

Govt. School of Arts & Crafts

Lucknow

15. VII. 32

Dear Professor Roerich,

My friend M<sup>r</sup> L. M. Sen and myself reached here safely on the morning of the 13<sup>th</sup> instant. We are extremely grateful to you for permitting Abdu Gani to accompany us upto Amritsar. It was very helpful to us on the way as seemed to be the living symbol of your kindness and good will towards us.

All through our journey, we remembered you + felt your ever-giving influence in our hearts.

Oh ! there were so many things to remind us of you ! For was not the cloud-swept sky itself a gigantic enlargement of your beautiful "Karelia" and the ever-receding or ever-rising mountain-tops the same old friends that we had met in so many of your noble creations ?

I have handed over your gifts to M<sup>r</sup> Haldar : he seemed to be touched by these tokens of your friendship.

I have arranged for the publication of your message for the Bro<sup>os</sup> Conference in 5 or 6 leading newspapers of the country + it will most probably be out on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August when the Conference will open. My friend in the Associated Press has sent the other news-item to Reuters, Bombay + hopes that it will be published in the European papers soon.

I shall start writing my little monograph on your creative works as soon as I am a little freer + in the meanwhile would request you very kindly to send me a copy of the "ADAMANT", as I intend to make a few excerpts from your inspiring essays in my article.

With kindest regards,

Yours very sincerely,  
Birendra Sen



Govt. School of Arts & Crafts,  
Lucknow, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct '33

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My dear Prof. de Roerich,

Greetings.

I am sending under separate cover a copy of the Special Puja Number of the Amritâ Bazar Patrika, which, I hope, might interest you. My short article on "Mannerism and Tradition" appears on page 35, and I shall be extremely grateful if you will kindly let me know your views on the subject; for, after all, our knowledge of Art is infinitesimal when compared with your rich and varied experience, and we should be still groping in the dark where your penetrating wisdom would illuminate and reveal.

The Modern Revivalist School of Indian Painting is gradually losing its vitality to some extent, owing to its strict adherence to the form-style of the by-gone days + a somewhat conservative

out-look. Art, I feel, must be linked with life, which should supply the motive Energy; in being dissociated with life, modern Indian art is being bereft of its human value. I have tried to explain my point of view in my article, but what really is the Patti in which we should direct our creative efforts?

We are very busy in these days in arranging an exhibition of Modern Indian Art which is going to be held in London under the auspices of the India Society, London, early next year. Paintings & sculptural works will be sent from all over India & we hope that the exhibition will be a great success.

With kindest regards,

Very cordially yours,  
Bireswar Sen

## GOVT. SCHOOL OF ARTS &amp; CRAFTS.

LUCKNOW.

The 17<sup>th</sup> Oct 1933

My dear Prof. Roerich,

Many thanks for your kind & stimulating letter and the sheaf of reprints. I am extremely delighted to learn that you liked my little dissertation on Mannerism & Tradition. The article in question roused a crowd of hostile criticism, because I ventured to affirm that a deliberate imitation of the style of the Ancients without recapturing their heroic Spirit, can lead to nowhere. I have been called an Apostate by several of my brother artists, because I am the one discontented spirit to raise my voice against the soulless repetition of the mannerisms of the Ajanta artists & do not decry Western art with a supercilious & omniscient contempt. I happen to hold with you that the best roots of

of the East and the West have the same fragrance + that the twain shall meet in the fields of Art in a brotherly union, despite Kipling.

You will be glad to know that some of my Kulu landscapes were exhibited in the Fine Art Society's galleries in London + met with praise even from the conservative press like the "Morning Post". My pupil M<sup>r</sup> S. S. Chowdhury also had a well-deserved recognition.

With kindest regards to yourself, Mme. Roerich + every body else,

Very sincerely yours,  
Birendra Sen

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My Dear Prof. Roerich,

I am extremely delighted to receive the little monograph on your life and works by M. Duvernois and thank you for your kind thoughts in sending me a copy of the same. It is, indeed, a welcome addition to the already enormous literature on your eventful life & multifarious activities and will, I am sure prove to be extremely useful for young aspirants.

We have just started a small cultural association in my own department, entitled "the Colourists' Association" and the boys + girls are requesting me to write to you inviting you to become one of the patrons of the Society. Need less to say, that the glowing colours of your beautiful works, exhibited early this year at our exhibition, have inspired them to found this Society & they are intending to start a manuscript magazine from next month. Several lectures were delivered under the auspices of this Society viz., 1) Twenty-five years of Indian Painting - by Mr Haldar 2) Idealism - by myself 3) the Development of the Rajput School into the Mughal School & its derivatives - by Mr D.C. Ganguly. On behalf of the students & staff of this school, I would cordially invite you to become a Patron of our Society and very kindly to contribute an article in the official organ of the Society — "Day-dreams" — giving us your blessings in our new endeavour.

A brief review of M. Duvernois' book is enclosed herewith.

With kindest regards,

Cordially yours,

Bireswar Sen

Govt. School of Arts & Crafts,  
Lucknow, 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov 1933

Govt. School of Arts & Crafts  
Lucknow, 25.XI.33

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My dear Prof. Roerich,

On behalf of my students and the Colourists Association, allow me to express our grateful thanks for your excellent article, "The Sonority of Colour." Our boys are delighted at your acceptance of the Patronship of their Association and look forward to meeting you personally some day.

It makes my heart glad to read about the great success of the Washington Convention. I am certain that mankind in its more lucid moments perceives the imperative + emergent necessity of the acceptance of the Roerich Pact + will in the very near future adopt it as the most remarkable humanitarian conception of the present age. We shall live to see the Banner of Peace waving joyfully in all lands proclaiming the ultimate triumph

of Beauty and Knowledge over Greed,  
Lust for possession and vandalism.  
Whatever might be said or done, I  
for one, always would believe in the  
final triumph of the Spirit of Man  
over the forces of Darkness and  
the universal acceptance of the Roerich  
Pact would be ample testimony to  
prove that my beliefs have not been  
cherished in vain.

I am glad to find that you liked  
my review of M. Duvergier's book. It  
has not been published anywhere as  
yet & nothing would give me more  
pleasure than seeing this review  
being of any service either to yourself  
or its author.

With kindest regards,

Yours cordially,  
Bireswar Sen

Govt. School of Arts & Crafts,  
Lucknow, 18 Nov 35

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My dear Prof. de Reuck,

I am extremely happy to learn that you are back again in our midst. It must have been a very fruitful and illuminating journey for you - this long sojourn in Mongolia, China and Japan. I hope your experiences & reactions will be embodied in another great travelogue like the "Altai-Himalaya", which is in our Library. In your inspired writings, no less than in your noble paintings, one gets the true feeling and atmosphere, the inpalpable pervading Spirit of the various lands you have visited and we are longing to see the many wonderful scenes through your eyes, in your forthcoming book.

We are working very hard in these days to justify the existence of our school which is regarded as an expensive but fruitless luxury by many. The bogey of "Retrenchment" is everywhere & people in general are so apathetic. Art can come later on, they say, after we have economic prosperity. Industries should be pushed, not Art, which butters no one's bread. As if our industry without any

sense of Beauty and Art, would be worth having and, to say the least, a success financially. Our own school exhibition each year is an eye opener to many, but alas, in a school, we cannot produce things on a commercial scale to make an abiding impression on the market, which will turn the public eye from worthless stereotyped articles to really beautiful things, which cost no more.

I have been elected the President of the Art Section this year, of the Bengali Library Conference, which is to be held in New Delhi in December. I shall try to put forth the case of the artists, before the people. Not that I hope to convert any body to our side, but I shall at least have the satisfaction of having done my duty.

During your absence from India, another volume of the "Day dreams" was published by the Colourists' Association of our school, in which Mr. Shibaayev very kindly contributed an article on the Art of M. Swiatoslav de Roerich. We hope to get a contribution from you for our next number, with reproductions of your latest paintings, if possible.

The Colourists' Association welcomes you back to the old country & sends its cordial greetings to you & to Dr. George de R. who, we hope, is back too. Mr. L.M. Sen sends his best wishes.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,  
Deesawar Sen



GOVT. SCHOOL OF ARTS & CRAFTS  
LUCKNOW, THE 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1897  
TEL: ARTIND.

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My dear Professor Roerich.

I am delighted to receive your kind letter of the 18<sup>th</sup> instant. The magnificent Latvian publication of your work also reached me this morning. It is a volume well worthy of your genius; though I feel that the illustrations fall short of those incorporated in your HIMALAYA, in quality of printing.

I shall certainly review the book & shall send it on to the Twentieth Century, sometime next month, as I do not wish to do the thing hurriedly.

I don't know if separate prints are available of the colour prints CHENREZI, THE SWORD OF GESAR KHAN and SRI KRISHNA. Several of my students would like to have a copy, if the price is not beyond their means.

I shall try to induce the Alwar Durbar to include some of your paintings in the State collection, when I go there next. It is a very small state, compared with Hyderabad or Travancore and definitely not so enlightened.

With very best wishes,

Yours cordially,  
B. Sen



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GOVT. SCHOOL OF ARTS & CRAFTS  
LUCKNOW, THE 1<sup>ST</sup> August 1938  
TEL: ARTIND.

My dear Prof. Roerich.

I have just received a copy of the *Zelta Grāmata* issued by the Latvian Roerich Society of Riga + went through its contents as far as was possible for me. It filled me with joy to see the glowing tributes paid to your genius by the finest intellects of the leading nations of the world and to note that in spite of the unfortunate strife which are rending mankind to pieces, there is a brooding Serenity all over the Universe which permeates, pervades + protects the spiritual aspirations of Man.

I am very glad to note that the Uguns Press of Riga is bringing out two volumes of your works. Would it be possible to get a set for our Colourists' Association, of which you are the President? I am writing separately to Mr. Rudzitis and would request you to put in a few friendly words on behalf of our Association.

You will be glad to note that this year one of my pupils Mr. B.C. Gue has won the huge silver cup awarded by His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore for the finest painting in the Mysore Dasara Exhibition. Three other students got the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> prizes for the best painting in Indian Style. I have myself taken to painting in pastels + got the 1<sup>st</sup> Prize for pastel work in the Punjab Fine Art + Industrial Exhibition early this year.

My students are requesting me to write to you for copies of your beautiful painting "The Commands of



GOVT. SCHOOL OF ARTS & CRAFTS  
LUCKNOW, THE 15<sup>th</sup> August 1939  
TEL: ARTIND.

My dear Professor Roerich,

As desired by you I am sending herewith three copies of my review of Barnett D. Conlan's inspiring book on your mind and art. The great admiration & reverence which I feel for you and your creative achievements can never be adequately summed up in a short article like this ; but I hope your own prophetic utterances will reverberate through the world like the rolling thunder notes of Himalayan cumulo-nimbus clouds, without the almost unnecessary tremulous notes of my criticism.

Please kindly tell Mr. Shibayev about the colour-reproductions of your works about which I wrote to you in my last letter. My boys have been clamouring for them for many days & their soul-hunger must be appeased.

With cordial greetings,

Very sincerely yours,

D. Sen

GOVT. SCHOOL OF ARTS & CRAFTS

MURKINOW THE

LET APPLIED



Rigden Seypo". If available, would you very kindly instruct Mr. Shibayev to send me a dozen copies by V.P. Post?

I hope you have heard from our friend & pupil M<sup>r</sup> Evelyn Culhane. She is a very refined & cultured lady and is very much interested in all cultural movements in general & your own inspiring works in particular.

I have not heard from M<sup>r</sup> Shibayev for quite a long time.  
I hope he is doing well.

Kindly convey my respectful greetings to Mme. Roerich  
& remember me to Dr. George Roerich & Mr. Svetoslav Roerich.

With kindest regards & all good wishes,

Very sincerely yours,

Bireswar Sen

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read "Bireswar Sen".

FROM B.S.E.N.M.A.  
GOVT. SCHOOL OF ARTS & CRAFTS

(N155) 10

LUCKNOW

Dec 12, 1942

My dear Professor Roerich,

I have not heard anything from you for quite a long time. I hope that you are all doing well and as usual creating new visions of Beauty. If there is any photograph of your latest works, kindly pass them on to me.

I have lately done a large number of miniature water colour landscapes, like the ones I usually make for X'mas and New Year Greetings. A dozen of them have been acquired by the Mysore State Museum and four for Travancore Palace. Many more have been purchased in small lots by individual art-lovers. It is becoming increasingly difficult to sell large works on account of the war in these days & exhibitions all over India have practically ceased.

I hope you have seen the Abanidra Number of the Viswabharati Quarterly. Your message has been given a conspicuous place in the first few pages. There is also a small article written by me on the art & genius of my beloved Guru.

There is a small personal matter in which I require your assistance. The post of the Superintending Craftsman will soon be vacant in our School & the post advertised for through the Public Service Commission. The rules require that I must submit two testimonials

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from two well known people not connected with our institution, who know me and my work and achievements personally. If there is nothing to stand in the way, may I request you kindly to grant me such a testimonial of my work and conduct, as I have had the privilege of knowing you intimately for over a decade. I shall get Dr James Connis to give me the other testimonial.

For some years, I have been working as the sectional editor on Art in an Hindi Encyclopaedia which is being published serially. I have contributed chapters on Prehistoric, Egyptian, Assyrian, Cretan, Greek, Roman, Chinese and Japanese Art and shall soon have to write on the art of Tibet. As Dr George R's book on Tibetan Painting is nowhere available in these days, may I borrow his book, in case he can spare it for about a month? Also Hackui & Bacot's L'Art Tibétain, if that book is with him by any chance. Needless to say that I shall take the greatest care of the books and shall return them as soon as I finish taking down my notes.

Kindly convey my best regards to Mme. de Rocchich, Dr George R and M. Svetoslav R. My salutations to you!

Yours very sincerely,  
Dineswar Sen

Jan 7, 1943

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My dear Prof. Rocrich,

I hope you have received my last letter and the little miniature I sent to you as a New Year's memento.

I am sending herewith a short review of your latest booklet and hope that I have been able to express my admiration for you & your creations adequately.

Kindly drop me a line when you receive this same, as one is never sure in these days of frequent postal irregularities.

Has your book "Vigil" been published by any chance? I would like to have a copy of the same and a copy of "Shambhala, the Resplendent" for my library, if you can spare two copies for an old friend.

With kindest regards to all of you.

Yours very sincerely,

B. Sen

The seldom comes across a more beautiful appellation in our ancient language than the word Kavi (कवि). It generally means 'a Poet'; in our older literature, it also means 'the Omniscient'. The gift of Supreme Knowledge is thus always linked up with the gift of Poetry. A true Poet is indeed a Seer as well.

But what does a Poet really see? Is his vision the same as ours. The matter-of-fact optical impression of a fleeting moment or something deeper and different? In a way it is the same as ours, in another way it is entirely different. We see, but we do not realise the significance of what we see, but to the Poet the deeper significance and the hidden mysteries of Life and Nature are spontaneously revealed along with his sensory impressions.

This clairvoyance of the Soul is seen only in the noblest of poets, artists, musicians and scientists of all lands — and, above all, in those whom God chooses to be His mouth-piece from time to time for the sustenance of the Good and the extermination of the Vicious.

Such a clairvoyant soul is Rerich's. His sounding trumpet voicing forth the clarion-call of Truth and Beauty, peals out afresh in his fascinating book, "The Joy of Life".

May his stirring appeal for the cause of Art sound loud and long, and the young devotees to the temple of Beauty follow his joyous oriflamme for many, many years to come!

Sham!

(शम्)



GOVT. SCHOOL OF ART & CRAFTS,  
LUCKNOW.

February 6, 1944

My dear Prof. Roerich.

I have not heard from you for quite a long time. I hope you are doing well & creating yet nobler visions of Beauty. We very much miss your bulletins & colour-reproductions in these days & shall be grateful for small mercies in the shape of photographs. You must be aware how your great Himalayan paintings appeal to innumerable hearts, all a thirst for majestic panoramas of unearthly beauty. One of my friends, Mr. M. S. Randhawa I.C.S., Deputy Commissioner, Rae Bareli, U.P., is one such Roerich enthusiast & when we meet we invariably talk about you. I showed him your 'Himalayas', Conlan monographs, letters, bulletins etc., & like me, he has become an ardent admirer of your genius. He is now so keen on meeting you personally that he is pressing me to accompany him to Naggar in May next. Personally I would love to meet you again, as also Madame, Dr. George & Sojatoslav. But somebody was telling me that the trains now go only as far as Nagrota

The bus service also is very uncertain. Randhawa is so keen on meeting you that he is even proposing to go on foot from Simla to Oot & thence to Naggar. But as he can get only a fortnight's leave, the journey would be very hasty. As you are aware of the local conditions much better than us, would you very kindly let me know how to go about our way to Kulu now? S. Saijiva Dev, another Roerich enthusiast may also accompany us.

M<sup>r</sup> Randhawa is also keen on buying your big Volume "Himalayas". if any more copies are available. I do not know if you have more copies of this book in stock, but would appreciate it very much if you let M<sup>r</sup> Randhawa have one. M<sup>r</sup> Randhawa belongs to Hoshiarpur & is one of the finest young I.C.S. man I have come across. He is an M.Sc. in Botany, takes keen interest in algae, in which he has made many researches, which got him the membership of the National Institute etc., His other interests are bio-aesthetic planning, flowering plants, Himalayas in general & Himalayan painters in particular.

With kindest regards & greetings to you all,  
Very cordially yours  
B. Sen