

**The Great Buddhist Revivalist
ANAGARIKA DHARMAPALA
Founder - Maha Bodhi Society (1891)**

IMPORTANT EVENTS OF THE
MAHA BODHI SOCIETY OF INDIA

- 17.09.1864 Anagarika Dharmapala was born in Sri Lanka (Ceylon)
- 21.08.1884 His first visit to India
- 22.01.1891 He visited Buddha Gaya for the first time and vowed to restore the great temple
- 31.05.1891 Founded the Buddha Gaya Maha Bodhi Society
- 01.05.1892 Founded the Maha Bodhi Journal
- 11.09.1892 Maha Bodhi Society started its office in Calcutta
- 18.09.1893 The Anagarika delivered address at the "Parliament of World Religions in Chicago"
- 06.02.1895 Instituted case to restore the Buddha Gaya Maha Bodhi Temple
- 06.07.1908 The Society Headquarters opened at Beniapur Lane, Calcutta
- 03.04.1915 Maha Bodhi Society became a registered body
- 26.11.1920 Sri Dharmarajika Vihara, Calcutta was ceremonially opened
- 13.07.1931 The Anagarika entered ordination at Sarnath and named Siri Devamitta Dharmapala
- 11.11.1931 Opening ceremony of Mulagandha Kuti Vihara in Sarnath
- 16.01.1933 Ven'ble Siri Devamitta Dharmapala received higher ordination
- 29.04.1933 Ven'ble Devamitta Dharmapala passed away in Sarnath
- 17.09.1991 The Society celebrated its Centenary.

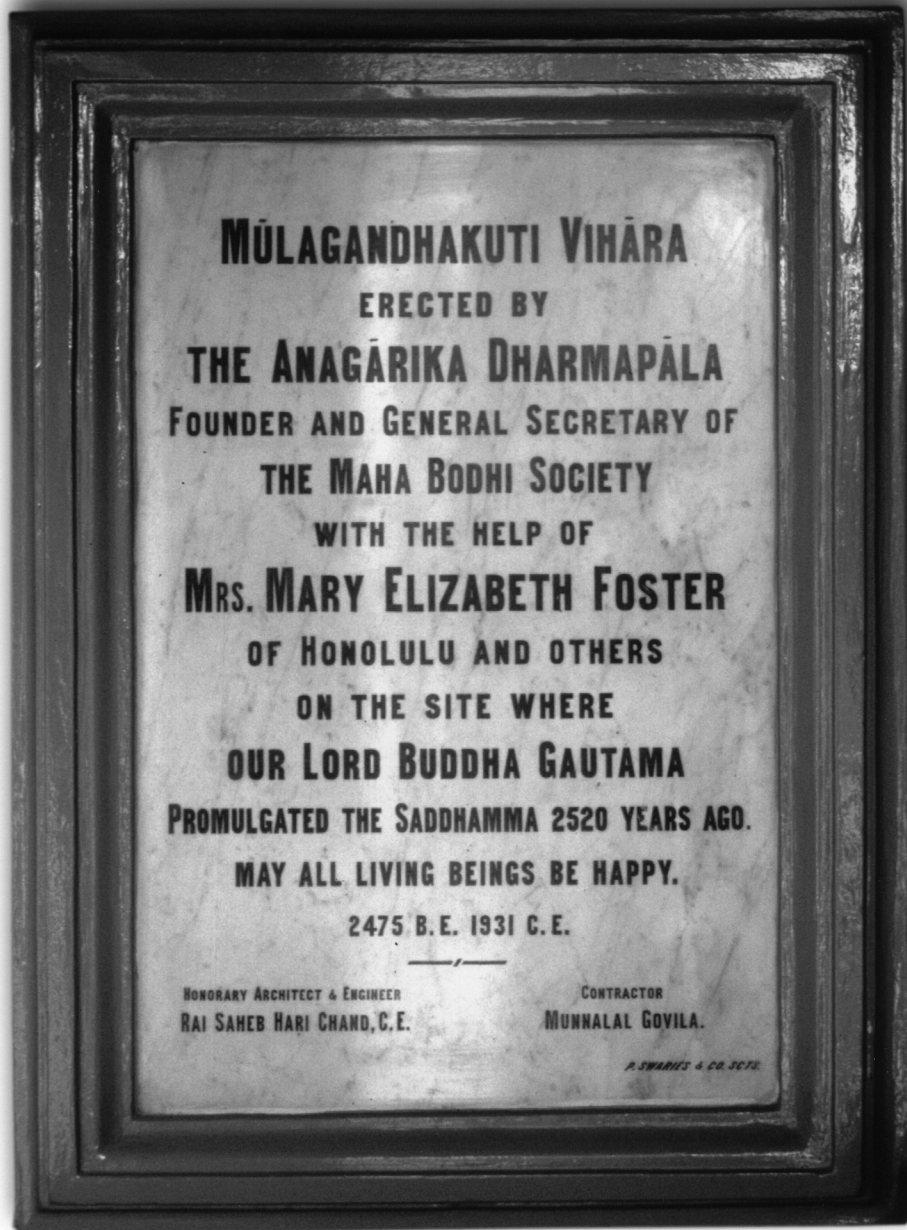
1998

Maha Bodhi Society, Titel eines Kalenders für das Jahr 1998

DIE MAHA BODHI SOCIETY

Don David Hewavitarne wurde am 17. September 1864 als erstes Kind des Möbelfabrikanten Don Carolis Hewavitarne und seiner Frau Mallika geboren. Die Eltern waren praktizierende Buddhisten, aber wie zur damaligen Zeit in Kreisen der aufstrebenden singhalesischen Bourgeoisie üblich besuchte ihr Sohn anglikanische Missionsschulen in Colombo und trat nach dem Abschluß in die britische Kolonialverwaltung (Bereich Erziehungswesen) ein. Beeinflußt durch die neobuddhistische Erneuerungsbewegung im Lande (BECHERT 1988:47 ff.) und enge Kontakte mit Colonel Olcott, beschließt er 1886 sein weiteres Leben ganz der Erneuerung des Buddhismus zu widmen. Mit Zustimmung der Eltern quittiert er den Dienst und nennt sich fortan Anagarika (Nicht-Behauster) Dharmapala (Beschützer des Dharma). 1891 reist er, aufgerüttelt durch die Berichte von Sir Edwin Arnold in englischen Tageszeitungen (AHIR 1994:95 ff.), nach Nordindien, um sich selbst ein Bild vom desolaten Zustand der Stätten des frühen Buddhismus zu machen. Von Sarnath aus kommend trifft er in Begleitung des japanischen Shingon-Mönch Kozen Gunaratne, den er auf einer Konferenz der Theosophischen Gesellschaft kennengelernt hatte, am 21. Januar 1891 mit der Bahn in Gaya ein und notiert dazu (AHIR 1994:107) in seinem Tagebuch:

After driving 6 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 Mahant's temple on both side's of the portico there are statues of our Lord in the attitude of meditation and expounding the Law. How elevating! The sacred Vihara - the Lord sitting on his throne and the great solemnity which pervades all round makes the heart of pious devotee weep. How delightful! As soon as I touched with my forehead the Vajrasana 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 Sakya Sinha gained Enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree... 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 came to take charge of the place.



Gedenktafel am Haupteingang der Mulagandhakuti Vihara in Sarnath

Damit beginnt die Geschichte der „buddification“ (DOYLE 1997:16) von Bodh Gaya und der bis heute andauernden Bemühungen, den „Ort der Erleuchtung“ zu einem „Jerusalem aller Buddhisten“ (TREVITHICK 1988) auszubauen und den von Hindus vor Jahrhunderten „okkupierten“ Haupttempel des Ortes in allein-buddhistische Verantwortung zu überführen. Sie ist in den zwei vorstehend genannten Dissertationen nachgezeichnet und dabei der Prozeß der sozio-religiösen Konstruktion von neuen Wirklichkeiten akribisch dokumentiert worden. Hier sollen Details daraus immer nur insofern interessieren, als sie zum Verständnis der aktuellen Situation wichtig erscheinen.

Am 31.5.1891 wurde „The Buddha Gaya Maha Bodhi Society“ mit Anagarika Dharmapala als Generalsekretär in Colombo gegründet. Ziel der Gesellschaft war es, den „Maha Bodhi Tempel“ möglichst umgehend zurückzugewinnen und den Buddhismus in Indien wieder einzuführen. Schon 1892 wurde die Geschäftsstelle der Gesellschaft nach Calcutta, die damalige Hauptstadt des kolonialen Empire verlegt und noch im gleichen Jahr mit dem „Maha Bodhi Journal“ ein wichtiges englisches Sprachrohr zur weltweiten Verbreitung der Ziele der Gesellschaft geschaffen, die Anagarika Dharmapala auf dem Parlament der Weltreligionen in Chicago 1893 so wirksam vorgetragen hatte, daß er anhin mit internationaler Unterstützung seiner Ziele rechnen konnte. Im fast wörtlichen Sinne lebenswichtig wurde ihm dabei die anhaltende Förderung durch Mrs. Mary Foster (1844-1930) aus Honolulu, die er an Bord der „Oceanic“ auf der Weiterreise von den USA nach Japan kennenlernte (AHIR 1989:17):

The Parliament of Religions ended on 27 September, 1893. After delivering a few more lectures in America, Dharmapala sailed for India via Japan and China. A chance meeting with Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Mikhala Foster on Board the S.S. Oceanic at Honolulu on 18 October 1893 proved of immense significance both for Mrs. Foster as well as for Dharmapala. Mrs. Foster was born in the far off Hawaii islands in the Pacific Ocean and was a descendent on her mother's side of King Kamehameha the Great of Hawaii. She was married to a wealthy merchant of North America. It is said that she was of an indomitable temper which she was unable to control. As a remedy for this ailment, Dharmapala advised her to cultivate will-power, and to



Statue vor der Mulagandhakuti Vihara. Inschrift:

Anagarika Dharmapala, Founder of Mahabodhi Society and Pionier of Buddhist Revival in India. Born in Colombo, Ceylon, September 17, 1864. Died at Sarnath, April 19, 1933

repeat the formula „I will be good, I will control the rising anger.“ These simple words of a practising Buddhist worked wonders. Mrs. Foster was able to get over her temper and gained serenity. She was so deeply impressed by this change that she decided to divert her enormous wealth for the spread of the gospel of the Buddha for which Dharmapala was trying hard.

Trotz aller Anstrengungen und internationaler Unterstützung gelang es Dharmapala bis zu seinem Lebensende nicht, den Haupttempel in Bodhgaya für die Buddhisten zurückzugewinnen: Er verlor im Rechtsstreit gegen den Mahant (Abt) des hinduistischen Kloster von Bodh Gaya, zu dem der Haupttempel seit Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts „gewöhnheitsrechtlich“ gehörte.

Erfolgreicher dagegen waren Anagarika Dharmapalas Aktivitäten in Sarnath. Mit Unterstützung vor allen auch hier wieder durch Mary Foster entstand auf dem historischen Gelände des „Gazellenhain“, wo Buddha erstmals seine befreienden Erfahrungen weitergegeben hatte, ein großer buddhistischer Tempel. Die Bauarbeiten für die „Mulagandha Kuti Vihara“ begannen 1922 und wurden 1931 abgeschlossen (AHIR 1991:130):

The foundation stone of Malugandhakuti Vihara, the life of new Sarnath, was laid in November 1922 by Sir Harcourt Butler, the Governor of the United Provinces. The name ‘Mulagandakuti’ has a historic basis. This name was first used for the monastery in which Lord Buddha actually resided. During the archaeological excavations at Sarnath a piece of tablet was found on which this name was inscribed. This discovery prompted Anagarika Dharmapala to name the new Vihara as ‘Mulangandhakuti Vihara’. The Mulagandhakuti Vihara cost about Rs. 1,20,000 and the principal donor was Mrs. Mary E. Foster of Honolulu, who is generally called the modern Visakha of the Buddhists.

This magnificent Vihara was opened on November 11, 1931 (Kartik Purnima). On the same day, the sacred relics of Lord Buddha, which were discovered from Taxila, Punjab, in 1913-14 by Sir John Marshal, were presented by the Director General of Archaeology to the Maha Bodhi Society on behalf of the Government of India, and enshrined in this Vihara.

From 1st October, 97 to 31st January, 98.

(1). 66th Anniversary of the Mulagandha Kuti Vihara Celebrated.

The 66th anniversary of the Mulagandha Kuti Vihara was celebrated on the Kattik Poo! Moon day- the 14th November, 1997. The Programme of the day started with Dhamma Desana in the morning. The Holy Relics Darshan was held in the Vihara in the fore-noon and Sanghadana was given at noon which was participated by hundreds of Ven'ble monks from various Buddhist countries of the world. The Holy Relics - Procession was conducted in the after noon. Besides thousands of Buddhists from different parts of India, Buddhists from different Buddhist countries of the world participated in this procession. In the evening, a Public meeting was held in the campus of the Mulagandha Kuti Vihara to commemorate this historic occasion. Mr. Kalyan Singh, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, participated as the Chief Guest in this meeting while Mr. K.B.Ratnayake, the Hon'ble Speaker of Sri Lanka participated as the Chief Speaker in this meeting. Mr. Mangala Moonesinghe, High Commissioner for Sri Lanka in India was the Guest of Honour at the meeting. Among the distinguished persons, who participated in this meeting, were Ven'ble Lama Lobzang, member, National Commission for Scheduled Casts and Scheduled Tribes, Government of India, His Excellency Prof. Prabhakar Jha, Ambassador for India in Madagascar, Hon'ble Prof. Om Prakash Singh, Minister of Irrigation and Sugarcane, Government of Uttar Pradesh, Hon'ble Mr. Virendra Singh, Minister of State for Agriculture, Government of Uttar Pradesh, Hon'ble Smt. Saroj, Singh, Mayor of Varanasi. Ven'ble D.Wimala Thero, Bhikkhu-in-charge, Sarnath Centre, welcomed the guests on this occasion and presented the annual report of this centre. The meeting was conducted by Dr. Beni-Madho, Principal, Mahabodhi Inter College, Sarnath as well as Mr. Upali Rupasinghe, Publicity Officer at the Head Quarters of the the Mahabodhi Society of India. The meeting terminated with the blessings by the Bhikkhu Mahasangha.

(2). 49th REPUBLIC DAY OF INDIA CELEBRATED:

The 49th Republic Day of India, coinciding with the Golden Jubilee year of India's Independence, was celebrated under the auspices of the Mahabodhi Society of India, Sarnath. Besides the students

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Hier trat Anagarika Dharmapala im gleichen Jahr als Novize Devamitta (Götterfreund) Dharmapala in den Sangha der Mönche ein, hier auch wurde er im Januar 1933 zum Vollmönch ordiniert. Als er drei Monate später starb, wurden Überreste seines in den letzten Lebensjahren teilweise gelähmten Körpers auf dem Tempelgelände eingäschert. Alljährlich zum November-Vollmond wird in einer Feier der Gründung und Einweihung der Mulagandhakuti Vihara gedacht (vgl. S. 46).“

Der folgende BRIEF (vgl. S. 51 f.) aus dem Jahre 1925 vermittelt einen Eindruck vom agitatorischen Stil Anagarika Dharmapalas; daß er sich ähnlich polemisch fast immer geäußert hat, wenn es um „Andersgläubige“ ging, das zeigt ein umfangreicher, in Sri Lanka herausgegebener Sammelband mit Texten von ihm (GURUGE 1965). Doch wäre der „Beschützer des Dharma“ wohl nicht so wirksam gewesen, hätte er immer nur polemisiert. Auf seiner im Brief angekündigten Europareise besuchte Anagarika Dharmapala auch das von Dr. Paul Dahlke 1924 gegründete Buddhistische Haus in Berlin-Frohnau; seine „liebenswürdige Persönlichkeit“ hinterließ dort einen bleibenden Eindruck (FISCHER 1974):

Erfreulicher und harmonischer verlief die Begegnung mit einer anderen bedeutenden Persönlichkeit, die wenige Jahre später das Haus besuchte: Venerable Anagarika Dharmapala. Er war wohl acht oder zehn Tage bei uns, und wenn wir abends in der Bibliothek zusammensaßen, strahlte er so viel gelassene Heiterkeit, so viel Humor aus, daß sonst ernste Gespräche oft von seinem und unserm fröhlichen Lachen unterbrochen wurden. Am Tage, wenn Dr. Dahlke seine Sprechstunde abhielt, pflegte er oft im Tempel oder im offenen Vorraum zu sitzen und halblaut Pali-Verse zu rezitieren. Seine hohe, imponierende Gestalt in der gelben Robe und seine liebenswürdige Persönlichkeit kann man so leicht nicht vergessen.

Abgesehen von der polemischen Schärfe des Briefes von Dharmapala bleibt bemerkenswert, daß er als einziges Dokument „aus seiner Feder“ in einer zum hundertjährigen Bestehen der Maha Bodhi Society in Bodh Gaya erschienenen Festschrift aufgenommen wurde!

Das hier anschließend (vgl. S. 55) daraus außerdem noch wiedergegebene Dokument soll die offizielle Selbsteinschätzung der Maha

Activities of the Maha Bodhi Society of India

SARNATH CENTRE

- ☞ **Maha Bodhi Mulagandha Kuti Vihara** – Development, Maintenance, Pooja and Daily Dhammachakka Sajjhayana.
- ☞ **Maha Bodhi Mulagandha Kuti Vihara Library and Reading room** – Free service to readers and students with a vast collection of books.
- ☞ **Mahabodhi Book Agency** – Publication and distribution of Books on Buddhism, philosophy with world-wide agencies.
- ☞ **Maha Bodhi Inter College** – A complete institution with building and other modern facilities for general higher education with government assistance.
- ☞ **Dhammapala Bhikkhu and Bhikkhuni Training Centre** – A Centre for teaching Buddhist Philosophy and Sangha Vinaya with preliminary training of Buddhist missionary works.
- ☞ **Maha Bodhi Primary School** – A complete body with trained staff to Educate children.
- ☞ **Maha Bodhi Girls Junior High School** – An institution for girls education with trained staff which provides service to the girls of the area.
- ☞ **Maha Bodhi Birla Dharmashala** – A notable service by the society for pilgrims fully maintained by donations.
- ☞ **Maha Bodhi Sangharama** -- A hostel for resident monks with free food and other facilities.
- ☞ **Dhammapala Museum** – A specially designed place where Anagarika Dhammapala's personal belongings including robes, wheel-chair, arm-chair, walking-sticks, begging bowl, books, personal notes and other important documents. are exhibited.
- ☞ **Maha Bodhi Hospital (Under Construction)** – This twenty beds hospital is being constructed specially for rendering medical service to the poor patients in this area. The construction cost is estimated rupees thirty Lakhs in Indian Currency and one hundred thousand U.S. Dollors. The donors and well-wishers are requested to donate generously towards this noble cause and earn the merit.

THE SARNATH CENTRE OF THE MAHA BODHI SOCIETY OF INDIA
INVITES YOU FOR YOUR KIND CONTRIBUTION FOR MAINTENANCE
OF THE ABOVE INSTITUTIONS

Kindly send your contribution to :

D. Wimala Thero

Secretary and High Priest

Maha Bodhi Society of India

Sarnath, Varanasi (U.P.) India

Selbstbeschreibung des Sarnath-Centre der MBS

Bodhi Society durch ihren Generalsekretär kennzeichnen. Ausführlicher dazu dann weiterhin die Darstellungen aus dem „Centenary Volume“ von „Maha Bodhi“ (vgl. S. 56 bis 60), der 1892 von Anagarika Dharmapala gegründeten Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft. Verfolgt man diese Selbstbeschreibungen über andere Publikationen der Gesellschaft dann weiter (vgl. S. 61 bis 62), so ergibt sich daraus und aus den eigenen Beobachten „vor Ort“ das folgende Bild zur Einschätzung der Wirkung der „Maha Bodhi Society“ für den Buddhismus bzw. auf die Buddhisten in Indien heute:

- Die MBS hat gegenwärtig acht Zentren in (Nord-)Indien, sie arbeitet an fünf weiteren (auch südindischen) Orten mit anderen Gruppen in sog. „Affiliated Centres“ zusammen.
- Gesteuert wird die Arbeit aus der Zentrale in Calcutta. Die Mittel für außerordentliche, über den „laufenden Betrieb“ hinausgehende Maßnahmen kommen aus Spenden, neuerdings vor allem aus Japan.
- Die MBS versteht sich nach wie vor als eine „Missionsgesellschaft“ zur Verbreitung der Lehre des Theravada. Entsprechend rekrutiert sie ihre hauptamtlichen Vertreter noch immer aus dem singhalesischen Klerus von Sri Lanka (AHIR 1998:59-76), wo derartige „Missionsarbeit“ hohes Prestige hat. Die entsprechende Rotation der „Missionare“ bedingt allerdings, daß sie die indische Landessprache(n) oft nur mangelhaft sprechen.
- Die Bhikkhus der MBS sind ganzjährig ortsgebunden. Sie wirken als Repräsentanten des Sangha in ihren jeweiligen Viharas und darüberhinaus als Moderatoren von angegliederten Maßnahmen vor allem im Erziehungs- und Gesundheitsbereich.
- Nachgerade überlebenswichtig für die vielen Pilger aus Sri Lanka sind die Herbergen der MBS in Bodhgaya und Sarnath.
- Nach wie vor wichtig für die internationale Vermittlung der Aktivitäten der MBS und die angemessene Reflektion der Lehren des Pali Kanon an eine englischsprachige Leserschaft ist „The Maha Bodhi“ (vgl. „A Panorama of Indian Buddhism“, 1995).

- Zur neo-buddhistischen Bewegung in Indien jedoch haben die singhalesischen Repräsentanten der MBS ein recht distanziertes Verhältnis, weil die eigenwillige Neuinterpretation des Dhamma durch Dr. Ambedkar (1957) von ihnen nicht akzeptiert wird (JATAVA 1997:67-85). Umgekehrt wird die MBS von der neo-buddhistischen Bewegung nicht akzeptiert, weil sie „Bengali high caste interests“ repräsentiere (vgl. dazu hier besonders S. 59/60).
- Besonders auffällig präsent ist die MBS in der vergleichsweise aufgeräumten und überschaubaren Welt von Sarnath. Die Mulagandhakuti Vihara mit ihren schönen Fresken aus der Lebensgeschichte Buddhas (gestiftet von B.L. Brownton, einem englischen Buddhisten, und in dreijähriger Arbeit von dem Japaner Kosetsu Nosu gestaltet) und der umliegende saubere Park mit den Resten von Klosterruinen und Stupas aus der klassischen Hoch-Zeit des indischen Buddhismus sind eine gerne besuchte stille Zuflucht und bieten besonders an Wochenenden „all walks of Indian life“ eine willkommene Abwechslung zur lärmenden Enge ihrer Wohnquartiere in Benares. Das schmucke kleine Verwaltungsgebäude der MBS wurde kürzlich mit Spenden einer recht vermögenden Japanerin gründlich renoviert und vermittelt mit dem pagodenartig auskragenden neuen Dach einen exotischen Kontrast zur „neo-klassischen“ Strenge der großen Pilgerherberge auf der gegenüberliegenden Straßenseite, ein Geschenk der Industriellenfamilie Birla an die MBS.
- Ganz anders dagegen die Verhältnisse in Bodh Gaya, dem Ausgangspunkt der von Anagarika Dharmapala vor mehr als hundert Jahren angestoßenen Bewegung zur Wiederbelegung des Buddhismus in seinem Ursprungsland: Hier hat der internationale Bau-Boom mit vor- und nachgelagertem Wildwuchs von Bazar und fliegenden Händlern inzwischen den ehemals freistehenden Gebäudekomplex der MBS sozusagen überwuchert.

APPENDIX I
Anagarika Dharmapala's Letter to Francis J. Payne,
London dated 3.4.1925
NAMO BUDDHAYA

VEN: ANAGARIKA DHARMAPALA
DIRECTOR GENERAL
BUDDHIST MISSION OF INDIA

4/A College Square
Calcutta

My dear Friend,

It seems that your vigorous activities in the arena of the Dhamma propaganda have come to a standstill. How did the collapse come? What have you done with regard to the publication of your Buddhist-Bible? When activities cease people understand that life has left the body. While we are alive we have to do good Kamma?

What are we here for? The answer is given in the Maha Mangala Sutta. There is nothing so evil as association with the muddle-headed, and that is what 99% of people do. Priests, theologians, political leaders, lawyers, statesmen are of one mind. The people are enslaved. They have to work for the benefit of those who have created a god and created a king. Jehovah told Samuel to warn the Hebrews not to elect a king. What we

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Faksimile eines Briefes von Anagarika Dharmapala vom 3.4.1925

failed to convince the idiots, and gave the tallest of the lot, a donkey-driver, to be made king. The conflict arose between Jehovah and the people's sovereign. Both parties went down when Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem. Jehovah went into a state of suspended animation. The Hebrews went into captivity.

The Dhamma of the Tathagato is little understood in the West. No two scholars agree with the ultimates of the Dhamma. The first requisite necessary to understand the Dhamma is Wisdom (Panna). To have panna one should be armed with the ^{adjuncts of the} first two principles of the Noble Eightfold Path. The British people are imbued with the spirit of sensualism, which is a hindrance to enter the Path. Absolute renunciation is too philosophic a requisite to be undertaken by the muddle-headed who wish to be governed by the priest and the aristocrat, failing both the wife.

Forty years of ceaseless activity has made me

those who have created a god and elected a king. Jehovah told Samuel to warn the Hebrews not to elect a king. But he failed to convince the idiots and gave the tallest of the lot, a donkey-driver, to be made king. The conflict arose between Jehovah and the people's sovereign. Both parties went down when Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem. Jehovah went into a state of suspended animation. The Hebrews went into captivity.

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Physically weak for 34 years I have spent my life
in India in voluntary exile. The name of the Lord
Buddha was hardly ~~then~~ known 34 years ago by
the people of India. Today all India acknowledges
him as their God. There was no Vihara in India,
no Buddhist publication, no preaching until started
by the Maha Bodhi Society. There is a great harvest
to be reaped if there are Buddhist workers. The
number of Untouchables waiting to be rescued
from the Brahmanical despotism is 65 millions.
The Brahman's don't want them. They are ^{not allowed} by
the Brahman's to walk in the same road with them.
Christians and Moslems wish to convert them, and
steps are being taken by both to have them converted.
There are 70 million Moslems. If the Untouchables are
converted the number of Moslems will increase to 135.
Millions. Padres will be glad to have the number of
Native Christians increased from 3 millions to 68 millions.
When the Untouchables become Moslems - there will
be a tough fight between Moslems & Hindus.

physically weak. For 14 years I have spent my life in India in voluntary exile. The name of the Lord Buddha was hardly known 37 years ago by the people of India. Today all India acknowledges him as their God. There was no Vihara in India, no Buddhist publication, no preaching until started by the Maha Bodhi Society. There is a great harvest to be reaped if there are Buddhist workers. The number of Untouchables waiting to be rescued from the Brahmanical despotism is 65 millions. The Brahman's don't want them. They are not allowed by the Brahman's to walk in the same road with them. Christians and Moslems wish to convert them and steps are being taken by both to have them converted. There are 70 million Moslems. If the Untouchables are converted the number of Moslems will increase to 135 millions. Padres will be glad to have the number of Native Christians increased from 3 millions to 68 millions. When the Untouchables become Moslems there will be a tough fight between Moslems and Hindus.

Faksimile eines Briefes von Anagarika Dharmapala vom 3.4.1925

Indian Christianity is synonymous with butchery & alcoholism. I wish to start a propaganda to carry the Dhamma to the Untouchables, but I am now so very weak that the Doctors advise me to take complete rest in a German Sanitorium for 3 months, otherwise I shall be completely break down and be of no use to the Cause.

I propose leaving Calcutta next month about the 10 of May and go to Colombo, there to take steamer for Marseilles. If after my arrival ^{in Europe} I shall let you know. Would it be helpful to the Cause if I visit England?

The Buddha Dhamma is too sublime for the barbarian ^{pagans}. They do not want to give up alcohol & meat. They are satisfied with the low-caste gods and the fetish priests.

Yours affectionately,

The Anagarika Dharmapala

Francis J. Payne Esq.
London.

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Yours affectionately
The Anagarika Dharmapala.

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THE MAHA BODHI SOCIETY OF INDIA

(Estd. by Anagarika Dharmapala in 1891)

POST BOX NO. : 12365

4-A, BANKIM CHATTERJEE STREET, CALCUTTA - 700 073 INDIA

MESSAGE

Maha Bodhi Society's main objective was the restoration of Buddhagaya Temple and its vicinity. Hence amongst all activities of Mahabodhi Society during past hundred years Buddhagaya had been main which used to rotate other things and gave impetus to the activities.

The Centenary Celebrations of Mahabodhi Society actually means the 100 years that revolution for restoration of Buddhist prestige in India, which was started from Buddhagaya. This is the most worthy place for the Celebrations, and the Buddhagaya Centre is doing this.

I feel immense pleasure that the year 1991 has rejuvenated most of the Mahabodhi Centres at different places to take on various social and welfare activities. The Buddhagaya has come forward with opening a hospital, a school, a Bhikkhu Training Centre and—literary organ—which all had been wished by the founder Ven. Dharmapala, for Buddhagaya. It has been brought in action with this Centenary.

I wish all success and I shall co-operate in all of my capacities with its all activities.

Bhavatu Sabba Mangalam.

(Ven. M. Wipulasara Maha Thera)

General Secretary

Maha Bodhi Society of India

Grußbotschaft der Maha Bodhi Society, Calcutta, anlässlich der Feiern zum hundertsten Jahrestag des „Buddhist Revival“ in Bodh Gaya.

The Name...

The Maha Bodhi Society derives its name from the tree under which about two thousand five hundred and thirty five years ago, at Buddha Gaya, the Great Being, Gautama Buddha, took his adamantine seat (Vajrasana) and visualised the Truth, The Reality.

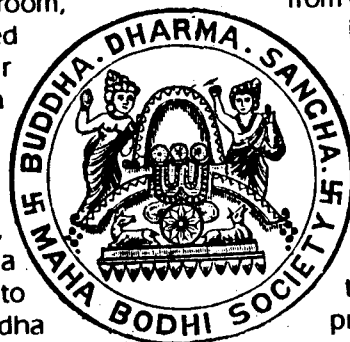
This Tree was an Asvattha (Ficus Religiosa), which was sanctified by Siddhartha Gautama's attaining Supreme Knowledge (Bodhi) beneath its shade.

Thenceforth, it became known as the Bodhi-Tree in India and Bo-Tree in Sri Lanka.

Today the word Bodhi has become internationally known term or noun in connection with the Buddhist activities.

The Seal...

The Seal of the Maha Bodhi Society, of which an engraving is printed here, was copied from an alto-relievo tablet in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, and may be seen against the right-hand wall of the large square room, Sculpture Gallery. It is included by Major General Sir Cunningham and most computed to be more than it was the seal adopted by Viharas of those days. The the three Gems — Buddha, supporting it is the Dharma the Couchant Deer refer to Benares, where the Buddha entitled the Dhamma his doctrines. The two figures typify the celestial hosts in the act of adoration. The Japanese auxiliary of the Maha Bodhi Society (Indo Busseki Kofuku Kwai) has adopted this as their emblem.



The Aim...

Maha Bodhi Society, a true missionary organisation of the type which the founder of the religion had in his mind and carried out literally the direction given by the Buddha in the memorable words :—

“Go ye, O Bhikkhus, and wander forth for the benefit of the many, for the welfare of many, out of compassion for the worldly beings, for the benefit, good and happiness of men and gods. Do not two of you set forth in the same direction. Proclaim, O Bhikkhus, the doctrine, excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle and excellent at the end — true in its meaning, true in its letter, preach ye a life of holiness perfect and immaculate”.

—Mahavagga Vinaya Pitaka

Selbstbeschreibung der Maha Bodhi Society, Calcutta, 1992

The Maha Bodhi
Founded by Anagarika Dhamapala
First Published in 1892

Centenary Volume

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The Society's Objectives

The Maha Bodhi Society of India is an Association registered with the Government of India in 1915 (under Act VII of 1913) and its Head Quarters is situated at 4A, Bankim Chatterjee Street, Calcutta-73.

The objectives of the Society are set out in the Memorandum of Association and among them a few important ones are as follows :-

- To revive and propagate Buddhism in India and work towards inter religious harmony through the message of Love and Compassion of the Buddha.
- To popularise the study and dissemination of Pali and Sanskrit Buddhist Literature.
- To publish Pali and Sanskrit Buddhist and other Indian Religious Texts.
- To translate such texts and literature into English and Indian vernaculars.
- To educate illiterate people in domestic sciences, such as hygiene, technical industries and home crafts.
- To open schools in villages for boys and girls to teach them arts and crafts.
- To open vocational schools and gymnasia for physical culture.
- To revive ancient Buddhist and other Religious Arts and Crafts by importing teachers from Buddhist and other countries.
- To start a Medical College and Hospital to cater to the sick and needy people.
- To train young men of unblemished character to become Bhikkhu Missionaries to carry the Message of the Lord Buddha of Love and Compassion to the people of India and other countries.
- To found orphanages and free Schools to educate needy children and found homes for needy elders.
- To found the nucleus of a Buddhist University on the lines of the ancient University of Nalanda to which students of all religions and faiths could gain admission.
- To found Pali Scholarships and Lecturer-ships.
- To send students for further studies to Buddhist and other countries.
- To provide facilities for foreign Buddhist and other needy students in Calcutta.
- To found International Libraries and Museums with special stress on Buddhist and other Religious Books, Literary and Cultural works.
- To set up centres and branches of the Society and to build Buddhist Viharas, Pilgrim Centres and Pilgrim Guest Houses in India and abroad.
- To establish a fully equipped Press to print texts, books and pamphlets on Buddhism, and other literary and cultural works on Indology and on physical and moral sciences.
- To start journals in English and in the Vernaculars for disseminating Buddhism, Buddhist Art and Culture and Buddhist Literature as well as other Indian Religions, Art, Cultural and Literary works.
- To revive the ancient ideal of Brahmacharya life of self-abnegation and disinterested service for the welfare of the many, and to revive the forgotten science of Buddha Yoga.
- To incorporate any Society or Association having similar objectives as this Association.
- To receive any property for any one or more of the objectives of the Association.
- To maintain liaison and contact with all other National and International Buddhist Organisations.
- To do all such things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objectives or any of them.

Books by Dharmapala

- The Arya Dharma of Sakyamuni Gautama, the Buddha.
- The Life and Teachings of Buddha.

— Maha Bodhi Publications

Ziele der Maha Bodhi Society, 1992

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