

The Philosophical Research Society, Inc.

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40th ANNIVERSARY
OF MANLY P. HALL'S
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CONTRIBUTORS' BULLETIN -- JUNE 1965

Dear Friend:

In recent months, there have been several important additions to our permanent library collection. We have strengthened our section on the Inca culture of Peru, and added several fine volumes on the art of Leonardo da Vinci. Through the cooperation of a friend in Japan, we have acquired a rare series of stone rubbings depicting the twenty-seven forms of the Bodhi-sattva Kannon. Japanese stone rubbings of religious subjects are rare, and this matched set, all identically mounted in scroll form, may be unique. As demands for exhibits are increasing, and our source material is on loan to local institutions much of the time, it is both useful and pleasant to have choice items available.



A few years ago, a remarkable exhibit of the Gandhara sculpture of Pakistan and Afghanistan was brought to the United States as a special loan from the government of Pakistan. This art is very little known in the West, but has unusual interest to all students of Eastern religion. Gandhara was originally the name of an ancient province and kingdom located at the eastern limit of the conquests of Alexander the Great. He reached this region 327 B.C. Later Gandhara was reunited with India, and a strong civilizing influence was exercised in this area by the Buddhist Emperor Asoka. So far as can be learned, the earliest likenesses of Buddha were created at Gandhara, and it is believed that these early stone portraits were based upon statues of the Greek sun god.

It has been assumed that Gandhara art was strongly influenced by Greek culture. Some recent authorities, however, insist that it was more directly indebted to Roman art, and that about the 1st century A.D., Roman artisans actually worked in Gandhara. As Roman art, however, was heavily indebted to Greek originals, the distinction has little practical value. Buddha is represented in a Greco-Roman costume, with a decidedly Grecian cast of features. Traditional Oriental elements are also present, such as the urna -- a small circle or dot on the forehead, the large ears, and the ushnisha (or dome) on the crown of the head, which is partly covered by the chignon. The outstanding feature of much of the Gandhara sculpturing is the hair arrangement. Buddha is portrayed with wavy hair and a high chignon, rather than the usual tight curls. Gandhara

sculpturing is dated between the 1st and 5th centuries A.D. Most of the carvings are cut in slate, although figures in terra cotta are also known. Through the generosity of the Birthday Club, a very good example of Gandhara Buddhist sculpturing has been added to our permanent collection. Buddha is represented seated between two monks. The Greek or Roman drapery hangs in gentle folds, and the loosely arranged hair identifies the school. We believe this piece was carved in the 3rd or 4th century A.D. It was brought from Pakistan only a few months ago.



Our library exhibit for July and August has been made possible by two friends of the Society. Through the courtesy of Mr. Abnashi Ram, we are able to display a complete set of the eighteen lohan carved in ivory of very fine quality during the early Chin Lung Dynasty, about 1660 A.D. Each figure is an idealized representation of one of the great Buddhist saints, and stands upon an elaborate base of intricately designed cloisonné. The expressions on the faces of these saints clearly suggest men of unusual character and great spiritual strength. Combined with this display are eighteen paintings of lohan loaned through the generosity of Mr. Julian C.

Wright, a distinguished collector of Oriental art. The paintings, which are rare and curious, apparently originated in the North China area. Mr. Wright has kindly consented to prepare a description of them from his own research and from the few other examples known to exist. We are indeed grateful to Mr. Ram and Mr. Wright for making it possible for our friends to enjoy these rare collections.

As I expect to be out of the office for most of the month of July, our summer Open House will be held on Sunday, July 25th, immediately after my return. Our headquarters will be open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and I will give a special afternoon talk in addition to the regular Sunday morning lecture. The Hospitality Committee will provide refreshments in the patio, and visitors are invited to study the library exhibit of Chinese art and to browse in the gift shop, where there will be a preview showing of our 1965 line of Christmas cards, as well as interesting art objects. Fine Oriental prints and paintings will also be available. A special attraction for bargain hunters will be a thrift sale arranged by the Friends Committee. If you live within a reasonable distance of Los Angeles, we certainly hope to see you then.

With best wishes for a pleasant summer season, I am

Most sincerely yours,

Manly P. Hall