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BROADCAST BY SVETOSLAV ROERICH

ALSO

Broadcast - Interview with SMT. Devika Rani Roerich  
AND SMT. SUDHA REDDY.



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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
ALL INDIA RADIO: BANGALORE

DATE OF B'CAST: 9.10.74  
TIME OF B'CAST: 9.15 p.m.

"NICHOLAS ROERICH THE ARTIST AND THE SEER"

Broadcast

by

SVETOSLAV ROERICH

ON the occasion of the Centenary of  
Prof. Nicholas Roerich on the 9th of October 1974

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In the Kulu Valley, the ancient Kuluta, at Naggar, in the full view of the snowy peaks, amidst Deodars and Blue Pines stands a large rectangular stone. The inscription reads: "On December the Thirteenth 1947 here was cremated the body of Nicholas Roerich - the great Russian friend of India - let there be Peace". The stone stands like an altar fashioned by the sole hand of nature which gave it an almost perfect shape of a rectangle. It is a fragment of a rock which detached itself from a cliff nearby as if to provide a seal over the spot where the BARD of the - Himalayas was cremated, to mark the place of his physical dissolution. Today the Ninth of October, falls the HUNDREDTH Birth Anniversary of my father Nicholas Roerich. I shall say a few words about my father:

Our late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru inaugurating Father's Exhibition of paintings said:

"When I think of Nicholas Roerich I am astounded at the scope and abundance of his activities and creative genius. A great artist, a great scholar and writer, archaeologist and explorer, he touched and lighted up so many aspects of human endeavour. The very quantity is stupendous - thousands of paintings and each one of them a great work of art. When you look at these paintings so many of them of the Himalayas you seem to catch the spirit of those great mountains which have towered over the Indian plain and been our sentinels for ages past. They remind us of so much in our history, our thought, our cultural and spiritual heritage so much not merely of the India of the past, but of something that is permanent and eternal about India, that we cannot help feeling a great sense of indebtedness to Nicholas Roerich who has enshrined that spirit in these magnificent canvases."

It is difficult in the course of a short broadcast to give an adequate picture of a Man who lived such an extraordinary life



and left such a vast heritage. I shall only dwell on some of the most important facets of his life.

Whenever I think of my Father, I see before me his serene and thoughtful face. His kind violet blue eyes which at times would become quite dark. I can hear his quiet voice, he never raised his voice and all his countenance reflected that wonderful composure of mind and of "Self" which were the very foundation of his character. It was the composure of a Superior Man, grave and yet kind, thoughtful, with a remarkable and happy sense of humour.

In all his movements there was a measured harmony. He never hurried yet his output was prodigious. When he painted or when he wrote he did so with quiet deliberation when he wrote in his large and clear handwriting he never corrected or changed his sentences or words, least of all his thoughts. It was a continuous progressive effort towards a certain definite goal and that was true of his entire life. Under all conditions of life, in the most trying circumstances he remained calm and possessed and never wavered in his determination.

From his earliest school days he held before himself the transcendental ideals of the great Italian masters of the Renaissance Leonardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo. Already as a student he would drive about these great ideals, this unique dedication in the search and service of the beautiful.

He was born in 1874 at St. Petersburg in Russia and came from an ancient family of Scandinavian extraction. He simultaneously attended the Academy of Art, the Institute of Archaeology and several faculties at the University, including the faculty of Law in deference to his father's wishes. Later he studied abroad. He was endowed with a brilliant searching mind and a most remarkable memory that never forget anything that was once entrusted to its care.

He began his archaeological researches and excavations when only eighteen years old. The forty-three years he spent in Russia were a most remarkable example of human dedication and achievement. He was at the head of leading art and educational institutions and organised and took part in source of other organisations and activities. With all that he painted thousands of paintings, executed Murals and Mosaics for public buildings and churches, designed



settings for Operas and Ballets, wrote his books and essays on Art and Archeology, his short stories, fairy tales and poems, and conducted researches in Archaeology, History and Art.

From his student days he wrote powerful articles calling for greater appreciation and protection of Russia's great art heritage and was one of the first to point out the treasures of Russian Icons and ancient monuments. Most of his early paintings were on historic subjects of Russia's past, later he worked hard to revive the great art of Mosaics and Icon painting, <sup>and himself headed the classes of icon painting.</sup> He also found time to assemble remarkable collections of Art and Archaeology which were among the best in Russia.

Some of the settings he designed for the theatre like the Prince Igor and the Sacre du Printemps produced by Diaghilev in Paris have since become classics of the Stage.

Most of the great murals he executed have not survived the ravages of wars and now remain for us only in reproductions and in their original sketches. Recognition and fame came very early in life to my Father. When he finally embarked on his World Travels he was only 43 and was already a World figure with a tremendous record of achievement to his credit.

The great Russian Sculptor S.T. Konekov recently wrote: "Nicholas Roerich has become a great artist and scholar on Russian national soil, though many years he lived in India and America. The moral principles of Roerich in relation to the cultural heritage of mankind have become the norms of International Law."

Philosophy, the Great Oriental thought attracted him from his earliest days. The books on Shri Ramakrishna, of Swami Vivekananda and others were published in Russia at the beginning of the century. The poems of Tagore were beautifully translated into Russian by the great Lithuanian Poet Baltrushaitis. At that time an Exhibition of Indian Art was organised in Paris by the Russian Art Connoisseur Golubev. Father dedicated one of his articles to this Exhibition and concluded it with the following significant words:

"Beauty still lives in India;

Beckons to us the Great Indian Path." -

This "Path" was to take him later to India to discover for himself and through him for others the beauties of this land, to paint as no one has painted before him the grandeur, the sublime beauty and inner meaning of ~~the~~ the Himalayas. His studies in Philosophy and



and Oriental thought were a constant background in his quest for Self-Realisation. This quest runs like a golden thread through his entire life.

The question that may naturally arise. Has he found what he was searching for? Have his expectations been ~~xx~~ fulfilled? Yes, a thousand times yes! Out of her innermost recesses life laid before him her transcendental gifts, she made his life infinitely rich in its scope, revelations and sublime contacts.

He travelled far and ~~xx~~ wide not only throughout Russia, Europe and the New World, but also Asia, <sup>and his extensive expeditions took him across</sup> Mongolia, Tibet, China and Japan. Many hardships have been experienced, many difficulties had to be overcome. During one of the expeditions the caravan was held up by local officials and not allowed to proceed. It had to spend the winter, without any winter equipment at an altitude of 16,000 feet. All the pack animals perished through lack of fodder and exposure. Throughout all these trials he continued his work, carried out his researches and painted his great paintings.

My mother was his constant companion, herself a student of Philosophy and an Author of many books. She shared with Father all his aspirations and took part in all his work. Many of her thoughts are immortalised in his canvases, many books are dedicated by him to her. So close was their creative association that at times it is very difficult to draw the line of their mutual influence and inspiration.

Father loved India, the Himalayas and dedicated to them many books, essays and thousands of his canvases. That "Great Indian Path" which beckoned to him from his early days <sup>contact</sup> the very sources of the great philosophies, of ancient transcendental thought. He travelled throughout India and the Himalayas and finally settled at Kulu where he lived and worked till his death in 1947. He always visualised and hoped for a closer cooperation between India and Russia. Concluding one of his articles on India while on ~~xx~~ an expedition to Mongolia he wrote:

" O, Bharata all beautiful, let me send you my heartfelt admiration for all the greatness and inspiration which fill thy ancient cities and temples, thy meadows, deobans, thy sacred rivers and the Himalayas".



As an artist he worked in an unique and very personal style he was a brilliant colourist and had a marvellous imagination and gift of composition. Many of his paintings have proved to be prophetic. The great Russian writer Gorky called him the Greatest Intuitivist while Leonid Andreew described his art as the "THE REALM OF ROERICH"

Rabindranath Tagore write to Father in 1920:

"Your pictures profoundly moved me.  
They made me realise one thing which  
is obvious and yet which one needs to  
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it is that Truth is infinite .....  
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One of his endeavours which has quite a special significance was his International Pact for the Protection of Cultural Treasures in time of war and strife. This Pact known as the ROERICH PACT became a reality yet in Father's life time, and has now been made the basis for the Treaty signed at the Hague Convention in 1954 by all the leading countries.

An enormous bibliography exists on Father, over a dozen large monographs besides dozens of smaller ones and many hundreds of essays and articles by leading writers and art critics have been dedicated to his art and work. Several books on Father are now in preparation and new monographs have just come out in the Soviet Union.

Numerous countries honoured Father in his life time. He received some of the highest decorations and was Fellow of more than half a dozen academies. He was Chairman, President, Honorary Member of innumerable organisations, learned bodies and societies. But his greatest heritage left to Posterity are his paintings and writings. His writings comprise some 30 volumes besides innumerable essays and articles.

His better known books are:-

Collected Works.  
Flame in Chalice.  
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His paintings number over 7,000 dispersed throughout the whole wide world in Museums and private collections. In India Fathers' paintings are in many public collections, separate halls are dedicated to his paintings at the Kala Bhavan, Benares; Trivandrum Museum and the Allahabad Museum. Leading Museums own his paintings as for instance, Calcutta, Baroda, Chandigarh, Mysore and others.

His life can be best summarised as a ceaseless Quest, a Quest after knowledge, Self-Relaisation and Synthesis through concentrated creative activity and service.

From his earliest days he intuitively felt that labour was the great purifying and elevating principle. He believed that by conscious labour man emancipates and purifies himself. That the will and effort to produce something better, something more perfect for the sole purpose of doing it better raises us to a higher state. This search after perfection, this conscious effort for a more perfect expression, this ceaseless rythm of ~~man~~ joyous work were Fathers' Credo throughout his life. "Faith without deeds is dead". The repeated blows of the hammer forge inert metals into tangible shapes. The HEART, WISDOM, Labour and PATIENCE were maxims Father invoked early in life. By applying them deligently to everything he did, he reached his self-integration and with confidence he could affirm:

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WITH BEAUTY WE CONQUER."

Though we are now celebrating my Fathers first Birth Centenary I know that in the vista of time every Centenary will be marked be ever greater awareness and appreciation. Today we are only kindling the first flame of our tribute to a great life to be followed by ever brighter flames of gratitude and recognition leading into the distant beckoning future.

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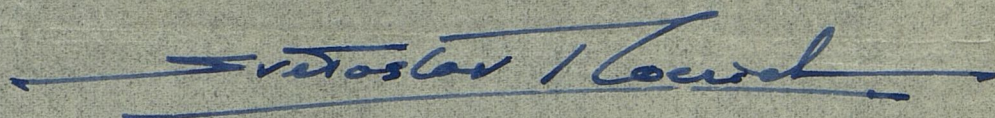
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A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Svetoslav Roerich", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

(SVETOSLAV ROERICH)

Bangalore,  
6th September 1974.



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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
ALL INDIA RADIO : BANGALORE

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No. Ban 15(3)74-Pl(E)  
Mme. Devika Rani Roerich,  
94, Edwards Road,  
Bangalore.

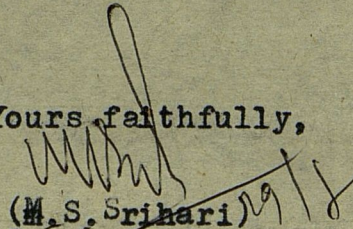
Dated : 29.10.74.

Dear Madam,

We are sending herewith copies of all the 4 scripts broadcast on 9.10.74 in connection with the centenary of of Prof. Nicholas Roerich.

Kindly acknowledge receipt.

Yours faithfully,

  
(M. S. Srihari)  
for Station Director.

Encl: 4 scripts.

\*my\*



B R O A D C A S T S9TH OCTOBER 1974

1. TALK BY SHRI LAL CHAND PRARTHI  
FOREST MINISTER, H.P. GOVT. SIMLA.
2. TALK BY SHRI HARISH CHAND RAHI,  
PRINCIPAL, GOVT. ART COLLEGE, SIMLA.
3. BROADCAST BY SHRI L.S. SESHAGIRI RAO
4. BROADCAST BY SHRI K.P.S. MENON
5. INTERVIEW WITH SMT. DEVIKA RANI  
AND SMT. SUDHA V. REDDY.
6. BROADCAST BY SVETOSLAV ROERICH.