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जे २२ हौज़ खास एंक्लेव
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The Ph.D. thesis of Mr. V.A. Rossof on the expeditions of Nicholas Roerich to Central Asia contain distortions of a serious nature that have totally ignored the correct perspective of his cultural perceptions, his deep attachment to the nationalistic roots of Russia, his mystical symbolism along side the agni-yoga of his wife, the influences of theosophy on his thought, his artistic sensitivities to the time-honored life of Russia, and his concern for the rich academic traditions of Russian scholarship in the domain of Buddhism.

The patriotic roots of Roerich were deep, and he was a devotee of ancient Russia. He descended from the 8th century Rurik who forged Russia's unity. He named his sons Yuri Roerich for Rurik's son Igor, and his son Svetoslav Roerich after the grandson of Rurik Svyatoslav. His earliest paintings deal with the myth, folklore and beginnings of Russia. He always supported his country: in 1934-35 he supported Stalin's Russia as a legitimate defender of the country against Japanese aggression. In 1940 he wrote articles about the great "Red Flag".

He was influenced by the theosophy of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. Blavatsky's *The Veil of Isis*, drew him to the elusive secrets that may be found in Tibet, Mongolia, the Gobi and Himalayas. He felt the genuine value of Buddhist philosophy. To him Mongolia and Tibet were full of mystics, saints, and invisible beings who would dawn a new world of spirituality. His fascination for the occult, arcane signs and symbols, global unity and world peace was to maintain continuity of tradition, history and scholarship. The cultural destruction of Stalin left deep scars on all writers, poets, artists, and scholars. His Peace Pact was responsible for the saving of the historic treasures of Kyoto. Prof. Reischauer of the Harvard University invoked the Roerich Pact to save Kyoto from a nuclear holocaust in 1945. Along with is my paper on the Pact and I invite your attention to it, to understand the mind-ground of poets, artists and scholars to preserve the higher values of life.

Roerich, his wife and two sons were enamoured of the rich Buddhist tradition with its accents on the charm and grace of human life. They continued Sanskrit, Buddhist and Tibetan studies in India. They were guardians of the native traditions, as well as of the rich traditions of Russian scholarship. A complex interplay of understanding between scholars

and political leaders was unavoidable. Pandit Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, credited Roerich with having enriched Indians' knowledge of their own ancient culture. The paintings of the Himalayas by Roerich have been valued highly in India.

The Russian legends about the fabulous kingdom of Belovodye became popular among believers. From the 17th century onwards they went to Central Asia, Mongolia, Tibet and even India in search of this kingdom. Roerich shared this belief in the Tibeto-Mongolian legend of Shambhala. He was seeking the labyrinths of treasures of the mind. In his words: "The hills are adorned in gold. Verily thou art beautiful, Asia! Accept the chalice".

My father Prof. RaghuVira knew Nicholas Roerich well. Roerich never took part in any political conversation. He was a sagely recluse, away from the freedom struggle of India.

The attacks on Nicholas Roerich seem to be inspired by international motivations to downsize the emerging cultural paradigms of Russia which will give her new strength to progress and ensure her unique position in the comity of nations.

Dear friends, please understand Nicholas Roerich as a symbol of national dignity and global consciousness. To us in India he is the cosmic rhythm that evolves from the deeps of Russian *slava*.

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