

NOTES & TOPICS

STUPA SYMBOL

An authority on Buddhist as well as Hindu art forms, Kalyan Kumar Ganguli, in his article (Supra p p. 5 ff) states that the Stupa, as an object of veneration or a receptacle for relics, is anterior to the life and times of Buddha Sakyamuni. This is in accord with Tibetan tradition, which holds that there were several Tathagatas prior to Buddha Sakyamuni. Tibetan tradition also confirms Dr. Ganguli's opinion that Buddha in iconic form is later than Stupa for Buddha and that first Buddha image, in high or low relief, was on the body of the Stupa or railings around.

Stupa as a common feature of all schools and sects of Buddhism is admitted by scholars as well as believers. The five illustrations suffixed to the learned article attest this fact.

An article from Tibetan sources describing the five steps to Sumeru, the Mandala and other features as in Mahayana sources will be published in the Bulletin shortly.

Portable metal stupa, containing relics or some Mantra, has been a special feature of Tibetan Buddhism. Its popularity dates from the time of Atisa Dipankara whose baggages were only two, a metal Stupa with Buddha's relics and a basket containing a few sacred texts. This Stupa known as Kadam Chorten has special structural peculiarities. This will also be noticed in the scheduled article.

- NCS

JAGANNATH UPADHYAYA

Professor Jagannath Upadhyaya, an authority on Mahayana and Northern Buddhism, and a member of the General Council of Sikkim Research Institute of Tibetology passed away in September last. An obituary will be published in the next issue of the Bulletin.

- NCS