

Devastation of three non-governmental museums of Nicholas Roerich

*Speech of Marianna Ozolina, chairwoman of the Latvian department of the ICR (Latvia),
on the occasion of the press conference in Tallinn March 15th, 2017*

Ladies and gentlemen!

The subject of a non-governmental form of Culture is topical and not overdue, because it can no longer be dependent on state dictates or political fluctuations associated with subjective factors of the variability of events and human consciousness.

"Cult-ur - veneration of the Light" (in translation from Sanskrit). Where there is no Culture, there begins wildness. S. N. Roerich, being a great artist and thinker, always urged to strive for the Beautiful.

However, in life, after having received a bitter experience of unreliability and betrayal from government officials, he had to make the most unmistakable decisions in the legalization of donative documents on the heritage of the Roerich family transferred to Russia. This decision was the non-governmental independent organization of the ICR and the non-governmental Museum of N. Roerich at the Lopoukhin Manor.

Svetoslav Nikolaevich did not forget the dark days of destruction by the state officials of America of the **first** non-governmental Nikolaj-Roerich Museum in the 30s of last century. Then, the **second** non-governmental Museum by name of N. Roerich was raided: in Riga in 1940 with the arrival of Soviet power in Latvia. The Latvian Cultural Roerich Society was closed by the decree of the government of Soviet Latvia, the Cultural Roerich Society of Latvia, having had 47 paintings of the father and son Roerich donated by the Roerich family, as well as a collection of paintings by artists from Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. The paintings were arrested and taken to protective authorities. This glorious Museum survived for only 3 years, from 1937 to 1940. Moreover, although the paintings were a private property of the non-governmental Museum, this fact did not stop the activities of Soviet officials. Further searches were carried out in the apartments of the members of the Latvian Roerich Society. All books of the Agni Yoga published in Riga, and all others related to the name of Roerich and eastern philosophy were seized. The members of the society themselves were repressed for their anti-Soviet activities and sent to serve their terms in the North and in Kazakhstan. In 1942, A.I. Klizovsky was shot in prison in Tashkent. Rikhard Y. Rudzitis, the chairperson of the Society, was subject to severe torture in the Lubyanka.

The members of the Lithuanian Roerich Society had a similar fate. The paintings of N. Roerich in the Lithuanian capital Kaunas (Kovno) were seized from private collections and burnt. Their number is known - 27. The members of the society also served their terms in the Gulag.

Ladies and gentlemen, all the monstrous events that are taking place in Moscow today in the beautiful non-governmental Museum of N. Roerich are undoubtedly interlinked with past attacks and they are links of one chain. Such anger against Roerich and his work, as well as

against the successors of his great evolutionary steps directed towards the future of the planet and Russia...

The **third** bashing of the Museum: the seizure of works of art, the attempt to ban the Agni Yoga teaching itself - the philosophy of cosmic reality, by declaring it a sectarianism, harmful for state, to muffle the folk Roerich movement in Russia and abroad – as if that is an echo of the bitter experience of not distant past. The goals of the organizers of the destruction of the ICR and the non-governmental Museum of N. Roerich - officials of the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation and other interrelated departments of the state - are evident.

The plan of capture was carried out a long time ago. By misleading the President of the country and other departments, thanks to lies and intrigues, at the command of the Minister of Culture of Russia V. Medinsky, the museum was illegally expropriated by force.

The banner of peace was taken down, all the property of the Museum and the personal belongings of museum staff were captured by OMON forces ... And all that - without the right for the ICR to appeal against this lawlessness, which is taking place in the centre of the capital. The invaders established their own committee of the National Committee of the Roerichs NCR - as an alternative to the ICR... This committee is actively misleading the entire population of Russia and the world community, trying to convince the media by making false statements on the legality of the vandalism committed against the culture. The NCR announced that the state "House of the Roerichs", a branch of the State Museum of the East, will be organized by the state and the public society at Lopoukhin Manor.

What kind of public society are we talking about, if among the names of the so-called "public people" we see all the same state officials ... This is a new fiction of state officials - another eyewash. Without fear for lies and forgery. The true public, the broad Roerich movement, is ardently protesting against the committed vandalism. However, his protest does not find a response among state structures and their ministers. And, the state media actively and consistently spread this lie by carrying out state orders. The Roerich family, who loved Russia so much, dreamed of giving the people all the best that they collected in their cultural heritage and placed in a museum. And so it happened, but it's hard for dark forces to bear such a bright light, and they came to destroy it.

All his life, Svetoslav Nikolaevich Roerich urged people to strive for the Beautiful and thereby improve themselves daily. He believed in the real possibilities of the non-governmental status of the Museum of a new type, which, according to his firm conviction, can reveal the powerful creative potential of the people in revealing and developing the multifaceted aspects of Culture from the point of view of the philosophy of cosmic thinking as an evolutionary stage of the New era of prosperity of Russia and humanity as a whole.