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DR. M. S. RANDHAWA

A Tribute

By

SVETOSLAV ROERICH.

Dr. M.S. Randhawa combines the rare accomplishments of an outstanding Administrator, Scholar, Scientist, Organiser and Social Worker.

Endowed with a remarkable energy and enthusiasm he has expanded into many seemingly unconnected fields of knowledge and endeavour and made valuable contributions in one form or another to all of them.

Though his early training was in Science and he later joined the Indian Civil Service, one can readily discern in him a deep preoccupation with the search and expression of the Beautiful. His scientific training and appreciation and understanding of esthetic values made him combine science and art in his researches which studies resulted in a number of important papers and books. As an outstanding Administrator he held many important Government posts and took an active part in public life. He came in contact with artists and poets and became closely and prominently associated with organisations promoting and encouraging the arts and took an active part in the art life of the country.

His love for Art was a spontaneous upsurge of forces that lived deep in his heart and in his Search of the Beautiful
~~At that time~~ he became powerfully aware of the great message of the school of paintings which at one time flourished in the hill areas of his native Punjab. With all ^{the} his enthusiasm and energy ^{at his command} (he engaged himself in research and study of this unique expression of Indian Art. The results of his interest in this field are well known through the splendid books which have enriched and greatly contributed to our knowledge of the Western Himalayan Schools of Miniature Painting.

In these publications Dr. M.S. Randhawa brought out the ^{moving} beautiful lyrical qualities that underlie and have inspired these beautiful paintings and has ^{enlarged} enriched our knowledge and vista of the complex forces that were at work in the formation of this, one of the finest and richest schools of painting in India. Indeed the school of painting which developed in the western Himalayas viewed as a whole may be considered as the most beautiful of the later schools of Indian painting.

The deeply emotional and poetic subject matter set against the inspiring background of hills and mountains with their rich flora, so well understood and eloquently depicted by the artists and animated by the highly sensitive treatment of the heroes and heroines, reflects the richness and abundance of life and tradition which pulsed once throughout these regions. From the bold, powerful and highly decorative treatment of the early Hill and Basohli schools to the brooding tenderness, beauty, refinement and technical accomplishment of the later schools of Guler, Kangra and Chamba, we have a ^H unique ^B hymn of beauty left to us by true artists, who worked, mostly anonymously, sheltered within the intricate pattern of the numerous small states which grew up in these regions.

It is but natural that the artist, poet and lover of nature in Dr. M.S. Randhawa should have been attracted to and moved by this rich artistic expression of the Western Himalayan regions and that his spirit should delight in what he found and saw.

Poetry, folk lore are but allied ^{spheres} fields of creative expression and his combined researches resulted in several publications dealing with these vital expressions of the peoples of the former Punjab Hill areas.

While engaged in his researches on art he had to give a great deal of time to his work as Administrator and to other fields that were also of vital interest to him such as

researches in Botany, Agriculture, Planning and Social work, which experience he again shared in a number of publications of considerable interest and value to those interested in these ^{spheres} fields of human endeavour.

Love of nature and beauty is the unifying thread that runs through Dr. M.S. Randhawa's researches and studies. There is a unity in his creative expression, the unity of purposeful approach and enlightened evaluation. In these days when the general tendency is to specialise and thus restrict the sphere of our general knowledge it is especially precious to find a person of such outstanding merit and accomplishment in such seemingly diverse and unconnected fields.

All those who have the progress of man through the quest after knowledge, beauty and service of man at heart will feel a great debt of gratitude to Dr. M.S. Randhawa for his splendid, enlightened and dedicated work and for the happiness and inspiration he has given through it to so many people.

SVETOSLAV ROERICH

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