

AGNI YOGA

QUARTERLY

A White Mountain Education Association Publication
OCTOBER / NOVEMBER / DECEMBER • 2017 • VOL. XXXIX / NO. 4



The Sacredness of Daily Life

Agni Yoga, 1929

Agni Yoga, 169. Just as Fire is the all-embracing principle, so does Agni Yoga permeate the whole of life. One can notice how one's consciousness is gradually sharpened, how the real values of one's surroundings become clear, how one's understanding of the immutability of the cooperation of worlds grows. Thus life fills with the signs of highest understanding. Truth as reality enters one's daily life.

Hierarchy, 1931

Hierarchy, 176. Verily, if you realize yourself as being constantly in the solemn presence of the Lord, you are already on the shortest path to Us. People loathe especially the routine of daily life; for them it is the symbol of weariness and descent, whereas for us the daily routine is perfectment and ascent; it opens the gates to Infinity. One can learn to love this daily routine because it tempers the spirit and gives one courage to contemplate the endless chain of the ages of labor. For some, these ages are a menace, but a refined consciousness will accept them as the source of endless creativeness. Beautiful cults become dulled on account of daily routine, but how wondrous is the realization that daily devotion and a flaming love are offered to Hierarchy. If I shall say, "I love Thee, O Lord, and I am devoted to Thee, O Lord, and I reverence Thee, Teacher," by what a mighty choir will this song of praise be transformed on the far-off worlds! Thus, in each act of devotion one can open new locks; and how wondrous it is to feel the inexhaustibility of great concepts. The Ordainment can be concise: "Be aflame in heart and create in love!"

Heart, 1932

Heart, 508. People will ask how to feel the influ-

ence of the Teaching in the midst of daily life. Answer: by the smallest things, by every action, every touch. Denial and habit deprive some students of a great deal.

Supermundane, 1938

Supermundane, 324. Urusvati knows how people reveal themselves in everyday life. Biographers make the mistake of thinking that the value of a person can be measured only by exceptional deeds, and because of this they miss the truth. Celebrities are often characterized by the glory of their activities,

their sparkling eyes and powerful, eloquent speech, but entirely different personalities are revealed by these people in their everyday life. They should be observed in their routine work and in the company of their near ones. Their true mentality, as manifested in thoughts and

dreams, should be properly understood.

Above all, We value the achievement of harmony in everyday life. Most of human life passes in such routine, and people should be evaluated by how they stand this test of daily life—whether they can preserve harmony in their domestic environment, resist petty irritations, and rise above boredom.

Many unseen circumstances are hidden in daily life, and one must find in them the joy that elevates one into the Supermundane. May you all remember that you build your human dignity amid daily turbulence. This awareness will make your achievement permanent...

The Thinker taught that awareness of the resounding of space comes when least expected. "No human measure can determine when the harmony of the Supermundane becomes accessible."

"Be aflame in heart and create in love!"

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Welcome

For discussions and posts on the Agni Yoga Teachings, please visit our "Agni Yoga – Living Ethics Community" site on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Agni.Yoga.Living.Ethics.Community>

and WMEA on the Web:

<http://www.wmea-world.org>

NETWORKERS LETTER

Dear Friends,

In New York City, the Nicholas Roerich Museum staff has been busy at work these past few months with offerings that I would like to share with you.

First, the NRM archive department has begun to digitize their archival materials, beginning with their library. You can now go to their website and find the section entitled “Museum’s Archive,” which includes books from their digital library, brochures, and periodicals in different languages. More materials will eventually be added. Here is the link to the “Museum’s Archive”: <http://www.roerich.org/roerich-museum-archive.php>.

The Nicholas Roerich Museum’s project of publishing the improved versions of N. Roerich writings and Agni Yoga books is in progress. These books are available for many readers in English and Spanish. Books in English now are available in an inexpensive paperback version that can be ordered through Amazon.

Agni Yoga in Spanish

Kindle format:

<https://www.amazon.com/Sociedad-Agni-Yoga-Hispana/e/B072C3C2SJ/>

ePub format:

<https://www.smashwords.com/books/byseries/27791>

Agni Yoga in English

Kindle format:

Community

“Begin to build the community as a home of knowledge and beauty.”

– *New Era Community*, verse 229

Rev. Joleen D. DuBois



<https://www.amazon.com/Agni-Yoga-Society/e/B01MV46SA7/>

▪ Adamant

ePub format:

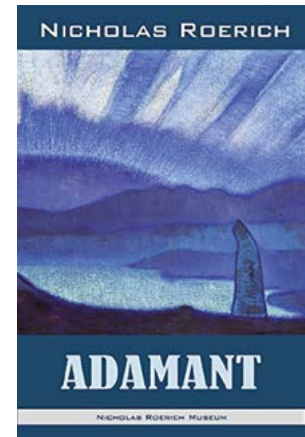
<https://www.smashwords.com/books/byseries/27789>

NICHOLAS ROERICH: COLLECTED WRITINGS

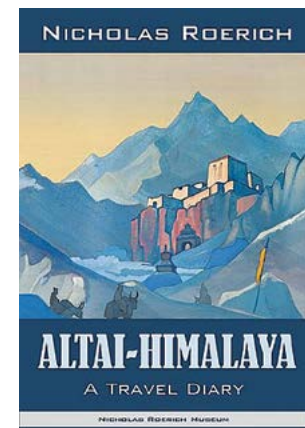
<https://www.amazon.com/-/e/B06Y49SJ8P>

Nicholas Roerich (1874–1947) is known first and foremost as a painter. His paintings, of which there are thousands around the world, explore the mythic origins, the natural beauty, and the spiritual strivings of humanity and of the world. But Nicholas Roerich was as prolific a writer as he was a painter. He wrote books, poetry, and almost-daily essays on life and events (called Diary Leaves).

Many of these writings have been unavailable for decades. They will, therefore, be new to many of you. It is the Museum’s hope that bringing these volumes to light again will expand awareness of the vast range and depth of Roerich’s interests and insights into human nature and cultural history.



▪ Altai-Himalaya



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White Mountain
Education
Association

Agni Yoga Quarterly

Vol. XXXIX No. 4

Agni Yoga Quarterly can be found on the Internet World Wide Web Address:

<http://www.wmea-world.org>

Email: staff@wmea-world.org

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The First Steps of the Agni Yoga Society in America: The Beginning

by Nataliya Fomin
(May 2017)

In far-away 1980, I had a Call, and I became acquainted with amazing books that struck me with their wisdom and depth of thought. In these books, I found the answers to all the questions that had arisen during my life, and was given explanations to complicated issues. Indeed, these books helped me philosophically to realize life in its entirety, opening the way to penetrate into the depth of human nature and prove the necessity of self-improvement and self-consciousness.

I knew practically nothing about Roerich, having only seen a TV show about his paintings. The show was short—about five minutes—not long enough to make an impression on me about this painter.

At that time, I didn't even think about the achievements of Elena Ivanovna, Nikolay Konstantinovich, and their sons. No one, taking these books in their hands, could realize how much effort, inspiration, and creative power were invested in these books.

I realized that only when my fate brought me to the Roerich Museum in New York and I had the opportunity to learn about the documents of these times in detail. I saw the whole picture of the Grandeur Project of our Teachers and their students toward the Eternal Good.

Reading and sorting documents and letters of those days, I can clearly see the picture of the enormous efforts of the people—united by one idea, devoted to their Teachers' Ideals, and assured that this work



Meeting with the builders of the Master Building, New York, 1929

was a necessity. I was struck by the fact that all this colossal work had been done by a small group of people. This is an example of how much can be done by a few people united by the belief in High Ideals and devotion to their Teachers.

It was in New York that the Roerichs found and gathered around them their first students. From the evidence in Helena Roerich's notebooks, it is clear that these first students had been connected with the Roerichs in one way or another long before and had by fate been brought together in one place. These people were carefully chosen to help them fulfill the Roerichs' mission. Not all of them stayed. A few drifted away, and a few even turned against their Teachers some years later.

Soon, in Latvia, the Latvian Roerich Society was established. The Latvian Society was a large and active center, at which all the Agni Yoga books were published

and a few were translated into Latvian, Bulgarian, and Polish. In every case, the Russian language editions came first.

Also, a center was established in the Kullu Valley, in the Indian Himalayas, where the Roerichs lived.

These three centers formed a triangle of power and energy through which much was accomplished over the years—not just in publishing and teaching Agni Yoga but also in developing progressive and forward-looking cultural and educational activities, and promoting the Roerich Pact and the

Banner of Peace, which was an important achievement in the efforts to protect the cultural heritage of the world. These were the main three centers, but there were others that flourished in many places. Activities developed in Latin America and in Western Europe.

But there were few books. Those who could read Russian could find some. But, it was only after 1924 that some of the books began appearing in English. The books in English contained material that was added by Helena Roerich, when it was decided that the Teaching was intended not just for Russia but for the entire world. It is interesting to note that in the first Russian edition of the first book, the first line is "Into the New Russia, My First Message." When the book was translated into English for worldwide use, they were instructed to change the line to "Into the New Country, My First Message." While living in India,

Helena Roerich pasted a piece of paper over the word “Country” in her copy of the book, and wrote “World.” *Into the New World, My First Message*. This one line demonstrates the broadened growth of the Teaching. Nevertheless, the books appeared slowly—a few in the twenties, a few in the thirties and forties. Not until the end of the 1950s were they widely available.

Daniel Entin’s recollection

Daniel Entin: “It is known that the first book of the Teaching, *The Call*, was given in 1920–23. The dates of all the messages appear in the book. But many do not know that these messages were taken from proceedings of the meetings held by the Roerichs with their students in New York. Sina was there almost all the time. Her own notebooks record all that was said, all that was given. For me, it was always interesting to hear Sina point to passages in that first book and say, ‘Oh yes, this message was for my mother, reprimanding her for such-and-such; or this was for E.I., reminding her about this-or-that.’ The passages in the book acquired an added context and enrichment, and I understood when Sina told me that for some of the earlier students, *The Call* was the only book they ever loved.

“After all, at that time there was not yet a published Teaching. All that was learned came from what was spoken by the Roerichs. At that time, Nicholas Roerich took an active part, and much, if not most, of what appears in the first book was written down by him. Our Museum still preserves in its archives some of those early scrolls with writings by Nicholas Roerich. These writings were called ‘automatic,’ but without the suggestions that they were received in a trance state.

“Sina said that Helena Roerich was less active in the meetings of the group, though always present and participating. It was only when the Roerich family left New York for the Far East that she assumed full responsibility for the



Nicholas Roerich aboard the SS Majestic upon arrival in New York June, 1929

recording of the Teaching.”

“One interesting and important element of those early meetings in New York was the insistence by the Roerichs that their students become familiar with the spiritual and religious classics of the world’s religions. These include many classics of spiritual literature, such as the Bhagavad Gita, the Dhammapada, or the Upanishads of the East; the writings of the European mystics, such as Teresa of Avila or St. John of the Cross; the Hebrew Kabbalah; and of course, the entire oeuvre of Blavatsky and Theosophy. All this was important, Sina said, so that no one would think of Agni Yoga as something in a cocoon but rather as a Teaching in the great currents of the world’s Teachings. And that was important, she stressed, because all great Teachings, in essence, are true.

“At that time, Maurice was also the group’s Kabbalah expert, and he brought much from his own study, as was requested by the Roerichs, of Kabbalah teaching and lore to the development of the work.

“From the very beginning, it was Sina’s duty to write down the proceedings of the meetings of the group—when and where the meetings were held, who attended, and what was asked or said. All these materials

were later rewritten by Helena Roerich in her first notebook of the Teaching, adding to the material that she herself recorded from meetings held without the students but with her husband. It should be noted that the members of the group were encouraged to try to ‘receive’ their own messages too and to write them down. They all did this, but Helena Roerich chose to copy into her own notebooks only those written by Frances Grant.

“After the crisis in 1935, Sina, with her adamant persistence, her unquestioning loyalty, and her aggressive pursuit of what she felt was right, kept enough people together to continue fighting. Fortunately, Katherine Campbell was equally adamant and had the funds to support the efforts. The Roerichs were despondent, and Helena Roerich even wrote that they undoubtedly had come to the world with the Teaching too soon and that the entire Teaching and its dissemination should be shut down for a couple of centuries. When Sina heard that, she protested vigorously and insisted that so much had been accomplished already that the Teaching should continue to be published, translated, and spread. And so, permission was given from India, and in 1944, the Agni Yoga Society became incorporated. In 1948, Helena Roerich wrote a letter to New York assigning Sina and her husband, Dudley Fosdick, all the copyrights to the Teaching in the Americas and Europe.

“The tragic destruction of the Latvian Roerich Society in 1940 was a terrible setback to the development of the Teaching, as was the equally tragic loss, at the same time, of the Roerich Museum in the United States, which caused the collapse of all the organizations—the schools, the publishing house, and the museum, which had been so carefully developed. Many important materials were dispersed and have never been found. Two points of the triangle were gone, and only one remained. Certainly, not a triangle. Superhuman efforts were needed to regain what

had been lost, not only in those two places but everywhere around the world, because all the groups had collapsed, along with the major centers.”

Sina Fosdick was the main engine in launching the Agni Yoga books into life. She was one of the first Agni Yoga students appointed by the Master Himself to be the Guardian of the Teaching and the institutions, in order to develop and promote the Teaching.

I would like to refer to the memories of Sina Fosdick about the first steps of the Agni Yoga Society. She told about the beginning in her Talk at the meeting of the Agni Yoga Society in 1975.

Sina Fosdick: “Early in the twenties, the Himalayan Brotherhood appointed Helena and Nicholas Roerich, the high Initiates of that Stronghold of Light, to serve as guides and spiritual leaders in bringing the Teaching of Living Ethics, also known as Agni Yoga, to mankind in this Era. They came to America, and a small group gathered around them, receiving daily guidance for the understanding of the essence of that Teaching. They were taught to refine their senses and to expand their consciousness. Responsibilities and tasks were entrusted to each member in accordance with their abilities and the level of perception. Self-discipline was practiced together with co-measurement. A whole new world of knowledge and beauty was revealed to them, and the need of applying the principles of Living Ethics in life became paramount. The proclaimed Era of the Mother of the World and of the Maitreya Buddha was entered with deep reverence and full awakening of the heart as ‘the channel to Hierarchy’ (*Heart*, 340). The group was to absorb the true ideals of community; duties and tasks of both a spiritual and practical nature were assigned to the members.

“It is impossible to describe the joy and light which filled the life daily as the Teaching was continually unfolded before



Helena and Nicholas Roerich, Valdai, Novgorod province, 1905

the group by Prof. and Mme. Roerich. She especially stressed the need of applying Agni Yoga in Life.

[In a letter to Frances Grant, Helena Roerich wrote:] “People usually have absolutely no idea how to use the given Teaching. When they hear as if a familiar formula, they conceitedly exclaim—again the same thing, known to everyone! They do not try to verify themselves as to what extent this familiar formula has been realized and applied by them. They do not wish to think that the useful Teaching is given not for the sake of novelty but for the building up of a worthy life.

“The Teaching of Life is not a compilation of unheard of utopias. The existence of humanity is very ancient; and in the course of ages, multifarious sparks of wisdom were poured upon Earth; but every circle has its key.

“If someone can recognize the present key as familiar to him, then let him rejoice and be thankful for the Indication which is close to him. It seems easy, but in fact it is

very difficult. People love to listen to sensationalism and to receive toys, but few are ready to refine their consciousness.

“Verily, just as faith is dead without deeds, so the Teaching is useless without its application to life.”¹

“Elena Ivanovna revealed the spiritual depths of Agni Yoga. Prof. Roerich guided the thinking toward the all-embracing meaning of culture and its vital need for humanity. He planted many vigorous seeds in America, where he founded several cultural institutions. Then came his call to the artists of other nations to unite in the name of Art, Beauty, and Culture; thus the International Art Center—Corona Mundi—came into being. The members of the group were active in both institutions, facing many problems that demanded decisions. Weakness, faults, human failings came to light, and our leaders pointed out the way of avoiding serious errors; for the work was growing and we were compelled to grow with it, practicing patience, observation, and alertness.

“Having been told from the very beginning about the Mahatmas of the East, we had to ponder and ‘choose the manifest path of response to the call of Infinity.’² The call of the heart and striving toward the Masters steadily grew in our consciousness. Mme. Roerich spoke at length about Them and their disciples.

“During the first years, under Mme. Roerich’s guidance, we were studying writings by the Great Teachers of Humanity, by Eastern and Western philosophers, and by revered spiritual toilers. Life became saturated with many revelations and experiences. We were told to keep daily notes regarding our progress and put down any one precept of the Teaching successfully applied, as well as a habit preventing progress.

“Mme. Roerich used to say, ‘To be honest with oneself is the greatest difficulty.’ We were led into a new world in which intolerance, selfishness, and ambition had no place. The members of the group,

while of different races, nationalities, and natures, were nevertheless united in their aspirations. One goal was supreme—to find one's Master!

"We had the rare privilege of being guided for thirty-five years by both Prof. and Mme. Roerich. During those years we founded the Roerich Museum, collecting the great art of Prof. Roerich. The Roerich Pact and Banner of Peace were launched. The Central Asiatic Expedition, begun by our leaders in 1923, was most successfully terminated by them in 1928, and they settled in India. Several unique new ventures and institutions dedicated to art, science, and general welfare were brought into life. We were in constant, close contact with them, at times through travels together but mostly through continuous correspondence, working in the many spheres of activities entrusted to us. The teaching of Agni Yoga was steadily spreading; its books were published in several languages besides English. Numerous Agni Yoga groups sprang up in America, India, and Europe."

So, in the 1920s there was no AY Society, but a group of disciples who gathered at the meetings, led by the Roerichs themselves. All efforts were applied to the establishing of cultural institutions. A lot of attention was given to the translations of Nicholas Roerich's articles, his talks; to developing contacts with American cultural centers, universities, libraries; and to the correspondence with theosophical and spiritual centers. Activities of the Master Institute, Roerich Museum, and the Corona Mundi Cultural Center were widely advertised in the press. Soon, the hard work began to bear fruit. Every member of the "Circle" had their own responsibilities. All of them had strong personalities and, of course, they experienced tension in their relations. Each of them wanted to be the only one, and be closer to Helena and Nicholas Roerich. Nicholas Roerich wisely eliminated these tensions saying, "Whoever works harder is the leader." And really, all of them worked very hard.



Helena Roerich, Naggar, India, 1930s

So, the work on the translation of the first book from the Agni Yoga series began in 1923. In the museum's archives, there are manuscripts of these first translations. The main translators were Sina Fosdick, Esther Lichtmann, Maurice Lichtmann, and Francis Grant, who, being a brilliant journalist, edited the text.

The work went like this: the text was typed and then the translation was made, and after that, the translation was sent to Helena Roerich, who put in her corrections and notes and sent it back to New York. Then, the text was given to the publishing house, and galleys were made; and after editing the text, the master copy was ready and directed for publishing.

In 1933, the Agni Yoga Publication Committee was organized to get all the books together, assembling them in one place and having a full statement of them. After that, Agni Press was formed and then incorporated on the 17th of November 1936. But the activities of the Agni Press, as a part of the Roerich Museum, stopped after 1938, and it became a part of another institution, the Roerich Academy of Arts, which was situated at 200 W. 57th St., New York.

In 1944, the Agni Yoga Society became incorporated. Prof. Roerich and Mme. Roerich were the founders, and Sina Fosdick, Dudley Fosdick, Katherine Campbell, Gisela Ingeborg Fritchi, and Joseph Weed

were the directors of the corporation.

I cannot avoid mentioning Vladimir Anatolyevich Shibayev and his role in the activities of the Agni Yoga Society and his work in other institutions. Being a long-time secretary for Nicholas Roerich, he was known as an extremely responsible and efficient coworker. His duty was to mail out correspondence, type Nicholas Roerich's articles, write answers to letters, and translate manuscripts into English.

Vladimir Anatolyevich Shibayev was born on the 27th of November 1898 in Riga. He received a good education. He met the Roerichs in 1919 in London. Then in 1920, the Roerichs went to America, and Vladimir Shibayev traveled to Riga. From Nicholas Roerich's letter to V. Shibayev: "Yesterday we got an order from MM to publish all of His Messages in one book, *Leaves of Morya's Garden*, and publish it through you in Riga." In Latvia, Mr. Shibayev created and was the head of the World Service agency, which was built along the same system of other Roerich organizations. Those who were interested in Eastern philosophy and admired N. Roerich's ideas and art gathered around V. Shibayev, and the Roerich Society was born in Riga.

In 1924, V. Shibayev, together with the Roerichs, traveled to India. "Days in India were marked by hard work together," wrote V. Shibayev when he left India—because the Roerichs were starting to prepare for their Central Asian Expedition—"a lot of manuscripts I carried with me for mailing along with other tasks from the Roerichs." He returned to India on the 1st of October 1928 and had been working with the Roerichs as a secretary for a length of ten years. "Life with the Roerichs in India was the most significant period in my life," he wrote.³

In the sixties and seventies, living in England, V. Shibayev took an active part in the work of the Agni Yoga Society in New York through correspondence, having no opportunity to be present in person. He

passed away on the 6th of March 1975 in Cardiff, remaining an Agni Yoga student till the end of his life.

V. Shibayev was asked one and the same question many times, "You worked with Nicholas Roerich so closely and for so long. What did he value most of all in the Teaching?" Vladimir Anatolyevich immediately gave his opinion, that Nicholas Roerich valued the Teaching about the phenomenon of thought. As proof of this statement, I would like to read an extract from Nicholas Roerich's Talk to the students of a drawing class at the Master Institute in 1923.

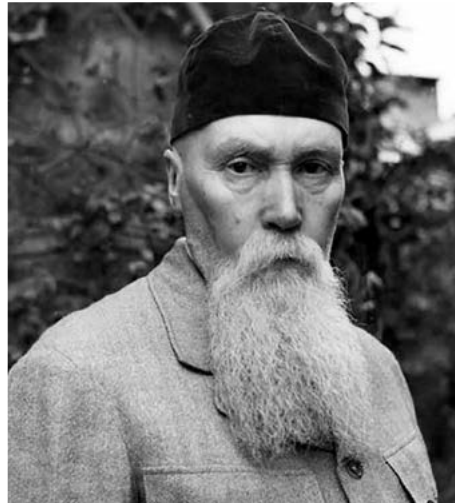
One of the students asked this question, "How can one apply Agni Yoga to everyday life?"

N. K. Roerich: "So often we repeat the word 'thought,' that it is very good to realize that thought is the highest motivating power. But very seldom do we apply this power of thought, and very seldom even do we control ourselves, and very seldom do we direct our thoughts in the proper paths.

"The question in everything in life is how to apply the principles. First, we must realize that psychic power exists and is within ourselves, and then we must learn to release it. In all fairy tales, we hear about closed doors, hidden treasures, to be opened only by the magic key. Within ourselves the poisons of anger and irritation collect and are closed; and to overcome the power of these, we must release them. In the same way, cancer is formed, holding the gathering poisons which destroy us if they are not released. There have been cases of cancer being cured by psychic power.

"Learn to release all poisonous thoughts—see the sparks and lights, and study these lights, and then you will create something for the future of humanity which is really unusual."

It was mentioned already that the activity on the translations and publication of the books of the Agni Yoga Series began in 1933, when the Agni Yoga Publication Committee was created. One can find more information about the work of the Committee from



Nicholas Roerich, Naggar, India, 1936–1942

the records of the meetings, minutes, and letters in the museum's archive. The work was performed in New York, Riga, and Kullu.

Great contributions to the work of the Committee were done by Katherine Campbell and Ingeborg Fritschi. Most of the documents were collected and organized by Ingeborg. This woman was extremely responsible and neat, and stored all documentation regarding the activities of the Publication Committee, saving every piece of paper, letter, and order.

Here are some examples of the Agni Yoga Publication Committee activity according to the records in the minutes, 1933–1935:

At the first meeting were present—

Mrs. Nettie Horch, Chairman
Mrs. Helen Seidel, Secretary
Mrs. Sina Lichtmann
Mr. H. J. Forman
Dr. Charles Fleischer
Miss Francis Grant
Miss Ingeborg Fritschi, Acting Secretary

4) In reference to No. 6 paragraph of Urusvati minutes, No. 26, the Committee decided to have a stamp made with the address of 310 Riverside Drive, as near to the type as possible, and stamp the books "Agni Yoga Publications."

July 1935 – Kullu

1) Mr. Shibayev will be glad to send out pamphlets of all Agni Yoga Publications which have so far appeared, with his book-lists, which he sends out continuously and would therefore appreciate receiving at least 50 copies of each of the pamphlets.

2) Mme. Roerich is happy to announce that our Society in Riga at the meeting has passed the resolution to publish on their own means the second volume of *Mir Ognenny (Fiery World)*.

3) It was also contemplated to print afterwards the book *New Era* in Russian in Riga.

4) We would like to have a copy of the magazine *The American Theosophist* for our files, in which a review of *On Eastern Crossroads* appeared.

1934 – New York

Miss Grant reported that galley proofs had been received and read on half of the book *Heart* and that the rest of the galley proofs will be received today. She also reported that the entire revised copy of *Infinity* has been mailed to Mme. Roerich as well as 16 pages of *Fiery World*.

June 4, 1934 – New York

1) As per request of Prof. Roerich, Mrs. Lichtmann requests the Committee to give her 10 books of *St. Sergius* to send to Metropolitan Sergius, Tokyo

2) Some books were sent to the Theosophical Society in Wheaton, Ill.

3) To send a book to Mme. Kuvshinova to the magazine *Russkiye Polya* to have a review on *St. Sergius*; to send 10 books to Harbin

4) Given to Dr. Sonck of Finland, *Agni Yoga*, 1 copy in Russian, and *Hierarchy*, 1 copy in English

Active work started after a long break only when the Agni Yoga Society was incorporated on the 4th of November 1944. The Society grew bigger, new people approached, new helpers appeared.

Dudley Fosdick, Sina's husband, became

a valuable and irreplaceable coworker, as did David Fogel, Cassie Michaelis, Melany Adams, Frank Svengalis, Bernard Lentz, Elizabeth Meeker, Elina Yussupoff, and Valentina Dutko.

I would like to read the extracts from Mme. Roerich's letters, which give us an idea of how the hard work on the translations went on:

"30/9/49 F.W. III, par. 60 Zealot (not liked by E.I.) perhaps best to say earnest toilers or zealous toilers, but the translation is very fine."

"5/6/50 Community 47 – each word is a thunder-bearing arrow."

"Community 66 – Each revolution (correct!)"

"22/9/50 p. 142 – there is no mistake. Sound is the reaction of light. Sound becomes a light and the light sounds."

We must be grateful to another member of the Agni Yoga Society, who perfectly translated two volumes of Mme. Roerich's Letters. It is **Valentina Leonidovna Dutko** 1909–1983.

She was born in Harbin to a family of colonists who worked on the Eastern-China railroad. Her talents manifested from early childhood: she sang, danced, played the piano, wrote poems, and learned different languages. She became a professional dancer.

Valentina traveled a lot through Europe because her husband Pavel Nikolayevich was a diplomat. They lived in France, Germany, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, and Ireland. Then they came to Canada and later to the USA. After years of popularity, she was the leader of small dancing groups in Toronto. In 1956, a small troupe under her conduct laid the foundation for the German-Canadian Ballet.

In 1956 her career as a ballet dancer ended, and she set up residence in Florida. In the early forties of the twentieth century she became a pen pal with Sina and then with the Roerichs, who lived in India at that time. Mme. Roerich became Valentina's spiritual Teacher. Valentina



Helena, Nicholas, and George Roerich, Naggur, India, 1940–1945

Leonidovna expressed her desire and took responsibility for translating Mme. Roerich's Letters. Two volumes of these Letters were published in Russian, in Riga, right before World War II. The work on the translations lasted for twenty years.⁴

From Mme. Roerich's letter of Nov. 21, 1953:

"My beloved one,

The Letters must be completed by January... Keeping of the dates is essential. The letters should have been completed in autumn, but we are approaching winter. The Great Master approves your translation and wishes you to translate even the second volume. I would like you to finish this work too."

From George Roerich's letter to Valentina Dutko on February 12, 1956:

"Dear Valentina Leonidovna,

I am returning your translations of Elena Ivanovna's Letters, which I have perused (numbers 13–24).

Similarly, your translations remarkably reflect the original. I allowed myself to make a few remarks by pencil. Certainly many words are, in general, difficult to translate. For instance, the wonderful Russian word *podvig*. Yes, perhaps 'great

achievement' But this is not altogether it. My sincerest gratitude for your work. May the Light be with you.

G. Roerich"

Another wonderful woman, Elizabeth Meeker, was very active and totally involved and devoted to the process of translations. Besides, she had a deep knowledge of Theosophy. Her hard work on the indexes to the Agni Yoga Books and compilations from the Teaching for the brochures Mother of Agni Yoga, Woman's Heart, and Mother of the World was highly appreciated by Mme. Roerich and The Great Master. Here are some sayings about E. Meeker in E.I.'s letters:

E.I.'s letter of October 9, 1953:

"Publish Brotherhood at the beginning of 1955, Infinity and AUM in 1957, also the brochures of Miss Meeker. She will live a long life; she was The Great Master's co-worker (a nun) in the 14th century, in Rothenburg, and so that is why she is so close to Sina."

E.I.'s letter of December 17, 1954:

"This wonderful message also came in the letter. The Great Lord said: 'I give my cooperation in this work. Let her gather as much as possible and if it will be necessary to abbreviate, We shall do it later.'

'My Care about her health and her devoted work is constantly with her. I send her My Blessing.'

E.I.'s Letter of March 4, 1955:

"Thank Elisabeth Meeker for her touching letter. She is a fine spirit and help will be sent to her needed work. She will not leave until she will complete the work ordained to her.

She will understand the difficulty of my position and will not expect letters in English from me—a language which I have almost forgotten, not having opportunity for any practice in it. Only when my son Svetoslav and his wife come to visit me am I able to refresh a bit of knowledge."

Daniel Entin told me that of all the members of the Agni Yoga Society, Sina Fosdick loved Elizabeth Meeker the most and found in her the closest friend and soulmate, and was greatly upset when Elizabeth passed away. Two Agni Yoga meetings were dedicated to the memory of Elizabeth Meeker, where those who knew and loved her shared their memories about her.

Here are Sina Fosdick's recollections:

"I first knew Elizabeth Meeker in 1930; she took an apartment at the first Roerich Museum building. She loved Prof. Roerich's art, was interested in the books of Agni Yoga—in fact she even volunteered to help in the library. She moved out later and I lost all traces of her.

"We moved into our present building in 1949 and started the Roerich Museum here. Mr. Montagu, an artist and his wife, came to see the Roerich paintings around 1951. A year later they came again with E.M., she being related to Mrs. Montagu.

"We immediately recognized each other and were happy to meet again. She came alone a few times later, talked about the Teaching, and it was not long afterward that she joined the Agni Yoga Society. Most of her earlier life, she was a Theosophist and very active in the Eastern Star (a branch of the Theosophical Society) for many years. She eventually left that organization.

"She lived at that time in Hanover, N.H., and came a few times from Hanover to visit the headquarters in N.Y., was present at several members' meetings, and expressed a desire to work actively in the Society.

"She offered, on her own initiative, to prepare compilations on various themes from the Teaching, and at first began working on *Mother of the World* and *Mother of Agni Yoga*, which later became two brochures.

"When E.M. joined the Society, Mme. Roerich, to whom I wrote about her, heartily welcomed her. She subsequently sent to me several messages from the Master for



Helena, Katherine Campbell Stibbe, Ingeborg Fritschi, Kalimpong, India, 1951

her. He praised her work and encouraged her to continue.

"At that time she received an unexpected inheritance which she offered to donate for the publication of the two brochures. Later she was told to prepare the third brochure—*Woman*—which the Agni Yoga Society published.

"From the time she became a member of the Agni Yoga Society, she devoted all of her life to the Teaching and the work for the Master. She worked from morning to night, assembling material, doing extensive research work in all the books of the Teaching for the Compilations and Gleanings that she was preparing. Actually, the majority was done by her. We were in constant correspondence as to which themes were of great importance for the members; then, she would start assembling material from all the books, e.g., the paragraphs that referred to these concepts. Later on, she herself began to choose important concepts, preparing various compilations. The format, paper, binding was all done according to her own ideas. The completed work was sent to the society.

"Due to Miss Meeker, who was the originator of the work, and Mrs. Michaelis, her fine co-worker, we now have an impressive Lending Library of Compilations, Gleanings, and Leaflets, which are being lent to all the members of the Agni Yoga Society in America and other

countries where we have members.

"My correspondence with Miss Meeker was frequent; at least twice a week we wrote to each other.

"On January 5th, 1964, she wrote to me: 'Yes, I have faith and hope for the Future, and realize the great responsibility each of us bears. How wonderful it will be to receive *Letters of H. Roerich, Vol. II*, and the other translations you are working on. May you be blessed in your labors of love for the Hierarchy of Love.'

"On February 2nd, 1965, she passed away, at the age of 92. She was a strong pillar of our Society and that pillar stands in testimony to her service in the Master's work."

Nicholas Roerich and Helena Roerich have left the earthly plane, but the work of the Teaching continues.

In the sixties the most active members of the Society were Bernard Lentz, Torkom Saraydarian, Frank Svengalis, Edgar Lansbury, and Elina Yussupoff. Edgar is the president of the Agni Yoga Society at present. He worked on the translations and has contributed a lot toward the understanding of the Teaching.

In the seventies, there was Daniel Entin, Cortny Collier, Robert Lesser, Jeff Clark, Emiko Tanaka.

In the eighties Daniel Entin and Aida Tulskeya worked hard on the translation of the book Supermundane.

Nowadays Aida Tulskeya and Jeff Clark worked on the improvement of the translation of the book Heart.

*To Himself
With love*

"Blest are they whose hearts are enfolded by Thy great Heart of Love. Blest are they whose lives are encompassed by Thy holy Presence. Blest are they who are permitted to share Thy heavy burden. Alone, even Thou canst not remove it entirely.

– Elizabeth Meeker

APPROACH TO DISCIPLESHIP: “RHYTHM”

A Talk before the Agni Yoga Society,
January 24, 1963

Prepared by Elizabeth D. Meeker

“It is not ordinary discipleship that we are discussing this evening, but a discipleship that will last throughout this incarnation and all that are to follow until we, ourselves, become like unto Him who is the Great One we now would serve. We are here because His Teaching has drawn us. Perhaps in former lives we have served humanity under His guidance, so there is already a powerful bond between His all-encompassing Heart and our hearts in which a tiny flame has been kindled.

“His Call goes out to all the world, to gather together one vast army of loving

Thoughts on Agni Yoga

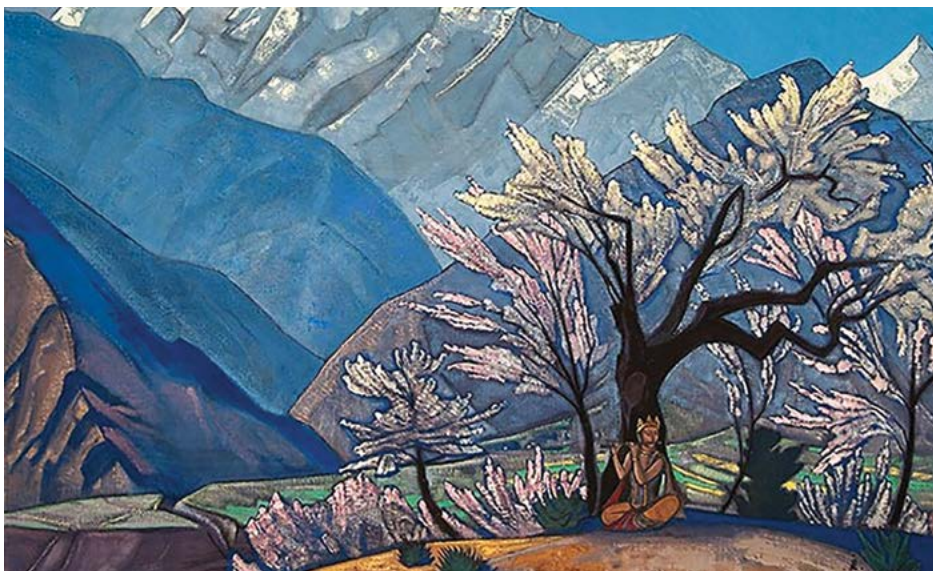
We invite our readers to send us their thoughts on a quote from the Agni Yoga Teachings



servers. Is it presumptuous to think that we have been called? There are those who say, ‘When the pupil is ready, the Teacher will appear’ and, resting upon that adage, take their time in getting ready. But the Teacher knows the cosmic dates when people must be called—ready or not—and so He comes. We are reminded of Jesus’s parable of the Bridegroom and the ten virgins. Five, whose lamps were already lighted, rose and followed Him.

The other five were unprepared—and the door was closed. Doubtless they consoled themselves by thinking, ‘When we are ready, the Bridegroom will come again,’ but the great evolutionary impulse, to which the others had responded, had already left these far behind.

“So let us take stock of ourselves and see that our lamps are alight, that the flame does not flicker, that the vehicle is without a smudge. But, even so, how do we know that there is anything in us, individually, that would make us seem worthy of the consideration of the great Teacher? How can we fit into His great Plan? How can we adapt ourselves to His rhythm? Discipleship is not static. As the disciple grows in the consciousness that he abides in the Aura of his Master, his vibration is raised and he becomes stronger emotionally, mentally, and spiritually; but he is repeatedly reminded that he must safeguard his health, for it is not easy for the physical body to adjust to the higher rhythms and to live purposefully and effectively in his earthly environment; yet this is what he must learn to do.



Krishna, Kulu Valley Series by Nicholas Roerich, 1929

continued on page 11

The WMEA is celebrating its 35th Anniversary!

Fall classes are ongoing through December. Be sure to check the calendar on our website.

For our calendar of events and more about the WMEA, visit www.wmea-world.org

Agni Yoga Society International Headquarters:
Agni Yoga Society, Inc.
319 W 107th St.
New York, NY 10025
www.agniyoga.org

Thoughts on Agni Yoga

(continued from page 10)

“Just thinking about the approach to discipleship stirs within us an awareness of our many shortcomings. We would do well to ponder these and strive to overcome those that should be obliterated and carefully cultivate the qualities which will be of lasting value.

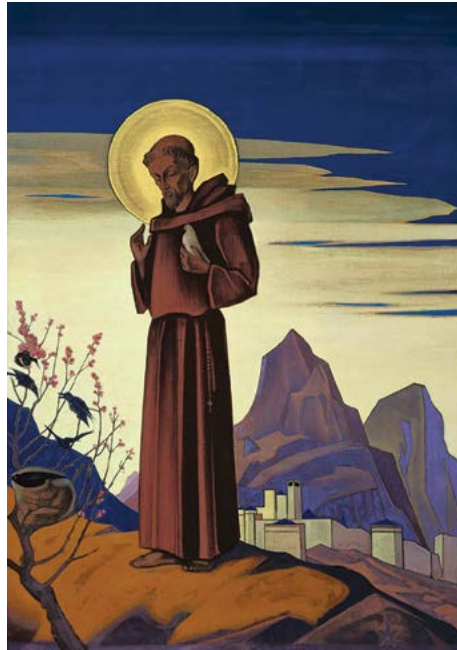
“‘Order is heaven’s first law’ we have been taught since early childhood. There can be no order without rhythm, and ‘Rhythm’ has been selected as the theme for this evening’s discussion. There are many, very many, references to this theme in the books of the Agni Yoga Teachings. A few of them follow:

In a tensed tempo of labor there is concealed a remarkable occult quality. No tension of the will whatsoever can yield the results attainable through strenuous labor. The tempo and saturation of rhythm can coalesce with cosmic tension.

You have already heard about the saturation of rhythm of labor as a particular quality possessed but rarely by people. Its beneficial influence has a far deeper significance than it may appear to have. Yet the ancient mysteries used these two expressions: “to labor in the wave of Sublime Nature” and “to work with the heartbeat of the Mother of the World.”

Those who have studied profound subjects must have known this labor of saturated rhythm, so that nothing could hinder them. The Teacher Buddha took much care that His disciples should know about changes of rhythm. Before great attainments He advised not repose but labor of saturated rhythm. Keep this in mind.¹

Cooperation must be based upon sound rules. This teaches orderliness; that is, it helps the acquirement



St. Francis by Nicholas Roerich, 1932

of a rhythm. Thus even in daily work are expressed the great laws of the Universe. It is especially needed to become accustomed from childhood to continuous labor. Let the better evolution be built upon labor as the measure of value.²

The rhythm of truth is as an invincible stronghold. Not a pile of words but a rhythmic sound bears decisive significance. Why try to conquer with words when the lightning of rhythm can drive away the most harmful beings?³

[T]he new rhythms are like a new armor unexpected by the dark ones. One can continuously create new vibrations and thus repel darkness.⁴

¹ *Leaves of Morya’s Garden* (1925), *Book Two, Illumination*, verses 349–350. © 1952 Agni Yoga Society, Inc.

² *New Era Community* (1926), verse 8. © 1951 Agni Yoga Society, Inc.

³ *Agni Yoga* (1929), verse 156. © 1952 Agni Yoga Society, Inc.

⁴ *Heart* (1932), verse 49. © 1944, 1975 Agni Yoga Society, Inc.

Community

(continued from page 2)

- Fiery Stronghold
- Flame in Chalice
- Heart of Asia
- Invincible, The
- Realm of Light
- Shambhala
- Himavat
- Himalayas – Abode Of Light

In closing, it is my joy to announce that the thirty-fifth anniversary celebration of the founding of the White Mountain Education Association, Inc., is taking place the weekend of October 14th and 15th. This celebration is coinciding with the 100th birthday celebration of Torkom Saraydarian. To learn about the celebration activities and to register, please go to:

<http://wmea-world.org/wmea/calendar/events/>

With love,

Joleen Dianne DuBois
President and founder of the WMEA

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Look for it on the World Wide Web
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