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The Voice of an Epoch



Nicholas Roerich

October 10, 1874—December 13, 1947

*His roots were in the primeval past—
He lent grace and beauty to the living present—
He labored to make straight the path into the future.*

By THEODORE HELINE

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The world of Roerich is the world of Truth
—Leonid Andreyeff



SANCTA PROTETRIX By Nicholas Roerich

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EXTRACTS FROM

Nicholas Roerich

The Voice of An Epoch

by Theodore Heline

"If Pheidias was the creator of divine form and Giotto the painter of the soul, then Roerich may be said to reveal the spirit of the Cosmos."

—Barnett D. Conlan

Now and again in the course of human history a man appears who places an immortal impress upon the age in which he lives. Such a man was Nicholas Roerich. It is safe to say that in this serene yet crusading Apostle of Culture the most profound spiritual significance of our epoch found its most effective and comprehensive embodiment. By his identification with the whole scope and sweep of the spiritual renaissance which comes quietly but surely to birth in the midst of the present world chaos and tribulation, it seems certain that history will accord him a place in our time similar to that which it gives to Francis Bacon, for example, who stands out as a focal figure in a time when a new creative impulse entered into the European cultural stream, or to Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci as towering lights of the period of the Renaissance, or again to Pericles as but another name for the glory that was Greece, or to Akhnaton, the Egyptian Pharaoh, as the one really living image of one of the world's oldest and greatest civilizations. In short, Roerich's place is even now secure as one of the world's immortals by virtue of the elements of immortality which he has so conspicuously imparted to his many magnificent and varied cultural activities and artistic creations.

Roerich's life was of epic proportions. The range of his creative genius has been equalled only by a few. Continents were to him what provinces are to lesser prophets. Europe, America and Asia claimed him as their very own and all the world united in rendering him the highest homage.

Nicholas Roerich achieved international eminence as an artist, scientist, author, philosopher and educator. To each and all of these diversified activities he brought the insight and understanding that comes to the inwardly illumined. He was Russian by birth and of Slavo-Viking descent. He became an American by adoption and made Himalayan India his residence for the last twenty-five years of his life. These simple biographical facts are in themselves indicative of his universal character and his world-wide mission.



It was also in keeping with his life's general pattern that the land of his birth and the land of his adoption are the two principal areas in the world in which new racial strains are in process of development, and that after he had drawn into his being the fresh, creative impulses from these two lands this citizen of the world should turn to the Orient and in particular to India, the heart of Asia and the Mother of Religions. In that land where the things of the spirit have always been exalted above the things of this world, his soul found its true home. Also, the elevated consciousness in which he worked naturally drew him to the mountains and to the very roof of the world. And so it was among the lofty Himalayas on India's northern border, where the atmosphere, psychic and physical, is charged with inner power as nowhere else on earth that he completed the major part of his historic mission.

A Many-Sided Genius

Roerich's was the Master Mind that could do many things and do them all well. He first studied law; then archeology, becoming a professor in the subject. Then came his preoccupation with art, art in all its manifold expressions. In the course of the years he founded numerous institutions and inaugurated a world movement for the establishment of Peace through Culture. Intensive activity marked his life from first to last.

Professor Roerich had a particular interest in the ancient, the legendary, the prehistoric as well as in the unfolding Future which he came to serve and in which he had an abounding faith. His researches into the Stone Age were of scientific importance.

There is something deeply significant in the fact that Roerich's early years were devoted to art on the one hand and science on the other, and that the particular branch of science which he chose to cultivate was archeology. This had a very important bearing on his life's mission. It links up with the fact that science rules our modern world, a science that has shut out both art and religion from its sphere. The materialistic world it has created has left the soul of man in a spiritual void. Roerich came to correct that condition.

The first step toward that correction was to find ways to readmit art
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and religion into the field of science. Time was when they functioned as a trinity in unity. It must be so again. The benefits of specialization which divided them have been won. To continue the separation is fatal to civilization. It militates against man's spiritual progression.

And so a man comes on our earthly scene to serve as a Master Synthesizer. It is Roerich. In order to perform that task he sets out first of all to acquaint himself with science and with art and with religion, and above all with the means to bring them together once again in their individual and united service of man. This mission he conceived in the terms of Peace through Culture. That is, a Culture embracing art, science and religion functioning as a trinity in unity.

So he became a scientist exploring the culture of the primeval world, the Stone Age. It fascinated him. He applied the artist's imagination to his task and in so doing entered into the state of consciousness that then prevailed. He became aware of nature's processes and their cosmic significance. He tuned in with the rhythms of creative evolution. He observed as a scientist observes, he understood as the intuitive artist understands, and he beheld in reverence as the reverential behold. Inwardly he experienced the unity that exists at the heart of art, science and religion but which man today apprehends and regards only in a state of separation.

This sense of unity which Roerich evoked from within the depths of his subconscious mind as he worked in the dual role of scientist and artist, the primitive man experienced in an instinctive, subjective way. Modern man must arrive at this same experience only now it must be in his objective consciousness through a development of the inner faculty of intuition and imagination. This comes with the cultivation of the science of the soul. Roerich cultivated that science. He was an exponent of the Ageless Wisdom, the Arcane Doctrine. He therefore carried the experiences of the man of the Stone Age who knew art, science and religion as one, and which he recapitulated in his early life, up to a corresponding point on a higher level of the spiral of attainment where modern man must lay hold of it in our time. Roerich was a prophet of this restoration. He was by virtue of this in deed and in truth the Voice of an Epoch.

Roerich's archeological interests were carried alongside of his artistic achievements throughout the whole of his career. They entered into his exploration in Central Asia during a five-year expedition from 1923 to 1929 that took him into Mongolia, Tibet and remote places in Central Asia. On these travels he collected data on Asiatic culture and philosophy, discussed ancient lore and the Ageless Wisdom with lamas in Tibet (and in their very own language), made a pictorial record comprising five hundred magnificent paintings and carried out a commission from the United States Government to search the Gobi Desert for drought-resisting plants to help save American denuded lands in the Dust Bowl.

On this expedition he encountered both hardships and dangers. But what are obstacles, he asks, but "new possibilities to create beneficent energy, and without battle," he adds, "there is no victory."

A Master Artist

Roerich's paintings, which number 5000, are to be found in the leading museums and art collections all over the world. It is said that in Russia there is no museum or gallery that does not possess some of his works. In some museums entire halls are dedicated exclusively to his paintings and in New York City a 29-story building was erected to his honor in 1929. This is perhaps the first time in history that an entire museum was built to house an artist's masterpieces while the artist was still alive.

Here is a modern artist who is not "modern" as this term is generally understood. His works are as different from those of the Modern School as they are from the Old Schools of the period of the Renaissance. They do not follow the ordinary line of development but spring like a new, fresh creation direct from some higher source. No one can miss their dazzling splendor, their tremendous power, their air of triumphant freedom and the exaltation of the spiritual atmosphere they radiate. They are charged with cosmic energies and divine meanings. They compel not only admiration but reverence.

Here are objects embodying the good and the true and the beautiful to such a degree that their spiritual significance is inescapable. They tell of a new force that is coming into the world, a force to quicken the Spirit of Man to new and nobler enterprises. For this were they given to the world.

A remarkable testimony as to the influence of Roerich's paintings on an observer is that of Ivan Narodny, a celebrated art critic as quoted in Padmanabhan Tampy's book on Roerich. Declared Mr. Narodny after viewing the master's canvases in a New York museum: "I began to feel the magic of their aesthetic rhythm, the metaphysical tones of their design and colour harmonies and I felt a new ray of light was falling on my disillusioned soul; I had actually sunk into moments of silent devotion or prayer. I was a changed man. From a depressing melancholy and cynicism of life, I had been transformed by the sight of the canvases of Nicholas Roerich into an aesthetic optimist, a believer in the mystic powers of beauty."

Roerich's paintings are at once sacred and occult. "He is certainly one of the most spiritual of masters since Leonardo and Blake," observes Mr. Conlan. And again, Mr. Tampy writing about this "teacher from the white summits" characterizes his works as essentially symbolic and occultly mystic. "He is essentially esoteric in his labors, he writes, "and through his prophetic visions embodied in his paintings which speak to the heart of men, he leads humanity to the gates of heaven."

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The first phase of Roerich's art consisted of realistic paintings depicting scenes in prehistoric Russia and the wanderings of his ancestral Norsemen. This was followed by some years in the theatre and lastly by the Asiatic period in which he produced his greatest works, works of Himalayan grandeur and splendor.

The theatre offered wide scope to this versatile genius since the stage presents a composite art, more especially opera and the ballet. So here we find him designing both scenery and costumes, and writing librettos as well.

His first creation for the theatre was settings for Wagner's *Valkyrie* which he did, not "on order" but solely for his own self-expression. This attraction for Wagner was quite inevitable since what this composer did consciously and purposefully with music, Roerich was doing with color—bringing the Spirit back into our life by the powers of the beautiful. Both dealt with myth and legend; both were of heroic mould; both formed their work into epic cycles and both brought Initiate consciousness to bear upon their respective works giving to them an enduring spiritual significance.

Stage designs for all other Wagner operas followed; also for the Russian opera *Prince Igor*. "These settings," writes an eminent critic, "have the character of great music; they are themselves a form of visual music." They have an inner unity with the drama such as only an artist of great synthetic powers can bestow upon a work.

Then there were the stage decorations for Maeterlinck's tragedies, *Princess Maleine* and *Sister Beatrice*, which gave him an opportunity to express the poetry and beauty that arises from out of the realms of myth and legend in which Maeterlinck and Roerich were equally at home.

But it was in the ballet where Roerich's theatre activities found their highest and most complete expression. For *The Rite of Spring* he did the stage settings, costumes and libretto in collaboration with Stravinsky who composed the music, and assisted by Nijinsky, the dancer, Daghileff, the producer, and a corps de ballet. Writing of this, Barnett D. Conlan, in his book entitled *Nicholas Roerich—Master of the Mountains*, ventures the opinion that this production, done in Paris in 1913, "may well come to be recognized as the most important artistic event in the 20th century."

The Rite of Spring was a theme to call forth the most exuberant powers of an artist who was not only in close and conscious rapport with nature's mystic powers but who was in himself a part of the resurrection forces of the age he came to serve. In commenting further on Roerich's service to the ballet, Mr. Conlan says, "It is interesting to see to what extent Roerich, as an artist, belongs to Russian music, to that great movement which, beginning with Glinka, and developing through opera and the theatre finally produced the Russian ballet, the most important event

after Wagner and in some ways the finest synthesis of all the arts since the Greeks. The poetic legends of Russian life which inspired the works of Glinka, Balakirev, Moussorgsky, Borodin, Rimsky Korsakov and Stravinsky has always been the chief element in Roerich's work . . . I have reason to think he was the most authentic element in it."

Roerich's Prophetic Office

It is to be expected that one worthy of being designated the Voice of an Epoch would have a prophet's grasp of the nature and the direction of the social forces at work in the world and the general manner of their out-working. Roerich possessed such knowledge as evidenced by a series of paintings done before the first World War in which the approaching catastrophe was unmistakably depicted in such pictures as *Last Angel*, *Ominous Signs*, *Human Deeds*, *Doomed City*, *The Lurid Glare*, *The Cry of the Serpent* and others.

It is to be noted that these pictorial warnings came when such upheaval as presently overtook the world was looked upon generally as virtually impossible. Then when disaster did overwhelm the world not only in one all-engulfing conflict, but two, and with a third threatening, and the masses despairing of ever finding a way out of the continuing tribulation, this same Voice of our Epoch proclaims in another series of prophetic pictures the coming of the Promised One and the Great Restoration. This message is conveyed in his cycle of pictures called the Messiah series; also in *Bridge of Glory* and *Himself Came*. Incidentally it is interesting to note that these last named pictures were all made in America, as was also the Sancta Series.

Roerich has but repeated in our day what the Lord Christ proclaimed two thousand years ago when He told His Disciples about the great tribulation that was coming upon the world in these "latter days" and that when these things came to pass they were to lift up their heads for their redemption had drawn nigh. Moreover, that in that day there was to be a great sunburst of Divine Glory and they would see the Son of Man coming in a cloud in power and great glory.

Roerich has translated that prophecy in its entirety, first the judgment as previously noted, and then the Restoration. Very literally one of his canvases portrays the Second Coming in a cloud though it is not recognizable as such in terms of orthodox Christianity since Roerich's message is never creedal but always universal. This is in the picture called *The Sign of Maitreya*. It shows a Tibetan surrounded by lofty peaks praying to a gigantic rock-hewn figure of Maitreya. While engaged in this devotion he catches a glimpse of the Great Horseman riding across the sky in the shape of a cloud. The long-awaited One has come.

In the universal character of Roerich there was a perfect blend of

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the Oriental insight into the inner realities of the spiritual life and the Occidental power to bring these mystical concepts into practical objectivity. True to his birth sign, Libra, which in the natural zodiac occupies the point on the western horizon, Roerich, in his consciousness stood on this line where heaven and earth, the inner and the outer, meet in perfect balance. And again, true to Libra, sheath of Venus, goddess of Beauty, it was primarily through the medium of art and by the power of Beauty that he made revelation to our age of the living spirit that permeates all form and gives significance to everything about us.

A Westerner by physical heredity, he was an Easterner by soul lineage. There were associations with India in his life from the very first. When finally he did visit India he came to his own and his own received him with deep homage and with the reverence they hold for the spiritually wise and good and true. An eminent artist, Bireswar Sen, welcomed him in the name of India in the following words which appeared at the time in the *Hindu Weekly* "To most of us, Roerich is a legendary figure of romance. Against the lurid glare of the flaming West, his mighty figure looms large like the motionless and benevolent Buddha in the midst of a vast cosmic cataclysm. Far above the tumultuous din of frenzied nations rings his voice—the unequivocal commandments of the Eternal, the Voice of Truth, Beauty and Culture. Great is Roerich—and greater still are his works, the beautiful harbingers of Peace and Good Will among men. Indefatigable in action, indomitable in spirit and innocent at heart, he is the new Sir Galahad, seeking after the Holy Grail."

Concerning most people it is quite natural to ask about their religion. But not so in the case of Roerich. Upon even the slightest acquaintance with this man and his work there is an instinctive recognition that his consciousness functions on the universal level where all creeds and all faiths blend in a realization of their common source and goal. Roerich's religion was cosmic, not creedal, a fact borne out by his life and work viewed in its completeness and more specifically as he expressed it in his series of paintings of the world's great Teachers and Saviours in which the veneration and emphasis extended to one is no less than that bestowed upon another.

Peace through Culture

When Roerich spoke of Peace through Culture he meant vastly more than current usage of the words convey. To him culture had a sacred content. It stood for the sum total of man's creative abilities as these found expression in the divine triad of beauty, truth and goodness. Culture to Roerich was no mere synonym for personal refinement and social grace; nor again, for intellectual excellence and formal religious piety. It stood for no passive existence, idleness or ease. "The hope of ease in all times,"

says he, "forced the people to forget the higher." And his crusade was to bring the higher back again into our civilization.

Culture, then, as this peacemaker conceived it and promoted it, meant a life of intensive creativeness on the spiritual front for the purpose of bringing forth a more luminous and fruitful way of life. It is the moral equivalent for war which the psychologist William James postulated as a necessary requirement for the establishment of a permanent peace on earth.

Two instruments were conceived by Professor Roerich for promoting a new world order through Culture. One was a Banner of Peace, the other, a cultural Pact of Peace. The Banner is white with three red spheres in the center representative of art, science and religion. These are enclosed in a circle indicating their underlying unity. The symbol is also representative of the past, present and future, all of which are embraced within the circle of eternity. And Roerich expressed in his life and work this symbol in its double significance, for as artist, scientist and prophet, he was perpetuating the ancient wisdom, envisaging the unfolding future and making radiant and fruitful the living, pulsating present.

The concept of promoting Peace through Culture by the creation of a Banner and a Pact of Peace was first conceived in 1904 when its author proposed the plan to the Society of Architects in Russia and again in 1914 to the state authorities. It was received with the highest interest but delayed owing to the war. The project was formally promulgated in New York in 1929. In 1933 the Third International Convention of the Pact and Banner of Peace was held in Washington when thirty-five nations were represented. Two years later in Washington the United States and all twenty Latin-American countries signed the treaty of the Roerich Pact. In the words of President Roosevelt spoken on that occasion, the event marked "a step forward in the preservation of the cultural achievements of the nations of this hemisphere." Continuing, the President observed that "in opening this Pact to the adherence of the nations of the world, we are endeavoring to make of universal application one of the principles vital to the preservation of modern civilization. The Treaty possesses a spiritual significance far deeper than the text of the instrument itself . . ."

In 1937 the Baltic States entered into a like compact and Committees for carrying forward the work have been established in many other parts of the world. A brochure titled *The Roerich Pact and Banner of Peace* was published by the New York Committee in 1947.

The great humanitarian aspect of the Pact is summed up in articles One and Two which provide that "educational, artistic and scientific institutions, artistic and scientific missions, the personnel, the property and collections of such institutions and missions shall be deemed neutral and as such shall be protected and respected by belligerents. Protection and

respect shall be due to the aforesaid institutions and missions in all places, subject to the sovereignty of the High Contracting Parties, without any discrimination as to the State allegiance of any particular institution or mission. Also that Institutions, Collections and Missions thus registered may display a distinctive flag, which will entitle them to especial protection and respect on the part of the belligerents, of Governments and peoples of all the High Contracting Parties."

Culture and peace are the most sacred goals of humanity, declared Professor Roerich. "In these days of great confusion," he averred, "both spiritual and material, the disturbed spirit strives to these radiant strongholds Above all confusions the Angels sing of Peace and Goodwill. No guns, no explosives can silence these choirs of heaven. And above all earthly wisdom, idealism, as the Teaching of Good, will still remain the quickest reaching and most renovating principle in life."

On another occasion Professor Roerich declared that "there will be no peace until people learn to discriminate between the mechanical civilization and the future culture of the spirit Only through creative work is the balance of a country established."

The inauguration of this movement for Peace through Culture has been hailed as an Act of Destiny for our time.

Roerich the Writer

Professor Roerich was the author of many books and a contributor to a wide variety of magazines in all parts of the world. He wrote in several languages and his more important works have been translated into all the principal tongues, both European and Asiatic.

The subjects are of wide range—art, archeology, travel, philosophy and the Esoteric Doctrine. His volume *Agni Yoga* is among the latter. It deals with the Yoga of Fire, or the pentacostal experience awaiting the new humanity as it makes contact with the fires of the Holy Spirit.

One need but glance at a few of the many titles of his works to detect the prophetic nature of his writings. One of his earliest, published in 1925, is titled *Path of Blessing*. Then there is *Flame of Chalice* which by its title alone kindles the inner fires of every aspirant in his quest of the Holy Grail. *Shamballa, Realm of Light, Fiery Stronghold, Sacred Vigil* and *Gates of the Future* all conjure up in the mind of the aspirant sacred images and holy experiences associated with the path that leads to Illumination and Mastership.

Heart of Asia deals with the land where Roerich's soul found perhaps its most congenial environment and in *Altai Himalaya* he conveys by both word and picture as only a master can, something of the physical and spiritual glories of these sublime heights.

An Emissary of the Elect

Roerich was a great intellect; he was an artist of supreme rank. But over and above this he was a great soul. His consciousness was cosmic and the prime source of his power was spiritual.

That Roerich was a direct emissary of the Great White Brotherhood no one could well doubt who has become familiar with his thoughts, his aims, his ideals and his works. His divine commission was Peace through Culture. Art—art in a multiplicity of forms—was his primary medium of expression, and Beauty in its redemptive aspects the power with which he accomplished his most significant results.

It was a high and sacred call that had come to this devotee of the Beautiful and it was with a vivid realization of this fact that he discharged his every task. A profound spiritual significance, therefore, attaches itself to all his works. They are like so many revelatory messages from the powers on high. Each and all were calculated to further humanity's spiritual awakening and to point the way to the New Order of peace and unity, of righteousness and graciousness, that is to succeed the age of iron, the centuries of war and the period of distress, sorrow and frustration that now draws to its cataclysmic close.

In the midst of universal disaster and destruction which inevitably accompanies the collapse of a civilization that has made personal gain and material achievement paramount, Roerich came to turn the minds of men to the spiritual realities on which can be founded an enduring order of existence that will yield beauty, harmony and peace. This he came to do at that psychological moment in human history when such a messenger was of supreme importance to the future of the race.

Unifying Art, Science and Religion

The nature of mankind's present needs are such that one who was preeminently the artist could accomplish more than one centered primarily in either science or religion. Science is too strongly focused in the material side of life and religion has lost its way in doctrinal abstractions and sectarian dogmatism. In the words of Alexis Carrel in *Man the Unknown*, "There is not the shadow of a doubt that mechanical, physical and chemical sciences are incapable of giving us intelligence, moral discipline, health, nervous equilibrium, security and peace." And as for religion, neither is it equal to the task, since as Carrel further observes, "mystical activity has been banished from most religions. Even its meaning has been forgotten."

And so today's supreme task called for a leader who was first of all an artist but who had at the same time the intellectual qualities and practical accomplishments of a proven scientist together with the devotion,

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the reverence and the spirituality that distinguishes the deeply dedicated religious soul. And such a man was Roerich.

That forgotten mystical sense of which Alexis Carrel speaks, Nicholas Roerich came to help man recover. A mysticism pervades everything he touched. As with Blake, the spiritual outlook dominates. He was profoundly religious, not in the creedal but in the cosmic sense. The character of his ministry was impersonal and universal. It was, moreover, so far removed from the purely utilitarian activities prevailing in our time as to quite fail of recognition by the uncomprehending multitude for whose enlightenment and upliftment he spent his precious life.

The truth of this statement was made quite evident when recently one of the most widely read and best favored of our journalistic columnists devoted over a score installments belittling and even ridiculing this Master Interpreter of our Age as an oriental "Guru" who with a semi-oriental glamor and professional blandishments had hoodwinked good Americans to accept him as a man of science and a purveyor of honest doctrine. A second series of similar diatribes followed immediately after the great artist's passing. No more impressive commentary than this cruel calumny in our daily press against one of the most illumined and consecrated spirits of all time could be made upon the general spiritual illiteracy and materialized outlook of our age and the consequent need that it has for advanced souls of the redemptive type such as was Nicholas Roerich.

Revival, Renewal, Restoration

Contrary to the way of the world, Roerich made Spirit the starting point of all his enterprises. Material requirements followed. His primary mission was to restore vision to a people. Out of that vision would spring a new civilization, a new race. "Let us not expect great buildings or sigh over primitive conditions and lack of material," was his advice to some young, eager New World builders who wanted his counsel as to how best to proceed. "The smallest room" said he, "no larger than the cell of Fra Angelica in Florence, can contain the most valuable possibilities for art. The smallest assortment of colors will not diminish the artistic substance of creation and the poorest canvas may be the receptor of the most sacred image.

"If there comes the realization of the imminent importance of teaching Beauty", he continued, "let it be begun without delay. One must know that means will come if there will be manifest the enduring enthusiasm. Give knowledge and you will receive possibilities; and the more liberal the giving, the richer the receiving."

Revival, renewal, restoration—these were keywords to Roerich's career. Divine creativeness characterized his universal mindedness and the

attribute of timelessness pervades all his works. His achievements were monumental and his dynamic spirit seemed altogether like an inseparable part of nature's all-embracing universal rhythms.

This earth can afford no more fitting frame for a man of Roerich's heroic stature than the Himalayas in which he spent the closing portion of his richly productive life. This Master of the Mountains occupied a position midway between two centers of planetary power. On the one hand was the powers of materialism that govern present humanity in their external way of life; on the other was the spiritual Hierarchy that watches over human destiny and so governs as to bring mankind of its own free will eventually to a realization of its essential spiritual nature and a way of life consistent therewith. Their effort is to shorten the Path, to ease the journey, to reduce the errors, to lessen the needless suffering.

As an emissary of this Invisible Government, Roerich came to cleave the darkness from the light, to reveal the way of spirit to them that labor in bondage to the world of matter. He came when humanity was beginning to realize that no movement, no organization, no institution, however well intended or ideally motivated, could resolve the crisis that now confronts the world except it be based on soundly spiritual foundations.

Roerich realized that before such movements, organizations and institutions can arise in sufficient number and strength to meet mankind's basic need today and usher in the order of right relations and universal goodwill, there will have to be a complete reversal of current world thought. To aid mankind to achieve that necessary reorientation became, therefore, a fundamental proposition in the program he came to execute.

His equipment for that task was a mellow wisdom that had ripened in the course of ages past, a surrender of the personal life to the service of the group life of the race, and a proficiency in the arts and sciences that enabled him to reveal immortality in all his creations. And the primary powers with which he sought to fulfill his appointed task were those that flow through Culture. The arts were his vehicles and these he exalted by giving them a new significance for our time. And it was his faith, backed by prodigious works, that by their beneficent influence when properly restored in our individual and collective life, peace and harmony and gracious living will once more return to this earth. Such was Roerich's gospel; such his Hierarchial message to our time; such the Voice of an Epoch.

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VOLUME IX

JANUARY—FEBRUARY

NUMBER I

The Voice of an Epoch



NICHOLAS ROERICH

October 10, 1874—December 13, 1947

His roots were in the primeval Past; he functioned in the living Present and he labored to make straight the path into the Future.

(Page 2)

THE VOICE OF AN EPOCH

"If Pheidias was the creator of divine form and Giotto the painter of the soul, then Roerich may be said to reveal the spirit of the Cosmos."

—Barnett D. Conlan

Now and again in the course of human history a man appears who places an immortal impress upon the age in which he lives. Such a man was Nicholas Roerich. It is safe to say that in this serene yet crusading Apostle of Culture the most profound spiritual significance of our epoch found its most effective and comprehensive embodiment. By his identification with the whole scope and sweep of the spiritual renaissance which comes quietly but surely to birth in the midst of the present world chaos and tribulation, it seems certain that history will accord him a place in our time similar to that which it gives to Francis Bacon, for example, who stands out as a focal figure in a time when a new creative impulse entered into the European cultural stream, or to Michaelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci as towering lights of the period of the Renaissance, or again to Pericles as but another name for the glory that was Greece, or to Akhnaton, the Egyptian Pharaoh, as the one really living image of one of the world's oldest and greatest civilizations. In short, Roerich's place is even now secure as one of the world's immortals by virtue of the elements of immortality which he has so conspicuously imparted to his many magnificent and varied cultural activities and artistic creations.

Roerich's life was of epic proportions. The range of his creative genius has been equalled only by a few. Continents were to him what provinces are to lesser prophets. Europe, America and Asia claimed him as their very own and all the world united in rendering him the highest homage.

Nicholas Roerich achieved international eminence as an artist, scientist, author, philosopher and educator. To each and all of these diversified activities he brought the insight and understanding that comes to the inwardly illumined. He was Russian by birth and of Slavo-Viking descent. He became an American by adoption and made Himalayan India his residence for the last twenty-five years of his life. These simple biographical facts are in themselves indicative of his universal character and his world-wide mission.

It was in the natural order of things that this great artist should have been cradled by a people who are on the Art Ray; also that the two lands of his birth and adoption are those in which new racial strains are in process of development. Having absorbed into his being the fresh, creative and dynamic racial impulses that are emerging in both Russia and America it is also equally in the natural order of things that this citizen of the world should turn to the Orient and in particular to India, heart

of Asia and Mother of Religions. In that land where the things of the spirit have always been exalted above the things of this world, his soul found its true home. Also, the elevated consciousness in which he worked naturally drew him to the mountains and to the very roof of the world. And so it was among the lofty Himalayas on India's northern border, where the atmosphere, psychic and physical, is charged with inner power as nowhere else on earth that he completed the major part of his historic mission.

That Roerich was a direct emissary of the Great White Brotherhood no one could well doubt who has become familiar with his thoughts, his aims, his ideals and his works. His divine commission was Peace through Culture. Art—art in a multiclicity of forms—was his primary medium of expression, and Beauty in its redemptive aspects the power with which he accomplished his most significant results.

It was a high and sacred call that had come to this devotee of the Beautiful and it was with a vivid realization of this fact that he discharged his every task. A profound spiritual significance, therefore, attaches itself to all his works. They are like so many revelatory messages from the powers on high. Each and all were calculated to further humanity's spiritual awakening and to point the way to the New Order of peace and unity, of righteousness and graciousness, that is to succeed the age of iron, the centuries of war and the period of distress, sorrow and frustration that now draws to its cataclysmic close.

In the midst of universal disaster and destruction which inevitably accompanies the collapse of a civilization that has made personal gain and material achievement paramount, Roerich came to turn the minds of men to the spiritual realities on which can be founded an enduring order of existence that will yield beauty, harmony and peace. This he came to do at that psychological moment in human history when such a messenger was of supreme importance to the future of the race.

Unifying Art, Science and Religion

The nature of mankind's present needs are such that one who was preeminently the artist could accomplish more than one centered primarily in either science or religion. Science is too strongly focused in the material side of life and religion has lost its way in doctrinal abstractions and sectarian dogmatism. In the words of Alexis Carrel in *Man the Unknown*, "There is not the shadow of a doubt that mechanical, physical and chemical sciences are incapable of giving us intelligence, moral discipline, health, nervous equilibrium, security and peace." And as for religion, neither is it equal to the task, since as Carrel further observes, "Mystical activity has been banished from most religions. Even its meaning has been forgotten."

And so today's supreme task called for a leader who was first of all

an artist but who had at the same time the intellectual qualities and practical accomplishments of a proven scientist together with the devotion, the reverence and the spirituality that distinguishes the deeply dedicated religious soul. And such a man was Roerich.

That forgotten mystical sense of which Alexis Carrel speaks, Nicholas Roerich came to help man recover. A mysticism pervades everything he touched. As with Blake, the spiritual outlook dominates. He was profoundly religious, not in the creedal but in the cosmic sense. The character of his ministry was impersonal and universal. It was, moreover, so far removed from the purely utilitarian activities prevailing in our time as to quite fail of recognition by the uncomprehending multitude for whose enlightenment and upliftment he spent his precious life.

The truth of this statement was made quite evident only last year when one of the most widely read and best favored of our journalistic columnists devoted over a score installments belittling and even ridiculing this Master Interpreter of our Age as an oriental "Guru" who with a semi-oriental glamor and professional blandishments had hoodwinked good Americans to accept him as a man of science and a purveyor of honest doctrine. No more impressive commentary than this distorted diatribe in our daily press against one of the most illumined and consecrated spirits of all time could be made upon the general spiritual illiteracy and materialized outlook of our age and the consequent need that it has for advanced souls of the redemptive type such as was Nicholas Roerich.

A Many-Sided Genius

Roerich's was the Master Mind that could do many things and do them all well. He first studied law; then archeology, becoming a professor in the subject. Then came his preoccupation with art, art in all its manifold expressions. In the course of the years he founded numerous institutions and inaugurated a world movement for the establishment of Peace through Culture. Intensive activity marked his life from first to last.

Professor Roerich had a particular interest in the ancient, the legendary, the prehistoric as well as in the unfolding Future which he came to serve and in which he had an abounding faith. His researches into the Stone Age were of scientific importance.

There is something deeply significant in the fact that Roerich's early years were devoted to art on the one hand and science on the other, and that the particular branch of science which he chose to cultivate was archeology. This had a very important bearing on his life's mission. It links up with the fact that science rules our modern world, a science that has shut out both art and religion from its sphere. The materialistic world it has created has left the soul of man in a spiritual void. Roerich came to correct that condition.

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The first step toward that correction was to find ways to readmit art and religion into the field of science. Time was when they functioned as a trinity in unity. It must be so again. The benefits of specialization which divided them have been won. To continue the separation is fatal to civilization. It militates against man's spiritual progression.

And so a man comes on our earthly scene to serve as a Master Synthesizer. It is Roerich. In order to perform that task he sets out first of all to acquaint himself with science and with art and with religion, and above all with the means to bring them together once again in their individual and united service of man. This mission he conceived in the terms of Peace through Culture. That is, a Culture embracing art, science and religion functioning as a trinity in unity.

So he became a scientist exploring the culture of the primeval world, the Stone Age. It fascinated him. He applied the artist's imagination to his task and in so doing entered into the state of consciousness that then prevailed. He became aware of nature's processes and their cosmic significance. He tuned in with the rhythms of creative evolution. He observed as a scientist observes, he understood as the intuitive artist understands, and he beheld in reverence as the reverential behold. Inwardly he experienced the unity that exists at the heart of art, science and religion but which man today apprehends and regards only in a state of separation.

This sense of unity which Roerich evoked from within the depths of his subconscious mind as he worked in the dual role of scientist and artist, the primitive man experienced in an instinctive subjective way. Modern man must arrive at this same experience only now it must be in his objective consciousness through a development of the inner faculty of intuition and imagination. This comes with the cultivation of the science of the soul. Roerich cultivated that science. He was an exponent of the Ageless Wisdom, the Arcane Doctrine. He therefore carried the experiences of the man of the Stone Age who knew art, science and religion as one, and which he recapitulated in his early life, up to a corresponding point on a higher level of the spiral of attainment where modern man must lay hold of it in our time. Roerich was a prophet of this restoration. He was by virtue of this in deed and in truth the Voice of an Epoch.

Roerich's archeological interests were carried alongside of his artistic achievements throughout the whole of his career. They entered into his explorations in Central Asia during a five-year expedition from 1923 to 1929 that took him into Mongolia, Tibet and remote places in Central Asia. On these travels he collected data on Asiatic culture and philosophy, discussed ancient lore and the Ageless Wisdom with lamas in Tibet, and in their very own language,—made a pictorial record comprising five hundred magnificent paintings and carried out a commission from the

United States Government to search the Gobi Desert for drought-resisting plants to help save American denuded lands in the Dust Bowl.

On this expedition he encountered both hardships and dangers. But what are obstacles, he asks, but "new possibilities to create beneficent energy, and without battle," he adds, "there is no victory".

Peace through Culture

When Roerich spoke of Peace through Culture he meant vastly more than current usage of the words convey. To him culture had a sacred content. It stood for the sum total of man's creative abilities as these found expression in the divine triad of beauty, truth and goodness. Culture to Roerich was no mere synonym for personal refinement and social grace; nor again, for intellectual excellence and formal religious piety. It stood for no passive existence, idleness or ease. "The hope of ease in all times", says he, "forced the people to forget the higher". And his crusade was to bring the higher back again into our civilization.

Culture, then, as this peacemaker conceived it and promoted it, meant a life of intensive creativeness on the spiritual front for the purpose of bringing forth a more luminous and fruitful way of life. It is the moral equivalent for war which the psychologist William James postulated as a necessary requirement for the establishment of a permanent peace on earth.

Two instruments were conceived by Professor Roerich for promoting a new world order through Culture. One was a Banner of Peace, the other, a cultural Pact of Peace. The Banner is white with three red spheres in the center representative of art, science and religion. These are enclosed in a circle indicating their underlying unity. The symbol is also representative of the past, present and future, all of which are embraced within the circle of eternity. And Roerich expressed in his life and work this symbol in its double significance, for as artist, scientist and prophet, he was perpetuating the ancient wisdom, envisaging the unfolding future and making radiant and fruitful the living, pulsating present.

Peace through Culture had its inception in 1904. In 1933 the Third International Convention of the Pact and Banner of Peace was held in Washington when thirty-five nations were represented. Two years later in Washington the United States and all twenty Latin-American countries signed the treaty of the Roerich Pact. In 1937 the Baltic States entered into a like pact. The inauguration of this movement for Peace through Culture has been hailed as nothing short of being a high act of Destiny for our time.

A Master Artist

The first phase of Roerich's art consisted of realistic paintings depicting scenes in prehistoric Russia and the wanderings of his ancestral Norse-

men. This was followed by some years in the theatre and lastly by the Asiatic period in which he produced his greatest works, works of Himalayan grandeur and splendor.

The theatre offered wide scope to this versatile genius since the stage presents a composite art, more especially opera and the ballet. So here we find him designing both scenery and costumes, and writing librettos as well.

His first creation for the theatre was settings for Wagner's *Valkyrie* which he did, not "on order" but solely for his own self-expression. This attraction for Wagner was quite inevitable since what this composer did consciously and purposefully with music, Roerich was doing with color—bringing the Spirit back into our life by the powers of the beautiful. Both dealt with myth and legend; both were of heroic mould; both brought their work into epic cycles and both brought Initiate consciousness to bear upon their respective works giving to them an enduring spiritual significance.

Stage designs for all other Wagner operas followed; also for the Russian opera *Prince Igor*. "These settings", writes an eminent critic, "have the character of great music; they are themselves a form of visual music". They have an inner unity with the drama such as only an artist of great synthetic powers can bestow upon a work.

Then there were the stage decorations for Maeterlinck's tragedies, *Princess Maleine* and *Sister Beatrice*, which gave him an opportunity to express the poetry and beauty that arises from out of the realms of myth and legend in which Maeterlinck and Roerich were equally at home.

But it was in the ballet where Roerich's theatre activities found their highest and most complete expression. For *The Rite of Spring* he did the stage settings, costumes and libretto in collaboration with Stravinsky who composed the music, and assisted by Nijinsky, the dancer, Daghileff, the producer, and a corps de ballet. Writing of this, Barnett D. Conlan, in his book entitled *Nicholas Roerich—Master of the Mountains*, ventures the opinion that this production, done in Paris in 1913, "may well come to be recognized as the most important artistic event in the 20th century."

The Rite of Spring was a theme to call forth the most exuberant powers of an artist who was not only in close and conscious rapport with nature's mystic powers but who was in himself a part of the resurrection forces of the age he came to serve. In commenting further on Roerich's service to the ballet, Mr. Conlan says, "It is interesting to see to what extent Roerich, as an artist, belongs to Russian music, to that great movement which, beginning with Glinka, and developing through opera and the theatre finally produced the Russian ballet, the most important event after Wagner and in some ways the finest synthesis of all the arts since the Greeks. The poetic legends of Russian life which inspired the works

of Glinka, Balakirev, Moussorgsky, Borodin, Rimsky Korsakov and Stravinsky has always been the chief element in Roerich's work . . . I have reason to think he was the most authentic element in it."

Roerich's paintings, which number 5000, are to be found in the leading museums and art collections all over the world. It is said that in Russia there is no museum or gallery that does not possess some of his works. In some museums entire halls are dedicated exclusively to his paintings and in New York City a 29-story building was erected to his honor in 1929. This is perhaps the first time in history that an entire museum was built to house an artist's masterpieces while the artist was still alive.

Here is a modern artist who is not "modern" as this term is generally understood. His works are as different from those of the Modern School as they are from the Old Schools of the period of the Renaissance. They do not follow the ordinary line of development but spring like a new, fresh creation direct from some higher source. No one can miss their dazzling splendor, their tremendous power, their air of triumphant freedom and the exaltation of the spiritual atmosphere they radiate. They are charged with cosmic energies and divine meanings. They compel not only admiration but reverence.

Here are objects embodying the good and the true and the beautiful to such a degree that their spiritual significance is inescapable. They tell of a new force that is coming into the world, a force to quicken the Spirit of Man to new and nobler enterprises. For this were they given to the world.

A remarkable testimony as to the influence of Roerich's paintings on an observer is that of Ivan Narodny, a celebrated art critic as quoted in Padmanabhan Tampy's book on Roerich. Declared Mr. Narodny after viewing the master's canvases in a New York museum: "I began to feel the magic of their aesthetic rhythm", the metaphysical tones of their design and colour harmonies and I felt a new ray of light was falling on my disillusioned soul; I had actually sunk into moments of silent devotion or prayer. I was a changed man. From a depressing melancholy and cynicism of life, I had been transformed by the sight of the canvases of Nicholas Roerich into an aesthetic optimist, a believer in the mystic powers of beauty."

Roerich's paintings are at once sacred and occult. "He is certainly one of the most spiritual of masters since Leonardo and Blake," observes Mr. Conalan. And again, Mr. Tampy writing about this "teacher from the white summits" characterizes his works as essentially symbolic and occultly mystic. "He is essentially esoteric in his labors", he writes, "and through his prophetic visions embodied in his paintings which speak to the heart of men, he leads humanity to the gates of heaven".

Roerich's Prophetic Office

It is to be expected that one worthy of being designated the Voice of an Epoch would have a prophet's grasp of the nature and the direction of the social forces at work in the world and the general manner of their outworking. Roerich possessed such knowledge as evidenced by a series of paintings done before the first World War in which the approaching catastrophe was unmistakably depicted in such pictures as *Last Angel*, *Ominous Signs*, *Human Deeds*, *Doomed City*, *The Lurid Glare*, *The Cry of the Serpent* and others.

It is to be noted that these pictorial warnings came when such upheaval as presently overtook the world was looked upon generally as virtually impossible. Then when disaster did overwhelm the world not only in one all-engulfing conflict, but two, and with a third threatening, and the masses despairing of ever finding a way out of the continuing tribulation, this same Voice of our Epoch proclaims in another series of prophetic pictures the coming of the Promised One and the Great Restoration. This message is conveyed in his cycle of pictures called the Messiah series; also in *Bridge of Glory* and *Himself Came*. Incidentally it is interesting to note that these last named pictures were all made in America, as was also the Sancta Series.

Roerich has but repeated in our day what the Lord Christ proclaimed two thousand years ago when He told His Disciples about the great tribulation that was coming upon the world in these "latter days" and that when these things came to pass they were to lift up their heads for their redemption had drawn nigh. Moreover, that in that day there was to be a great sunburst of Divine Glory and they would see the Son of Man coming in a cloud in power and great glory.

Roerich has translated that prophecy in its entirety, first the judgment as previously noted, and then the Restoration. Very literally one of his canvasses portrays the Second Coming in a cloud though it is not recognizable as such in terms of orthodox Christianity since Roerich's message is never creedal but always universal. This is in the picture called *The Sign of Maitreya*. It shows a Tibetan surrounded by lofty peaks praying to a gigantic rock-hewn figure of Maitreya. While engaged in this devotion he catches a glimpse of the Great Horseman riding across the sky in the shape of a cloud. The long-awaited One has come.

In the universal character of Roerich there was a perfect blend of the Oriental insight into the inner realities of the spiritual life and the Occidental power to bring these mystical concepts into practical objectivity. True to his birth sign, Libra, which in the natural zodiac occupies the point on the western horizon, Roerich, in his consciousness stood on this line where heaven and earth, the inner and the outer, meet in perfect balance. And again, true to Libra, sheath of Venus, goddess of

Beauty, it was primarily through the medium of art and by the power of Beauty that he made revelation to our age of the living Spirit that permeates all form and gives significance to everything about us.

A Western by physical heredity, he was an Easterner by soul lineage. There were associations with India in his life from the very first. When finally he did visit India he came to his own and his own received him with deep homage and with the reverence they hold for the spiritually wise and good and true. An eminent artist, Bireswar Sen, welcomed him in the name of India in the following words which appeared at the time in the *Hindu Weekly*: "To most of us, Roerich is a legendary figure of romance. Against the lurid glare of the flaming West, his mighty figure looms large like the motionless and benevolent Buddha in the midst of a vast cosmic cataclysm. Far above the tumultuous din of frenzied nations rings his voice—the unequivocal commandments of the Eternal, the Voice of Truth, Beauty and Culture. Great is Roerich—and greater still are his works, the beautiful harbingers of Peace and Good Will among men. Indefatigable in action, indomitable in spirit and innocent at heart, he is the new Sir Galahad, seeking after the Holy Grail".

Links Vision to Works

Professor Roerich was the author of many books and a contributor to a wide variety of magazines in all parts of the world. He wrote in several languages and his more important works have been translated into all the principal tongues, both European and Asiatic.

The subjects are of wide range—art, archeology, travel, philosophy and the esoteric Doctrine. His volume *Agni Yoga* is among the latter. It deals with the Yoga of Fire, or the pentacostal experience awaiting the new humanity as it makes contact with the fires of the Holy Spirit.

One need but glance at a few of the many titles of his works to detect the prophetic nature of his writings. One of his earliest, published in 1925, is titled *Path of Blessing*. Then there is *Flame of Chalice* which by its title alone kindles the inner fires of every aspirant in his quest of the Holy Grail. *Shamballa, Realm of Light, Fiery Stronghold, Sacred Vigil* and *Gates of the Future* all conjure up visions in the mind of the aspirant sacred images and holy experiences associated with the path that leads to Illumination and Mastership.

Heart of Asia deals with the land where Roerich's soul found perhaps its most congenial environment and in *Altai Himalaya* he conveys by both word and picture as only a Master can, something of the physical and spiritual glories of these sublime heights.

Roerich was a great intellect; he was an artist of supreme rank. But over and above this he was a great soul. His consciousness was cosmic and the prime source of his power was spiritual.

Contrary to the way of the world, Roerich made Spirit the starting point of all his enterprises. Material requirements followed. His primary mission was to restore vision to a people. Out of that vision would spring a new civilization, a new race. "Let us not expect great buildings or sigh over primitive conditions and lack of material," was his advice to some young, eager New World builders who wanted his counsel as to how best to proceed. "The smallest room", said he, "no larger than the cell of Fra Angelica in Florence, can contain the most valuable possibilities for art. The smallest assortment of colors will not diminish the artistic substance of creation and the poorest canvas may be the receptor of the most sacred image.

"If there comes the realization of the imminent importance of teaching Beauty", he continued, "let it be begun without delay. One must know that means will come if there will be manifest the enduring enthusiasm. Give knowledge and you will receive possibilities; and the more liberal the giving, the richer the receiving."

Revival, renewal, restoration—these were keywords to Roerich's career. Divine creativeness characterized his universal mindedness and the attribute of timelessness pervades all his works. His achievements were monumental and his dynamic spirit seemed altogether like an inseparable part of nature's all-embracing universal rhythms.

This earth can afford no more fitting frame for a man of Roerich's heroic stature than the Himalayas in which he spent the closing portion of his richly productive life. This Master of the Mountains occupied a position midway between two centers of planetary power. On the one hand was the powers of materialism that govern present humanity in their external way of life; on the other was the spiritual Hierarchy that watches over human destiny and so governs as to bring mankind of its own free will eventually to a realization of its essential spiritual nature and a way of life consistent therewith. Their effort is to shorten the Path, to ease the journey, to reduce the errors, to lessen the needless suffering.

As an emissary of this Invisible Government, Roerich came to cleave the darkness from the light, to reveal the way of spirit to them that labor in bondage to the world of matter. He came when humanity was beginning to realize that no movement, no organization, no institution, however well intended or ideally motivated, could resolve the crisis that now confronts the world except it be based on soundly spiritual foundations.

Roerich realized that before such movements, organizations and institutions can arise in sufficient number and strength to meet mankind's basic need today and usher in the order of right relations and universal goodwill, there will have to be a complete reversal of current world thought. To aid mankind to achieve that necessary reorientation became, therefore, a fundamental proposition in the program he came to execute.

His equipment for that task was a mellow wisdom that had ripened in the course of ages past, a surrender of the personal life to the service of the group life of the race, and a proficiency in the arts and sciences that enabled him to reveal immortality in all his creations. And the primary powers with which he sought to fulfill his appointed task were those that flow through Culture. The arts were his vehicles and Beauty and saving grace. These were the agencies he exalted, giving to them a new significance for our time. And it was his faith, backed by prodigious works, that by their beneficent influence when properly restored in our individual and collective life, peace and harmony and gracious living will once more return to this earth. Such was Roerich's gospel; such his Hierarchial message to our time; such the Voice of an Epoch.



SANCTA PROTETRIX

By Nicholas Roerich

A Personal Note

Professor Roerich was a reader of the *Interpreter*. In return for our publication he sent us from time to time reprints of articles by or about himself and his work that had appeared in various magazines, and also other related literature. A card conveying his personal compliments always accompanied these valued packets.

Last year Professor Roerich sent Mrs. Heline a painting of the Himalayas done in tempora in the characteristic "Roerich color" and with the "Roerich blue" bearing the simple title and signature: Himalayas - Roerich. It is a scene depicting a range of snow white peaks that reach upward through the crystal air into the very heavens. The picture is a prized possession in "The Madonna Crest," the hill-top home of the Helines, beside a park called Elysian in "The City of the Angels!"

The Twelve-Stringed Cosmic Harp

BY CORINNE HELINE

I

CAPRICORN

"Melody is the cry of man to God. Harmony is the answer of God to man."

This universe is a mighty Cosmic Harp whose twelve zodiacal strings are resonant with the continuous Song of God. Each constellation sounds forth its own keynote and the majestic ensemble produces the supernal music of the spheres. This music changes each month as the Sun passes from sign to sign. Nature responds in complete harmony with this cosmic symphony, consequently beauty and harmony are the fundamentals of all nature's being.

The ancients were instructed in their Mystery Temples regarding these truths and were sufficiently sensitized to attune themselves to the varying musical rhythms. As a consequence of such teachings they developed a symmetry and beauty of body, a vibrancy of mind and a longevity entirely unknown to this materialistic modern age. However, now that we are on the threshold of the New Aquarian Day, these half-forgotten truths are being revived and a New Age philosophy of musical therapy based upon the stellar science is rapidly coming to the fore.

Capricorn is a month of profound mystery and of tremendous inner possibilities. The Sun's entrance into this sign marks the wonder night of the year. It is a time when the darkness of night is transformed into the bright radiance of a Light supernal.

The entrance of the Sun into Capricorn inaugurates a season of introspection, of recapitulation. It inspires seriousness and is conducive to profound inner deeps of meditation.

The innermost life's work of an Ego finds its particular accentuation in the musical rhythms of the zodiacal sign which opened the door for its physical incarnation. The purpose of this series of articles is to consider briefly compositions of the best known musicians and to correlate their lives and works with the inner and deeper significance of the Twelve-Stringed Cosmic Harp of the Zodiac.

Charles Wakefield Cadman

A well known Capricorn composer whose name is beloved wherever his music is heard is our own American, Charles Wakefield Cadman. He was born in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, December 24, 1881. This brave pioneering spirit turned to his life work in early youth when he first visited the Omaha Indian Reservation. Indian music was his forte and it was here that he did his most brilliant and best known work. He wrote several Indian songs, among which *Land of the Sky Blue Water* is probably one of the best known.

Cadman also wrote an Indian opera, *Shanewis (The Robin Woman)* which was produced by the Metropolitan Opera Company in New York City and later in the Hollywood Bowl. He traveled as a lecturer-recitalist for a number of years, accompanied by an Indian mezzo-soprano, Princess Trianina Red-Feather. He also lectured in London and Paris on American Indian music.

Music is a recapitulation of human experience recorded in sound. Among Indian Tribes the singer of historical narratives was second in distinction only to the chief. Indian music retains something of the magic of Atlantis that was brought over by the Incas to the New Aryan continent. This soothing magic is quite perceptible in Cadman's music.

It is significant to note that Capricorn is an earth sign. The Indians, being children of earth in a very special sense, are closely attuned to nature. Nature's color is green and green was the color tone in which Cadman, the Capricornian, did his composing.

Cadman's deeply esoteric knowledge of both philosophy and life was interwoven into his music. The termination of his earthly pilgrimage which occurred in Hollywood, California, in the autumn of 1946, was mourned by music lovers everywhere.

Cadman's Indian music has been recognized as carrying a marked physical benefit and as being especially efficacious for soothing tired or over-wrought nerves and in instances of prolonged insomnia.

Giacomo Puccini

The music of another Capricornian composer, Giacomo Puccini, is considered for its psychological effects. The music of this composer has been found to be of assistance for meditative purposes. For example, if difficulty is experienced in closing out the objective world, making the mind one pointed as it were, some esoteric students have been aided in entering the silence to the accompaniment of the beautiful aria *One Fine Day* from Puccini's opera *Madame Butterfly*. It can lift one easily and quickly into the rarer atmosphere of the spiritual realms wherein the mind finds its true home. Puccini's music is excellent for purposes of mental stimulation, retrospection and recapitulations, all of which are splendid exercises for memory training.

Giacomo Puccini was born in Lucca, Italy, December 22, 1858. Giacomo's was a musical family. His father was an organist and he himself commenced to compose for the organ at the age of nineteen. Through the influence of the Queen of Italy, he entered the Milan Conservatory in 1860. There he came under the tutelage of Ponchielli who soon became aware of the young man's real ability.

Puccini's disposition was lovable and gentle but he always bore an air of tender melancholy which is a characteristic of Capricorn and is the

signature of its ruling planet Saturn. This same introspective and melancholy note predominates in his best known and most popular operas; namely, *Manon Lescault*, *La Boheme*, *La Tosca*, and *Madame Butterfly*.

Puccini's color note is deep blue-black, the color the sky assumes at midnight. His music possesses the inner power which belongs to the mystic depths of the subconscious mind. He stated that his highest inspirations came to him at night. This is another Capricornian characteristic—they are in best attunement with their sign when bringing light out of darkness.

Puccini has been termed the successor of Verdi as master of continuous lyrical melody. He designated his operas as Lyric Dramas. Since the musical quality of the Italian people is lyrical in nature, it is natural that Puccini should be one of the best beloveds among this nation's musical sons.

The representative themes of *Manon Lescaut*, *La Tosca*, and *Madame Butterfly* give evidence of the inspiration Wagner gave to Puccini's work. The love-duet between Manon and Des Grieux in the second act of *Manon* in the high reaches of its passion and pathos evokes recollections of *Tristan and Isolde* and is considered a masterpiece for purposes of concentration.

Madame Butterfly begins with a sort of tonal fugue representative of the most ancient Japanese musical modes which were never committed to writing but were passed from father to son among the members of a Sacred Guild or Musical Hierarchy. Puccini said that the theme haunted him always. That it was constantly ringing in his head. However, notwithstanding the abject failure of the first performance of *Madame Butterfly* and the crushing humiliation which this brought to the composer, it has come to be considered by many critics as the most popular opera in the world today. Again we may note that the fortunes of Capricorn often swing from the depths to the heights.

Puccini was born on the cusp of Sagittarius and Capricorn. He drew idealism from the former and the sense of mystery from the latter. In *La Tosca* his skill has lifted crude melodrama into divine art. In the third act of this opera, the magnificent mood painting of the music depicts the eerie beauty of the night shadows which enshroud the prison of San Angelo as the ghost of the murdered Scarpio hovers near seeking vengeance. Here we find true Capricornian music filled with the beauty and mystery of deeps profound and unexplored.

An early death cut short his brilliant career. At the time of transition he was working on *Turandot*, an opera which gave promise of being his masterpiece. Here Puccini changed from the tempo of the Old Age (Saturn in Capricorn) to that of the New Age (Uranus in Capricorn). Like Scriabin, he was now experimenting with musical expressions that would

release in greater measure than hitherto those creative impulses that are entering into human life and consciousness at this time and which they perceived as tending toward a new synthesis in both our mundane and the larger universal spheres.

The theme Puccini worked on in this uncompleted opera was a simple, human story but the commonplace events with which it dealt were so sublimated by his genius that they assumed a deep significance. The ability to do this is one of Capricorn's principal gifts. Students and lovers of New Age music felt they had suffered an irreparable loss in the death of Puccini in Brussels in 1924.

At the moment of his passing, the fingers of Giacomo Puccini began to move lingeringly over the coverlet as though it were a piano; his face lightened and he listened. Who is there to disbelieve that as his hearing expanded to catch the music of the highest planes, he heard the angels singing the unfinished strains of his last opera *Turandot*?

The next installment in this series will be on Aquarius. It will appear in the March Interpreter.

Wagner Esoterically Interpreted

Corinne Heline is at present giving a series of illustrated lectures in Los Angeles on Wagner's Operas. At the conclusion of this series next June it is hoped that the material she is now presenting on the platform may be available in printed form.

The book will be cloth bound and contain approximately 250 pages. The price will probably be \$2.50. It will not be less. But in order to increase the publication funds we are offering this volume at a pre-subscription price of \$2.00.

Here is a book that every student of either music or the occult, or both, will not want to be without. It will occupy a place not yet filled by any similar work.

Remember, too, when sending in your order that you may want more than a single copy for yourself since there can be no mistake in counting on this book making an ideal gift to most anyone at any time.

THE WAGNER LECTURES IN LOS ANGELES

For the benefit of *Interpreter* readers residing outside of Los Angeles and its immediate environs who may be coming to this city in the course of the next few months and if so might be able to include one of Mrs. Heline's Wagner lectures in their program, and also in the event such have friends here whom they might like to send word about the series, we append herewith forthcoming subjects and dates. The hour is 8:00 p.m.; the place, The First Temple, 733 So. Burlington Street, Los Angeles.

It is to be added that the lectures are all illustrated with lantern slides and that the music of the opera is interwoven throughout by Brandon Faray, a life long lover and interpreter of Wagner both as a ranking musician of long experience in Europe, New York and now here in Los Angeles, and also as a Theosophical teacher and leader. The remaining lectures in the series follow:

Friday, Feb. 27—*Lohengrin*—The Development of Conscious Night Memory.

Friday, Mar. 26—*Parsifal*—The Attainment of Mastership.

Friday, Apr. 9—*Tristan and Isolde*—The Rite of the Mystic Marriage.

THE RING CYCLE

Outlining Four Major Stages in Racial Evolution

Friday, May 14—*The Rhinegold* and *The Valkyrie*.

Friday, June 11—*Siegfried* and *Goetterdaemmerung* (*The Twilight of the Gods*.)

A Study of Nations in the Light of the Symbolism of Their Flags

BY CORINNE HELINE

X

ARGENTINA

The Argentine Republic which takes its name from the silver river, La Plata, won its independence from Spain about the same time as did Chile.

Argentina's ensign is light blue, white, and light blue with a golden sun in the center of the white. The President's standard is light blue with a white, five-pointed star in each of the four corners. The number values, 5 multiplied by 4 gives 20, or 2, the number of change. The idealism embodied in the symbolism of Argentina's flag is best exemplified in the monument, The Christ of the Andes, which following a peace settlement with Chile, was placed on the Andean heights at a point where the two countries meet.

PARAGUAY

The beautiful and fertile land of Paraguay flies the familiar and popular tricolor of red, white, and dark blue with a badge centered in the white. The President's standard is a dark blue field containing a large white disc. This figure has a red, white and blue rim, red outside, blue inside, and in the center a large yellow five-pointed star. Yellow concretes higher aspirations that white holds more in the abstract.

Paraguay is a Cancer sign country. So intense is the love for the motherland that her people have more than the customary loyalty to their country and readiness to fight for their independence and rights. Once they fought alone for five years against Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil until almost the entire country was depopulated.

BRAZIL

Brazil is often referred to as Portuguese South America. Her history dates from the sixteenth century since which time she has been under the flags of Portugal, Spain and Holland. Her zodiacal ruler is Virgo, an earth sign, and her chief resources come from the soil.

Every nation or group of nations has a central focus through which the Invisible Government behind world affairs projects its forces. In the Orient this center is Tibet. In Europe it is Switzerland. For the United States this center is near Philadelphia, and for South America it is in Brazil. The natives sensing this spiritual inflow declare reverently: "God is a Brazilian."

Considering national flags in their totality from the point of color symbology, Brazil is perhaps entitled to first place. The field is green, the color of universal compassion or Brotherhood. The green square encloses a yellow lengthwise diamond which contains a world globe in pale blue upon which is inscribed twenty-one stars. Around a white equator are inscribed in green letters, *Ordem e Progresso*—(Order and Progress). The

position of the stars is that of the Southern Cross as seen from the nation's capital, Rio de Janeiro.

The twenty-one stars, combine to form the number three. Three is the number of the Trinity which manifests throughout the universe as Will, Wisdom and Activity, or Love, Wisdom and Regeneration. Brazil is the center through which this threefold power focuses for the spiritualizing of the Southern Continent. The New World, consisting of both North and South America receives an ever-increasing inflow of this inner world power. It is in line with this fact that the Huguenots were impelled in 1555 to seek refuge from persecution and freedom of worship according to the dictates of their own conscience upon this New Continent and where the city of Rio now stands. This was just sixty-five years before the Mayflower sailed upon a similar mission and for a like reason raised the flag of St. George of England upon the North American shores at Plymouth Rock.

URUGUAY

Uruguay's flag is composed of nine alternate stripes of white and blue. Five stripes are white and four blue. The canton is white and bears a golden sun in commemoration of "El Sol de Mayo," previously referred to.

In common with the majority of the South American countries, Uruguay banished red from her flag upon obtaining freedom from Spain and substituted the blue and white combination as expressive of the highest idealism of all the countries of South America.

Uruguay was first Spanish and later Portuguese. It was severed from Brazil in 1828.

Book Reviews

BEHOLD MY SONG. By Vida Reed Stone. Willing Publishing Co., 3524 No. Broadway Ave., Los Angeles 31, Calif. Cloth, 127pp. 1947. \$2.00.

Vida Reed Stone is truly a New Age poet. In her "Freedom Songs" she breaks the shackles of limitation to the infinite and steps forth, a free emancipated soul winging her way across the horizon of a new and glorious Day.

"Behold My Song" carries all the high and beautiful exaltation of consciousness that is the keynote of her inspired message and which may be summed up in the words of her song: "I hold a mirror up to life—find your true self herein, and live".

—C. D.

SACRED SYMBOLS OF THE ANCIENTS. By Florence Evelyn Campbell and Edith L. Randall. Published by Tora, Inc. P. O. Box 1927 Hollywood Station, Hollywood 28, Calif. 1947. Mimeo. Heavy printed covers. Spiral bound. 204pp. \$5.00 postpaid.

The authors of this work who are two well known Southern California writers, may well be termed modern goddesses of wisdom. This, their most recent publication, is a remarkable and fascinating treatise on the mystical significance of our fifty-two "Playing" cards and their amazing connections with our individual birthdays. It is a compendium of the esotericism in astrology and numerology together with their correlation to the fifty-two cards and the calendar days. Its wide sweep of knowledge and far-reaching implications may be summed up in the concluding words: "The wise ones choose their own birthdays." —C. D.

New Age Bible Interpretations

The Book of Joshua

By CORINNE HELINE

Twelve Steps of Illumination in the Life of Joshua

The Book of Joshua, like every other Book in the Bible, is only secondarily concerned with a specific people, a designated time or a named individual. The principal object of these Books is to present definite type-characters and to illustrate in various ways certain universal principles which are applicable to the spiritual development of all peoples of all times.

As we study the Bible in the light of New Age interpretation we come into the realization that we are not merely reading ancient history, but that we are studying certain definite events which correlate with our own personal experiences and development. For example, in the twelve most important experiences which are noted as occurring in the life of the historical character of Joshua, we find an outline of the Great Path of Attainment which has been given to all races and peoples in some form or another. This Path leads from the first initial steps of the awakening of spiritual realization within man and the processes by which he overcomes the lower or human self to the supreme crowning of the quest, the divine At-one-ment with the higher or Egoic self.

It is in the light of this understanding that the Bible becomes truly a textbook of life, for in each of its leading characters we discover ourselves in some stage of our personal development and have set forth for us the steps that lead upward toward the high place of a full manifestation of our innate Godhood.

FIRST STEP—THE CONQUEST OF AMALEK

"And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people."

—Exodus 17:13

Amalek typifies lust and Joshua the sincere and dedicated aspirant as he takes up the great quest towards perfection. Self-control is the first discipline given upon the Way of Purification, the primary requisite for true esoteric growth. It is Purity alone that will lead us to Perfection.

Joshua discomfited Amalek by the power of his sword. The sword is a symbol of the Law of Truth. It is only by living true to the highest we know that we begin to make real progress upon the Path of Spirit. During the processes of this first step, both mind and body are subject to a refining and a sensitizing procedure that comes about naturally in the course of daily life experiences. This comes about because the life is now attuned to the Guardianship of those High Ones who "neither slumber nor sleep," but who tend the apparently trivial occurrences of the day with the same tender compassion they give to important events. Inner perceptions

are strengthened and spiritual vision commences to develop. As the aspirant thus begins to perceive the reality of the inner life and the comparative unreality of this outer objective world, the realization is born that he has set his feet at last upon the way.

The next article in this series will deal with the second of the twelve steps leading to Illumination as set forth in the life of Joshua.

Another Anatomy Booklet

There has just come off the press the ninth booklet in the series on *Occult Anatomy and the Bible* by Corinne Heline. It is titled: *The Role of the Ductless Glands in Spiritual Attainment*. The price is 35c, the same as for all previously published booklets in the series.

The titles of the first eight booklets follow:

- I *The Archetype, or The Heavenly Pattern of Man*
- II *The Immaculate Conception*
- III *Prenatal Adventures of the Human Spirit*
- IV *Physiological Processes Spiritually Interpreted*
- V *Ye are the Temple of the Living God*
- VI *The Two Nervous Systems and Their Relation to Spiritual Development*
- VII *The Etheric Body and Its Role in the Sensitizing the Physical*
- VIII *The Blood—An Arcane Mystery*

Each booklet contains from 32 to 72 pages; pocket size, heavy paper covers. Each booklet in a color all its own. For \$4.00 you may now receive the nine booklets published, and have your subscription entered to receive the remaining three as they are issued. This means a slight saving in cost and the trouble of further ordering.

The Holy Easter Mysteries

The student of the Christian Mysteries will find the work by Corinne Heline bearing the above title of more than informative value; it carries a living, inspirational message to sustain the aspiring soul that treads the path that leads to the new and the resurrected life.

The chapter headings indicate the scope of its contents. Among others these include the following: *The Lazarus Initiation, The Triumphal Entry, The Master in Bethany, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday of Passiontide, Holy Thursday, The Footwashing, The Last Supper, The Agony Rite in the Garden, Good Friday, The Stations of the Cross, The Crucifixion, Holy Saturday, The Empty Tomb, The Easter Dawn, Easter Afternoon, Easter Evening and Easter Monday*.

The booklet is an important contribution the recovery of the long-lost initiatory content of the Christ teachings. The booklet contains 36 closely type set pages—matter frequently spaced into twice the number of pages—and is bound in heavy light blue covers bearing on its front the Holy Grail behind which looms the faint etheric outlines of the cross.

The brochure is modestly priced at 50 cents, a price which it is hoped will encourage many to secure extra copies for gifts and also for general circulation. For, incidentally, it is well that those who have found the spiritual joy of entering into the inner meanings of the Bible, that while they never intrude with that knowledge where it is not wanted there is ever a mindfulness and a readiness to pass it on by the spoken or the printed word where it is wanted or likely to be rightly received. To pass on the sacred truths, especially at this time of universal need, is at once an opportunity and a responsibility that awakened souls can ill afford to miss.

The book: 50c a copy; 10 for \$5.00!

IMMORTALITY NOW

Would you like to help people come into a realization that man is a living soul and that the soul is immortal now? That death is but passing through a door from the outer into the inner world? And to give comfort to the bereaved by sending them, anonymously, a message touching upon the nature of the transition we call death?

Then if you are not familiar with the service organized that will enable you to do this easily, inexpensively and effectively communicate with Immortality Now. You will receive information as to how you can proceed on your own. No solicitation for membership, for dues, for contributions. Nothing to sell. Only a sharing with others information as to how to become servers along a specialized channel under self-direction and in any place and at any time. Address: Box 67, Utica, N. Y.

A Beautiful Easter Gift is "Magic Gardens"

Magic Gardens by Corinne Heline is an exquisite volume of prose poetry dealing with the flower language by which angels communicate part of their message to man. The book invariably meets with a most joyful reception. For example:

Oakville, Tenn.

Thank you for the beauty and inspiration enshrined in your book "Magic Gardens". It is food for the soul.

Utica, New York

Magic Gardens is magic to lift one. I am deeply moved, too, by the dedication to Max Heindel.

Joplin, Mo.

Many thanks for putting a book like this on the market, for the angels and flowers can do so much these days to help heal humanity.

Winnetka, Illinois

I have just spent some time with "Magic Gardens" which has been loaned to me by a friend. It has *greatly* deepened and broadened my appreciations and I am thankful for it. I should like to own a copy of it.

Beverly Hills, California

Never have I loved a book as I have loved your beautiful *Magic Gardens*. It expresses so beautifully truths I have dreamed about for years but have never had explained to me so beautifully before. In opening the book I seemed to be drawn first of all to the chapter on The Acacia Blossoms and remembered "Acacia's dusty smell always weaves the same old spell". Thanking you again for this magical book, *Magic Gardens*.

Magic Gardens contains twenty-six chapters on as many flowers. Chapter headings in colored borders; art paper, deckled edge. Exquisite floral design in colors applied by silk-screen hand process. Frontispiece by Ruth Harwood. A book of priceless qualities but priced within easy reach—\$2.15 postpaid.

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The New Age Press is incorporated as a non-profit educational institution under the laws of the State of California. Its activities are devoted exclusively to the publication and distribution of literature aimed to further the oncoming of the Kingdom of Christ on this earth. Contributions to the New Age Press are deductible in income tax returns.

BACK NUMBERS

Not all, but many of the past issues of the *Interpreter* are available at fifteen cents each. At this price we would be glad to recover copies of the following issues: 3, 4, 5, 6, '41; 1, 2, 5, 10, '42; 3, 12, '43; 1, '45 and 4 and 11, '47.

READERS' COMMENTS

The Hague, Holland

The Bible books are already translated; they are waiting for the moment when editor, printer and paper say yes. They are beautifully translated and of such great value to every spiritual seeker of the Truth that I am sure they will find their reward.

Chester, Vermont

The day before the November *Interpreter* arrived I was reading Luke 21 as a daily Bible reading, given by Foreward of the Episcopal Church. I got interested and kept on a few verses farther than the reading called for and verse 24 just suddenly "hit" me. I wrote to a friend of mine and said, "I wonder if the Second Coming isn't nearer than we realize?" When the *Interpreter* arrived the following day and I saw "Jerusalem Encompassed," you can imagine my feeling.

Honolulu, T. H.

Your Bluebird and the Music and Color books by Corinne Heline are in a class by themselves. I contemplate placing a copy of them in the library on Maui as the main library in Honolulu has some copies. However I have to interview the Librarian first. Am awaiting Magic Gardens with interest as I have several friends whom I believe would enjoy the presentation.

San Diego, Calif.

Enclosed please find renewal for *New Age Interpreter*. We enjoy very much the message of love and understanding it brings to us, and hope that all of the subscribers may get the satisfaction and spiritual uplift that we are enjoying.

Chicago, Illinois

Enclosed is a check for \$5.00 for as many copies of *America's Destiny* as it will buy. I want to send them to friends to show them how God is working through our beloved America.

Manila, P. I.

I read with keen interest the contents of the two volumes of the Old Testament and I find them very interesting and helpful. Many Filipino occult students possess all the volumes of the Old and New Testament and they have no words with which to express their appreciation for the invaluable services the books render them in their studies.

Greensburg, Penna.

Enclosed find two dollars for renewal of my subscription to the *New Age Interpreter*. I would not do without this little magazine. It brings me much information, not to mention an inside look on why events are taking place as they are. In my opinion you are doing a great work. I have practically all of your published works. Only I feel so sad at times because there are so few people who are interested in this type of literature, even though I am willing to loan them these booklets, yet they lack the spiritual sight to see. Perhaps in the near future they shall become interested. May you ever be able to keep up this work and know you will always have my support.

Altadena, California

Please renew my subscription to the *Interpreter*. To me, your magazine gives a great 'up-lift' in life and the will to meet the problems that are with us these days. I am grateful to have made the contact with your work.

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By Theodore Heline

Nicholas Roerich returns and the city extends an official welcome. By this recognition does it honor itself even more than the distinguished citizen whom it receives.

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The tendency of the time finds superb expression in Roerich. Its essential character impresses itself on all he does. He is true to the Zeitgeist's dictates and becomes its simple and obedient instrument.

Roerich is to art what Einstein is to Science and Ford to Industry. He establishes unities not hitherto realized. He links Art to ~~x~~ Science, Beauty to Use, East to West, Form to Life and Man to Cosmos.

Roerich is the new-type man. He is the modern mystic of the marketplace. In him the ancient culture of the Orient comes under the dynamic drive of the Occident. The inner expresses the outer, the outer becomes suffused with the inner.

The soul of things lies open to him. He sees that which the multitude discerns as yet but dimly. To that multitude he speaks and they understand, for he speaks a universal language.

By the beauty aspect of the eternal word does he reveal men unto themselves, indicate their destiny and point the way to oneness with the ~~Mr~~ Whole. He taps the archetypal fount whence springs the authenticity of all his work. Thence comes its power to quicken, to create and to transform.

"His art knows no limitation of time and space," writes one critic, "for he envisages the universe in its past, present and future as a unit, as a continuous song, binding the stone age to the age of electricity."

Well may we pause to heed the beneficent direction given to the New Age impulse by this messenger of Beauty, whose works, to again quote Emerson, "Spring from a necessity of as deep as the world" and whose strokes are "drawn in the portrait of that fate, perfect and beautiful, according to whose ordinations all being advance to their beauty." "

selfish and ordinary has been removed from his being .When such a divine
section by the fire takes place there results a Michel^a Angelo, a Leonardo,
a Hokusai - and then and there results - a Nicholas Roerich.