WORKS ABOUT

NICHOLAS ROERICH

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY
by
IRINA H. CORTEN

New York
NICHOLAS ROERICH MUSEUM
1986
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c 1986
Irina H. Corten, born in Moscow of an American father, who was at that time a UPI correspondent, and a Russian mother, came to the United States as an adolescent. She was graduated from Barnard College, after which she obtained her Master's degree in Russian Studies from Harvard University, and a doctorate in the same field from the University of California, Berkeley.

Since 1975, Ms. Corten has been teaching Russian language, literature, and culture at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. Her interests extend to Eastern philosophy and religions, including the practice and teaching of Yoga since 1973.
Annotated Bibliography of Works about Nicholas Roerich

Copious literature exists on the subject of the life and work of Nicholas Roerich, in more than twenty-five languages. The major sources are in Russian and in English. This bibliography does not claim to be exhaustive. Choices of entries were made on the basis of length, scholarly import and/or topical interest; the author assumes all responsibility for subjective judgments. Additional bibliographical sources are listed in Section III. Too numerous to be included here are various newspaper articles, reviews, exhibition catalogs and other short publications dealing with Roerich; many of these sources are kept in the archives of Nicholas Roerich Museum in New York.

In transliterating Russian names and titles the Library of Congress system was used.

I. Books (more than 50 pages)

Alekhin, Aleksandr D. N. K. Rerikh.
An overview of Roerich's life and work. Factually reliable, but not as comprehensive as Belikov and Kniazeva's and not as vivid as Poliakova's works (see these entries). The author is an art scholar.

This rare edition contains high-quality reproductions of Roerich's paintings and texts of ten short fairytales and fables by Roerich. Baltrushaitis, "Vnutrennie primety tvorchestva Rerikha."

The author, a Symbolist poet, examines Roerich's art as an example of Symbolist aesthetics.

Benois, "Put' Rerikha."

This well-known Russian painter examines Roerich's art, compares it with his own and comes to the conclusion that, despite vastly dissimilar tastes and methods, they share a common spiritual goal.

Gidoni, "V zashchitu iskusstva."

The author, an art historian, outlines Roerich's career as an innovative artist and promoter of culture.

Remizov, "Zherlitsa druzhinnaia."

An imaginative literary experiment, by a well-known writer, to convey the spirit of Roerich's pictures through poetic language.

Iaremich, "U istokov tvorchestva."

The author, an artist and critic, discusses Roerich's artistic methods in depicting Russian landscapes and Russian antiquity.

Moscow: Molodaya gvardiia, 1972.

A thorough, well-researched investigation of Roerich's life and work, especially valuable for citations from unpublished archival materials. Unfortunately, the authors do not provide precise bibliographical information for these and other citations. The book is a typical example of Soviet scholarship on Roerich in that it plays down the significance of Symbolism and other idealistic philosophies in Roerich's art and thought. Both authors are scholars of art and literature.

Conlan, Barnett D. *Nicholas Roerich: a Master of the Mountains.*

Liberty, Indiana: Flamma, 1938.

A thought-provoking, impressionistic study of Roerich's art and spirituality, by a distinguished theosophist poet and critic. The author relates Roerich's art to certain Western and Eastern cultural traditions and draws interesting, if subjective, comparisons between Roerich and several of the world's greatest artists. No annotations, no bibliography.

The second edition of this text, published in 1939 by the Roerich Museum in Riga, contains beautiful
reproductions of Roerich's paintings.


The chief interest of this work is that it offers an example of a devotee's emotional and uncritical approach to Roerich.


Written by a noted Russian art historian, this is the earliest book-length study of Roerich containing detailed biographical material and critical commentary. It includes twenty-six poems by Roerich, a bibliography, and a list of Roerich's paintings in chronological order from 1891 to 1916.


In the first part of this handsomely illustrated publication Gollerbach, an art historian, discusses Roerich as a philosopher-artist. The second part, by Ivanov, is a reprint of his 1937 book (see entry).


A rare, lavishly illustrated monograph which
includes articles about Roerich by the above authors and Roerich's "Banners of the East" (observations and thoughts about Eastern cultures and religions).

Grant, "Voice of America."

A romanticized interpretation of Roerich's mission in the New World.

Grebenstchikoff, "The Call of Asia."

A eulogy to Roerich as a crusader for ecumenical ideals and cultural unity.

Narodny, "The Inner Meaning of Roerich's Art."

A discussion of the mythic, allegorical, and musical qualities of Roerich's art.

Siegrist, "The Universe of Roerich."

A commentary on Roerich's art as a mystical, symbolic representation of a higher reality.

Ivanov, Vsevolod N. Rerikh: khudozhnik, myslitel'.

Riga: Uguns, 1937.

Ivanov, a writer, approaches the subject poetically rather than analytically. He regards Roerich as one of the world's greatest artists and attributes his greatness, in part, to his Russianness. In Russian culture, thinks Ivanov, the ideals of Truth and Beauty are particularly vital.

Kniazeva, Valentina P. Nikolai Konstantinovich Rerikh.

This is the first full-length monograph about Roerich to appear in the Soviet Union in the post-Stalin period. The author bases her interpretations on careful research and achieves considerable objectivity of judgment although, as a Soviet scholar, she is critical of Roerich's non-Marxist views. Illustrated.


A very useful collection of articles, by Roerich specialists, on various aspects of his work (art, poetry, archaeology, scientific expeditions, crusading for peace and culture, etc.). Contains photographs of Roerich and reproductions of his paintings. Includes one of the most comprehensive lists of Roerich's paintings to date.


This is the first of a series of volumes of conference proceedings devoted to various aspects of Roerich's work. This volume contains twenty-six contributions divided into five sections: archaeology and history; art and culture; expeditions and biographical data; science; general
topics. The quality of these articles is uneven -- some are excellent, some superficial. Included is a bibliography of Roerich's works and of Soviet studies on the topic of Roerich and the East published after 1960.

Rerikhovskie chteniia.
The second volume of conference proceedings about Roerich, containing forty-eight contributions and divided into five sections: history and archaeology; art and literature; culture, science and religion; medicine, health care and ecology; biographical materials and general topics. As in the preceding volume, the quality of the articles varies.

Kazan': Izd. knig po iskusstvu, 1912.
This book consists of a brief essay giving biographical facts and general comments about Roerich's art, followed by Roerich's essay "The Joy of Art" and several fairy tales (later reprinted in the first volume of Roerich's Collected Works). Illustrated with reproductions of Roerich's paintings.

Paelian, Garabed. Nicholas Roerich.
The author of this book, a theosophist educator, regards Roerich as "a prophet of the new era" and discusses Roerich's work as a source of guidance for spiritual aspirants. The material is loosely organized, and fact tends to be mixed with fancy, but the overall message is eloquently conveyed. There is a fairly lengthy bibliography of publications about Roerich, which is less useful than it could be because it is not set up according to modern scholarly standards.

Poliakova, Elena I. Nikolai Rerikh.
An imaginative, vivid account of Roerich's life and work, full of rich background detail drawn from the author's extensive knowledge of Russian culture. The author is a reputable scholar; unfortunately, in this book she provides no documentation or bibliographical references.

Roerich Museum: a Decade of Activity (1921-1931).
A summary of the artistic and educational activities of the Roerich Museum, The Master Institute of United Arts, the Urusvati Himalayan Institute, and other related organizations, since their inception to 1931.
Rostislavov, A. A. N. K. Rerikh.
Petrograd: Izd. Butkovskoi, 1916 (?)
An interesting early study of Roerich. The author discusses formal and thematic characteristics of Roerich's art and traces the path of its development from juvenile eclecticism to mature personal style.

Selivanova, Nina. The World of Roerich.
New York: Corona Mundi, 1922.
In the preface to her book the author claims "to interpret the art of Nikolai Roerich," but does little more than translate selected passages from the monographs of Sergei Ernst and A. Rostislavov (see these entries), paraphrasing them slightly and not acknowledging that fact. The only redeeming feature of the book is that it serves as a source of factual material on Roerich to readers who do not know Russian.

Sidorov, Valentin M. Na vershinakh.
Moscow: Sovetskaia Rossilia, 1983.
This study reflects a characteristically Soviet approach to Roerich, stressing the realism of his art and his loyalty to Russia. The author, himself a poet, pays particular attention to the neglected part of Roerich's oeuvre -- poetry. However, he concentrates on discussing ideas and provides no
systematic analysis of structure and style. Appended are Roerich's *Tsvety Morii*, with the exception of "V zemliu."

**Tampy, K. P. Nicholas Roerich.**
Trivandrum: THCS, 1935.
A eulogy to Roerich by one who, obviously, looks up to him as a "guru."

**Verma, S. N., ed. Nicholas Roerich, 1874-1974.**
Himachal Pradesh, Simla: Dept. of Languages, Art and Culture, 1975.
This commemorative volume is interesting in that it presents Roerich through the eyes of Indians. The contributions range from evaluations of his art to eye-witness accounts by his domestic servants.

**Yaremenko, A. V. N. K. Roerich: His Life and Creations During the Past 40 Years (1889-1929).**
An album of reproductions of Roerich's paintings, with a brief overview of his life and work up to 1929.

**II. Articles, pamphlets, portions of books**

**Alekhin, Aleksandr G. "Grafika Rerikha." In Voprosy teorii, istorii i metodiki prepodavaniiia khudozhestvenno-graficheskikh distsiplin.** Ed. N.
Rostovtsev.
A good study of the usually overlooked aspect of Roerich's art -- graphic design.

N. K. Rerikh.
Moscow: Znanie, 1974.
This is a shorter version of the work listed in section I.

Aleksandrov, Emil. The Roerich Pact and the International Protection of Cultural Institutions and Treasures.
A short booklet containing a summary of facts about the Roerich Pact.

This oft-quoted short essay of the famous Russian writer is a moving tribute to Roerich as a great visionary and creator of "a world of truth."

An outline of Roerich's career, emphasizing the significance of his mission as "a prophet of peace."
The author is an artist, writer, and student of Eastern philosophy.


——. "Rerikh i Gor'kii." In Trudy po russkoi i slavianskoi filologii, XIII. Gor'kovskii sbornik. Ed. Z. Mints et al. Tartu: Uchenye zapiski TGU, 1968, pp. 251-265. This article describes the friendship of Roerich and Gor'kii and discusses the similarity of their attitudes to Russia, its culture, and its destiny.

scientific activities of the Urusvati Institute founded by Roerich and his son Iurii in Kulu Valley, India.

A member of Roerich's household briefly describes his expeditions, family life, and attitudes to work.

Boguslavskii, M. M. "Pakt Rerikha i zashchita kul'turnykh tsennostei." In Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo, No. 10.
A detailed summary of facts about the Roerich Pact, written by a professor of law.

This article discusses the "Karelian" period in Roerich's life and the theme of the Russian north in his paintings and literary works.

Bossom, Alfred C. "An Appreciation of Nicholas Roerich."
This short essay, written by an architect, attempts an evaluation of Roerich's contribution to American culture.
The author, a theosophist architect and art critic, discusses Roerich as a "mystic and metaphysician."

New York: Redfield, 1920, n. pag.
The aim of the author is to introduce Roerich to the American public. His language is rather flowery, but his insights into the essence of Roerich's art compensate for it.

The author, a long-time associate of Leo Tolstoy and a student of Russian culture, describes his correspondence with Roerich from 1936 to 1947. The salient theme of the correspondence is Russia. The author also comments on Roerich's conflicts and reconciliations with the Russian artist Igor' Grabar' and Aleksandr Benois.

Burliuk, David. Rerikh.
The paucity of original ideas in this publication is surprising in view of the fact that its author was a well-known avant-garde poet and artist. What he offers here is some biographical information and a paraphrased text of several conversations with Roerich. Much of what Roerich is quoted as saying can be found in his essays.

Corten, Irina H. *Flowers of Morya: The Theme of Spiritual Pilgrimage in the Poetry of Nicholas Roerich.*
A study of the semantic structure of Roerich's poetry, interpreting Roerich's use of time-space metaphors. The author is a specialist in Russian literature and culture.

Written in connection with an exhibition of Roerich's paintings, this article was one of the first to herald the "rediscovery" of Roerich in the Soviet Union in the late 1950s. The author draws some parallels between Roerich and other Russian artists and makes some interesting observations about Eastern influences in Roerich's art.

Moscow: Geograficheskoe obshchestvo SSSR, 1960, pp. 253-256.
The article discusses the value of Roerich's expeditions in Asia to Soviet geography.

A rehash of well-known facts and interpretations of Roerich, in an anthroposophical journal.

This booklet, written by a long-time friend and associate of Roerich, summarizes the main events of Roerich's life and his artistic accomplishments. Useful to those unfamiliar with the subject.

The author, a member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, writes about Roerich's expeditions in Asia and about his humanistic ideals and Russian patriotism.

Galune, P. "Rerikh i Litva." In Litva literaturnaja. Ed. A. Beliauskas.
The article discusses Roerich's interest in
Lithuanian culture, particularly in the work of the painter Churlionis and the poet Baltrushaitis.

A long, rambling piece surveying Roerich's career from the beginning to 1915. Useful as an early source on Roerich.

Grabar', Igor. Moia zhizn'.
An account of the personal relationship between Roerich and Grabar' -- a distinguished Russian painter and art critic. Grabar's opinions about Roerich are subjective and contradictory. Rather critical at the time of writing this memoir, Grabar's evaluation of Roerich became considerably more positive in the 1940s.

This brochure was published in conjunction with an exhibition of Roerich's paintings in Novosibirsk. Written for the general public, it contains basic biographical facts and standard Soviet interpretations of Roerich's art.

Kaun, Alexander. "Nicholas Roerich in the Himalayas."

Despite the title, this article offers no specific discussion of Roerich's Himalayan period but comments in general terms on the spirituality and uniqueness of his art.

Kniazeva, Valentina P. Nikolai Rerikh.
Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1968.
This is a condensation of the 1963 monograph, with minor changes and corrections.

A technical study about the methods of dating Roerich's undated works.

Kuzmin, Mikhail. N. K. Rerikh.
Petrograd: Vserokompom, 1924.
The author of this article, a modernist Russian
writer, attempts to explain the uniqueness of Roerich's art in terms of his peculiar vision of Russia. Roerich, in Kuzmin's opinion, sees Russia through the eyes of an outsider -- a stance which lends an exotic quality to his paintings.

The introductory text to this exhibition catalog offers a brief overview of Roerich's life and work.

Lichtmann, Maurice M. "Nicholas Roerich and Science."

This article discusses some of Roerich's achievements in the field of archaeology.

Makovskii, Sergei. "Vrubel' i Rerikh."

An astute comparison between the two artists by a noted Russian art critic.

——. "Rerikh." In *Stranitsy khudozhestvennoi kritiki*, kn. 2.
A sensitive interpretation of Roerich's early art, stressing his understanding of the spirit of Russian antiquity.

Milotvorskaia, M. "Rerikh i nekotorye problemy russkoj
An excellent short study of Roerich's art in the context of cultural and ideological trends in early 20th-century Russia.

Nicholas Roerich.

A tastefully illustrated booklet published for the Roerich Centenary. The writings include tributes to Roerich by Jawaharlal Nehru, Rabindranath Tagore, Leonid Andreev, and Alexander Benois.


In the untitled introduction to this volume Ol'ga Rumiantseva, an art historian, summarizes Roerich's artistic achievements. Her commentary is more detailed and scholarly than usual for an exhibition catalog and contains some fresh insights into Roerich's art -- such as the mention of his influence on modern Indian painters.


The author, a member of the Soviet Academy of
Sciences, writes about Roerich's scientific and humanistic mission in Asia.

Petrovskii, Iu. "Gonets."


The author characterizes Roerich's art as optimistic and writes about Roerich as a great humanitarian and Russian patriot.


The author, a theosophist, discusses Roerich's concept of culture and his philosophy of education.

"Roerich -- by his Contemporaries."


A handy collection of quotations from various Russian and non-Russian writers, artists, critics, and scholars appraising Roerich's art.

Rostislavov, A. "Individualizm Reikha." Zolotoe runo, No. 4 (1907), pp. 8-10.

This short article is often cited in bibliographies because it is one of the first to comment on the development of Roerich's personal art style. The text is followed by numerous illustrations.

A description of the Roerich family (Nicholas, his wife and two sons) and of their creative endeavors.

Rudzitis, Rikhard. _Kul'tura_.
Riga: Uguns, 1936.

A discussion of Roerich's concept of culture, of his cultural mission, and of his ideas about the special role of women in culture.


A study of Nicholas and Iurij Roerich as "participant-observers" of Mongolia and Tibet, and of their efforts to revive Western scholarship about those regions as well as to modernize Buddhism as an instrument of social stability and peace. Contains some interesting material about Nicholas Roerich's relationship with the US Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace.

Shaposhnikova, L. "Dolina tysiachi bogov."

The author, a specialist in Oriental cultures, describes her visit to India to see the Roerich family house and Urusvati Institute in Kulu Valley. Local customs and history are depicted in detail.
Sidorov, Valentin M. "Rerikh i ego literaturnoe nasledie." In N. K. Rerikh, Izbrannoe.
Moscow: Sovetskaia Rossiia, pp. 3-24.
This introduction to a collection of Roerich's essays contains some noteworthy observations on Roerich's literary craftsmanship.

The author describes his pilgrimage to India and his meeting with Nicholas Roerich's son Svetoslav and his wife Devika in Kulu Valley. Included in the text are the author's interpretations of Indian philosophy and some of his poems on this topic. This work was recently published in the Soviet Union in book form.

Simonov, E. "Kist', razrubivshaia gory." in V gorakh moe serdtse.
Intended for adolescent readers, this essay presents Roerich's career and travels in Asia as a noble adventure.

Sokolova, N. "Rerikh."
Oktiabr', No. 10 (1958), pp. 202-211.
One of the earliest articles about Roerich to appear in the post-Stalin period. A cautiously favorable
appraisal; contains some interesting comparisons between Roerich's art and Russian Symbolist poetry.

Tsесиuleвич, Л. "Рерих на Алтае."

A description of Roerich's Altai expedition. Particularly interesting are the stories about Roerich and his family cited from eyewitness accounts.

Volodarskii, V. *Nikolai Rerikh.*

Moscow: Izobrazitel'noe iskusstvo, 1974.
An album of reproductions of Roerich's paintings with an introductory text discussing Roerich's visual imagery.

This study discusses the "archaistic" trend in early 20th-century Russian art, choosing three painters as examples. It speaks of Roerich's gift of recreating the past and conveying the beauty of northern landscapes. The author is a well-known Russian poet and painter.

Williams, Robert C. "Mysticism and Money."

A highly tendentious interpretation of Roerich's activities in the United States. Using less fact than fantasy, the author (a teacher of Russian history) accuses Roerich of self-aggrandizement and of covert collaboration with the Soviet government. The latter allegation is consistent with the general anti-Soviet tenor of the book.


This essay deals with Roerich's Asian expedition and his visit to Moscow in 1926.

Zelinskii, Andrei. "Ekspeditsiia N. K. Rerikha v Tsentral'nuuiu Asiu."

A perceptive scholarly evaluation of Roerich as an explorer. The author is an archaeologist.

III. Bibliographies of publications about Roerich

"Bibliography." In A. V. Yaremenko, Nicholai Konstantinovich Roerich.

Though not without some value, this is an amateurish and confusing compilation. All titles are given in quotation marks, making it difficult to distinguish books from articles. Russian titles are


A good, scholarly source. Contains 132 entries, mostly of Russian and English publications. Includes a short bibliography of works by Roerich. Not annotated.

Part I: bibliography of works by Roerich.
Part II: bibliography of works about Roerich. 236 entries in 27 languages. A useful source, although somewhat difficult to use because the entries are listed haphazardly (neither alphabetically nor chronologically), and there are spelling errors. Not annotated.
IV. Bibliographies of publications by Roerich

Many publications dealing with Roerich provide bibliographies of his works, but the most comprehensive one to date is Belikov, Pavel F. "Bibliografiia proizvedenii N. K. Rerikha." In Uchenye zapiski Tartuskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta, Vypusk 217. Ed. Z. Mints. Tartu, 1968, pp. 265-282.

This bibliography, prepared by a prominent scholar and specialist on Roerich, lists Roerich's published and unpublished works and is annotated.