epoch of Chinese pilgrimage to Bodh-Gayā commenced 'in the 11th century, during the most flourishing period of Buddhist sovereignty, under King Mahīpāla and his successors.'⁷ Evidently these later pilgrims

1. Cunningham's *Mahabodhi* p, 55.

2. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 63 Pl. XXVIII.

3. See article 17, *passim*.

4. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 64.

5. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 65.

6. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 65.

7. The inscription of Pūrṇabhadra which is engraved on the base of a Buddha-statue. *IA*, Vol. IX, p. 143 : Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, pp. 64-65.

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came in four or five batches, some during the reign of the great Han dynasty and others during the reign of the great Sung dynasty. They performed certain specific acts of merit and to that effect set up inscriptions, some of which exist only in fragments and some are lost for ever. These inscriptions are engraved on stone-slabs, of which the two sides are carved. One of these slabs has a sculptured top bearing a figure of the Buddha in the middle with a figure of this goddess is seen also on another slab.¹

The inscription of the Chinese pilgrim Chi-I shows that he was a priest of the great dynasty. He came twice to the kingdom of Magadha to gaze upon the Diamond-throne and other vestigee of Buddhism, each time in company with others. In his second pilgrimage he was accompanied by Hwei-tsei, Chi-I and Kwang-fung.²

The longest and most fascinating of the Chinese inscriptions at Bodh-Gayā is a votive record and hymn of praise set up by the priest Yun Shu from the Western river (Yellow river) of China. Yun Shu caused a stone-*stūpa* to be built in honour of the Ten thousand Buddhas some 30 paces to the north of the Bodhimāṇḍa. In his first visit to Bodh-Gayā he became associated with Chiang Hsia-pias, another Chinese priest who had come there earlier and on three occasions spent the season of fast. His inscription is dated in the Jen-hsu year of Divine favour of the great Sung Empir (AD. 1021).³

The postscript to the above inscription clearly proves that Yun Shu was accompanied to India by the two priests I-ching and I-lin from the monastery of Established Doctrine in the High Street of the Eastern Capital, and became associated with

1. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 66. The inscription of Tuṅga is aptly characterised as 'long rambling farrago of the praises of the king and his predecessors.'

2. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 68

3. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 69 ; Pl. XXX, Fig. 1.

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them in his second visit to Bodh-Gayā¹ I-ching and I-lin set up a separate inscription, dated in the 6th year of the reign of the Great Sung dynasty (A.D. 1029). It records that these two Chinese priests presented a gold-embroidered holy robe to be spread over the Diamond-throne of the Buddha, and erected a stone *stūpa* as well.²

The Chinese priest Yu-pin from the monastery of the commencement of Holiness in the Eastern Capital set up his record on the same date as that borne by the inscription of I-ching and I-lin. Yu-pin's recorded acts of merit are precisely like those of other two priests from the Eastern Capital.³

Lastly, the inscription of the Buddhist priest Hui-wen, dated in the 2nd year of Ming Tao (A.D. 1033), distinctly records that by commands of their Imperial Majesties, the Emperor and Empress of the Great Sung dynasty he proceeded to the kingdom of Magadha to erect on behalf of His departed Imperial Majesty T'ai Tsung a *stupa* (Pagoda) beside the Bodhi-maṇḍa, the Diamond-throne.⁴

The history of Bodh-Gayā after the Pālas is one of decadence of its glorious life. The Indian archæologists have hitherto brought to light three inscriptions of the reign of King Aśokavalla of Sapādalaksha (Siwalik), one of which is dated in terms of a year of Buddha-era (*Buddha-varshe*), and the remaining two in those of two years of the expired reign of King Lakshmaṇasena of Bengal (*Śrīmal Lakshmaṇasenasya atīta-rājye*).⁵ The inscription dated in the year⁶ 1813 of the Buddha-era contains a clear statement to the effect that at the time when it was written the religion of the Buddha fell into

1. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 74.

2. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi* p. 75.

3. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 71.

4. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 71.

5. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, pp. 71-72.

6. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 72.

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decay (*bhrasṭe Muneḥ śāsane*).¹ It remains yet to be decided as to whether the recorded dates, 51 ann 74, of the other two inscriptions should be interpreted in terms of the era of Lakshmaṇasena which commenced from the year of his coronation or in those of an era of the same king which may be taken to have commenced from the expiry or termination of his reign.

We are aware that there exists a wide divergence of opinion among the scholars regarding the precise date of commencement of the era of Lakshmaṇasena. Dismissing as highly improbable all the theories advanced in favour of commencement of this era from a date prior to the reign of Lakshmaṇasena, one can say that the issue has so far been as to whether the said era was started by King Lakshmaṇasena himself from the year of his coronation or it was arbitrarily started by the Hindus from A.D. 1200 representing the fixed date of establishment of the Muhammadan rule in India, as if to give currency to a new Hindu era running parallel with the Muhammadan.² Dr. Kielhorn³ and the late Prof. R. D. Banerjee, in whose opinion the era commenced from the year of coronation of King Lakshmaṇasena, are disposed to accept A.D. 1118-19 as the date of its beginning. Both of them maintain that the dates of the two Bodh-Gayā inscriptions of the reign of King Aśokavalla are stated in terms of the era of Lakshmaṇasena which commenced in A.D. 1118-19.

If we render the recorded dates of the three inscriptions under notice in terms of the era of Lakshmaṇasena which commenced in A.D. 1119, the year of his coronation, we shall have to assign one inscription to A.D. 1170 (1119 + 51), the

1. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 70,

2. *IA*, Vol. X, p. 343.

3. *Journal, Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. XVI.

4. R. D. Banerjee's *Bāṅgālār Itihās*, Part I, pp.

5. *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XII, pp. 6-10, 27-30. *IA*. Vol. XIX, p. 1,

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probable year of Lakshmanasena's death, another to A.D. 1188, and the third to A.D. 1193 (1119+74). All the three dates thus derived make the inscriptions appear as records prior to the invasion of Magadha by Bukhtyer Khilji. The difficulty in accepting such a rederring as this is two-fold : (1) that it does not fully explain the significance of the expression *atīta-rājye*, 'in (the year of) the expired reign' ; and (2) that it does not satisfactorily explain why in one of these three inscriptions there should occur the statement about the sudden decay of the religion of the Buddha. We require a rendering which removes this twofold difficulty and assigns the three inscriptions to dates posterior to Bukhtyer's invasion of Magadha and ruthless destruction of the Hindu and Buddhist sanctuaries all over the ancient kingdom. The Mahābodhi Saṅghārāma was tenanted up till the reign of the Pālas by the Ceylonese monks. As a matter of fact, the sanctuaries at Bodh-Gayā remained till that time under the direct supervision of these monks. So long as they remained in charge of the shrines at Bodh-Gayā, no pilgrim, whether from China or from Sindh, appears to have described himself openly in the votive record left by him as follower of the Mahāyāna system (*Mahā-yāna-yāyī*). But in all the three records of the reign of King Aśokavalla, the donors and their royal patrons have been mentioned as the Mahāyānists by faith. From the second inscription, dated in the year 1813 of the Buddha-era, it is evident that the building work was supervised not by a Ceylonese monk but by Dharmarakshita, a renowned Buddhist teacher of the country of Kamā (? Kumāyun). We cannot but think that the decay of the religion of the Buddha was chiefly due to a terrible effect of the iconoclastic fury of the Islamic forces under Bukhtyer that expressed itself in a pronounced form all over Magadha. As for Bodh-Gayā, it sounded death-knell to its otherwise growing shrines and sanctuaries. The temples were broken down, the images suffered mutilation, the

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saṅghārāma was razed to the ground, and the Singhalese monks who permanently resided at the place must have fled away in panic, if their lives were spared at all.

The natural meaning of the expression *Lakshmaṇasenasya atīta-rājye sam* 74 is that the inscription containing this expression was written in the year 74 counted from the date of expiry or termination of the rule of Lakshmaṇasena, we mean, from *circa* A.D. 1170. Adding 51, 69 and 74 to 1170, we can fix up the dates of the three inscriptions respectively as. A.D. 1221, A.D. 1239, and A.D. 1244.

In the first inscription, dated in the year 51 of the expired reign of King Lakshmaṇasena, King Aśokavalla is represented as 'an adherent of the excellent Mahāyāna school a great *upāsaka*, pious at heart.' Moved thereto by the Kashmir Pandit, the honoured Chaṭṭopadhi, by the king's Pandit Mushala, the worthy Śaṅkaradeva, and the worth Trailokya-brahma, the illustrious king built a monastery for Bhaṭu Dāmodara, Bhaṭu Paima, Śiśu Rāghava and Mahipukha, and furnished it with an image of Buddha. He engaged the cook Māmaka, and the good keeper and disposer Harichandra to prepare the daily rations with pots, incense and lamps as a befitting offering to the Buddha-image.¹

The second inscription, dated in the Buddhist year 1813, is a lengthy royal panegyric (*praśasti*) composed 'in a great hurry' by Indranandi, a writer of high fame, and beautifully incised on a stone-tablet by the engraver Rāma. It is written in praise of King Purushottamasimha of Kamā (? Kumāyun) and King Aśokavalla of Sapādalaksha, both of whom combined in giving a fresh impetus to the life of the Buddhist Holy Land which fell into decay, King Purushottamasimha, who was a feudatory chief under King Aśokavalla, is introduced as the son of King Kāmadevasimha and grandson

1. *Journal, Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. XVI, p. 359.

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of King Jayatūṅgasimha of Kamā, a prosperous country which is said to have been situated 'towards the eastern part.' Here Aśovavalla is praised as an 'Indra-like Chhinda king,' which may be taken to establish that he belonged to the powerful Chhinda family exercising sovereignty also over the country of Sindh. The inscription records the construction of a *gandhakuṭi* of Buddha at Bodh Gayā, 'graceful and like a hall of emancipation and bliss,' for the spiritual benefit of Māṇikya-simha, the deceased son of Ratnaśrī, the daughter of King Purushottama. The whole work of construction of this beautiful temple was supervised by Dharmarakshita, a saintly Buddhist teacher.¹

The third inscription, dated *Sam* 74 of the expired reign of Lakshmaṇasena, and found by Mr. Hathorne near the great temple, is nothing but a record of a meritorious gift of Śrī Sahaṇasāna, son of Mahataka Śrī Mṛisibrahma. The donor Sahaṇasāna is described as 'a follower of the excellent Mahāyāna school, a great worshipper, a lamp of the assemblies of Kshattris.' He is mentioned also as 'a treasures and dependent of Prince Daśaratha,' the younger brother of King Aśokavalla. The interest of this particular record lies also in the fact that in it King Aśokavalla is extolled as 'lord of Khaśa kings of the Sapādalaksha mountains.'²

We have yet to take note of another Sanskrit inscription written in characters showing that it was a Mahāyānist record of the same age as those of the reign of King Aśokavalla.³ This inscription is engraved 'on the base of a life-size image of Buddha, standing, attended by Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya,'—statue which is 'now in the staircase leading up to the platform of the temple, on the northern side.' Even apart from the figures of the two Mahāyāna deities Avalokiteśvara and

1. *IA*, Vol. X, pp. 341 foll.; Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, pp. 79-80.

2. *IA*, Vol. X, p. 346.

3. In Bloch's opinion the characters are 'of about the 10th century A.D.'

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Maitreya, we have the clear evidence of the text itself to prove that its author, the senior monk Vīryendra, was an adherent of the Mahāyāna system of faith. Further, the inscription clearly proves that the donor of the gift was a pilgrim from the great monastery of Somapura and an inhabitant of Samatāṭa, a tract which formed a part of ancient Bengal. The first three lines of the text read :

*Sri-Sāmataṭikaḥ pravara-Ma-
hāyāna-yāyinaḥ Srimat-Somapura mahā
vihārīya-vinayavit-Sthavira Vīryendrasya.*⁽¹⁾

“(Gift) of the senior monk Vīryendra, a knower of the Vinaya and an inmate of the great monastery of Somapura, an inhabitant of Samatāṭa country and a follower of the excellent Mahāyana system.”¹

It is, then, during the benign rule of the earlier Pathan kings in India that some new structures were built at Bodh-Gayā under the auspices of King Aśokavalla for the first time after the ruthless destruction of the sanctuaries by Bukhtyer Khilji. It is indeed during the palmy days of the Pathan rulers of India that the decadent life of the art and architecture of Bodh-Gayā flickered once more before its final extinction in the 16th century. The larger and earlier Burmese inscription clearly proves that in the beginning of the 14th century the ruinous condition of the Bodh-Gayā temple attracted the attention of the then reigning powerful king of Upper Burma, who in all seriousness took steps to have it restored and repaired.

This Burmese inscription is incised on ‘a black stone, which is fixed in one of the walls of the Mahant’s residence,’ and there exist as many as three translations of its text, one published by Ratnapāla,² another by Col. Burney,³ and the

1. See for the text and translation Bloch’s *Notes on Bodh-Gayā* in *Archæological Survey of India*, Report for 1908-9, p. 158.

2. *JASB*, Vol. III, p. 214.

3. *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. XX, p. 164.

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third by Mr. Hla Oung.¹ The king of Upper Burma is honoured in this precious document as *Theinpyu-Thakintara-Mingyi* or 'the lord of 100,000 Pyus,' a fact which attests that up till that time the Pyus of Upper Burma had not become extinct as a race. The same fact goes also to connect the pious lord of the white elephant with the ancient dynasty that reigned in the city of Pagan.²

The inscription records that the pious king deputed at first his royal preceptor Śrī-Dhammarājaguna to repair the great temple, providing him with sufficient money to do the work. Śrī-Dhammarājaguna, who was accompanied by his pupil Kāthaba Thera (Kassapa Thera), proved unsuccessful in his attempt to accomplish the task. Thereafter His Majesty entrusted the task to the younger prince Pyu-Thakin and the minister Ratha, both of whom came across to India to repair the sacred edifice (in company, as it seems, with Thera Wardathi). The work was commenced on Friday the 10th day of the waxing moon of the *Pyatho* month in the year 667 (of the Burmese era, *Sakuarāja*) and completed on Sunday the 8th day of the waxing moon of *Tazungmon* month in the year 668 of the same Burmese era. The work was duly consecrated with splendid pomp and appropriate offering of various kinds including the offering of food to the poor and destitute who were as if they were His Majesty's own children.³

The old Stone-railing now contains a few granite pillars presenting certain lotus-medallions in the middle row with the male and female figures quite Burmese in their headdresses and appearances, and certain representations of the *stūpa* of Burmese models in the upper row. It is likely that in carrying

1. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 76.

2. It may be noted in this connexion that King Alungsithu of Pagan is known as the historical builder of the Mahābodhi Pagoda in the city of Pagan on the model of the great temple at Bodh-Gayā.

3. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 76.

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out the repairs of the great temple the deputies of the king of Upper Burma thought it necessary also to repair the damaged parts of the Stone-railing. The basalt throne of the Buddha inside the great temple appears equally to have been an addition made by the Burmese deputies.

‘A brick with a short Burnese inscription¹ was found built into the pinnacle along with several other bricks bearing (in Bengali characters, the names of the two) masons.’—Gopapāla and Dharmasimha.¹ It would seem that these inscribed bricks are relics of the last Burmese repair of the great temple made under the auspices of Ming-don-min, the king of Ava, and father and predecessor of King Thibaw.

The year 667 of the Burmese era corresponds with A.D. 1305, and the year 668 with A.D. 1306.² We cannot but differ from Cunningham when he arbitrarily proposes to correct these two dates in the inscription to 441 and 448 respectively, making the former to tally with A.D. 1079 and the latter with A.D. 1086.³ It will be simply doing violence to the historical truth to adopt such a wrong procedure as this, especially having regard to the fact that the document is intended to be precise even in the minute details of chronology. We detect, however, that Cunningham was led to this course in order to harmonise the date of this Burmese inscription with that of an inscription of Śrī-Dharmarājaguru, which he wrongly took to be a somewhat earlier Burmese record.⁴

The second inscription is a much shorter record, which is engraved ‘on a large copper-gilt umbrella, and found by Mr. Beglar under the Burmese ground level to the west of the temple. The umbrella actually bears two short inscriptions, one

1. Cunningham’s *Mahābodhi*, pl. XXIX. 3.

2. Cunningham’s *Mahābodhi*, p. 76.

3. Cunningham’s *Mahābodhi*, p. 77.

4. Cunningham’s *Mahābodhi*, pp. 75.

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in Mōn or Talaing (not in Burmese, as hitherto supposed), and the other in Indian (proto-Bengali), characters. The Talaing inscription consists of one short line and injured by a break in the middle. The Indian inscription consists of two lines, of which the upper one is much injured on the right hand.' The legible portion of the Indian inscription may be taken to yield the following text :

*Sam̐ 397 Sri Dharmarājaguru-mahāvala-dānagani.....
Rāñño Sahadevindasyātrajaḥ.*¹

With regard to this shorter inscriptions, Cunningham appears to have committed a twofold mistake : (1) in interpreting the recorded date *Sam̐ 397* in terms of the Burmese era, and (2) in assuming Śrī-Dharmarājaguru of this record to be the same personage as Śrī-Dharmmarājaguna of the larger Burmese inscription. The commonness of the official designation does not necessarily prove the identity of the persons who bear it. Here *Srī-Dhammarājaguna* or *Śrī Dharmarājaguru* is but an official designation. As for the date of the inscription, it is difficult to interpret the word *Sam̐* or *Sam̐vat* in the sense of *Sakkarāja*, which latter is a convention of Burma to denote the Burmese era. We maintain that the donor of the copper-gilt umbrella is altogether a different person, as well as that the recorded date *Sam̐ 397* is either a clerical mistake for *Sam̐ 1397* or a statement in terms of a year of the expired reign of King Lakshmanasenā. In either case, the copper-gilt umbrella inscription is later than the larger Burmese record, and belongs to A.D. 1340 (*Sam̐ 1397* being = *Vikrama Sam̐ 1397*) or to A.D. 1567 (1170 + 397), which is to say that the second Śrī-Dharmarājaguru visited Bodh-Gayā sometime after the repair of the great temple by the king of Upper Burma. The Mōn or Talaing record appearing on the copper-gilt umbrella is in itself a cogent proof to establish that the second Śrī-Dharmarājaguru

1. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 75 – suggests such reading as *Sri-rāno Sahadena...*

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was a Mōn or Talaing by race and belonged probably to Lower Burma.

The last cycle of Buddhist pilgrimage to Bodh-Gayā from different parts of India commenced in the beginning of the 14th century, while India was still under the suzerainty of the Pathan rulers. We have large number of inscriptions on stone-slabs, two of which are dated in *Sam* 1359, a third in *Sam* 1365, a fourth in *Sam* 1385 and a fifth in *Sam* 1388, Through the rest do not bear dates, their general contents and convention leave no room for doubt as to their being records of the same age. In case of the two inscriptions, dated *Sam* 1359, the pilgrim offers his adoration to Mahābodhi for the benefit of his parents, and the two records are worded in almost the same terms. In the third inscription dated *Sam* 1365, the pilgrim similarly records his devotion at Mahābodhi. On the stone-slab bearing the inscription, dated *Sam* 1385, there appear 'five figures (three male and two female), all kneeling in the Burmese fashion and holding out offerings of flowers to a *stūpa*, the most prominent man being labelled *Kara(śa)ka Thākura Srī*....., "Thākura so and so, a man of Karaśa," and his wife kneeling behind him being named *Thākura(ṇi) Jājorā (De)v i*). One of the remaining labels has for its first word *Karaśakā*, a feminine form of the local epithet. The other slab bearing the date of *Sam* 1388 presents 'four figures, three male and one female, all kneeling and offering flowers.'

With the last-named two slabs may be associated a third which bears 'two figures, man and wife, the former labelled *Rāchrā* and the latter *Siṅqāra Dabu*,' and also a fourth bearing 'three figures, a man, and women, and an animal (very like a dog),' the man being labelled *Sundaravarmā*, the woman *Nāgaladevi* and the animal *Bhutamāna*.¹

1. *Archæological Survey of India*, Vol. I, Pl. VI. The local epithets *Karaśaka* and *Karaśakā* are brought to light here for the first time. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, pp. 82-83.

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The local epithet *Karaśaka*, 'a man of Karaśa, or *Karaśakā*, 'a woman of Karaśa,' which occurs in some of the labels is historically important as showing beyond doubt that these latter-day Buddhist pilgrims hailed from Karaśa, probably a locality in the Punjab or Sindh. The influx of the Thākuras or Thakkuras as pilgrims to the region of Gayā from the Punjab or Sindh at this very period of time is proved by the inscription of Thakkura Śrī-Kulachandra, son of Simbarāja and grandson of Dālarāja, found at the city of Gayā and dated in the Vikrama Samvat 1431 (= A.D. 1374). The form of his name leads Dr. Bhagawanlal Indraji to conjecture that 'he may have been a hakkura of some place in the Punjab or Sindh.' The inscription clearly proves that Thakkura Kulachandra repaired the fallen temple of the Lord, the worshipful Dakṣiṇāditya' near the Viṣṇupada temple at Gayā in A.D. 1374 and during the reign of Feroz Shah Tughlak. In style the Sun-temple 'resembles the temples of Mahābodhi and Tārādevī,' and in point of fact it was rebuilt in its present form with materials brought over from the ruins at Bodh-Gayā, the materials including the stone-tablet bearing the second inscription of the reign of King Aśokavalla.¹

Along with the above-mentioned records of Buddhist pilgrims from the North-Western regions of India we may, perhaps, consider the inscription of Paṇḍita Jinadāsa, engraved by Saṃgatta on a pillar of the old Stone-railing. Paṇḍita Jinadāsa hailed from a country, called Parvata.² In all probability the Parvata of this votive record is no other than the country of *Po-fa-to* (Parvata) which was reached by Hwen Thsang after walking a distance of 700 *li* or so north-east from Mūlasthāna or Multan. Two other pillars of the same old Stone-railing still bear stylo-sketches of the figures of Buddha and the goddess Tārā, which cannot but be the fancy carvings

1. *IA*, Vol. X, p. 341.

2. Book III, *Uttara-Pāshāṇa-Lekhā*, No. 3.

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of some of the pilgrims from the country of Parvata, and presumably of Saṃgatta who engraved the record of Jinadāsa. Abul Fazl, the historian of Akbar's court, wrote his Aini-Akbari in the 40th year of the reign of his imperial master. His information is that Buddhism was nowhere to be found in India but in Kashmere, where, too, it was difficult to meet a learned representative of this religion. Tibet, Tenasserim (Lower Burma) and Dhañāsiri (? Arracan) are mentioned as three distant corners of the earth where Buddhism held ground as a living faith of the people. We are completely in the dark as to the source of such an information as this. It is quite possible that Bodh-Gayā was visited during Akbar's rule by some Buddhist pilgrims from those three places. Śrī-Dharma-rājaguru, the donor of the copper-gilt umbrella at Bodh-Gayā may have been one of those pilgrims, should our interpretation of the recorded date *Sam* 397 in terms of a year of the expired regin of Lakshmaṇasena be sound.

With the votive constructions and offerings of Buddhist pilgrims from Burma, Upper and Lower, and the north-Western regions of India the flickering life of the art and architecture of Bodh-Gayā extinguished for ever, and the holy site passed out of the hands of the Buddhists. Bodh-Gayā as dreamland of the Buddhists sank into oblivion till its cause was vigorously espoused in the last century by the Mahābodhi Society of Ceylon with the Anagarika Dharmapala as its General Secretary, leader and lieutenant.

In closing this hurried survey we may draw the reader's attention to the periodicity of pilgrimages and the timespirit, which must not be lost sight of in accounting for the uniformity of styles and conventions noticed in the different seat of records. We might, for instance, observe that in the first wave of Chinese pilgrimage all those who visited Bodh-Gayā (Fa Hian, Hwen Thsang, and the rest) recorded what they saw in their travels instead of setting up any votive

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inscriptions and hymns of praise in the manner of the later pilgrims representing the second wave (Yun Shu, Chiang Hsia-Pias, I-chin, I-lin, and the rest). Similarly we may observe that the earlier batch of Ceylonese pilgrims (Mahā-nāma and others) left inscriptions written in one kind of style and those forming the second batch (Prakhyātakirtti and Udayaśrī) set up inscriptions written in a different style. We must have also noticed that all the inscriptions which may be relegated to the reign of King Aśokavalla are so many Mahāyānist records written in a uniform style. And the same remark applies equally well to the votive records of the hākuras from the Punjab or Sindh. It is sure to pain one to think that the archives of Bodh-Gayā should appear conspicuous by the absence of any records of visits or meritorious by deeds of the pilgrims from Siam and Tibet, Korea and Japan.

16. BODH-GAYĀ FROM HINDU POINT OF VIEW

To survey the history of Bodh-Gayā from the Hindu point of view is to witness how from the very beginning it presented a scene of struggle between Śaivism and Buddhism. So far as Śaivism is concerned, this struggle was rather for the assertion of right to existence than for the establishment of supremacy. The verdict of the historian is bound to be this that through this age-long struggle that Śaiva has generally been on the defensive and only occasionally on the aggressive. In other words, the purpose of the present article is to show what apology Śaivism actually had and still has for being where it is.

Buddhaghosha has utilised a legend invented by the Buddhists to account for the growth of Uruvelā into a sandy tract. In spite of the fantastic character of the legend, it may be cited here to show that even in Buddhist belief long before the advent of the Buddha the region was once hallowed by the religious rites and austere penances of a class of Vedic hermits,

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legion in number. ¹ who may be rightly described as precursors of our much-acquainted matted-hair Jaṭilas. The stage in which these old-world hermits are made to appear points to a time when they had not as yet developed a sense of corporate life under a commonly acknowledged leader, everyone doing his work in his own way without waiting for the dictation of anybody else. ² The legend seeks to keep these hermits distinct from the Jaṭilas by representing them as a body of *religieux*, far more ancient, observing the particular solemn ceremony, the *Kṛittikā-vrata*, connected with the asterism *Kṛittikā*³ (the *Pleiades* of western astronomy) constituting the first constellation of the Lunar Zodiac, — a holy rite so exuberantly extolled in the *Brāhmaṇas*, especially in the *Śatapatha*.⁴ The legend distinctly says that the tradition of such an observance by these ancient hermits furnished the pious posterity with a good excuse for commemorating it by demarcating the site, fencing it round, and raising it into a place of special sanctity.⁵

Leaving aside these ancient Vedic hermits who had no rival to encounter, we may come down to the historical period and witness how just prior to the rise of Buddhism and at the time of Buddha's enlightenment the distinguished body of the Jaṭilas,

1. *Papañch-sūdanī*, Siamese Ed., Part II, p. 232. *Atīte kira anuppanne Buddhhe dasasahassa-kulaputtā tīpasa-pabbajjam pabbajjivā tasmim padese viharantā.*

2. *Papañcha-sūdanī*, Siamese Ed., Part II, p. 233 : *tassa añño chodako nāma n'atthi.*

3. *Papañcha-sūdanī*, Siamese Ed., Part II, p. 232 ; *Kattikavattam akamsu.*

4. *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* (S.B.E.) : "He may set up the two fires under the *Kṛittikās*, for they, *Kṛittikās*, are doubtless *Agni's* asterism. So that if he sets up his fires under *Agni's* asterism he will bring about a correspondence between his fire and the asterism. Moreover, the other lunar asterisms consist of one, two, three or four stars, so that the *Kṛittikās* are the most numerous (of asterisms). Hence he thereby obtains an abundance."

5. *Papañcha-sūdanī*, Siamese Ed., Part II, p. 233 : *Pacchimā janatā chetiyatthānam akāsi.*

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the predecessors of the Śaiva ascetics, were holding unquestioned sway over the region of Uruvelā,¹ unmindful of what was portended by the appearance of a new star on the horizon. Their hearth and home was the hermitage (*assama*) overlooking the glassy flow of the Nerañjarā which in its downward course also washed the village of Senānī-gāma and the sombre site of the Bo-tree. Performing as they did the sacrificial rites, daily ablutions and other duties they were spending their time in perfect peace and contentment without brooking any cause of fear. The princely ascetic Siddhārtha was completely at liberty to move about and act as he pleased, and seek a religious career as well he might. Even his great attainment did not excite their grudge or jealousy, and his movements and ponderings immediately following it did evoke any feeling of suspicion neither. If we can rely upon the authenticity of Buddhist records, both canonical and post-canonical, we cannot but admit that even when the Buddha wended his way back to this tract with the sole object of subduing the Jāṭilas of the place and entered into their hermitage, they unsuspectingly accorded hospitality to him, treating him as their distinguished guest. When on his first arrival at their hermitage he enquired if they had any objection to allowing him to stay for a night in their fire-room, which was undoubtedly the *sanctum sanctorum* in their dwelling place, it was frankly pointed out that they had no objection whatever, and that if they had any scruple in the matter, it was due only because of their fear that his life might be in danger from the fury of a Serpent-king who jealously guarded the hearth. They were all very glad that he took up his abode in a pleasant woodland nearby and found there a suitable place of sojourn. During all the time of his stay at Uruvelā they paid respectful attention to him. The only instance of exception to be noted is that at the approach of the day of 'great sacrifice'

1. *Vinaya Mahāvagga*, I, 1X.

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(*Mahāyañña*), the annual function celebrated as the most joyous occasion by all the inhabitants of Aṅga and Magadha, they wished in their heart of hearts if he would think well not to make his appearance at their residence on that particular day, fearing lest his superior personal dignity and charm might overpower the credulous multitudes who would assemble, and serve only to increase his gain and fame and decrease those thitherto enjoyed by them. But even with respect to this the Buddhist account carefully points out that that, too, was nothing but a passing thought. For although to allay their fear the wise Buddha had retired of his own accord to a place far off, they felt sorry that he was not be found in the locality when they wanted to greet him also on that day with their usual hospitality.

The reformist zeal which actuated the move on the part of the Enlightened One of the great hypnotic powers naturally carried with it the love of conquest and the spirit of aggression. Thus we need not be astonished to see that the Buddhist chronicler has aptly described the conversion of the Jaṭilas by the Great Buddha as *Jaṭila-damana* or Infliction a defeat on the matted-hair aseetics of the Gayā region by the employment of all the stratagems consistent with his position. The matter did not stop here. The account glibly proceeds to narrate that the powerful victor made an open exhibition of these convert-captives in the great metropolis of Magadha to the very people who had so long paid their unstinted homage to them.¹

The muse of history is strangely mute over the long roll of events affecting the interests of the Jaṭilas as Jaṭilas within the bounds of Uruvelā during the succession of centuries. The life of this region as portrayed in the informative itinerants of Fa-Hian breathes altogether a Buddhistic atmosphere, although the Chūlavam̐sa would have us believe that Buddhaghosha,

1. *Vinaya Mahāvagga*, I, 22.

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who was destined to figure as the greatest among the Pāli commentators, hailed from a Brahmin family of Bodh-Gayā and had excelled in Vedic lore with all the auxiliary sciences and arts and drunk deep at the fountain of Patañjali's system,¹—the acquisition which he succeeded in bringing to bear upon his interpretation and defence of Buddhism. If this story be true, the gifted Brahmin youth saw the light of the day in the same neighbourhood of the Bo-tree where after the great event of Buddhahood the sage of Śākyaś happened to meet and converse with an erudite Brahmin vaunting of his knowledge of Vedānta, the Brahma-lore. The Buddha is said to have been pressed with the inquiry as to the qualities that go to make a real Brahmin (*brāhmaṇa-karaṇā dhammā*)² It will not be far from legitimate, we think, to infer that the even tenor of Brahmanism remained unbroken in Uruvelā, and that the light of Vedic lore was kept ever burning and it did not extinguish even under the glamour of the new-born faith which dazzled the place and the people. Brahmanism never ceased to be a living force.

Brahmā, according to Buddhist tradition, is the supreme Brahmanical deity who prevailed upon the Buddha to proclaim the new faith to the world for the good of mankind. It is again the Vedic or earlier Brahmanical deities Śakra and Brahmā who at every important step looked after the comforts of the Enlightened One preaching his new gospel. With the tide of time the tradition changes its complexion, Śakra retires into the background and Brahmā is in a mood to retire, yielding place to Lord Śiva under the iconic form of Maheśvara on whom devolves the benign work of acting as the

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1. *Bodhimaṇḍasamīpamhi āto Brāhmaṇa-mānava |
Vijjāsippakalāvedī tisu Vedesu pāragū ||
parivātteṇ sampuṇṇapadaṃ rattim Patañjali-mataṃ ||*
 2. *Vinaya Mahāvagga, 1, 2.*

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guardian angel to Dharmēśa-Dharmēśvara, the Buddha transformed.¹

The protracted law-suit fought between the present Śaiva Mahanth of Bodh-Gayā and the Anagarika Dharmapala of the Mahābodhi Society is popularly known as a case between the Hindus and the Buddhists for the ownership of the Bodh-Gayā temple and its sacred area. The Mahanth's claim to ownership, which the court of law has in some sense upheld, is said to have been based on "some *sanads*, or grants, given to his predecessors in the 16th or 17th century A.D. by one of the Mughal emperors, either Akbar, Jahangir or Shah Jahan." Without entering here into the merits of the case which has been a cause of much chagrin of feelings to the Buddhist world we may maintain that the Buddhist leader would have pressed a wrong issue if he had instituted a title-suit at the first instance for the possession of the shrine, the apple of contention. If *de facto* possession be the main incident of the law of real property, it could not be denied that the Mahanth was in actual possession of the shrine at least in the sense that it was situated within his undisputed jurisdiction and as such he could not but appear as a hereditary custodian of the towering temple with the sanctuaries around from a date when there were no Buddhists in the locality or anywhere else in India proper to take care of it. The first decision of the court of law has indeed allowed the Śaiva Mahanth to enjoy the fetish of legal ownership over the site of the greatest known Buddhist shrine in India, and has even recognised his claim to act as its *sebayat* or beneficiary, investing him with the right of regular worship within its holy precincts. But it has not at the same time debarred the Buddhists from the right of the entering into the sacred area and conducting worship in their own approved ways.

1. Maheśvara-devaputra of the *Lalita-vistara* is honoured in two of the Barhut Jātaka labels by the designation *Arahaguta devaputa* (*Arhadgupta devaputra*).—Barua and Saha's *Barhut Inscriptions*.

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In point of fact, this decision, interesting in itself, coupled with the provisions of the Government of India Act for the preservation of ancient monuments India, has served just to push the question of ownership into the background and bring the question of control to the forefront. Neither the Śaiva Mahanth, the acclaimed owner of the holy site and *sebayat* of the temple, nor the Buddhists of the world who are tormented with chagrin of feelings that the ownership does not formally belong to them, possess any longer the right of making structural additions and alterations within the shrine itself or its compound, removing anything of antiquity from the sacred area, or preventing each other from performing religious rites and paying worship in the approved ways of each. One of the responsible officers deputed by the Public Works Department to act in behalf of the Department of Archæology remains placed in charge of the great temple and all other ancient monuments to be found within its wide surroundings. Just as at the lower end of the sacred area a passer-by has to turn aside to mark the imposing sight of the high wall surrounding the impregnable citadel of the Śaiva Mahanth serving as a Brahmanical monastery, so walking higher up his eyes are sure to be pleased to get a sense of relief at the sight of the open doors of the welcoming Buddhist rest-house built in recent times under the auspices of the Mahābodhi Society, while close by on his right stands, half hidden from view, the quarter of the Public Works Department officer who is really vested with the power of control. The rest-house prominently stands overlooking the towering temple and the entire site remains open, day and night, to all pilgrims, official visitors and sight-seers. While certain employees of the Śaiva Mahanth lie in wait to catch hold of some of the credulous Hindu pilgrims, decoy them into some dark recesses tempting them with the rare sight of the figure of the five Pāṇḍava brothers and other unimportant Hindu divinities, and sluggishly proceed

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to delude them into the belief that the shrine is a Hindu one, the trained guides appearing prominent with the badge and livery of the Department of Archæology take the inquisitive visitors and sight-seers round the temple drawing their attention to all lingering antiquities of importance and filling their hearts with overwhelming awe at the sight of the undying act of Buddhist devotional piety. Though the question of ownership has thus been thrown into the background and the power of control virtually rests with certain departments of the Government, strangely enough, the apple of contention continues as before to trouble the two worlds, Hindu and Buddhist. And sad it is to find that the leaders of these two communities have hitherto failed to set the remaining question of approved modes of rites and worship at rest by forming a committee of experts from both the sections of people to determine the modes that would be prejudicial to none !

The case of the Mahanth of Bodh-Gayā, even as it stands to-day, gives rise to these two important issues, each calling for a definite opinion from the impartial historian : (1) Whether or not, the Mahanth as the acknowledged head of a sect of the Śaivas or worshippers of Maheśvara, who have permanently settled down in Bodh-Gayā, can claim to act as a hereditary custodian of the Bodh-Gayā temple and its sacred area ; and (2) whether or not, the Mahanth as a recognised head of the Hindu community can legitimately claim the right of worship of the Buddha-image, the Bo-tree as well as the Hindu divinities in the sacred area of Mahābodhi in his own approved ways.

As for the first issue, we have already noted that a time came when in the Buddhist legend itself, the Śaiva Brahmanical deity Maheśvara was entrusted with the benign work of acting as the guardian angel to the Buddha. The testimony of Hwen Thsang clearly proves that as early as the 7th century A D. the Buddhists themselves freely recognised the very temple in

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dispute as a magnificent erection of the devotional piety of a Śaivite Brahmin who undertook the costly work under inspiration from no other deity than Maheśvara, the Lord of Mt. Kailāsa. The belief then current among the Buddhists of Bodh-Gayā indeed was that when Maheśvara, the supreme deity of the Śaivas, generously inspired his Brahmin votary to erect the great shrine to the Buddha, he inspired also the younger brother of this Brahmin to excavate the tank, the *Buddha-pokhar*, on the south side of the temple. If we can rely upon the testimony of the great Chinese pilgrim, the life-like image of the Buddha which he found enshrined in the main sanctuary of the temple at the time of his visit was the wonderful handiwork of a skilled Brahmin artist employed by the builder of the temple. If the two Brahmin brothers had afterwards become votaries of the Buddha, for that, too, the credit is due at the first instance to Śiva-Maheśvara, the Brahmanical deity ungrudgingly rendering distinct service to the Buddha.¹ The quote Hwen Thsang in his own words :²

“On the site of the present *vihāra* Aśoka-rāja at first built a small *vihāra* (shrine). Afterwards there was a Brahman who reconstructed it on a large scale. At first this Brahman was not a believer in the law of Buddha, and sacrificed to Maheśvara. Having heard that this heavenly spirit (god) dwelt in the Snowy Mountains, he forthwith went there with his

1. So long as the fact remains that the Śaivite Brahmin erected the temple to the Buddha for the fulfilment of a worldly desire, namely, the securing of the post of minister to a reigning monarch, the question as to whether he commenced the pious work as a lay worshipper of Siva or as a lay worshipper of the Buddha is immaterial. A Hindu openly professing to be a devotee of Siva or of Brahmā or of Viṣṇu may proceed to make a religious offering even in honour of a Muhammadan saint or Fakir in all sincerity of heart for the fulfilment of a worldly desire, say, for having the birth of a male child in the family, without ceasing thereby to be a Hindu.

2. Beal's *Buddhist Records*, Vol. II, p. 119.

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younger brother to seek by prayer (his wishes). The Deva said, those who pray should aim to acquire some extensive religious merit. If you who pray have not this ground (of merit), then neither can I grant what you pray for.'

The Brahman said, 'What meritorious work can I set about to enable me to obtain my desire ?'

The god said, 'If you wish to plant a superior root (growth) of merit, then seek a superior field (in which to acquire it). The *Bodhi-tree* is the place for attaining the fruit of a Buddha. You should straightway return there and by the *Bodhi tree* erect a large *vihāra* and excavate a large tank, and devote all kinds of religious offering (to the service). You will then surely obtain your wishes.' "

"The Brahmans having received the divine communication, conceived a believing heart, and they both returned to the place. The elder brother built the *vihāra*, the younger excavated the tank, and then they prepared large religious offerings, and sought with diligence their heart's desire. The result followed at once. The Brahman became the great minister of the king. He devoted his emoluments to the work of charity. Having built the *vihāra* he invited the most skilful artists to make a figure (likeness) of Tathāgata when he first reached the condition of Buddha. Years and months passed without result ; no one answered the appeal. At length there was a Brahman who came and addressed the congregation thus : I will thoroughly execute the excellent figure of Tathāgata."

King Śaśāṅka of Bengal, the hated rival of the Pushpabhūti royal family and blackmailed in the court-history of Kanauj as the base assassinator of King Rājyavardhana, the elder brother and predecessor of Harsha, is made to appear in the pages of the Si-yu-ki of Hwen Thsang, the Chinese pilgrim and Buddhist priest, as the formidable enemy of Buddhism. The cutting down of the sacred Bo-tree is mentioned in bold letters

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as the very first heinous act of vandalism on the part of wicked Śāśāṅka, which he intended to consummate by the destruction of the main Buddha-image of the great Buddhist shrine at Bodh-Gayā. How far the blackening of the character of Śāśāṅka by Hwen Thsang was due to the prejudice which the Maukhari court naturally tried to create in the mind of the inquisitive but credulous Buddhist pilgrim and foreign traveller, entertained as its most distinguished guest, is still a problem for the sober historian to solve. Suspicion begins to grow and gain in strength on this point as we find that after the sword had failed to sufficiently retaliate the wrongs done to the Maukhari family by the artful rival from Bengal, the pen of the court-poet Bāṇa was employed to feed fat the ancient grudge. The spirit which enacted this court-record would only find its fulfilment in duping an eminent foreign agent with unique attention, honour and courtesy to act as a very powerful agent, though unconsciously, for broadcasting the stigma it sought to attach to the hated name. It may appear from the procedure followed by the Maukhari court that it did not let off this agent to do its work before it had succeeded in creating these two delusive impressions : (1) that King Harsha was a fervent Buddhist although still paying the customary homage to the Maheśvara, and (2) that, on the other hand, wicked Śāśāṅka of the far east proved himself only to be a fanatical desecrator of Buddhism in the holiest of its shrines while madly acting as an avowed champion of the cause of Lord Maheśvara.

We have already cast our doubt over Hwen Thsang's account relating to the attempt of Śāśāṅka to destroy the Bo-tree by cutting it down. Now with regard to the remaining portion of replacement of the Buddha-image by a figure of Maheśvara in the main sanctuary of the great temple of Bodh-Gayā, we may reasonably maintain that the palpable self-contradiction, inherent in it, alone suffices to indicate that

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it is not exactly the gospel truth. It will be worth while to reproduce here the words of Chinese pilgrim to establish our contention.

“Śaśāṅka-rāja having cut down the Bodhi-tree wished to destroy this image (the figure of Tathāgata enshrined in the great temple); but having seen its loving features, his mind had no rest or determination, and he returned with his retinue homewards. On his way he said to one of his officers, ‘We must remove that statue of Tathāgata and place there a figure of Maheśvara.’

The officer, having received the order, was taken by fear, and, sighing, said, ‘If I destroy the figure of Tathāgata, then during successive *Kalpas* I shall reap misfortune. If I disobey the king, he will put me to a cruel death and destroy my family; in either case, whether I obey or disobey, such will be the consequences; what, then, shall I do?’

On this he called to his presence a man with a believing heart (*i.e.*, a believer in Buddha) to help him, and sent him to build up across the chamber and before the figure of Buddha a wall of brick. The man, from a feeling of shame at the darkness, placed a burning lump (with the concealed figure); then on the interposing wall he drew a figure of Maheśvara-deva. The work being finished, he reported the matter. The king hearing it, was seized with fear; his body produced sores and his flesh rotted off, and after a short while he died. Then the officer quickly ordered the intervening wall to be pulled down again, when, although several days had elapsed, the lamp was still found to be burning.”¹

From this account, it does not certainly appear that Śaśāṅka, the decried royal promoter of the Śaiva cause, was either a religious fanatic or a vandal, but rather as one on whose mind the very sight of the lovely figure of the Buddha, the lasting work of fame of a Brahmin artist enshrined as the

1. Beal's *Buddhist Records*, Vol. II, pp. 121-122.

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greatest object of veneration in the temple erected by a Śaiva Brahmin, produced the deepest impression. It seems that nothing would be more distant from his intention than the destruction of such an awe-inspiring image. The account itself clearly shows that his mind was so tenderly disposed then that even a passing thought of this kind would be strong enough to fill it with fear and trepidation of heart. It would be simply a misreading of fact to take the account to mean that the king of Bengal marched with his troops and transports to Bodh-Gayā with the sole objects of converting the Buddhist shrine into a Śaiva one. The impression which it creates rather is that when he had halted at Bodh-Gayā on his way back to his capital after having carried out a campaign in the kingdom of Magadha or farther west, he eventually visited the recently built famous shrine. A sealmatrix of Śaśāṅka found on Rhotasgarh¹ may be taken to establish that he was marching by the highway of which we have a familiar description in the Mahāvastu and the Lalita-vistara.

Even if we take Hwen Thsang at his own word, the king's command to his officer was not to destroy the Buddha-image but just to "remove that statue and place there a figure of Maheśvara." How his officer could construe the simple and unambiguous words of the king to mean destruction is something beyond our conjecture. The account proceeds further to narrate that the impending calamity was averted by the officer by an ingenuous plan of seeking the aid of a pious Buddhist devotee to keep the Buddha-image concealed by a brick-wall erected across the chamber with a figure of Maheśvara drawn upon it. This ingenuous plan would, however, prove to be a very poor device if the Śaiva king were, as alleged, bent upon the work of destruction. Whatever might have been the import of the king's command, it transpires that it was

1. Fleet's *Corpus Inscriptionum*, Vol. III, p. 284. The inscription reads *Sri-mahā sāmanta Saśāṅkadevasya*.

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anything but the destruction of the Buddha-image. The task was anyhow left to be executed by a pious Buddhist devotee, and when it was executed, the figure of Maheśvara was assigned a place nowhere else but on the covering wall as if to make it play the humble role of a guardian angel of the Buddhist sanctuary. We cannot reasonably interpret the whole affair as tremendously gratifying to the Śaiva spirit for aggrandisement.

If, as it seems, Śaivism became aggressive from the 5th or the 6th century A.D., or even from a still earlier date, under the strong support of such a powerful king of northern India as Śaśāṅka, it must be conceded that it had tried to make its supremacy felt not only at Bodh-Gayā but over the entire region of Gayā. Viewed in its true historical perspective, this work of aggression on the part of Maheśvara was to gain an ascendancy over his rivals Śakra and Brahmā, and so far as the Buddhist shrine of Bodh-Gayā is concerned, he sought to step into the place of these earlier guardian deities, and never to usurp the eminence of the Buddha.

Proceeding further down to the earlier period of the reign of the Pāla kings of Bengal, say, "towards the close of the 9th, or the beginning of the 10th century A.D." which was about to see the full blossoming of the budding architectural and sculptural features of the life of the Gayā reign as a whole, we happily chance upon an important epigraphic record of one Keśava, son of Ujjvala, the stone-cutter, clearly showing how the erudite Śaivite Brahmin scholars and their successors were living at Bodh-Gayā side by side with the Buddhists of the place without any feeling of enmity or discord. The record goes so far as to indicate that a devout Hindu was freely allowed to set up a stone-figure of Śiva-Brahmā (Mahādevaś-chaturmukha) within the temple of Buddha-Dharmēśa for the benefit of the Śaivite Brahmin scholars of the locality. As Dr. Bloch informs us, the stone containing this inscription, in nine lines,

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is now exhibited in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, and it shows three figures, Sūrya, Śiva and Viṣṇu, "all of very crude fabric," Sūrya to the proper right, Śiva in the centre and Viṣṇu to the proper left." The inscription itself occupies a space just beside the figure of Viṣṇu. The enshrined object of worship is a Śivaliṅga of the type which is "exceedingly common in North-Eastern India" and is "still called *Chaumukh Mahādev* as in the inscription,"—a phallic symbol of Maheśvara with four faces, which may be looked upon as an adaptation of "the well-known images of Brahmā, by the Śaivas." The enshrinement of such a peculiar type of Śivaliṅga at Bodh-Gayā evidently resulted from the same process of synthesis or compromise between Śaivism and Brahmanism which found expression in the figure of Prapitāmaheśvara, a Śivaliṅga showing the face of Brahmā, installed at Gayā proper during the Pāla period. The inscription which is dated in the 26th year of the reign of Dharmapāla reads as below :—

a. Text¹

- L1—*Oṃ (||) Dharmeś-āyatane ramye*
Ujvalasya śilābhidaḥ || Ke—
- L2—*śav-ākhyena putreṇa Mahādevaś—*
chaturmukhaḥ || Śreshṭha—
- L3—*me——Mahābodhi-nivāsinām ||*
Snātakā—
- L4—*(nām) prajāyās-tu śreyase*
pratishṭhāpitaḥ || Pushkari—
- L5—*nyatyagādhā cha pūtā Viṣṇupadī-samā ||*
Tritaye—
- L6—*na sahasreṇa drammanām khānitā satām ||*
- L7—*Shadvimśatitame varshe Dharmapāle mahībhūji ||*
- L8—*Bhādra-va (ba)hula-pañchamyām sunor Bhāska—*
- L9—*rasyāhani || Oṃ (||).*

1. Based on Bloch's *Notes on Bodh-Gayā* in *Archæological Survey of India*, Annual Report for 1908-9, p. 150.

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b. Translation

[Commenced with Oṅkāra, the Vedic praṇava]

(A figure of) *Chaumukh-Mahādev*¹ has been installed in the pleasant abode (temple) of (Buddha), the Lord of Righteousness,² by Keśava, son of Ujjvala, the stone-cutter, for the benefit of the descendants of *snātakas* (the erudite Śaivite Brahmin scholars) residing at Mahābodhi (Bodh-Gayā). A tank, of exceeding depth and holy like the river Ganges³ has been excavated for these good people at the cost of three thousand *drachmas*. (Written) in the 26th year of the reign of Dharmapāla, the enjoyer of the earth, on the 5th day of the dark fortnight of Bhādrapada, on a Saturday:

[Concluded with Oṅkāra]

We have already tried to show that after the Pālas and during the reign of the later Sena kings of Bengal Buddhism fell into decay in the region of Gayā and even at Bodh-Gayā, due apparently to the lack of active support, and that the early history of Bodh-Gayā from the Buddhist point of view came to be closed with certain votive erections and pious works done under the auspices and during the reign of king Aśokavalla of Sapādalaksha in the 13th century A.D. In consequence of the deluge caused by the onrush of Islamic forces and a sweeping destruction of the sanctuaries in the Holy Land, the Buddhists permanently lost their foothold at Bodh-Gayā as at all other important centres of their influence in India proper. The later Gayā-māhātmya, composed in the 13th or the 14th century A.D., reveals a changed state of

1. A *liṅga* with four faces, being a phallic device, representing a figure of Śiva and the four-faced Brahmā.

2. *Dharmēśa* or *Dharmēśvara* is a designation of the Buddha-image worshipped at Bodh-Gayā.

3. Bloch has missed altogether the sense of the word *Vishṇupadī* as used in this inscription when he takes it to mean the footprint of Vishṇu. The word *Vishṇupadī* signifies in Sanskrit nothing but the river Ganges.

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things when the Brahmins of Gayā brought misery on their life by going out of their jurisdiction to officiate as priests at the worship of the Buddha-Dharmēśvara at Bodh-Gayā.

Thus we may dispose of the first issue with the observation that from the earliest times till now the Śāivite Brahmanis have neither lost nor waived their coveted right of acting Gayā.

And as for the second issue concerning the right of the Hindus to worship the Buddha-image Dharmēśvara, the Bo-tree *Aśvattha* in the Bodh-Gayā temple and its sacred area, we have noticed that as far back as the Kushāṇa age it is enjoined in the Epic version of the earlier Eulogium that every pious Hindu visiting Gayā should make it a point to go also to Dharmaprastha or Bodh-Gayā and have a sacred touch of the Buddha-image of the place. The later Eulogium in the Purāṇas enjoins in the same manner that every Hindu pilgrim to the Gayā region desiring to release the departed spirits of his ancestors must visit also Bodh-Gayā to pay his respectful homage to the Buddha-image Dharmēśvara as well as the Bo-tree *Aśvattha*, and prescribes a set formula of prayer to be addressed to the Bo which happens to be no other tree than an Indian Fig :

Namas te Aśvattha-rājāya Brahmā-Vishṇu-S'ivātmane |
Bodhi-drumāya karttṛṇām pitṛṇām tāraṇāya cha || :
Ye asmat kule mātṛivamśe bāndhavā durgatiṃ gatāḥ |
tvad darśanāt sparśanāch cha svargatiṃ yāntu śāśvatim ||
Ṛṇatrayaṃ mayā dattaṃ Gayām āgatya Vṛiksharāt |
tvad prasādān mahāpāpād vimukto' haṃ bhavārṇavāt ||

“I bend my head low in obeisance to thee, O Aśvattha, the lord of trees, standing as living form of the Holy Triad of our pantheon with thy high fame as Bodhi-druma, the renowned Bo, for the release of the dead forefathers, the makers of the line of descent.

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Those in my direct line and those connected with the mother's line, the kith and kin who have gone into the state of woe, may they, from thy holy sight and touch, pass into an eternal state of heavenly life.

The triple debts have I paid, O king of trees, by coming on pilgrimage to Gayā. By thy benign grace am I rescued from the awful ocean of existence and liberated from deadly sins."

Thus this set formula of prayer or hymn of praise sets forth the Hindu purpose in pilgrimaging to Bodh-Gayā, and paying homage to the Buddha-image Dharmesvara and the Bo-tree *Āśvattha* which is no other than the securing of release of the dead forefathers from the state of woe, the payment of triple debts and the liberation from all dreadful sins. The same is, no doubt, the inner motive which guides the pious action of even the Buddhist pilgrims from some part of India of our time. We must humbly differ from Dr. Bloch¹ when he suggests on the strength of the above hymn that the Hindus do not pay homage to the Fig tree which stands as the living symbol of Buddhism but to a second Pipal tree which stands to the north of the Bodh-Gayā temple and is larger and finer than the Bo. The wording of invocation hardly leaves any room for doubt that the Pipal forming the object of veneration is none other than the Bo-tree *Āśvattha*.

Considered in the light of these historical evidences, on the second issue, too, we have to pronounce our judgement in favour of the Mahanth of Bodh-Gayā and freely recognise his right of worship at the Buddhist shrine in accordance with the traditional Hindu mode.

But the question yet remains : Have the Buddhists themselves ever disputed the Hindu right of worship at their shrines ? So far as our information goes, the Buddhists

1. Bloch's *Notes on Bodh-Gayā* in *Archæological Survey Report*, 1908-09, p. 152.

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have never and nowhere prevented the Hindus from either visiting or conducting worship at their shrines. As a matter of fact, they have no case against the Hindu devotees coming to a Buddhist shrine for worship. Their shrines remain open to all for worship, without any distinction of caste and creed. The inscription of Keśava, engraved during the reign of Dharmapāla, clearly proves that the Buddhists were liberal and tolerant enough even to allow a Hindu to instal a figure of his deities, Śiva and Brahmā, in their temple at Bodh-Gayā (Dharmēśa-āyatane) for the benefit of the resident Śaivite Brahmins. Aśokavalla, the last known powerful Buddhist king of India who made structural additions in the sacred area of the Bodh-Gayā temple, did not hesitate to engage an erudite Brahmin scholar and poet to compose the text of the votive record and royal panegyric in commemoration of his pious deed.¹ Though avowedly a Buddhist king who toiled like 'a bee on the pollen of the lotus-feet of Jinendra' (*Jinendra-charraṇā-ravinda-makaranda-madhukara*),² Aśokavalla rebuilt in his dominion a fallen temple of Śiva and considered it to be an act worthy of great men (*mahatām yuktam satānām puṃsaḥ*),³ thereby upholding the ancient tradition of the Buddhist king Aśoka of Magadha and the Jaina king Khāravēla of Kalinga, particularly that of the latter represented as 'a repairer of all temples of the gods (*savadevāyatana-saṃkāra-kāraka*).⁴ Read the votive record and eulogy of Aśokavalla composed for him by the erudite Brahmin scholar and poet in a great hurry (*praśastiṃ drutataram akarot*) and you will be at once convinced of the folly of the unwise step on the part of the Buddhist king to allow the Brahmin composer a free hand

1. *IA*, Vol. X, An inscription at Gayā, p. 314.

2. *IA*, Vol. X, p. 346.

3. *IA*, Vol. X, pp. 345-346.

4. Barua's *Old Brāhmī Inscriptions in the Udayagiri and Khaṇḍagiri Caves*, I. 16.

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in the matter. The inevitable result has been that he has produced a Buddhist record written entirely in his own style and unlike all other known records of the Buddhists in tone and effect :

*Om namo Buddhāya, nam o dharmāya śarmane, namaḥ
Saṅghāya siṃhāya laṅghanāya bhavāmbudheḥ.*

“Obeisance to Buddha—the pure ! obisance to Dharma—the bliss ! obisance to the Saṅgha—the lion ! for the crossing of the world-ocean.”

Such would never have been the precise wording of the invocation, if the document had been composed by a person imbued with Buddhist tradition. And what is worse, in going to describe the daily worship of the Buddha in the temple at Bodh-Gayā in the light of that of some of the Brahmanical deities in a Hindu temple, he has unknowingly suggested reflection on the character of the whole of Buddhism of his age :

*Pūjāḥ pūjyatamasya pañchamagatairbbādyais—
trisaṇḍhyaṃ sadā Rambhā-sannibha—
Bhāvinibhir abhito Cheṭibhir (a) tyadbhutaṃ
Nṛityantibhir anaṅga-laṅgima-gatairggitā-
dir aṅgair imā yasmāt santi hi
śāsane bhagavataḥ satkāra-visphāritaḥ.*

“Since in the religion of Bhagavat, worship is here offered to the most worshipful, always three times a day, by means of instrumental music in the highest key, together with Rambhā like Bhāvinis and Cheṭis dancing round wonderfully with mirth in singing and so on, in a way appertaining to the unions of Anaṅga (Kāma)—(worship) increased by hospitable entertainments.”¹

How a thoughtless poetical description like this, taken uncritically, may mislead its reader will be evident from the

1. A, Vol. X, pp. 342-344.

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following comment of a scholar like Dr. Bhagawanlal Indraji :—

“Bhāvinis are the dancing and singing girls attached to temples. Chetis are maid-servants belonging to temples who perform certain menial services as well as join with the Bhāvinis in singing. Such women are still employed in the Brahmanical temples of Southern and Eastern India. They are of very loose morals ; and their employment in Buddhist temples of the 12th century is an indication of its corruption.”¹

If the worship of the Buddha-image and the Bo-tree be left entirely in the hands of the Hindus, it is likely to be utilised to the end of time for the sordid business of releasing the disembodied spirits from a state of woe or obtaining an easy passport to heavenly worlds. It can never be expected to cast off the fear of the ghosts and consciously rise up to the sublimity of Buddhist feeling of pure joy of merit and delight in making a free offering of that joy to the parents, to begin with, to the teachers and preceptors, nay for the uplift of all sentient beings.² A Hindu pilgrim can never be expected, we dare say, to cherish the *Bodhimaṇḍa* as the very centre of the cultured universe, or to be actuated by that earnest longing for the holy sight, or to be prepared to undertake a long and perilous journey through ‘dust and desert’, or to be so devoutly inspired by the holy sight as to give a felicitous expression to his feelings in the manner of Chinese pilgrims.

Whatever be the present legal position of the Śaiva Mahanth or the historian’s verdict in his favour, so long as the name Mahābodhi or Bodh-Gayā designates the sacred site, it is humanly impossible to deny that the great shrine belongs

1. *IA*, Vol. X, p. 344 fn.

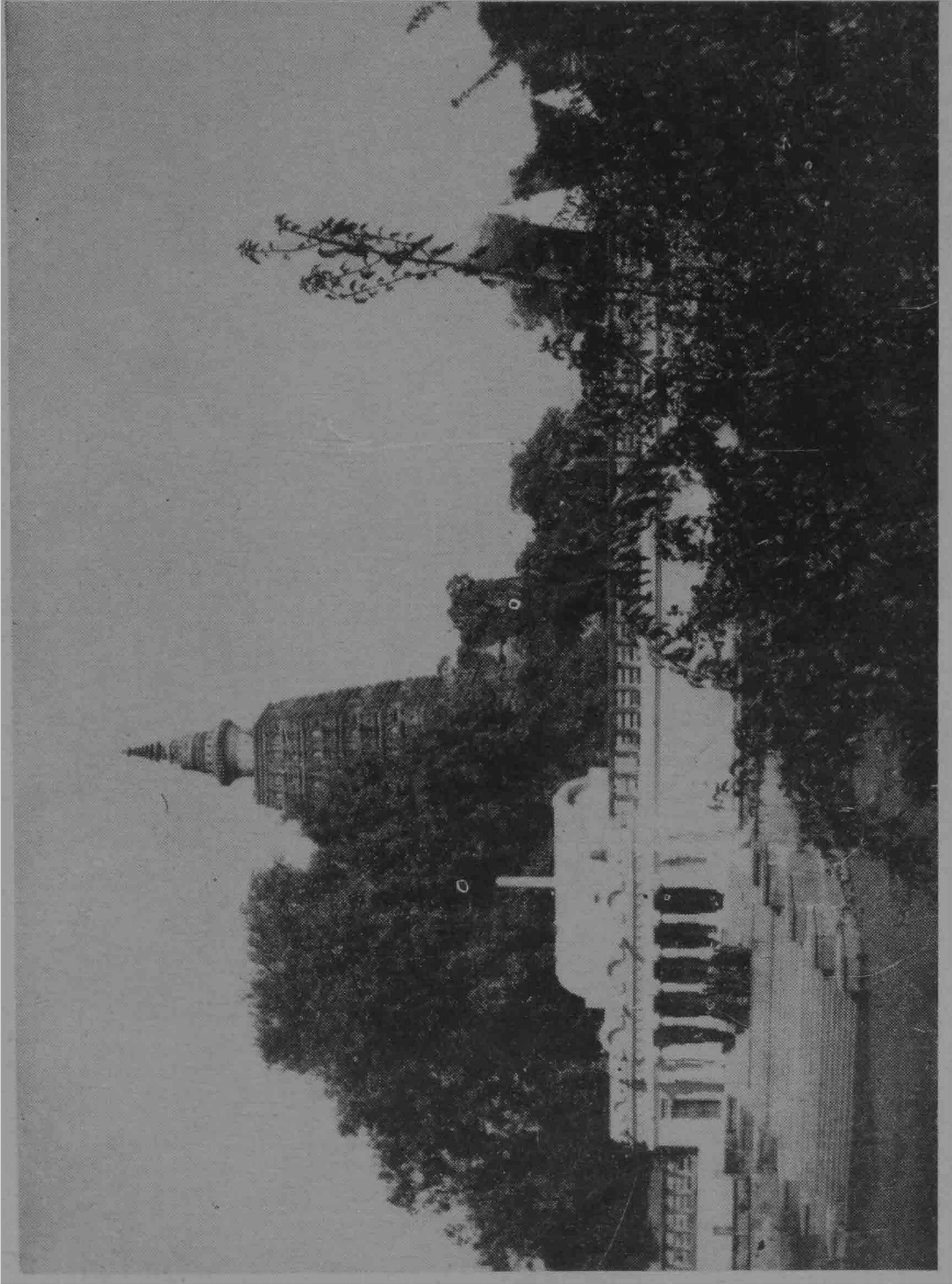
2. The sentiment has found expression in the Buddhist votive records in such a phraseology as :

Yad atra puṇyam tad bhavatvāchāryopādhyāya-mātāpitṛi:pūrvāṅgam kṛitvā sakala-sattva rāśer anuttara-jnāno-phalvaptaya iti.

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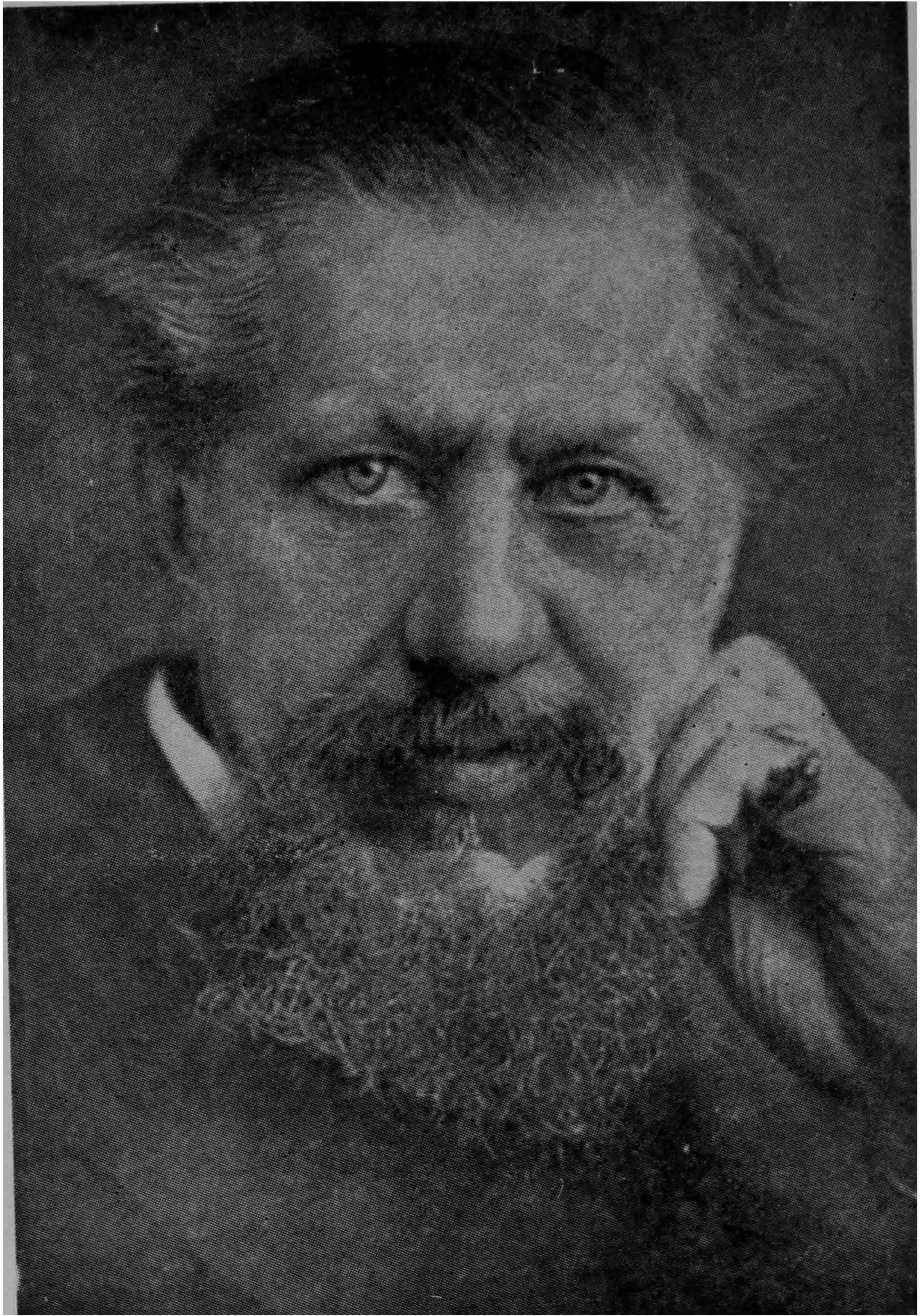
to the Buddhists. From a purely human point of view, the Mahanth appears guilty of these two charges : (1) that by setting up a bug-bear of legal ownership he has unnecessarily checked a free and spontaneous expression of Buddhist religious feeling and piety which is so essential for the resuscitation of the lost glory of the place ; and (2) that by his callous apathy towards the shrine he has deviated from the ancient tradition of generosity and by enforcing the Hindu mode of worship and wounding the religious susceptibilities of millions of people he has deliberately acted contrary to the noble principle of Hindu toleration. He is not only unsympathetic but antipathetic. If his ownership be a nominal one, he should frankly speak it out, and if a real one, he should try to justify it by effecting a palpable improvement of things in and out. Not to speak it out is to be guilty of hypocrisy, and not to justify it is to be guilty of culpable negligence of duty amounting to irreligion. The onus of proof lies upon him and him alone. At all events, the Hindu verdict in the story of the curse of Brahmā, as we find it in the *Gayā-māhātmya*, is that the Brahmins of Gayā had not done the right thing to go out of their jurisdiction and conduct the worship of the Buddha at Bodh-Gayā, lured by lucre.

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Lotus Tank i.e. Kamal Sarovar

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SIR EDWIN ARNOLD

APPENDIX THREE

EAST AND WEST—A SPLENDID OPPORTUNITY

by

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD

M.A., K.C.I.E., C.S.I.

I would today, in these columns (*Daily Telegraph*) respectfully invite the vast and intelligent British public to forget, for a little while, home weather and home politics, and to accompany me, in fancy, to a sunny corner of their empire, where there centres a far more important question, for the future of religion and civilisation, than any relating to parish councils or parish pumps. I will by their leave, tell them of beautiful scenes under warm skies ; of a temple fairer and more stately as well more ancient, than almost any existing fane ; and will also show them how the Indian Government of Her Majesty, supported by their own enlightened opinion, might, through an easy and blameless act of administrative sympathy, render four hundred millions of Asiatics for ever the friends and grateful admirers of England.

We will spread the magic carpet of Kamar-az-zaman, told of in the "*Arabian Nights*" and pass at once upon it to Patna, the busy city beside the Ganges, some 350 miles by rail from Calcutta. The closing days of March are hot there, and the river glitters as if it were molten gold under the fiery sun. We will not stay accordingly to inspect the indigo factories ; or to visit the wonderful Golah, where 140,000 tons of rice can be laid up ; nor the government opium factory where enough of that most useful and benign drug is stored to put the whole world to sleep. We will take train from Bankipore for Gaya,

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only fiftyseven miles away, and having rested in that town for the night, we shall have ordered carriages to be ready at break of day to convey us four koss further—some seven or eight miles—into the hills which hereabout just across the valley of the Ganges.

I said you should see beautiful scenery, and surely this is such. The road, broad and well made, runs between the Gaya Hills on the right and the bright slow-stealing stream of the ancient Nilajan on the left. The mountain flanks are covered with cactus, wild indigo, and korinda bushes, showing a little temple perched upon almost every peak ; while down on the flat, and especially along the sandy levels bordering the river green stretches of palmgroves are interspered with sal and tamarind trees, the undergrowth being long tiger grass and the common but ever-lovely ground palmetto, *chamoerops humilis*. The air, deliciously cool before the sun rises, is full of birds abroad for food—crows, parakeets, mynas, the blue-winged rollers, the green and scarlet ‘hammer-smiths’ black and white kingfishers, bee birds, bronze and emerald, with graceful silvery egrets stalking among the cattle. Later on, when the sky grows warmer, you will see clouds of lovely butterflies among the flowers of the orchids and poisonous datura, with sun-birds and dragon-flies skimming along the blue and pink lotuses in the pools. The people whom we meet upon the road are dark-skinned patient peasants going with their products to Gaya and Bankipur, while those whom we shall overtake will be mainly pilgrims of the day wending their way to the immeasurably holy place towards which we also are bound. For, see ! they also at the fifty miles quit the main track, and turning to the left by a less excellent but still carriageable road, which winds under the now welcome shade of the jak-trees and mangoes, are making for that most sacred spot of all hallowed places in Asia, towards which our own feet and thoughts are bound.

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It is here ! Beyond the little village of mud huts and the open space where dogs and children and cattle bask together in the dust, beyond the Mahunt's College, and yonder great fig tree which has split with its roots that wall, twelve feet thick, built before England had ever been discovered, nestles an abrupt hollow in the surface, symmetrical and well-kept, and full of stone images, terraces, balustrades, and shrines. It is oblong—as big, perhaps, altogether as Russel Square, and surrounded on its edges by small houses and buildings. From one extremity of the hallowed area rises with great beauty and majesty a temple of very special style and design. The plinth of the temple is square, with a projecting porch, and on the top of this soars to the sky a pyramidical tower of nine storeys, profusely embellished with niches, string courses, and mouldings, while from the truncated summit of this an upper pinnacle rears itself, of graceful form, topped by a gold finial, representing the amalaka fruit. A smaller pyramidical tower stands at each corner of the roof of the lower structure, and there is a broad walk round the base of the Great Tower. Over the richly worked porch which fronts the east a triangular aperture is pierced, whereby the morning glory of the sun may fall through upon the gilded image seated in the sanctuary within. That image, you will perceive, is—or was—of Buddha, and this temple is the holiest and most famous, as well as nearly the sole surviving shrine of all those eightyfour thousand fanes erected to the Great Teacher by King Asoka, two hundred and eighteen years after the Lord Buddha's Nirvana.

Yet more sacred even than the cool, dark sanctuary into which we look, to see the sunbeams kissing the mild countenance of the Golden Buddha inside ; more intensely moving to the Buddhists who come hither, and richer with associations of unspeakable interest and honour than King Asoka's stately temple, or even those stone railings carved with mermaids, crocodiles, elephants, and lotus flowers, which the king himself

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commanded, and which still surround the shrine, is yonder square platform of stone, about a yard high from the ground, out of which a tree is growing. That is the Maha Bodhi tree—in the opinion of superstitious votaries the very original Bodhi tree, miraculously preserved—but more rationally that which replaces and represents the ever memorable shade under which the inspired Siddhartha sat at the moment when he attained Sambodhi, the supreme light of his gentle wisdom. It is a fig tree—of the *ficus Indica* species—with the well known long glossy leaves. Its stem is covered with patches of gold leaf, and its boughs are hung with streamers of white and coloured cloth, while at its root—frequently watered by the pious with sandal oil and attar of roses—will probably be seen sitting a Brahman priest of the Saivite sect intoning mantras. You will hear him say, “Gaya ! Gaya Sirsa, Bodhi Gaya”, for though he is praying on behalf of Maharatta pilgrims, and does not know or care for Buddha, yet ancient formulas cling to the spot and to his lips. And, beyond all doubt, this is the spot most dear and divine, and precious beyond every other place on earth, to all the four hundred million Buddhists in China, Japan, Mongolia, Assam, Cambodia, Siam, Burma, Arakan, Nepal, Tibet and Ceylon. This is the authentic site, and this the successor-tree, by many unbrokenly cherished generations of that about which my “*Light of Asia*” says :

“Then he arose, made strong by the pure meat,
And bent his footsteps where a great Tree grew,
The Bodhi tree (thenceforward in all years
Never to fade, and ever to be kept
In homage of the world), beneath whose leaves
It was ordained the Truth should come to Buddha,
Which now the Master knew ; wherefore he went
With measured pace, steadfast, majestic,
Unto the Tree of Wisdom, Oh, ye worlds
Rejoice ! Our Lord wended unto the Tree !”

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There is no doubt, in fact, of the authenticity of the spot. The four most sacred places of Buddhism are Kapilavastu (now Bhuila), where Prince Siddhartha was born ; Isipatana, outside Benares, where he first preached ; Kusinara where he died ; and this site marked by the tree, whereat "in the full moon of Wesak" 2483 years ago he mentally elaborated the gentle and lofty faith with which he has civilised Asia. And of all those four, the Tree-Place here at Buddha-Gaya is the most dear and sacred to Asiatic Buddhists. Why, then, is it today in the hands of Brahman priests, who do not care about the temple, except for the credit of owning it, and for the fees which they draw ? The facts are these. Until the thirteenth century — that is, for more than 1400 years — it was exclusively used and guarded by Buddhists, but fell into decay and neglect, like other Buddhist temples, on the expulsion of Buddhism from India. Three hundred years ago a wandering Sivite ascetic visited the spot, and settled down, drawing round him gradually the beginning of what is now the College of Priests established there. So strong have they since become in ownership, that when the Bengal Government in 1880 was repairing the temple and its grounds, and begged for its embellishment from the Mahant a portion of Asoka's stone railing which he had built into his own house, the old Brahman would not give it up, and Sir Ashley Eden could not, or did not, compel the restoration.

The Buddhist world had indeed, well-nigh forgotten this hallowed and most interesting centre of their faith—the Mecca, the Jerusalem, of a million Oriental congregations—when I sojourned in Buddha-Gaya a few years ago, I was grieved to see Maharatta peasants performing "Shraddh" in such a place, and thousands of precious ancient relics of carved stone inscribed with Sanskrit lying in piles around. I asked the priest if I might have a leaf from the sacred tree.

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“Pluck as many as ever you like, sahib”, was his reply, “it is nought to us.”

Ashamed of his indifference, I took silently the three or four dark shining leaves which he pulled from the bough over his head, and carried them with me to Ceylon, having written upon each the holy Sanskrit formula. There I found them prized by the Sinhalese Buddhists with eager and passionate emotion. The leaf presented by me to the temple at Kandy, for example, was placed in a casket of precious metal and made the centre of a weekly service, and there and then it befell that, talking to the gentle and learned priests at Panadure—particularly to my dear and wise friend, Sri Weligama—I gave utterance to the suggestion that the temple and its appurtenances ought to be, and might be by amicable arrangements with the Hindoo College and by the favour of the Queen’s Government, placed in the hands of a representative committee of the Buddhist nations.

I think there never was an idea which took root and spread so far and fast as that thrown out thus to the sunny temple-court at Panadure, amid the waving taliputs. Like those tropical plants which can almost be seen to grow, the suggestion quickly became an universal aspiration, first in Ceylon and next in other Buddhist countries. I was entreated to lay the plan before the Oriental authorities, which I did. I wrote to Sir Arthur Gordon, Governor of Ceylon, in these words : “I suggest a Government Act, which would be historically just, which would win the love and gratitude of all Buddhist populations and would reflect enduring honour upon English administration. The temple and enclosure at Buddha-Gaya are, as you know, the most sacred spots in all the world for the Buddhists. But Buddha-Gaya is occupied by a college of Saivite priests, who worship Mahadeva there, and deface the shrine with emblems and rituals foreign to its nature. That shrine and the ground surrounding it remain, however, govern-

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ment property, and there would be little difficulty, after proper and friendly negotiations, in procuring the departure of the Mahunt with his priests, and the transfer of the temple and its grounds to the guardianship of Buddhists from Ceylon and elsewhere. I have consulted high authorities, among them General Cunningham, who thoroughly sympathises with the idea, and declares it entirely feasible...I apprehend that a certain sum of money might be required to facilitate the transfer of the Brahmans, and to establish the Buddhist College. In my opinion, a lakh of rupees could not be expended by any government in a more profitable manner.'

Sir Arthur, who had just been exploring Buddhist remains in Ceylon, was very well disposed to the idea. Lord Dufferin warmly received it, at Calcutta ; Lord Connemara, in Madras ; and at that time, if only the Home-Government had been more alive to a grand opportunity, it would have been easy to make satisfactory terms with the Brahmans, and to have effected the transfer of the holy place to a representative committee—at one stroke delighting and conciliating all Buddhistic Asia.

But two or three years passed by, and while the idea was spreading throughout Asia, and a large society had become established with the special purpose of acquiring the guardianship of the sacred site, the Mahunt grew more exacting in his expectations, and clung closer to the possession of the temple. The letters which I received from the East showed that the old Brahman had memorialized the government, in his alarm or avarice, and that local authorities had for quiet's sake reported adversely to the negotiation. I think the Mahunt was a good man. I had never wished any but friendly and satisfactory arrangements with him. Yet if you walked in that spot which all these scores of millions of our race love so dearly, you would observe with shame and grief in the mango groves, to the east of Lilajan, ancient statues plastered to the

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the walls of an irrigating well near the village Mucharin—identified with the “Muchalinda” tank. Stones carved with Buddha’s images are to be found used as weights to the levers for drawing water. I have seen ryots in the villages surrounding the temple using beautifully-carved blocks as steps to their huts. I have seen three feet high statues in an excellent state of preservation, buried under rubbish to the east of the Mahunt’s baradari. A few are plastered into the eastern outer wall of the garden along the bank of Lilajan ; and the Asoka pillars, the most ancient relics of the side—indeed “the most antique memorials of all India”,—which graced the temple pavement, are now used as posts of the Mahunt’s kitchen. To rectify this sad neglect, and to make the temple, what it should be, the living and learned centre of purified Buddhism, money was not, and is not, lacking. If the Home-Government had seen its way to make the Hindoo Abbot well-disposed, I could have commanded any sum which might have seemed fair and necessary. But the idea was too intelligent for the official grasp, and the golden moment went by.

Nevertheless, Asia did not abandon its new desire, and I received so many, and such pressing, communications, that I went at last to the then Indian Secretary of State, Lord Cross—always intelligent, kindly and receptive—and once more pleaded for the great restoration.

“Do you wish, Lord Cross”, I asked, “to have four hundred millions of Eastern peoples blessing your name night and day, and to be for ever remembered in Asia, like Alexander or Asoka, or Akbar the Great ?”

“God bless my soul, yes” answered the Minister ; “how is that to be done ?”

Then I repeated all the facts, and produced so happy an effect upon the Indian Minister’s mind, that he promised to consult the Council, and to write—if the idea was approved—to Lord Lansdowne. In due time the Viceroy replied that the

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idea was legitimate and beneficial, and that so long as no religious ill-feeling was aroused, and no pecuniary grant asked from the Indian Treasury, the Calcutta Government would be inclined to favour any friendly negotiations. Thus the matter stood at my last visit to the east, when I was astonished and rejoiced to find how firmly the desire of this restoration had taken root, and how enkindled with the hope of it Ceylon, Siam, Burmah, and Japan had become. The Maha-Bodhi Society, established to carry out the scheme, was constituted as follows :

MAHA-BODHI SOCIETY

Patron :

Lozang Thub-Dan-Gya-Tcho, Grand Lama of Tibet

President :

Right Rev. H. Sumangala, Pradhana Nayaka Maha Sthavira
of Ceylon

Vice Presidents :

The Ven. The Tathanabaing, Mandalay, Burmah.

Right Rev. Shaku Unsizo, Tokyo, Japan.

The Fang Tang, Yung-Ho-Kung, Peking, China.

The Ven. Vaskaduve Subhuti, P.N.M., Ceylon.

The Ven. V. Sri Sumangala, Ceylon.

Representatives :

Siam — H. R. H. Prince Chandraat Chudadhar, Bangkok.

Japan — S. Horiuchi, Esq., Indo-Buseki Kofuku Kwai,
1, Hachigo, Shiba Park, Tokyo.

Japan — The Secretary, the Society of Buddhist Affairs,
Jokojoji, Teramachi-dori, Shojo Sagaru Kioto.

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- Ceylon** — G. P. Weerasekera, Esq., Assistant Secretary, Maha-Bodhi Society, 61, Maliban Street, Colombo.
- Burmah** — MOUNG HPO MHYIN, K. S. M., Secretary, Maha-Bodhi Society, 5, Commissioner's Road, Rangoon.
- Burmah** — MOUNG HPAY, Extra Assistant Commissioner, Thayetmyo.
- Arakan** — CHANG HTOON AUNG, Advocate, Htoon Chan, B.A., B.L. Secretaries, Arakan Maha-Bodhi Society, Akyab.
- Chittagong**— KRISHNA CHANDRA CHOWDHURY, Secretary, Buddhist Aid Association, Raozan, Chittagong.
- Dharjeeling**— (India) — LAMA UGYEN GYATSHO, Tibetan Interpreter, Secretary, Maha-Bodhi Society, Darjeeling.
- Calcutta** — *The Secretary, Calcutta Maha-Bodhi Society, 20-1, Gangadhar Babu's Lane, Bowbazar, Calcutta.*
- California** — PHILANGI DASA, Editor, Buddhist Ray, Santa Cruz, California, U. S. A.
- New York**— CHARLES T. STRAUSS, 466, Broadway, New York, U. S. A.
- France** — BARON HARDEN HICKEY, Secretary, Bouddhique Propagande, Andilly par Montmorency, Seine-et-Oise, France,

All communications to be addressed to H. Dharmapala, General Secretary, Maha-Bodhi Society, 29, Baniapooker Road, Entally, Calcutta.

The purpose of the Society was thus stated :

"The site here the Divine Teacher attained supreme wisdom, now known as Buddha-Gaya, is in middle India, and to his followers there is no spot on earth more sacred than the Bodhimanda, whereon stands the Bodhi-tree—

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**"Never to fade, and ever to be kept
In homage of the world, beneath whose leaves
It was ordained the truth should come to Buddha."**

"At this hallowed spot, full of imperishable associations, it is proposed to re-establish a monastery for the residence of Bhikkhus representing the Buddhist countries of Tibet, Ceylon, China, Japan, Cambodia, Burmah, Chittagong, Nepal, Korea, and Arakan. We hope to found also a college at Buddha-Gaya for training young men of unblemished character, of whatsoever race and country, for the Buddhist Order (Sangha), on the lines of the ancient Buddhist University at Nalanda, where were taught the 'Mahayana and also works belonging to the eighteen sects' ".

"The study of Sanskrit, Pali and English will be made compulsory on all students. One or more Buddhist scholars from each of the Buddhist countries will in time be attached to the staff of teachers.

"To carry on this great and glorious work of Buddhist revival, after a torpor of seven hundred years, whence dates the destruction of Buddhism in India, the Maha-Bodhi Society has been organized and the promoters solicit sympathy and generous support all the world over."

To give some faint idea of the interest felt in this matter even among such remote communities as those of Japan, I will speak of a scene in Tokyo still vivid in my memory. Last summer, in the Japanese capital, the Buddhist High Priest, with certain of the fraternity begged me to come to the temple in Atagoshita and speak to the brethren about the Holy Places in India, and especially upon the prospects of acquiring for the Buddhist world the guardianship of the Temple of the Tree. In the cool, dark inner court of that Japanese tera the priests and their friends sat on the white mats in concentric circles, eagerly listening while I told them all about that three or four hundred miles of Indian country lying between Busti in Oudh

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and Buddha-Gaya in the Lower Provinces, which is the Holy Land of the "calm brethren of the yellow robe". I spoke of the birthplace and death-place of the Gentle Teacher, and showed them pictures which I had myself taken of the ancient building at Isipatana outside Benares. The hot day, beating upon the hillside beyond the temple garden, shone upon the scarlet azaleas and the lotus buds in the garden-lake, and rendered it warm enough, even in that vast shadowy apartment, for a constant flutter of fans while now and then a young priest from the outer circle would glide away for drinking-water. But when I came to point for them that site of the stately temple—which from its hollow beside Buddhist-tree, looks over the hill of the "Thousand Gardens," and marks the spot where the whole religious history of Asia was transformed, and its manners for ever stamped with the merciful tenderness and indestructible hopes of Buddhism—those hundreds of priests and novices sat like rows of little children lost in a fairy story. The fans were laid aside; the shaven heads were craned forward in intense desire to hear every word; old men laid their hands to their ears, and young ones leaned towards me with clasped palms, to learn all about the Tree, and the Temple, and the broken statues, and the Hindoo priests who do not care for the spirit of the place, and who ought, in a friendly way, to yield it up, on proper conditions, to Buddhist guardianship. Every man present would have given all he possessed. I think to hope towards such an end. As for their unworthy guest, they lavished upon me marks of pleasure and gratitude; they spread me out an outrageously elaborate feast table in the temple pavillion, and sent with me back to my lodgings servants carrying presents of books and boxes of beautiful Japanese silks and embroideries. Since then the High Priest writes to me thus from Tokyo :—

"After your regretted departure from Japan the Indo-Busseki Kofuku Society has not been idle, and now I am glad

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to inform you that we are trying to buy a certain piece of land near each of the sacred sites according to your kind advice to us. Mr. Dharmapala, of the Maha-Bodhi Society, is doing all he can to help us in India ; and if everything goes as intended, a certain number of Japanese monks will start for India within this year."

Thus is this new and great idea spreading, and the world will not be very much older, I think, before Buddhism by this gateway goes back to its own land, and India becomes the natural centre of Buddhistic Asia. For the moment I am sorry to say the movement has sustained a check. After a friendly correspondence in Sanskrit between the Mahant and myself, matters were looking fair for an arrangement, when—against my wish—hostile measures were commenced between the Maha-Bodhi Society and the Hindoo monks. Mr. Dharmapala, the energetic secretary, whose enthusiastic services to the cause can never be sufficiently praised, and the example, of whose generous efforts ought to make him beloved throughout Buddhistic Asia—thought proper to place in the temple a very precious gilded image of Buddha, sent to his care from Japan. The Mahant's people ejected this, not without violence, and a series of lawsuits began. We gained the favourable decision of the resident official, and of the Sudder Court ; but the High Court of Calcutta, by a judgment which I must respectfully declare erroneous and untenable, reversed the decree so that, after an expenditure of more than one hundred thousand rupees, and the bravest labours on the part of my excellent friend, Mr. Dharmapala, the policy of appealing to law has failed.

I am, however, quite certain that my own policy of appealing to Reason and Right, and of relying upon friendly negotiations with the present Hindoo tenants of the shrine, will and must eventually prevail. It is a fixed purpose of my mind that these shall prevail, and the first really enlightened Viceroy

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who takes up this question, will discern its huge political importance and assist me and my friends to obtain success. I suppose there are some people who will ask, why should the British public take any concern in such a movement ? But such will be of much the same calibre as those who go about inquiring, "What is the British Empire to Battersea ?" Apart from the immense historical, religious and social importance of Buddhism in Asia, here is an opportunity for the Government of India and gratify and conciliate half that continent by the easiest and least costly exercise of good-will. The Mahunt and his college will, no doubt, have to be bought out and rather expensively, now that delays and misguided judgments have made him master of the bargaining. But if an enlightened Minister and Viceroy will, as they may, facilitate the arrangement, all must end well, and grateful Buddhists would furnish whatever cash is requisite. No orthodox Hidoos will be wounded in sentiment, because, by strict truth, the Mahunt, as a Brahman and follower of Sankaracharya, goes against his shastras by keeping control of a Buddhists' temple. However, it brings him so much personal dignity and so much money, that these things must be compounded for, no doubt ; yet a well-disposed, collected and a far-seeing government could find a score of pleasant ways to make him willing to give up his tenure. There is no room left me to dwell upon all the happy consequences which would flow to the Indian Viceroyalty and to India herself from the good-will so created in Burmah and Siam. Buddhism would return to the place of its birth, to elevate, to spiritualise, to help and enrich the population. It would be a new Asiatic crusade, triumphant without tears, or tyranny, or blood ; and the Queen's administration would have the glory and benefit of it. The Hindu of Madras, a leading native journal, writes : "If there is anything in the intellectual and moral legacies of our forefathers of which we may feel proud, it is sublime, pure and simple conception of a

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religious and moral system which the world owes to Buddha. Educated Hindoos cannot hesitate in helping Buddhism to find a commanding and permanent footing once more in their midst and to live in mutually purifying amity with our Hinduism itself." Here is indeed, for an enlightened British Indian Minister, "a splendid opportunity."

(Reproduced from *The Daily Telegraph*, 1893
and from William Peiris' *Edwin Arnold : Brief
Account of his life and contribution to Buddhism*
—Appendix I, pp. 81—96).

APPENDIX FOUR

THE BODH GAYA TEMPE ACT, 1949

(BIHAR ACT 17 OF 1949)

(as modified up to the 8th February, 1955)

[Governor's assent published in the Bihar Gazette of the 6th July, 1949].

An Act to make provision for the better management of the Bodh Gaya Temple and the properties appertaining thereto.

Whereas it is expedient to make provision for the better management of the Bodh Gaya Temple and properties appertaining thereto.

It is hereby enacted as follows :—

Short title
and
Commencement

1. (1) This Act may be called the Bodh Gaya Temple Act, 1949.

(2) It shall come into force at once.

Definition

2. In this Act, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context,—

(a) “the temple” means the great temple built by the site of the Mahabodhi Tree near the village of Bodh Gaya in the district of Gaya and includes the Mahabodhi Tree and Vajrasan ;

1. Legislative Papers—For statement of Objects and Reasons, See the Bihar Gazette, 1949, Pt. V. p 230 ; for proceedings in the Legislative Assembly, see the Bihar Legislative Assembly Debates, 1948, Vol. V. No. 12, pp. 14-36 ; 1949, Vol VI. No. 32, pp. 31-61 and Vol. VI, No 48, pp. 41-44 and for proceedings in the Legislative Council, see the Bihar Legislative Council Debates, 1948. Vol XI, No. 32, pp. 16-40.

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(b) "the temple land" means the land in which the temple and its precincts stand and shall cover such area or shall lie within such boundaries as the [2] [State] Government may, by notification direct ;

(c) "the Mahanth" means the presiding priest for the time being of Saivite Monastery at Bodh Gaya ; and

(d) "Committee" means the Committee constituted under Section 3.

Constitution of Committee

3. (1) As soon as may be after the commencement of this the¹ [State] Government shall constitute a Committee as hereinafter provided and entrust it with the management and control of the temple, the temple land and the properties appertaining thereto.

(Secs. 4-6)

(2) The Committee Shall consist of a Chairman and eight members nominated by the [1] [State] Government, all of whom shall be Indians and of whom four shall be Buddhists and four shall be Hindus including the Mahanth:

Provided that if the Mahanth is a minor or of unsound mind or refuses to serve on the Committee, another Hindu member shall be nominated in his place.

(3) The District Magistrate of Gaya shall be the ex-officio Chairman of the Committee :

Provided that the [1] [State] Government shall nominate a Hindu as Chairman of the Committee for the period during which the District Magistrate of Gaya is non-Hindu.

1. Subs. by para. 4 (1) of the A. L. O. for "Provincial".

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(4) The [¹] [State] Government shall nominate a person from among the members to act as Secretary of the Committee.

Incorporation of Committee.

4. The Committee shall be a body corporate by the name of the Bodh Gaya Temple Management Committee, having perpetual succession and a common seal, with power to acquire and hold property, both movable and immovable, and to contract, and shall by the said name sue or be sued.

Term of office of members:

5. (1) The term of office of the members of the Committee shall be three years :

Provided that the¹ [State] Government, if they are satisfied that the Committee is guilty of gross mismanagement, dissolve the Committee and constitute another Committee or assume direct control of the temple, temple land and the properties appertaining thereto.

(2) Where a member of the Committee dies, resigns, refuses to serve on the Committee, absents himself from six consecutive meetings of the Committee, without the leave of the Committee or ceases to reside in India, or becomes incapable of working, the [¹] [State] Government may nominate a person to fill the vacancy.

(3) Any Act done by the Committee shall not be questioned on the ground merely of the existence of any vacancy in or any defect in the constitution of the Committee.

1. Subs. by para. 4 (1) of the A. L. O. for "Provincial."

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Publication of
names of
Chairman and
members.

6. The name of the Chairman other than the District Magistrate of Gaya and of every member of the Committee shall be published by the¹ [State] Government in the Official Gazette,

(Secs. 7-10)

Office and
meetings of the
Committee.

7. (1) The Committee shall maintain its office at Bodh Gaya.

(2) At the meeting of the Committee the Chairman, or in his absense one of the members to be elected at the meeting, shall preside.

(3) No business shall be transacted at any meeting unless at least four members are present.

Limitation on
Committee's
power to alienate
property.

8. (1) No movable property of a non-perishable nature appertaining to the temple shall be transfereed without the previous sanction of the Committee, and, if the value of the property is more than one thousand rupees, without the previous approval of the¹ [State] Government.

(2) No immovable property appertaining to the temple shall be leased for more than three years or mortgaged, sold or otherwise alienated except with the previous sanction of the Committee and the [¹] [Sate Government.

Limitation of
borrowing power.

9. The Committee shall have no proper to borrow money from any person except with the previous sanction of the¹ [State] Government.

1. Subs. by para. 4 (1) of the A. L. O. for "Provincial".

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Duties of the Committee.

10. Subject to the provisions of this Act or of any rules made thereunder, it shall be the duty of the Committee—

(1) to arrange for—

- (a) the upkeep and repair of the temple ;**
- (b) the improvement of the temple land ;**
- (c) the welfare and safety of the pilgrims ; and**
- (d) the proper performance of worship at the temple and pindadan (offering of pindas) on the temple land ;**

(2) to prevent the desecration of the temple or any part thereof or of any image therein ;

(3) to make arrangements for the receipt and disposal of the offerings made in the Temple, and for the safe custody of the statements of accounts and other documents relating to the temple or the temple land and for the preservation of the property appertaining to the temple ;

(4) to make arrangement for the custody, deposit and investment of funds in its hand ; and

(5) to make provision for the payment of of suitable emoluments to its salaried staff.

(Secs. 11-15)

Right of access and worship.

11. (1) Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act or in the rules framed thereunder, Hindus and Buddhists of every sect shall have access to the temple and the temple land for the purpose of worship or pindadan.

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Provided that nothing in this Act shall entitle any person to perform animal sacrifice or to bring any alcoholic liquour within the temple or on the temple land, or to enter the temple with shoes on.

(2) If any person contravenes the provisions of the proviso to sub-Section (1), he shall be punishable with fine not exceeding fifty rupees.

Decision on
dispute between
Hindus and
Buddhists.

12. Notwithstanding anything contained in any enactment for the time being in force, if there be any dispute between Hindus and Buddhists regarding the manner of using the temple or the temple land, the decision of the¹ [State] Government shall be final.

Committee to
have no juris-
diction over
properties of
Saivite
Monastery.

13. Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act or in the rules made thereunder, the Committee shall have no jurisdiction over the movable or immovable property of the Saivite Monastery of Bodh Gaya.

Audit of
Accounts.

14. The¹ [State] Government shall every year appoint an auditor to audit the accounts of the funds of the Committee and fix his remuneration which shall be paid from the said funds. The auditor shall submit his report to the Committee and send a copy of it to the [¹] [State] Government which may issue such directions thereon, as it may deem fit, and the Committee shall carry out such directions.

1. Subs. by para. 4 (1) of the A. L. O. for "Provincial".

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Constitution of
an Advisory
Board.

15. (1) The¹ [State] Government may constitute an Advisory Board (hereinafter referred to in this Act as the "Board") which shall consist of such number of members as the [¹] [State] Government may determine.

(2) The majority of the members of such Board shall be Buddhists who may not all be Indians.

(3) The members of the Board shall hold office for such term as may be fixed by the [¹] [State] Government.

(4) The Board shall function purely as an Advisory body to the Committee and shall discharge its functions in the.....prescribed by the¹ [State] Government by rules made.....behalf.

(Secs. 16-18)

Act to override
Act 20 of
1863, etc.

16. This Act shall have effect notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in the Religious Endowments Act² 1863, or in any decree, custom or usage.

Power of the
Committee to
make bye-laws,

17. (1) With the previous sanction of the³ [State] Government the Committee may, from time to time, make bye-laws to carry out the purposes of this Act.

(2) In particular, and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing powers, such bye-laws may provide for :—

1. Subs. by para. 4 (1) of the A. L. O. for "Provincial."

2. Printed in Central Acts, Vol. Ed. 1951, p. 395.

3. Subs. by para 4 (1) of the A. L. O. for "Provincial."

Appendix Four

- (a) the division of duties among the Chair-, man, the members and Secretary of the Committee ;
- (b) the manner in which thier decision may be ascertained otherwise than at the meetings ;
- (c) the procedure and conduct of business at meetings of the Committee ;
- (d) the delegation of powers of the Committee to individual members ;
- (e) the book and accounts to be kept at the office of the Committee ,
- (f) the custody and investment of the funds of the Committee ;
- (g) the time and place of its meetings ;
- (h) the manner in which notice of its meeting shall be given ;
- (i) the preservation of order and the conduct of proceedings at meetings and the powers which the Chairman may exercise for the purpose of enforcing its decisions ;
- (j) the manner in which the proceeding of its meetings shall be recorded ;
- (k) the persons by whom receipts may be granted for moneys paid to the Committee ;
and
- (l) the maintenance of cordial relations between the Buddhists and the Hindu pilgrims.

3. All bye-laws, after they have been confirmed by the¹ [State] Government, shall be published in the Official Gazette, and shall thereafter have the force of law.

1. Subs. by para. 4 (1) of the A. L. O. for "Provincial"

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Power of Govt.
to make rules.

18. The¹ [State] Government may make rules²
to carry out the purposes of this Act.

[*Preface to the said Act* : “The Bodh Gaya Temple Act, 1949 (Bihar Act 17 of 1949) has been amended by the Adaptation of Law Order, 1950. The amendments made by the Adaptation of Laws Order have been incorporated in the text and some other foot-notes have been added for convenience of reference”—Deputy Secretary to Government, dated the 8th February, 1955].³

1. Subs. by para. 4 (1) of the A. L. O. for “Provincial”

2. For Rules under this S., See B. O. R. O., Vol. 1, Pt. VIII.

3. Government of Bihar, Law Department. The Bodh Gaya Temple Act, 1949 (Bihar Act 17 of 1949) [As modified up to 8th February, 1955], i, 1-5.

APPENDIX FIVE

BYE-LAWS OF THE BODH GAYA TEMPLE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Government of Bihar,
Political Department.
(General Branch).

NOTIFICATION.

Patna, the 26th February, 1957.

No. A/B1-1026/56-P.G. 435. The following bye-laws made by the Bodh Gaya Temple Management Committee under Sub-section (1) of Section 17 of the Bodh Gaya Temple Act, 1949 (Bihar Act 17 of 1949), having been confirmed by the State Government, are hereby published as required by Sub-section (3) of the said Section :—

By-laws under Section 17 of the Bodh Gaya Temple Act.

Definitions

1. In these bye-laws unless the context otherwise indicates :
 - (i) 'Act' means the Bodh Gaya Temple Act, 1949 (Bihar Act XVIII of 1949).
 - (ii) 'rules' means rules framed by the State Government under section 18 of the Act.
 - (iii) 'Bye-laws' means the bye-laws framed by the Committee with the previous sanction of the State Government under section 17 of the Act.
 - (iv) 'Chairman' means the Chairman of the Committee.
 - (v) 'Secretary' means the Secretary of the Committee.

Meetings

2. Meetings of the Committee shall be held at the office of the Committee or at such other place at Bodh Gaya as the Chairman or in his absence, the Secretary may decide.

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- 3. Meetings of the Committee shall be held, as far as possible, at intervals not exceeding three months.**
- 4. The agenda for a meeting shall be prepared by the Chairman after taking into consideration suggestions (if any) received in this behalf from the members, and resolutions received in the office of the Committee at least seven days before the notice of the meeting is issued to members shall be included therein.**
- 5. Notice of a meeting together with copies of the agenda shall be circulated to members by post by Express delivery letters, or by messengers in case of local members, at least, twenty-one days before the date fixed for the meeting :**

Provided that in case of an emergency a meeting may be called on seven days' notice.
- 6. Notice of a meeting together with the agenda shall be entered in a register kept for the purpose, and the register shall be open to inspection by any member at the office of the Committee during office hours.**
- 7. The Chairman (or, in his absence, any other member elected for the purpose by members present at the meeting) shall preside over a meeting.**
- 8. Four members shall form the quorum at any meeting.**
- 9. The minutes of proceedings of meetings shall be recorded by the Chairman, or, in his absence, by the member who may preside at the meeting or by such other person as may be directed by the person presiding at the meeting.**
- 10. At a meeting other than an adjourned meeting, the minutes of the last meeting shall be read out and, if approved as having been correctly recorded or after necessary correction, if any, shall be signed by the Chairman or such other member as may be presiding at the meeting.**

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11. At every meeting a financial statement and a report on the work done after the last meeting of the Committee (including a resume of the steps taken to implement the previous decisions of the Committee), or proposed to be undertaken in future, shall be laid.
12. No subject once finally disposed of at a meeting shall be reopened or re-considered within six months from the date of its disposal, except with the concurrence of, at least, two-thirds of the members present at a meeting.
13. The Chairman may issue special invitations to persons who are not members of the Committee to attend a meeting and the invitees may participate in the deliberations of the Committee, but they will have no right of vote.
15. An adjourned meeting, being merely continuation of the original meeting, shall not require notice of more than seven days.
16. No matter may be considered at a meeting including a meeting adjourned for want of the quorum unless it is included in the agenda circulated under bye-law 5 :
Provided that, at the request of any member or on his motion, the Chairman (or, in his absence, the member presiding at the meeting) may include any other matter in the agenda if he is satisfied about its urgency.
17. Any member of the Committee may make suggestions in writing for the inclusion of any matter in the agenda of a meeting and the same shall be considered by the Chairman and, in case the Chairman does not include in the agenda any such suggestion which has been received in the office of the Committee more than seven days before the notice together with the agenda is issued to the members, he shall record the reasons for inability to include the suggestion in the agenda and inform the member concerned of it.

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18. The suggestions mentioned in bye-law No. 18 shall together with the date of their receipt in the office of the Committee be entered in the order in which they are received in a register to be maintained for the purpose.
19. The Chairman, or the Secretary, in consultation with the Chairman, shall convene meetings of the Committee ;
 Provided that, if no meeting is held within three months, any member may send a requisition to the Chairman requesting him to call a meeting and the Chairman (or the Secretary in consultation with the Chairman) shall thereupon call a meeting of the Committee and, if the Chairman (or the Secretary) fails to call a meeting within a year, any four members may call a meeting of the Committee.
20. Within seven days of the holding of a meeting, the minutes of the proceedings of the meeting shall be circulated to all members of the Committee, and a copy thereof shall be forwarded to the State Government and the Commissioner, Patna Division by the Chairman.
21. (i) If any question of importance requiring urgent consideration arises, the Secretary, with the consent of the Chairman, or the Chairman on his own motion may ascertain the opinions of the members thereon otherwise than at a meeting by referring the matter to them in writing by registered post.
 (ii) In making the reference the question on which the opinion of the members is to be ascertained shall, as far as practicable, be framed succinctly and precisely, split into parts, if necessary, so that the answer to the parts or whole may be 'yes' or 'no'.
 (iii) A short explanatory note shall accompany the question.
 (iv) The decision of the majority of the members so ascertained shall operate as the decision of the

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Committee and shall have the same binding force and effect as that of a decision arrived at a meeting.

- (v) The majority opinion shall be calculated and determined on the basis of opinions received in the office of the Committee before the 22nd day of the despatch of the registered letters in this regard to the members :

Provided that, if the majority opinion becomes clear before the lapse of the said period of 21 days, the Secretary shall proceed to act on it forthwith.

- (iv) The opinion so ascertained shall be reported in writing to the next meeting of the Committee and then incorporated in its minutes.

Budget

- 22. The annual budget of the Committee shall be finalised every year not later than the 31st January, and, at least, one month before the date of the meeting convened for the purpose of considering and passing the budget, the the Secretary shall, in consultation with the Chairman, prepare ;—

- (i) an estimated budget of expenditure which may be incurred during the ensuing financial year ;
- (ii) a statement showing all expected receipts from all sources during the ensuing financial year ;
- (iii) an estimate of the balances likely to be available for expenditure during the ensuing financial year, and circulate them with an explanatory memorandum, to all members of the Committee at least 21 days before the date of the meeting.

- 23. No expenditure shall be incurred unless it is sanctioned in the budget :

Provided that, to meet unforeseen and urgent expenditure, the Committee shall, subject to rules, be competent to sanction special grants during the year.

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- 24. The power of the Committee to sanction special grants to meet unforeseen and urgent expenditure, may by a resolution of the Committee, be delegated to the Chairman and/or the Secretary.**
- 25. At the meeting of the Committee convened to consider the annual budget estimates, statements and proposals, the Secretary shall place the final accounts of the financial year next preceding and the provisional accounts of the financial year.**
- 26. The budget for a financial year passed at the meeting of the Committee referred to in the bye-law 23, shall be forwarded for information to the State Government, and to such other authority as the State Government may, from time to time, indicate,**

Financial Provision

- 27. All money received whether by way of donation, subscription or in any other manner, shall be credited to the Fund of the Committee.**
- 28. Charity-boxes shall be opened at least a month by the Chairman or any other person authorised by him in writing, in presence of two other responsible persons who will each certify in writing what amount is taken out of each such box.**
- 29. Accounts will be maintained in the local branch of the State Bank of India.**
- 30. All money received by or on behalf of the Committee must be deposited in the Bank within the next three working days of the Bank after such receipt.**
- 31. Payments exceeding Rs. 20.00 except the payment of salaries and emoluments to the staff of the Committee, shall be made by cheques signed by the Chairman or signed by the Secretary and countersigned by the Chairman.**

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32. For all money and articles received by or on behalf of of the Committee the Chairman or any other person authorised in writing by him shall issue printed receipts, the counterfoils of which shall be preserved for a period of twelve years.
33. The income and the property of the Committee, howsoever derived, shall be applied solely towards the proper performance of the duties of the Committee as laid down in the Act.
34. Subject to the control of the Chairman, the Secretary shall be in charge of the funds of the Committee.
35. Subject to the provisions of the Act all transfer of properties, movable or immovable, whether by way of lease, mortgage, sale or otherwise shall be openly negotiated and completed :

Provided that the Chairman, or such person as may be authorised in writing by him in this behalf, may have any perishable article auctioned after giving locally notice of the auction by beat of drum.

36. All leases and contracts shall be made in open public bids held after seven days of proper and public notice.
37. The lease shall usually be given to the highest bidder for reasons to be recorded in writing by him.
38. In giving out contracts, the lowest tender shall ordinarily be accepted :

Provided that the Chairman will have the right to give a contract to a person whose tender is not the lowest for reasons to be recorded in writing by him.

39. The Chairman may authorise the Secretary or the senior-most member of the staff of the Committee to keep with himself a permanent advance of a sum not exceeding Rs. 50/- for incurring expenditure on contingencies, which will be recouped by drawing regular bills after submission

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of proper vouchers for each item of expenditure already incurred.

Power and Duties of Office Bearers.

41. (i) The appointment or the dismissal of member of the staff of the Committee employed on a salary of Rs. 50/- a month and above shall rest with the Committee.

(ii) The Chairman may appoint, suspend or dismiss any employee of the Committee whose salary is less than Rs. 50/- a month :

Provided that, all such appointments, suspensions and dismissals must be reported with the reasons therefore for information at the first meeting of the Committee held after the order or appointment, suspension or dismissal has been passed.

(iii) The Chairman may, pending an inquiry, suspend any employee of the Committee drawing a salary of Rs. 50/- a month or more for misconduct, incompetence, neglect of duty or any other sufficient cause :

Provided that the action taken along with the explanation, if any, submitted by the employee, shall be reported to the Committee for proper action at its first meeting held after the order of suspension has been passed.

(iv) All temporary employees of the Committee, whose services may no longer be required shall be liable to be discharged after one month's notice or on payment of one month's salary in lieu thereof. Permanent employees may be removed from service after consideration of an explanation to be submitted by them within a reasonable times.

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- (v) The Chairman may impose a fine not exceeding one-tenth of one month's salary on any employee of the Committee drawing a salary not exceeding Rs. 50/- a month for misconduct, neglect of duty or any other sufficient cause.**
- (vi) The Chairman may impose a fine not exceeding one-tenth of one month's salary on any employees of the Committee drawing a salary of Rs. 50/- a month or above but the order imposing the fine shall be submitted to the Committee for approval at its first meeting held after the order is passed and the Committee may approve, rescind, or modify the order.**
- (vii) The Chairman shall call upon the employee concerned to explain his conduct and consider the explanation, if any, submitted by the employee before he passes an order imposing a fine.**
- (viii) All persons employed by a Committee shall, if required, furnish such security as the Committee may from time to time determine.**
- (ix) During the period of suspension pending enquiry into his conduct, an employee will get as subsistence allowance only one-half of the salary which he was entitled to draw on the day he was suspended.**
- 42. The General superintendence and control of the establishments maintained by the Committee shall vest in and be exercised by the Chairman. The Chairman shall be in general control of the funds of the Committee and shall enter into contracts or execute leases or other documents and pass bills for payments, on behalf of the Committee.**
- 43. The Secretary shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Committee, and shall exercise supervision over the staff of the Committee and keep the books of accounts and other principal records of the Committee in his custody.**

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- 44. The Committee may designate the seniormost member of its office staff as its Superintendent who shall :—**
- i) have the general charge of the office of the Committee and its day to day work ;**
 - ii) subject to any general or special direction which the Chairman or Secretary may from time to time give, deal with routine correspondence.**
 - iii) examine and sign the cash-books and keep them in order and up-to-date ;**
 - iv) be responsible for the maintenance of the purity and cleanliness of the Temple and the Temple land ; and.**
 - v) look after the comforts of visitors and devotees.**
- 45. All communication received in the office marked 'Secret', 'Confidential', or 'Personal', (or addressed by name) shall be opened by the Chairman or the Secretary (according as who is the addressee).**
- 46. The common seal of the Committee shall remain in the custody of the Chairman, or, if he so directs in writing, of the Secretary.**

Miscellaneous

- 47. The common seal shall be affixed to the following documents :—**
- (i) all deeds of transfer executed by, or, on behalf of the Committee ;**
 - (ii) all written contracts entered into by the Committee ;**
 - (iii) the minutes of proceedings of the Committee ;**
 - (iv) notices of the meetings of the Committee ;**
 - (v) all receipts for money granted on behalf of the Committee ; and**
 - (vi) any other documents which in the opinion of the Chairman or the Secretary, is of importance.**

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48. (i) For the proper maintenance of accounts and efficient discharge of its duties the Committee shall maintain necessary books and registers in its office.
- (ii) A list of such books and registers shall be maintained in the office.
- (iii) Books and registers maintained by the Committee shall be open to inspection, during office hours, by the members of the Committee and with the permission of the Chairman or the Secretary, by any other person.
49. The Committee may from time to time, for any purpose connected with its work, appoint sub-committees consisting of such of its members and any other persons as it may think proper and such sub-committees shall exercise such powers and perform such functions as may be prescribed by the Committee.
50. Any addition, alteration or modification in these bye-laws may be made by the Committee by a majority of votes of the members of the Committee, subject to confirmation by the State Government and publication in the official Gazette.
51. In matters not specifically provided for in these by-laws the Committee shall be competent to pass orders and regulate its affairs in such manner as is necessary for the discharge of its duties in accordance with the Act and the rules.
52. The Committee may, by a resolution, delegate such of its powers to the Chairman or the Secretary as it may consider necessary.
53. The Secretary shall prepare each year a report of the affairs and activities of the Committee and present it at its meeting held to consider and pass the budget. A copy of the report shall be forwarded to the State Government along with the budget estimates.

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54. The members of the Committee including the Chairman and the Secretary and the special invitees to the meetings of the Committee and Sub-committees shall be entitled to travelling allowance and daily allowance for attending the meetings of the Committee and its Sub-committees (and for other journeys required in connection with the work of the Committee, in the case of the Chairman and Secretary) at the following rates :

- (i) Single second class railway fare from the railway station nearest the members or special invitees, place or residence to the railway stations nearest the place of the meeting.**
- (ii) Eight annas for each mile of distance travelled by road in the course of journey from the place of residence to the place of meeting.**
- (iii) Daily allowance at the rate of Rs. 5/=per diem for the duration of the meeting and an allowance of Rs. 5/= as out of pocket expenses for every day spent in travelling between their places of residence and the place of the meeting and vice versa :**

Provided that, the out-of-pocket expense shall not be paid for the day or days for which daily allowance is admissible.

Provided further that, that employees of the State Government shall not be entitled to charge any travelling allowance or daily allowance or out-of-pocket expense from the funds of the Committee.

55. The staff of the Committee shall be entitled to such rates of travelling and daily allowances as the Chairman may, from time to time, after due consideration of the finances of the Committee, by an order in writing determine and such rates shall prevail until modified.

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