

## The Beauty of Labor

### *Agni Yoga, 1929*

*Agni Yoga, 104.* Let us pronounce the prayer to Shambhala:

“Thou Who didst call me to the path of labor, accept my fitness and my desire.

“Accept my labor, O Lord, because by day and by night Thou behold-est me.

“Manifest Thy hand, O Lord, because great is the darkness. I follow Thee!”

### *Leaves of Morya's Garden: The Call, 1924*

*Leaves of Morya's Garden: The Call, 14.* Carrying the spear of life, breathe smilingly the life-giving ether of the sun.

Take up your spear at sunrise and guide your steeds of morning towards the searing high noon of life.

And the lilies will blossom upon the stones.

And at the first ray, throw open your chamber door,

And the birds will sing in praise of labor.

Learn the Wisdom of the Creator through life's symbols.

Those who fulfill their accepted mission unmask the fact of earthly life,

And understand the true meaning of their own path.

*Leaves of Morya's Garden: The Call, 60.* In your labor your thoughts turn not to danger.

Let your heart unfold and your eye perceive.

*Leaves of Morya's Garden: The Call, 61.*

Labor is the guarantee of success.

Each of you must endure earthly thorns.

Manifest strength of spirit and approach!

Open your hearts through benevolence.

The Teacher values every pure quest for Higher Knowledge.

The spirit of reason bestows knowledge upon the seekers of Truth.

It is enough to follow the path of spirit-realization—the rest will come

*Leaves of Morya's Garden: The Call, 87.* Understand the soul of your brother;

Labor untiringly, show understanding, behold the power of My Shield.

There are many wonders in this world, and a pure and ardent striving leads to victory.

### *Heart, 1932*

*Heart, 80.* Get used to the beauty of labor and the creativity of thought, for with them we shall conquer darkness.

*Heart, 411.* In the education of the heart the first concept to be put forward is work. From the earliest years labor is established as the one foundation of life, as a process of perfectment. This approach eradicates the notion of labor being selfish, and at the same time the child acquires a broad understanding of work for the common good. Such a concept can already refine the heart a great deal, but later on this expansion of the idea of labor is no longer enough. At that point spatial work consciously penetrates the higher spheres.

“How can the complex process of broadening the consciousness begin if people close the gates to higher knowledge?”

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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:

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

## NETWORKERS LETTER

*Dear Friends,*

This year, 2020, we are commemorating 100 years since the first lines of Agni Yoga were written down.

March 24, 1920, is the day when the first lines of the Teaching were recorded. And is, in fact, the underlying reason that the theme of this year's annual conference is *The Path of the Agni Yogi*. And to reflect the theme of the conference, this issue's keynote article is "On the Practice of Agni Yoga," written by the president of the International Agni Yoga Society, New York City, N.Y. All activities are in celebration of March 24, where the first lines of the Teaching were recorded and where today we are in recognition of the progression of the Teaching, 100 years later.

The Roerichs came to America at the end of 1920, 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 for applying the principles of Living Ethics in life became paramount. The proclaimed

# Community

*"Begin to build the community as a home of knowledge and beauty."*

– *New Era Community*, verse 229

*Rev. Joleen D. DuBois*



era of the Mother of the World and the Maitreya Buddha was entered with deep reverence and full awakening of the heart as "the channel to Hierarchy." 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.

### *How to study Agni Yoga?*

Some of the advice that is given in the Teaching can be summarized:

READ.

REREAD.

READ AT DIFFERENT TIMES

OF THE DAY.

READ AT DIFFERENT MOODS.

READ, UNDERSTAND & APPLY.

"Thus everyone should enter the domain of the Teaching as into life, without deviating. But for this purpose one has to read the Teaching often, in different states of spirit. It will be a mistake to devote to the Teaching only the period of rest or of upliftment. The all-pervading Fire is the best symbol of the Teaching."<sup>1</sup>

"When all books are read and the

words have been studied, then it remains to apply in life that which is realized. If books are read again and again, and words harkened to, nevertheless their application may remain outside of life and not any signs will prompt the changing of habits. Yet one has to find the way to mobility of consciousness. The heart can sense the shame of an unworthy waste of time. We do not desire to be severe. We prefer to see the joy of attainment, but the habit of centuries demands that the sword be held ready, for fear still dominates people. Victory over fear will be the threshold of the new consciousness."<sup>2</sup>

Here is some valuable advice for those who teach Agni Yoga: "Teaching must be freed from egoism. The good teacher transmits knowledge accumulated by him, but he will not claim it as his own. He should be able to accept the gift of knowledge in order to impart it joyously to the

*continued on page 11*

<sup>1</sup> *Agni Yoga* (1929), 5th ed. (New York, NY: Agni Yoga Society, Inc., [1928] 1952), verse 468.

<sup>2</sup> *Agni Yoga*, verse 538.



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# On the Practice of Agni Yoga

by Gvido Trepša

President of the Agni Yoga Society

The goal of Agni Yoga, in layman's terms, is to help each of us to become an enlightened being, good for ourselves, for others, and for the world. In this, Agni Yoga is no different from other advanced spiritual disciplines, but the paths towards perfection in each of them do differ. Every teaching, with time, branches off into sects and schools, and they, in turn, create their own practices, methods, routines, and exercises. An ageless teaching deals with permanent truths, while the practices depend on, and are adopted according to, the age, place, and idiosyncrasies of the people. Theory and practice are two sides of the same coin, and in Agni Yoga the importance of practice and discipline is outlined in no uncertain terms.

"One must manifest discipline of spirit; without it one cannot become free." (*Illumination*, preamble)

"Discipline is the beginning of everything." (*Illumination*, 253)

"Let us speak about Lord Buddha.

"People do not realize the foundation of the Teaching of the Blessed One. The foun-

dation is discipline." (*Illumination*, 254)

"People read about instantaneous enlightenment and imagine that they can succeed without spiritual practice and protracted experiments." (*Supermundane*, 276)

"It is also a mistake to call every beginner of any of the Yogas a *Yogi*. Yoga, or communion, is achieved by hard and

"Human consciousness can be directed toward the disciplining of unbridled and unconscious thoughts." (*Infinity I*, 4)

"At times people are ready to recognize the power of thought, but they do not apply this recognition to themselves. They dream about great thoughts but will not put the small ones in order. They will ask how to set thought into motion. One has

to start by disciplining the smallest thoughts; only when that is done can one create a thought that moves mountains. By following this advice about putting small thoughts in order, one begins to bring health to the heart. Do not rely on an assortment of outer pranayamas. The path of Agni Yoga is through the heart, but one must help the heart by putting thoughts in order." (*Heart*, 495)

"He who said,

'We see with the eyes of the heart,' had in mind not a symbol but a physical law. A consciousness that has been deepened and freed manifests a transformation of all feelings. The most vivid color becomes invisible, the loudest symphony inaudible, the most powerful touch unnoticed, the hottest food unfelt.



*And We Labor* by Nicholas Roerich, 1922.

constant spiritual practice." (Helena Roerich, *Letters I*, 5.6.1934)

The goal may be one, but the core principle to be perfected along the way may vary, as is distinctly manifested in Bhakti, Jnana, Karma, and Raja Yogas. What kind of practice, then, does Agni Yoga suggest?

“That is how real the realm of feelings becomes—in the heart. This quality should not be considered an abstraction. Quite the contrary, in it is contained yet another approach to the Subtle World. We make Our disciples practice this transmutation of feelings as one of the clearest ways to refine the heart.” (*Heart*, 559)

“One who is unable to practice discipline of thought and feelings cannot hope to progress speedily on the chosen path of Light.” (Helena Roerich, *Letters II*, 1.11.1936)

“We frequently perform exercises for clarity of thought, for thinking requires practice. Even the loftiest thinker will not deny that he too must exercise this capacity, just as a musician must practice constantly for clarity of sound. Let fools insist that they need no such exercises. Composure, too, is acquired through the exercise of thought.” (*Supermundane*, 424)

“Some will insist that special schools are required for learning concentration of thought. Not at all—everyone can practice thought-concentration, beginning with the most simple ways. If one compels oneself to think clearly at least one quarter of an hour daily, there will be good results.” (*Supermundane*, 555)

“Few wish to understand that the highest achievement is not in psychism, not in astral visions, but in synthesis, in the development of one’s own abilities. This is achieved by the scrupulous fulfillment of one’s duties, or, as those of the East would say, by dharma. Truly, the manifested world is upheld and is developed by action, and only action gives birth to new energies.” (Helena Roerich, *Letters I*, 10.18.1934)

There are many more direct statements and hints in Agni Yoga outlining which faculties, virtues, and qualities lead to “the highest achievement.” After learning what needs to be perfected, a true student



*Arhat*, by Nicholas Roerich, 1932

is inevitably thirsty to learn how to proceed: what are the best practices, methods, rules, exercises?

The Agni Yoga texts give no orders. Even the occasional pieces of concrete advice, which should never be taken out of context (e.g. in *Aum*, 350, 404; *Supermundane*, 441) do not exceed a dozen.

This lack of easily digestible sets of prescriptions has resulted in all kinds of misconceptions among the aspirants. One of the most widespread is the perception that to be excited about the lofty concepts and theories that strike us is already a practice, and a sufficient one. Agni Yoga gently corrects this with several subtle hints.

“Again they will ask: ‘Why at the beginning of the path is so much that is pleasant accorded and so much forgiven?’ It is because in the beginning all fires are full blown and the one who is called walks as a torch. It is up to him to choose the quality of his fire.” (*Illumination*, preamble)

“It is also said that the world is created by thought, or that thought engenders action. Therefore many, supposing that thought is higher than action, plunge into dreaminess, taking it for creative thought, forgetting that only that thought which is saturated by fiery will can create. But one

can acquire such will only by stubborn practice. . . .” (Helena Roerich, *Letters I*, 10.18.1934)

Some never get past this beginner’s state of excitement, and when the initial flame gradually decreases, become content with occasional bursts, more and more rare as the years pass by. Others settle on the cozy conviction that practice consists of reading a certain number of Agni Yoga paragraphs with more or less constant frequency. Still others express themselves through meetings and discussions; or by individual or collective sendings of good thoughts into space; and this list can be expanded.

All such activities have their own applications and benefits, but they do not automatically constitute the practice of Agni Yoga. Reading and discussing the teaching; praying and sending thoughts; calling upon psychic energy; randomly engaging in visualizations; teaching others or being taught—these and other activities of a similar kind become practice only when one approaches them as art and first spends all the necessary time and effort to master them.

Such understanding is important, and when it pushes one beyond the stage of



*And We See* by Nicholas Roerich, 1922

mere intellectual recognition, Agni Yoga, or the teaching of Living Ethics as it is often called, opens one's eyes to the actual method of the work. It is right here, before our eyes all the time, in the name itself, in the word "living."

"It is true, the practice of occultism in the way it is understood by the majority, that is, the performance of mechanical exercises, is most dangerous. But the path of Light, the path of selfless service to humanity, readiness of the spirit, constant striving toward the perfectment of the inner man, and steadfast devotion to the chosen Ideal, this path, although difficult, has its spiritual joys." (Helena Roerich, *Letters II*, 11.4.1935)

"I am charging you to walk with Us through joy and sorrow; it is only in this twofold flame that consciousness is created. Training in consciousness is the Yoga of the Heart. This practice

is impossible outside of everyday life." (*Fiery World II*, 598)

"*This practice is impossible outside of everyday life.*" — Everyday life—the 24/7—is the perfect, and only, battleground for the practice of Agni Yoga. But once more, this should not lead to the wrong conclusion that such practice is a free-flowing effort to lead one's life in a more ethical manner. Undisciplined, unskilled effort can still not be considered practice.

Living Ethics describes at length the qualities of an enlightened, perfect being, good for humankind and for the universe. And we need only life itself—regardless of circumstances, age, wealth, physical and mental idiosyncrasies—to strive to become this enlightened perfect being. But this striving becomes practice only when we are aware of it. And not aware intellectually or randomly—by thinking about it or remembering it when

we wake up and go to sleep, and several times during the day. Here awareness means to be aware to the marrow of one's bones, with every particle of one's whole being. The concept is simple, but it is one of the most difficult achievements to which one can aspire on earth. The moment we are *aware*, we practice; as soon as we step out of this awareness, we drift along.

Everyone can self-assess how advanced their practice is—the moments of awareness of practicing are moments of unconditional happiness, and clarity. More importantly,

you are in control of your feelings and thoughts, and consequently, of your actions, which is the only way to manifest the teaching in your life. How frequent and how long are these moments? Seconds, minutes? Once a day? or week? or month?

Continual awareness is a sine qua non requirement for becoming an enlightened perfect being. But before it becomes ingrained in one's everyday life, before the actual practice of Agni Yoga sets in, a relentless life-long practice is needed to extend the moments of true awareness; from, say, one moment once a week to two moments twice a day, steadily increasing.

How to practice in order to reach the stage at which true practice begins, is up to the individual. The collective wisdom of the ages provides enough disciplines, exercises, methods, and routines to choose from. Agni Yoga itself has at least one direct pointer, in *Heart*, in plain sight.

## Fire and the Energy of the Heart

“When we speak of the non-scorching fire, we must also not forget the consuming Fire. When the nun moans, ‘I burn, I burn!’ no physician knows how to alleviate it. The physician may even apply cold water, forgetting that oil cannot be submerged in water. Fire can be allayed only by fire—in other words, by the energy of the heart, which flows during so-called magnetism. We treat inflammation with a current; such inflammations may flare up in various centers. But, actually, the chief danger lies close to the heart, the solar plexus and the larynx. These centers, being the most synthetic, may be exposed to the most unexpected attacks. Whoever has even once experienced the inner fire understands the danger of the conflagration of the centers. He knows what agony is experienced when the fire breaks through. In most cases man is not responsible for this, except perhaps because of irritation. Often the fire bursts out due to extraneous influences, and in the case of a refined state of the organism, from cosmic causes. Fatigue of the heart actually opens the gates to the enemy. Thus the creative Fire can be transformed into a destructive flame. This should be remembered, for the outbursts develop from small beginnings. It should also be remembered that the use of fiery energy requires care. Great is the evil of needlessly spending the fiery energy of another. An Arhat can never be a vampire—this is a fundamental law of life. Therefore, wise is the law of eternal giving. It may seem that there is nothing in common between sacrifice and Fire; however, flaming sacrifice is mentioned in all Covenants.”<sup>1</sup>

### Fiery illnesses


“A thoughtful physician may ask con-

## Health Corner

**“I speak about the preservation of magnanimity as the basis of good health.”**

*Fiery World I, verse 17*

Note: All medical advice is given to the reader as a guideline. Please consult a medical professional before proceeding, and then proceed caerefully, with discretion and at your own risk.



cerning the fiery illnesses, ‘Are they named as quite specific sicknesses, or are they spread through the majority of diseases?’ The second is closer to the truth. Fire can aggravate all illnesses, therefore great attention should be paid to the state of fiery striving. Besides, it must be remembered that any fiery manifestation cannot be abated merely by water or cold, but rather through psychic energy, which resists Fire everywhere. This energy, as a sort of condensation of Fire, can absorb the fiery surplus. Thus, attention should again be directed to psychic energy when We speak about the heart, about the Fiery World, and about Our affirmation of the existence of the Subtle World. When you read about being consumed by the inner fire, bear in mind the reaction of psychic energy. It can be manifested in three ways: through auto-suggestion, through physical inaction, or through the highest action at a distance. However, physicians often forget that it is not the medicine but some external condition that helps. We recall one remarkable case when a physician possessed powerful psychic energy, yet stubbornly attributed its effects to his medicine. One can easily realize the extent to which such benefits would increase if the physician understood wherein his power lies. Only, do not confuse the heart’s energy with external magnetism and so-called hypnotism. Both of these manifestations are artificial and hence, temporary. The heart’s

energy is not applied forcibly, but is to be transmitted by contact with the current. If, prior to all physical means, the physician and the patient would simultaneously think about the energy of the heart, in many cases the reaction would be instantaneously useful and healing.”<sup>2</sup>

### Vegetable diet, meat diet, and consciousness

“It has been correctly observed that in order for the organism to adapt itself to a vegetable diet after a meat diet three years are needed. But if, for purely physical conditions, such a period is necessary, no less a period is required for the transformation of consciousness, unless karmic conditions induce special possibilities. To transform the consciousness means to enter a special world; it means to acquire a special evaluation of all that occurs; it means going forward without glancing back; it means leaving behind all complaints and acquiring good will. Does it not seem strange that alongside a period for a diet one must put the ethical concept of benevolence? But, fortunately, every physician will support us in this, because benevolence is the best expedient for the digestion. People like to have the spiritual foundations supported by dietetic advice.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Fiery World I* (1933), 2nd rev. ed. (New York, NY: Agni Yoga Society, Inc., [1943] 1969), verse 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Fiery World I*, verse 53.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, verse 112.

## MONHEGAN ISLAND

(snippets from  
*My Teachers/Sina Fosdick*)

“The Roerichs decided to spend the summer of 1922 on Monhegan Island.<sup>1</sup> My husband and I joined them in July.<sup>2</sup> This was the beginning of an unforgettable time. Days flew by quickly. The memories of frequent morning walks with Nikolai Konstantinovich<sup>4</sup> and Elena Ivanovna<sup>3</sup> have stayed with me for my entire life. I well remember the remarks of Nikolai Konstantinovich, a great artist and a wise person. He drew the rocks and the shoreline, and keenly observed everything around him, pointing out this or that shade of color, or the shape of a cloud. He spoke clearly, and every word was imprinted in memory. Elena Ivanovna got up very early, for she liked to work alone for a couple of hours. When she joined us, our happiness was complete. They would exchange thoughts, and we would listen to their words. Their lightness of feet and stamina were extraordinary, while we were exhausted during those walks. During the day, both of them worked with us. N. Konstantinovich<sup>5</sup> dictated the plan of development of our institutions for the coming years. Elena Ivanovna gave us books to study and discussed them with us. Her knowledge of ancient teachings and Eastern philosophy was extraordinary. With her help we also studied the history of the evolution of humanity.”

“So passed our Monhegan days, filled with work and conversation. The Roerichs also told us about their life in St. Petersburg, about meetings and friendships with writers, poets, musicians, and composers. They often spoke at length about Kuindzhi,<sup>6</sup> not only as

## The Realm of Beauty

“*Through Beauty We Conquer.*”

N. Roerich

*We invite our readers to submit their poems, photos, and short essays for this section.*



a prominent artist and pedagogue but a ‘teacher of life,’ as Nikolai Konstantinovich called him. For us the Roerichs were also the teachers of life in the full meaning of the word. To other members of our group, knowledge was also generously given, and self-discipline and the joy of labor were indicated. Elena

*“I will need to write my memoirs about Nikolai Konstantinovich and Elena Ivanovna. They are two great and extraordinary people for the world not to know about them, and besides that, they are disciples of M.M.”*

Ivanovna spoke extensively about the need for the physical and moral education of children, and also about her dreams to later work in Russia. She was a wonderful mother, and under her and Nikolai Konstantinovich’s wise tutelage, Yury<sup>7</sup> and Svetoslav<sup>8</sup> grew, first, to become a brilliant scientist-Orientalist; and the second, a significant artist.”

“Today is already our fourth day

on Monhegan Island (in Maine). The Roerichs and their older son, Yury Nikolayevich, have already been here for three days. I want to record everything related to the Roerichs, for I think that in a few years I will need to write my memoirs about Nikolai Konstantinovich and Elena Ivanovna. They are two great and extraordinary people for the world not to know about them, and besides that, they are disciples of M.M. and, as E.I. told me today, have been chosen by Him for a major mission in America, India, and Russia. She cannot yet disclose what that mission is.

“We have had several walks with them among local rocks and hills. They are both as simple as children and as wise as the chosen ones of God. For example, we climbed on a hill, and Yury Nikolayevich shouted from afar, “Come here! I see lots of wild strawberries!” N.K., upon hearing that, retorted gloomily, “That means he will gobble up all of them.”

“On Monhegan N.K. told me that the name *Cor Ardens* was brought by [him] to the first meeting, and all those present, even though each of them had their own suggestion, unanimously agreed with N.K.’s proposal and adopted that name, not yet understanding its significance. [*Cor Ardens* is the emergence of the creative force.]

“Also, N.K. was again comparing the landscapes of Monhegan island with those in Russia—here the woods are



*Monhegan, Maine* (from the *Ocean Series*), by Nicholas Roerich, 1922

similar, and the footpaths and the flowers, but the heart knows the difference.”

“We stayed a little over a month with the Roerichs on Monhegan, from July 7th through August 10th. We had the pleasure of spending entire days in conversations with them, discussing the plans for the school and our cooperation here and in Russia in the future. We dined together three times a day. Lots of laughter; jokes; N.K.’s subtle humor and his inimitable stories and recollections; deep conversations with E.I., full of esoteric and religious meaning! Her marvelous shining face, almost unearthly in its beauty and radiance. Long walks taken almost every day. Three times a week, joint Talks

with Master, and the happiness of being able to listen together with the Roerichs to the wisdom of the Teaching, and the blessing of love directed at us and the guidance to action. That was the best month of my and Nutsya’s life, and that time became the cornerstone in the foundation of our entire future life.”

“[On Monhegan]. The Talks became more and more intensive, with continuing readings and discussions of the books of Living Ethics, their application to common labor. New issues appeared that were to be addressed in future work; also, the future expedition to Central Asia was discussed, and its stages were planned. It seemed inconceivable at

times that the moment would come when we would have to live and work without our beloved teachers.”

<sup>1</sup> Monhegan Island, Maine is a small island off the coast of Maine, U.S.A., population of sixty-nine, and is accessible only by boat.

[https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction\\_Review-g40748-d283457-Reviews-Monhegan\\_Island-Monhegan\\_Island\\_Maine.html](https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g40748-d283457-Reviews-Monhegan_Island-Monhegan_Island_Maine.html).

<sup>2</sup> The Fosdicks: Sina and Dudley.

<sup>3</sup> Helena Roerich.

<sup>4</sup> Nicholas Roerich.

<sup>5</sup> Nikolai Konstantinovich is Nicholas Roerich.

<sup>6</sup> Arkhip Ivanovich Kuindzhi (1841–1920) A famous Russian realist painter. Nicholas Roerich referred to Kuindzhi as a “Teacher, a Master.” Kuindzhi was Roerich’s former teacher of art.

<sup>7</sup> Yuri Nikolayevich is George Roerich, elder son of Nicholas and Helena Roerich.

<sup>8</sup> Svetoslav Roerich, son of Nicholas and Helena Roerich.



October 18, 2003

**Symbolism**

Dear —,

In *The Call*, M. says that we students need symbols (as a crutch, He implies, something concrete to hang onto, otherwise we'd be adrift in the sea of Reality—at least that's how I read it), and that They, therefore, teach us with illusions in order to bring us closer to Truth.

And I have to say that after a lifetime of learning stuff, and stuffing my head with stuff, I have come to suspect that when we pass on into the Subtle World, if we have grown enough, we have to discard that stuff as old baggage and go clean into a New World.

Daniel

October 20, 2003

**Aryavarta – an energy point**

Dear —,

The second quote, I think, explains it quite thoroughly. The land of the Arya. The people who settled in and took over in northern India mainly came down from the ancient lands along the Amu Darya river (is that the right name?) northwest of India, about where the legendary cities of Samarkand and Bokhara are today. The people in southern India are, I was told, the true native people of India, but the Arya brought higher civilization, culture, science, and so forth, with them. Akbar's time was perhaps one of the culmination points

## Conversations with Daniel Entin

*Daniel Entin (1927–2017), Former Executive  
Director of the Nicholas Roerich Museum*



of this development.

I have been fascinated by that region around Samarkand for many years. I went there twice, hoping for what? to bump into a Mahatma? to be recognized and invited into a secret society? No. More a wondering about how much survived the Soviets' attempts to crush all that. I never did find out, but I was certain that the local "vibes" were extraordinary.

So Aryavarta is really in the northern regions of India, not a specific point. Helena Roerich was very aware that Kullu Valley was an energy point in the matrix of Aryavarta.

Daniel

October 21, 2003

**First translations**

Dear —,

Absolutely right!

Another confession. When the first translations into English were being made, Helena Roerich asked the person (Frances Grant) who was polishing the final draft "to make the text beautiful"

and not worry about occasional differences from the Russian. The spirit and beauty of the text was more important than the individual words.

Daniel

October 21, 2003

**First translations vs. inner work**

Dear —,

Of course, what Helena Roerich was trying to get at (at least according to the person who was so instructed) was that no student's spiritual development is enhanced or impeded by a badly chosen word in a text. The word that could do that is rare indeed. The true work is the inner work, after all.

I sometimes agonize over the likelihood that so much of the content in the books in various languages has been translated by partly qualified people (we are ALL partly qualified, really), who filter the material through their own mental web of prejudices, misconceptions, misinterpretations, and ignorance of the material they are dealing with. I could tell you some stories about this, some as laughable as the computer-generated trans-

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Agni Yoga Society International Headquarters:

Agni Yoga Society, Inc.  
319 W 107th St.  
New York, NY 10025  
[www.agniyoga.org](http://www.agniyoga.org)

lations that we see, some as distressing and scary. But the people I meet who study those texts appear to be impervious because their eyes are fixed on a true goal.

Daniel

**October 22, 2003**

*New Nicholas Roerich Museum website*

Dear —,

I'd like to take this opportunity to tell everyone about our new website.

Tomorrow is the first day of Svetoslav Roerich's centenary year, and we want to start that year with our new Nicholas Roerich Museum website, [www.roerich.org](http://www.roerich.org) (same address as before). The site has been redesigned (feedback, please; the site is for you!), and greatly enlarged.

We have stated often that our archives must be open to everyone. Of course, that doesn't mean that everyone can come in, go lumbering up to the fifth floor of the Museum and start rooting around! So we bring the treasures to you. Right now, you will see in one place all the paintings that we have in the Museum. But you will also see all of the more than five hundred drawings and sketches by Nicholas Roerich that have been in storage. And you will see in the archive section more than sixteen hundred historical photographs, showing Nicholas Roerich, Helena Roerich, Svetoslav Roerich, and George Roerich, as well as hundreds of images from the expeditions and the old Master Institute. Lots to dig around in, to enjoy, to download and use as you will.

Soon you will see our holdings of paintings by Svetoslav Roerich, and our collection of art objects and artifacts, many brought from the Far East by Nicholas Roerich after his major

expedition. You will also see the books by Nicholas Roerich that have been published in English, even those that have been out of print for many years. One of the great things about the internet is that no book will ever have to be out of print, ever again. Also, there will be a section for Roerich paintings in collections worldwide.

Daniel

**November 17, 2003**

*Museum founded November 17, 1923*

Dear —,

As far as I know, November 17th was indicated as a most auspicious date for initiating projects. If my memory serves, the Theosophical Society was founded on November 17, 1885 (someone please correct this if I am wrong). The Museum was also founded November 17, 1923 (there was no official Agni Yoga Society until 1946).

So today is our 80th birthday!

Daniel

**December 6, 2003**

*Main Expedition, China and the USSR, The Stone*

Dear —,

OK, here's the scoop!

When the Roerichs were on the main expedition, in Urumchi, China, they befriended the local Soviet Consul, Bystrov, who helped them to get into the U.S.S.R. without acquiescing to the requirements of the Moscow leaders, who wanted Roerich to take Soviet citizenship before entering the country. When the three Roerichs, together with Sina Lichtmann (later Fosdick) and her husband Maurice Lichtmann arrived in Moscow,

they met all the leaders of the country—Chicherin; Lunacharsky; Lenin's widow, Krupskaya; and others.

Roerich gave Chicherin and Lunacharsky the first published books of the Teaching (in Russian, of course). He also handed to them a letter from the Mahatmas to the Soviet government. This letter has been published a few times in Russian biographies and articles. Essentially, it is a complimentary and encouraging letter, despite the prophecy from the same Source, given only three years before, that "in three years the Bolsheviks will be overthrown." I was told here, in explanation, that there are two ways to affect the behavior of beasts: with sticks or with carrots. This letter was a carrot.

About the "box with the blue light coming out of it," what box do you mean? Perhaps you mean the casket that is seen in so many of the paintings, representing the repository of the New Teaching. If you do mean that casket, it exists. It was given to the Roerichs in Paris, in 1923 or 1924, when they were on their way to the Far East. The casket contained the famous Stone, about which so much was written in the Teaching. In the Agni Yoga website, [www.agniyoga.org](http://www.agniyoga.org), the book *On Eastern Crossroads* has a chapter, very veiled and filled with symbolism, about the Stone. It is the casket held by Nicholas Roerich in the portrait that can be found as the frontispiece of the book *Shambhala*. I guess you can call it a "pebble from the far-off worlds." The Stone is said to be from a meteorite, with origins in the constellation Orion.

Is this sufficient for an inquiring mind? If not, ask questions. Maybe I will have answers, though I do not know much more.

Daniel

**Conversations with Daniel Entin***(continued from page 10)***December 6, 2003*****Burning Away of Darkness***

Dear —,

Regarding the documentary you saw: I don't know how "finding" the letter would prove that the Roerichs were actually there. H.P.B. had letters fall from the ceiling in her room in New York!

Seriously though, the letter certainly exists. Sina remembered seeing it and holding it, before it was given to the Russian Ministers. When the text of the letter was first published in Russia, I asked Sina if it was accurate, and she said yes. In Russia, everyone is certain that it is still in the possession of the F.S.B., the old K.G.B., who won't show it. However, there was a time when the K.G.B. gave their Roerich files to Ludmila Shaposhnikova, the head of the International Roerich Centre in Moscow, so that letter may be there.

The painting you are referring to is *Burning of Darkness* (It should be *Burning Away of Darkness*), and yes, Nicholas Roerich painted himself and what I presume to be the other members of his family, emerging from a Himalayan cave, right behind the Masters, one of whom is carrying the casket. I take that to be a wordless statement and affirmation of having been there. You are right, the casket is glowing. To me, that is a very instructive painting, and I wish people would take heed. Its message is that we can fight darkness only by creating more light, not by becoming dark ourselves in order to battle the dark. Too many people read so much about darkness and battle in the Teaching, they tend to take it not in its metaphoric sense but too literally.

Daniel

**Networkers Letter***(continued from page 2)*

next generation. The work of the teacher must be compensated, not only materially, but also with universal respect. Teaching is one of the highest callings in a nation. It is not so much the teacher himself, but his gift of passing on knowledge that will open the higher culture to people. Thus, not personal ambition,

*“Let people, from home and hearth up to the spacial preordinations, remember about the value of cooperation.”*

but service to the general welfare, should be the reason for Teaching.”<sup>3</sup>

About coworkers on the path of Agni Yoga, “unity is pointed out in all beliefs as the sole bulwark of success. Better attainments can be affirmed if the unity of coworkers is assured. One may cite a great number of examples when mutual trust among the coworkers helped in lofty solutions. Let people, from home and hearth up to the spacial preordinations, remember about the value of cooperation. The seed of labor withers without the moisture of reciprocity. Let us not look backward too much. We hastening fellow-travelers shall become weary if we jostle each other. We shall realize a beautiful meaning if we can introduce the great concept—friend. Community may consist

only of friends.”<sup>4</sup>

“Our condition for the coworkers is a complete desire to apply in life Our fundamentals, not in theory but in practice.

“The Teacher bears the flame of an unquenchable achievement. The Teaching is interrupted neither by weariness nor by distress. The heart of the Teacher lives by achievement. He has no fear, and the words ‘I am afraid’ are not in His vocabulary.”<sup>5</sup>

With love,



Joleen Dianne DuBois

President and founder

White Mountain Education Association, Inc.

<sup>3</sup> *Supermundane, Vol. III* (New York, NY: Agni Yoga Society, Inc., Online edition), verse 477. <https://www.agniyoga.org>.

<sup>4</sup> *New Era Community* (1926) (New York, NY: Agni Yoga Society, Inc., 1951), verse 4.

<sup>5</sup> *New Era Community*, verse 65.

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