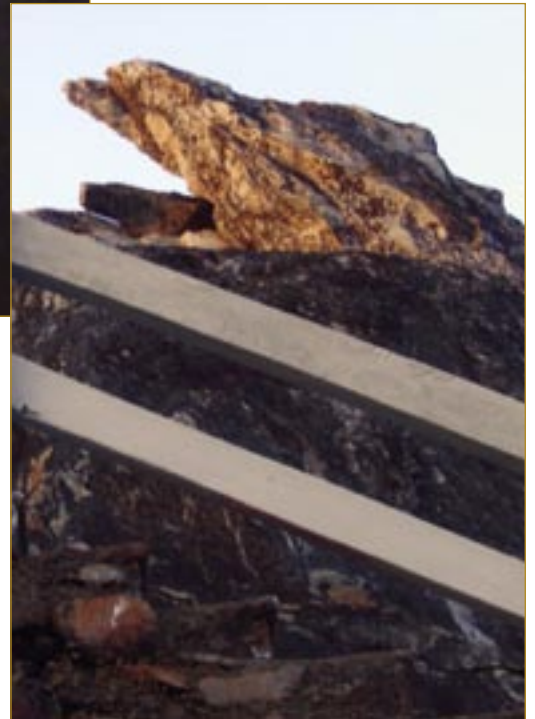




Images from a recent pilgrimage to Buddhist sites in India.

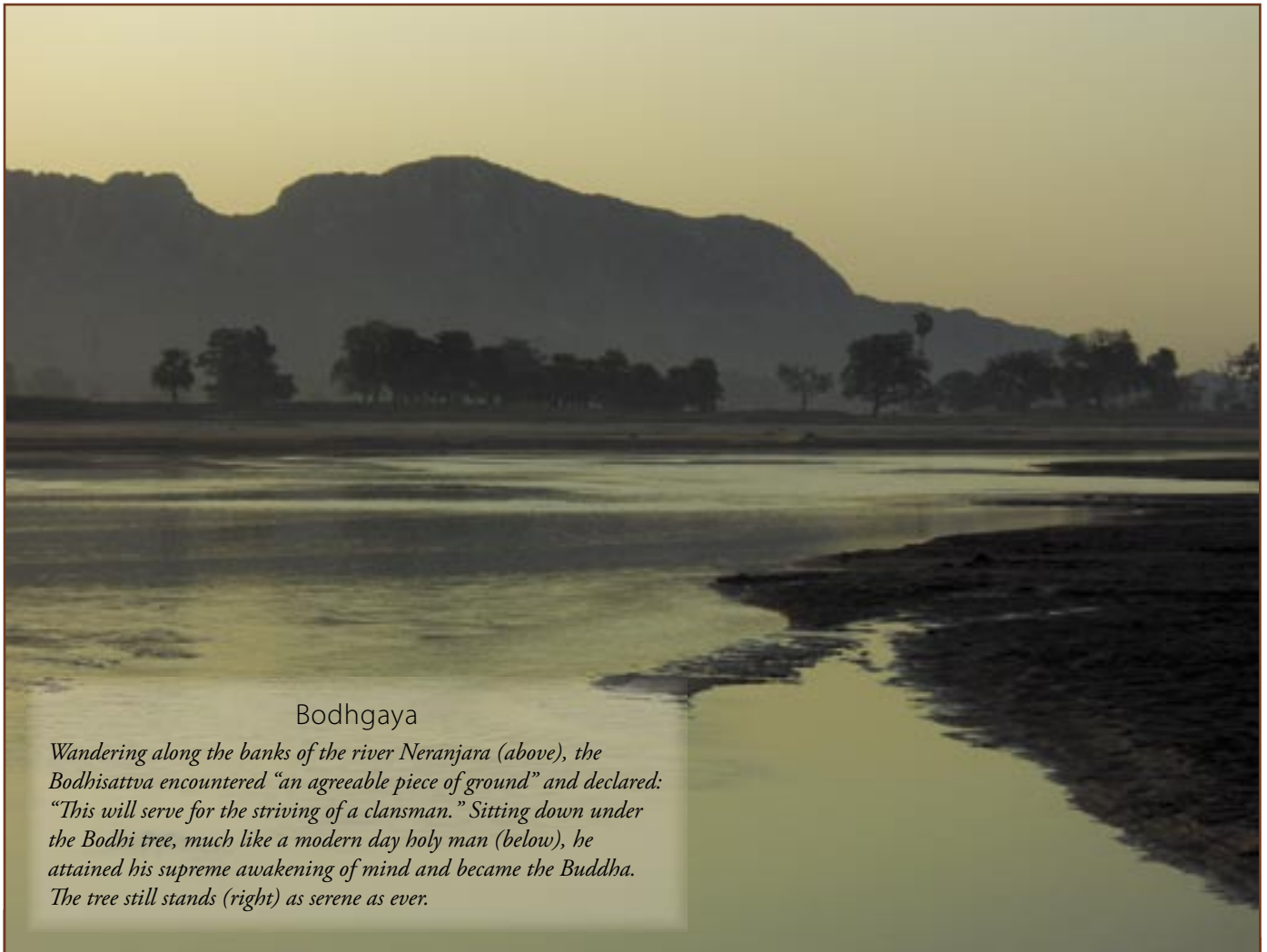


### Rajagaha

*The ancient capital of Magadha is a natural ring of hills rising abruptly from the plains. It is also the site of Vulture Peak (ever wonder how it got its name?) and the Bamboo Grove, both favorite haunts of the Buddha.*



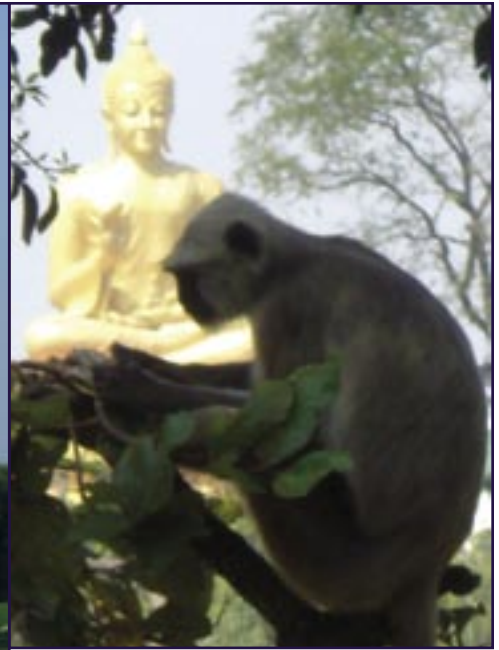
Photos by A. Olendzki.



### Bodhgaya

*Wandering along the banks of the river Neranjara (above), the Bodhisattva encountered “an agreeable piece of ground” and declared: “This will serve for the striving of a clansman.” Sitting down under the Bodhi tree, much like a modern day holy man (below), he attained his supreme awakening of mind and became the Buddha. The tree still stands (right) as serene as ever.*





### Sravasti

*The park purchased by Anathapindika from Prince Jeta and given to the Sangha still remains, strewn with stupas and monuments from all different ages. The Buddha spent most of his time here over the last twenty-five years of his life, and even today it is a place of great tranquility. Nearby are the unexcavated ruins of the old city, as well as a new attraction: an extensive Thai lay Buddhist complex complete with a massive gilded statue.*





## Kusinara

*The Buddha passed away at the age of eighty in a sleepy little “wattle & daub” town, as tranquil today as it was in ancient times. A stupa and shrine (left) identifies the spot, within which is found a magnificent reclining statue (below left). A solemn and powerful place, the womb-like room was lined with middle aged Asian women sobbing quietly, as if the event had just taken place. A puja is offered at dawn (below) at another nearby stupa, dating from the time of Ashoka, where the master’s body is said to have been cremated.*

