

STAR OF THE MOTHER OF THE WORLD

Nicolas Roerich, from 1924, published in Theosophical magazine.

Toward that seven-starred constellation known as the Seven Sisters, the Seven Elders or the Great Bear, the consciousness of humanity has at all times been directed. The Scriptures extol this celestial sign and Buddhism's sacred Trepitaka dedicates an imposing hymn to it. Ancient Magi and Egyptians carved it upon the stones. And the black faith of Shaman of the wild taiga paid their obeisance to it.



To another of heavens miracles, the constellation of Orion, which the wisdom of astronomers has named the Three Magi, were dedicated the ancient temples of mystery in Central Asia.

As a pair of iridescent wings, these two constellations are spread out across the firmament. Between them, darting headlong toward earth, is the Star of the Morning, resplendent abode of the Mother of the World. By its dominating light, by its unprecedented approach, it foretells the new era of humanity.

The dates, recorded eons since, are being fulfilled in the starry runes. The predictions of the Egyptian Heirophants are being invested with reality before our eyes. Verily, this is a time of wonder for its witnesses. Likewise predestined and also descending over humanity is that satellite of the Mother of the World Beauty, the living raiment. As a garment of purification must the sign of Beauty glorify each heart.



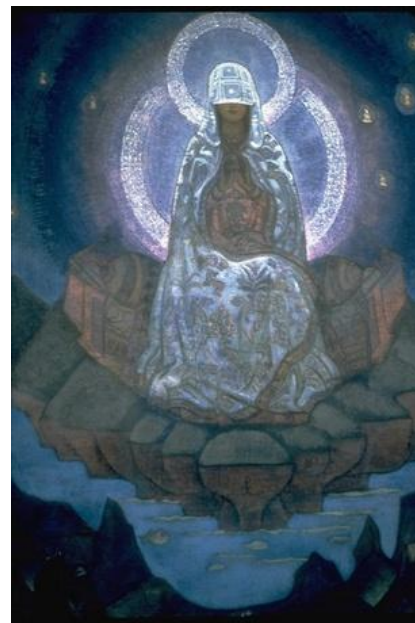
Simplicity, Beauty, Fearlessness: so it is ordained! Fearlessness is our guide. Beauty is the ray of comprehension and upliftment. Simplicity is the sesame to the gates of the coming mystery. And not the menial simplicity of hypocrisy, but the great simplicity of attainment encircled in the folds of love. Simplicity which unlocks the most sacred and mysterious gates to him who brings his torch of sincerity and incessant labor. Not the

Beauty of conventionality and deceit, which harbors the worm of decadence, but that Beauty of the spirit of truth which annihilates all prejudices. Beauty alight with the true freedom and attainment and glorious with the miracle of flowers and of sounds. Not the Fearlessness of artifice, but the Fearlessness which knows the unsounded depths of

creation and discriminates between self-confidence in action and the presumption of conceit. Fearlessness which possesses the sword of courage and which smites down vulgarity in all its forms even though it be adorned in riches.

The understanding of these three covenants creates faith and support of the spirit. For within the last decade everything has been endowed with motion. The most massed clods have become mobile and the greatest dullards have comprehended that without simplicity, beauty and fearlessness, no construction of the new life is conceivable. Nor is the regeneration of religion, politics, science or the revaluation of labour possible. Without Beauty the closely inscribed pages, like withered and fallen leaves, will be whirled away by the winds of life and the wail of spiritual famine shall shake the foundations of the cities, deserted in their populousness.

We saw revolutions. We saw crowds. We passed through the mobs of insurrection. But only there did we behold the banner of peace waving overhead, where beauty was aglow and by the light of its wondrous power evoked united understanding. We saw in Russia how the apostles of beauty and the collectors, the true collectors, not those who were the incidental possessors of some inheritance, were singled out for honor by the crowd. We saw how the most ardent youth stood in breathless vigilance, in prayer, under the wings of beauty. And the remains of religion were revived there where beauty did not perish and where the shield of Beauty was most firm.



By practical experience we can affirm that these words are not the Utopia of a visionary. No, these are the essence of experience gathered on fields of peace and of battle. And this manifold experience did not bring disillusion. On the contrary, it strengthened faith in the destined and in the near, in the resplendence of the possibilities. Verily, it was experience which constructed confidence in the new ones who hastened to help in the erection of the Temple and whose joyous voices resounded over the hill. The same experience directed our eyes toward the children, who, untaught, but already permitted to approach, began to unfold like the flowers of a beautiful garden. And their thoughts became crystal; and their eyes became enlightened and their spirits strove to proclaim the message of achievement. And all this was not in nebulous temples but here upon earth, here where we have forgotten so much that was beautiful.

It would seem incredible that people could want to forget the best possibilities, but this happens oftener than one can imagine. Man lost his key to the symbols of the Rig-Vedas. Man forgot the meaning of the Kabala. Man mutilated the glorious word of Buddha. Man, with gold, defiled the divine word of Christ and forgot, forgot, forgot the keys to the finest gates. Men lose easily, but how to regain again? The path to recovery permits every one to have hope. Why not, if a soldier of Napoleon discovered the Rosetta Stone

in a trench, key to the understanding of the complete hieroglyphs of Egypt? Now, verily when the last hour strikes, men still too few begin hurriedly to recall the treasures which were theirs long since, and again the keys begin to clink on the girdle of faith. And dreams clearly and vividly recall the abandoned but ever-existing beauty. Only accept! Only receive! You shall discern how transformed shall be your inner life; how the spirit shall quiver in its realization of unbounded possibilities. And how simply beauty will envelop the temple, the palace and the hearth, where a human heart is throbbing. Often one does not know how to approach beauty where are the worthy chambers, the worthy raiments, for the festival of color and of sound? We are so poor, is the reply. But beware lest you screen yourselves behind the specter of poverty. For wherever desire is implanted, there shall bloom decision.

And how shall we start to build the Museum? Simply. Because all must be simple. Any room may be a museum and if the wish that conceived it is worthy, it shall grow in the shortest time into its own building and into a temple. And from far will come the new ones and knock only do not outsleep the knocking.

How shall we commence our collecting? Again, simply and without riches, only with unconquerable desire. We have known many very poor persons who were very remarkable collectors, and who although limited by each penny, gathered art collections full of great inner meaning.

How can we publish? We know also that great art publications began with almost negligible means. For instance, such an idealized work as that tremendous publishing project of art postcards, Saint Eugenie, began with five thousand dollars, and in ten years afforded hundreds of thousands of profit yearly. But the value of this work was not measured by its financial profits. Rather was it gaged by the quantity of widely-spread art publications which attracted a multitude of new, young hearts to the path of beauty. The colored post-cards which were artistically published, and in a definite method penetrated into new strata of the people and created young enthusiasts. How many new collectors were born! And measuring their approach to new hearts, the publishers sent into the world, reproductions of the most progressive creations. Thus, through fearlessness, in the simplicity of clearness, were created new works of beauty.

How can we open schools and teach? Also simply. Let us not expect great buildings or sigh over the primitive conditions and lack of material. The smallest room ?not larger than the cell of Fra Beato Angelico in Florence can contain the most valuable possibilities for art. The smallest assembly of colors will not diminish the artistic substance of creation. And the poorest canvas may be the receiver of the most sacred image.

If there comes the realization of the imminent importance of teaching beauty, it must be begun without delay. One must know that the means will come, if there be manifest the enduring enthusiasm. Give knowledge and you will receive possibilities. And the more liberal the giving, the richer the receiving.

Let us see what Serge Ernst, director of the Hermitage in Petrograd, writes about the school which was started by private initiative in one room and which later grew to an annual enrolment of two thousand:

On a bright May day, the great hall in Marskaya conveys to the eye a bright festival. What can be lacking! A whole wall is covered with austere and shining ikons; whole tables are dazzling with polychrome rows of majolica vases and figures; finally, here are painted ornaments for the tea table and further off, luxuriantly embroidered in silk and gold and wool, lie rugs and pillows and towels and writing pads. Furniture, cozy and ornamented with intricate handcraft, stands here. And show-cases are filled with lovely trifles. Upon walls hang the plans for the most various objects of home decoration, beginning with architectural plans and ending with the plans for the composition of a porcelain statue. Architectural measurements and drawings of the monuments of ancient art are the interesting illustrations from the class of graphics; on the windows in colorful and brilliant spots are exhibited the creations of the class in stained glass. Further off, in front of the spectator, stands a white company of the productions of the class of sculptors, of the class of drawings of animals; and on the top awaits a whole gallery filled with paintings in oil and still life. And all this variety of creation lives, is vital with full young enthusiasm. All the happy field of art of our day receives here its due consideration, in close relation with the artistic questions of the present. And what is finer, what can recommend more highly the art school, than this precious and rare contact?

In these contacts of enthusiasm and in the economy of all precious achievements, the school work quickly progresses and yearly new forces are gathered as the most worthy guardians of the future culture of the spirit. How to recruit these new ones? This is most simple. If over the work shall glow the sign of simplicity, beauty and fearlessness, new forces will readily assemble. Young heads, long deprived and long expecting the wonderful miracle, will come. Only, let us not permit these seekers to pass us by! Only, not to let one of them pass by in the twilight!

And how to approach beauty ourselves? This is the most difficult. We can reproduce paintings; we can make exhibitions; we can open a studio; but where will the paintings of the exhibitions find an outlet? To what parts shall the products of the studio penetrate? It is easy to discourse, but more difficult to admit beauty into life's household. But while we ourselves deny entrance to beauty in our life, what value will all these affirmations possess? They shall be meaningless banners at an empty hearth. Admitting beauty into our home, we must determine the unquestionable rejection of vulgarity and pompousness, and all which opposes beautiful simplicity. Verily, the hour of the affirming of beauty in life is come! It came in the travail of the spirits of the peoples. It came in storm and in the lightning. Came that hour before the coming of Him Whose steps already are sounding.

Each man bears a balance within his breast?; each weighs for himself his karma. And so now liberally, the living raiment of beauty is offered to all. And each living rational being, may receive from it a garment, and cast away from him that ridiculous fear which whispers. This is not for you.? One must be rid of that gray fear, mediocrity. Because all

is for you if you manifest the wish from a pure source. But remember, flowers do not blossom on ice. Yet how many icicles do we strew, benumbing our worthiest striving through menial cowardice.

Some coward hearts inwardly determine that beauty cannot be reconciled with the gray dross of our day. But only faint-heartedness has whispered to them, the faint-

heartedness of stagnation. Still among us are those who repeat that electricity is blinding us; that the telephone is enfeebling our hearing; that automobiles are not practical for our roads. Just so timorous and ignorant is the fear of the non-reconciliation of beauty. Expel at once from our household this absurd unsounding no and transform it, by the gift of friendship and by the jewel of spirit, into Yes. How much turbid stagnation there is in No and how much of openness to attainment in Yes! One has but to pronounce Yes and the stone is withdrawn and what yesterday still seemed unattainable, to-day comes nearer and within reach. We remember a touching incident: a little fellow not knowing how to help his dying mother, wrote a letter as best he could to St. Nicholas, the Miracle Maker. He went to put it in the letter box, when a Casual Passer-by approached to help him reach it, and perceived the unusual address. And verily the aid of Nicholas the Miracle Maker came to this poor heart.

Thus through the work of heaven and earth, consciously and in living practise, will the raiment of beauty again be enfolded about humanity.

Those who have met the Teachers in life, know how simple and harmonious and beautiful They are. The same atmosphere of beauty must pervade all that approaches Their region. The sparks of Their Flame must penetrate into the lives of those who await the Soon-Coming! How to meet Them Only with the worthiest. How to await? Merging into Beauty. How to embrace and to retain? By being filled with that Fearlessness bestowed by the consciousness of beauty. How to worship? As in the presence of beauty which enchants even its enemies.

In the deep twilight, bright with a glory unequaled, shines the Star of the Mother of the World. From below, is reborn the wave of a sacred harmony. A Tibetan ikon painter plays his lay upon a bamboo flute before the unfinished image of Buddha-Maitreya. By adorning the image with all the symbols of blessed power, this man, with the long black braid, in his way, brings his utmost gift to Him Who is Expected. Thus shall we bring beauty to the people: Simply, beautifully, fearlessly!

Talai-Pho Brang, 1924

Paintings by Nicholas Roerich

1-Star of the Morning

2- Star of the Mother of the World

3- Mother of the World