

# The Philosophical Research Society, Inc.

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40th ANNIVERSARY  
OF MANLY P. HALL'S  
PUBLIC WORK

1960

## CONTRIBUTORS' BULLETIN -- AUGUST 1965

Dear Friend:



By the time you receive this letter, I will have returned from a three-week stay in Japan. After my most profitable trip there last year, it has seemed advisable to go again to gather needed material for my book on Buddhism, secure manuscripts for our library, and find unusual items for our art department. At present writing, I am making preparations for the trip. I will divide my time between Tokyo and Kyoto, and plan to be in Kyoto for the opening of the colorful Gion Festival. My constant companion will be a polaroid camera that I have recently acquired. With this instant photography (actual developing time is ten seconds), pictures can be taken as need arises, with a minimum of paraphernalia.

Incidentally, the acquisition of this camera makes me the unofficial official photographer for our Society. The picture of the Buddhist Triad in the last Contributors' Bulletin was the result of my efforts, as is the accompanying view of our patio, which I snapped just a few steps away from my private office door.

Bhutan is a mysterious and remote semi-independent state in the eastern Himalayas between Tibet and India. Although the country is only two hundred miles long and ninety miles wide, it includes mountain peaks that reach up twenty-four thousand feet. The population is 650,000, and it is still in a feudal state, governed, much like Tibet, by a spiritual ruler believed to be an incarnation of a buddha, and a maharajah assisted by a council and advisors. Bhutan is represented at the New York World's Fair by a charming building in native style, and to commemorate its participation, the little country issued a series of stamps, one of which is shown herewith. At one side of the stamp, which is in full colors, is the seated figure of the Buddha in meditation, probably based upon some religious treasure of the country. Beside this, is a reproduction of the Pietas of Michelangelo, the dead Christ in the arms of his mother. Considering the remoteness of Bhutan and the brief time in which it has emerged into public awareness, this stamp suggests a true spirit of religious understanding and tolerance.



The July-August exhibit in our library, "The Sages of China," was so outstanding that we feel you will enjoy a fuller report of the significance of the material. In



our last letter, we described the ivory carvings on loan through the courtesy of Mr. Abnashi Ram, but we now have further information about the remarkable paintings on display from the collection of Mr. Julian C. Wright. The accompanying picture shows Mr. Wright holding one of his paintings. Dating from the 13th or 14th century, these paintings were done by priest-artists for use in a temple. The work is in ink and colors, and testifies to a high degree of religious sensitivity, as well as artistic ability. Originally, the paintings were in the form of four scrolls, each scroll consisting of three lohan pictures at the top, followed by a ritual vessel painting, and at the bottom, a representation of Mongols, Turks, or other Asiatic people. When the scrolls began to show signs of serious deterioration due to age, the paintings

were separated for better preservation. Our exhibit (which can be seen through August 29th) includes the twelve paintings of lohan, and the four pictures of "foreigners," the latter being most curious, and we might even venture to say, somewhat amusing.

This exhibit is of particular interest because it gives the student of Oriental art and philosophy the opportunity to compare the ivory-carved and temple-painting representations of the lohan, also known as the arhats of Buddhism. These venerated sages were entrusted with the perpetuation of the Doctrine after Gautama Buddha departed from this world, and the group includes several of the actual disciples of Buddha. In both China and Japan, the arhats became closely identified with the Zen sect as symbols of transcendental meditational powers. In the Chinese tradition, it is said that they had attained the eight emancipations, the three knowledges, the six supernatural powers, the wisdom of passionlessness, the ultimate perfection of consciousness, and countless other merits. Representations of them appear frequently in Buddhist painting, sculpturing, and ceramics. Each arhat can be identified by certain attributes of appearance or ornamentation -- such as unusually long eyebrows or ears, or an alarm staff or incense burner or bell that he is carrying, all of which symbolize aspects of philosophic wisdom.

An interesting group of visitors dropped in at Headquarters recently. They included Bhikkshu Chaman Lal, who was ordained a Buddhist monk at Sarnath, India, in 1955. He was active in the struggle for political liberty, and has now dedicated his life to the liberating of human souls. He has written extensively. He was accompanied by Dr. Haridas Chaudhuri, Professor of Comparative Philosophy at the American Academy of Asian Studies, San Francisco. He is an exponent of the concepts of harmonious and creative living as advanced by the celebrated Indian mystic Sri Aurobindo. Mr. Lew Ayres, who has cooperated so graciously with the work of our Society, joined the group to look over the treasures of our library.

We are happy to report that Dr. Framroze A. Bode, member of our faculty, was invited to appear on radio station KABC in June on the program "Religion on the Line," a panel discussion with questions from radio listeners by phone. Our art department continues the good work in public relations, and participated in an Oriental exhibit at Los Angeles State College by supplying 87 items from our collection, including rare fabrics and Otsu wood-block prints.

As we have reached the bottom of the page, we will bring this letter to a close. With sincere greetings to all of you, as well as deep appreciation for your continuing support of our work, I am

Very sincerely yours,

*Manly P. Hall*

# PUBLICATIONS BY MANLY P. HALL

## IMPRESSIONS OF MODERN JAPAN

On May 13th, 1964, Manly P. Hall flew to Japan for a long-overdue vacation. He visited shrines, temples, galleries, dealers in books and antiques, and talked with persons of many interests in different walks of life. It is inevitable that Mr. Hall would be especially conscious of the religions of Japan, the philosophies that have guided the nation, and the psychological changes brought about by the pressures of material progress. He was fortunate in being able to compare the Japan of 1964 with the country as it was when he first visited it over forty years ago. This is an informal publication with touches of whimsey, and is illustrated with interesting pictures, many of which he took himself. It is distinctly intended for friends of Mr. Hall and his work, and will probably never be reprinted after the present limited edition of 1,000 copies is exhausted. Typescript, 8½ x 11, 48 pages, art paper cover, printed by offset. Price: \$2.00 (plus 4% tax in Calif.)



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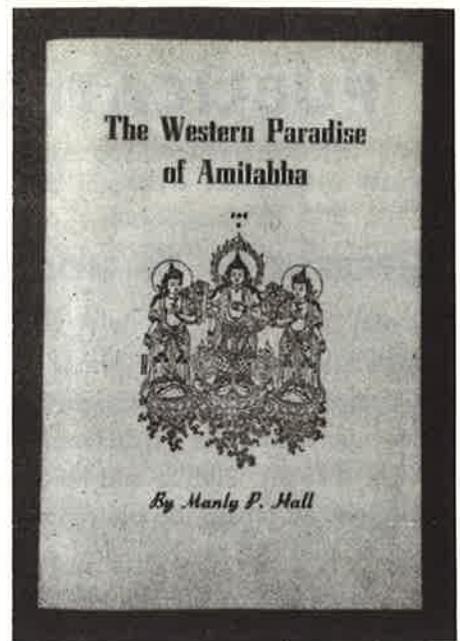
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