

AGNI YOGA

QUARTERLY

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Expansion of Consciousness

Agni Yoga, 1929

Agni Yoga, 615. Why must the path of the Teaching be a path of accumulation? Can it not be offered in one dose, like a medicine? But the stomach is of limited dimension, whereas consciousness is not a measurable constant. Truly, there can be people almost without consciousness. There can be people who have deprived themselves of consciousness through excessive passions. There can be consciousnesses obscured by the conventions of their time. Like hothouse flowers, consciousnesses are in need of nurture. The foundation of consciousness is built by straight-knowledge, but the refining of consciousness is as slow as the polishing of a crystal. Not by one's opinion of oneself but by the quality of one's action is the expansion of one's consciousness recognized.

Infinity II, 1930

Infinity II, 295. People are afraid most of all of expansion of consciousness. Everything within the boundaries of the customary is very close to man, and each new thought arouses opposition. Therefore, when We send someone for an achievement, We first impart the urge toward a new consciousness. Only limitless striving toward expansion of consciousness and reaching for the unusual can advance the consciousness toward evolution.

Supermundane, 1938

Supermundane, 796. Urusvati knows that an expanded consciousness brings into harmony all surrounding consciousnesses, and even has its influence upon the atmosphere. Thus a kind of magnet is formed that attracts and transforms the surroundings. This condition of broadened consciousness is important not only for Earth, but also for the Supermundane World. True, the expansion of consciousness is not obtained easily. Also, many people confuse the expansion of consciousness with rote learning. They deny the possibility of the influence of psychic energy; material science, for them, is all that is destined for mankind. They cannot understand that science without psychic

energy is devoid of life. How can the complex process of broadening the consciousness begin if people close the gates to higher knowledge?

Man must declare to himself, "I want to broaden my consciousness!" Only a free will can create a powerful magnet. "I want and I can." Thus will man open the first gates to the transformation of the World. But the passionate wish must be tempered with patience, for many processes take time. Such a task can be accomplished only by one who has dedicated himself to the service of humanity.

The Thinker affirmed, "Learn to want this. Become citizens of the Supermundane World!"

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

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Welcome

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

and WMEA on the Web:

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

NETWORKERS LETTER

Dear Friends,

A year ago, with the January/February/March issue of *Agni Yoga Quarterly*, I closed the Networkers Letter in this way, “*The Thinker urged His disciples to base their lives upon good. He said, ‘Good is inexhaustible, but evil is limited.’*”¹

And, “The tension in the world is constantly increasing. Events are hastened, but the Forces of Light will steer all into proper channels. Learn to find joy in labor and in endless knowledge during the most difficult days.”²

As we go into the year 2020, it seems like a simple and thoughtful goal to enter the new year with the Master’s words: Base your lives upon good. To strive upon good means to live without revenge, without intent to harm others, without jealousy, without a sense of inferiority or seeing ourselves as lesser than, but instead, to focus our life upon good. The Master is inspiring us to serve the General Good.

Helena Roerich wrote: “Strive, my friends! Is it so difficult if you have before you the Image of Beauty? Is it not the highest joy to bring every bit of yourself to the service of the General Good? The achievements are so beautiful, and there are no limits to them! But all the possibility, all the joy of it, is only in ourselves. No one can take more than he can

contain—otherwise, destruction will follow. The laws of Cosmos are exact and immutable. The highest joy for one may cause intense anguish in another if assimilation is not there. Do understand this! The Rays sent to us by the Teacher in the greatest joy of His Spirit will call forth our anguish and may even ruin our organism if we are not prepared to receive them. Do understand this, my dear ones, and give access to the Rays of the Great Teacher. . . .”³

The Master instructed: “*You must know that the chosen path of Good leads to the Source of Wisdom.*”⁴

Let us enter the year 2020 with these words of goodness:

“The miracle of Beauty in the adornment of our daily lives will exalt mankind.

Raise high your light.

Illumine the beauties of My Temple.

Teach the Joy of Beauty.

Teach the Happiness of Wisdom.

Community

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

– *New Era Community*, verse 229

Rev. Joleen D. DuBois



Teach the Bliss of Love.

Teach the Glory of Unity with God.

I will grant you the power and fleetness of Mercury.

*Go forward without doubt, without fear, without turning back.”*⁵

With joy and love,

Joleen Dianne DuBois
President and founder
White Mountain Education Association, Inc.

¹ *Supermundane* (New York, NY: Agni Yoga Society, Inc. [1994] 2016), verse 476. <http://www.agniyoga.org>.

² *Letters of Helena Roerich* (1935–1939), Vol. II, 23 April 1938 (New York, NY: Agni Yoga Society, Inc. [1967] 2016).

³ *Letters of Helena Roerich* (1929–1938), Vol. I, 11 February 1929 (New York, NY: Agni Yoga Society, Inc. [1954] 2016).

⁴ *Leaves of Morya’s Garden* (1924), Book One, 3rd ed. (New York, NY: Agni Yoga Society, Inc., [1923] 1999, repr. 2016), verse 210.

⁵ *Leaves of Morya’s Garden*, Book One, verse 45.



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The Youthful Years (1917–1923) of Orientalist George Roerich

(from the book) by Vladimir Rosov, Doctor of Historical Sciences

Translated by Nataliya Fomin

The young, or youthful, years of Yuri [George] Roerich is a little-studied, one might say, hidden period of his life, which the dry lines of the scientist's autobiographies say little about. He was born on August 16, 1902, in the village of Okulovka in the Novgorod province, where his father Nikolai Konstantinovich Roerich carried out archaeological research and his mother, Elena Ivanovna, as a photographer, also participated in the expedition. Upon reaching adulthood, the personality of the future Orientalist began to take shape. The life path passed through the heights of scientific creativity and the intense tension of feelings.

It is known that after the February Revolution in Russia, the artist N. K. Roerich and his wife and sons Yuri and Svyatoslav all left for Finland together (the head of the family going there for treatment) and therefore ended up in exile. From May 1917 and the whole of 1918, they were in Sortavala and then in Vyborg, and soon proceeded to wander around Europe. Art exhibitions of Nicholas Roerich took place in Sweden, Denmark and, finally, England, in one of the prestigious exhibition halls, London's Goupil Gallery. In the summer of 1919, the artist's family settled in London. The eldest of the sons, Yuri Roerich, was not yet seventeen years old at the time. He had to determine his future, that is, to attain a higher education.

SORTAVALA

Yuri Roerich inherited his ability to draw from his father. The child began to draw at the age of six. His



George Roerich

first “masterpieces” were presented in 1908, at an exhibition of children of artists who were members of the World of Art Association (Mir Iskusstva). His early works, except for battle pictures and historical skits, have the everyday genre of urban life. The work itself is magnificent in composition and color scheme. A significant number of drawings are related to military clashes, knightly tournaments, and warlike angels and saints. According to his mother, such an interest was not accidental; it reflected “great-grandfathers by blood.” Elena Ivanovna was the grandniece of Field Marshal Mikhail Illarionovich Golenishchev-Kutuzov, and on the line of her great-grandmother, there were Mongolian roots. At the genetic level, Yuri Roerich preserved tribal memory; the ancestors laid the warrior magnetism in him.

The life of Yuri Roerich in Sortavala became a kind of period of improvement

in the art of drawing. His Karelian landscapes have color sophistication and technical skill. Because the easels of the illustrious artist Roerich and his sons often stood nearby—all used the same colors and worked in the general aura—the painting of the children quickly began to acquire artistic merit. The landscape genre was also successful for Yuri Roerich.

Despite the obvious talent of a draftsman, Yuri Roerich, living in Sortavala, was more inclined to the East. He made a choice in favor of Orientalism. He independently began to study the history of Eastern literature, redrawing Chinese hieroglyphs and Arabic script from scientific books.

LONDON

Upon arrival in England, the young man entered the School of Oriental Languages at the University of London, in the Indo-Iranian Department. He studied there for the 1919/20 academic year with the famous Orientalist Edward Denison Ross. After completing the course, Yuri Roerich moved to Harvard University (USA), where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in Indian philology. Moving overseas was associated with the artistic plans of his father. N. K. Roerich was offered to conduct a series of exhibitions in cities in the United States. A long-term contract stipulated a trip to America, and the family settled for a while in New York.

A logical question arises: What exactly explains such a life choice—why did Yuri Roerich take the path of Orientalism? From an early age, his

interest in the art of the East, in the languages and culture of the peoples of Asia, was aroused. Undoubtedly, the family became the determining factor. At the beginning of the twentieth century, sometime after the birth of his sons, N. K. Roerich intended to go along the “Great Indian Way.” First in 1906 and then in 1914, he planned to go to the Asian continent together with Orientalist V. V. Golubev. Life circumstances and the First World War did not allow these plans to be realized.

In London in 1920, the dream again seemed real and feasible. The Russian artist met and made friends with the Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore. Tickets for the ship to India had already been bought, but financial difficulties adjusted the plans. But Yuri Roerich had the opportunity to complete an oriental education and thoroughly prepare for long-distance travels. A year later, he wrote: “I started my classes related to Central Asia, in London, where I studied Persian and Sanskrit. . . . First, I started to study the works of Persian authors. . . . In addition, I collected materials on the history of Central Asian studies in the library of the British Museum.”¹

In London, Yuri Roerich, like his parents, took part in the public life of emigration. He initiated the creation of the Russian Youth Circle. Members of the youth association were his friends and subsequently employees of cultural institutions formed by the initiative of N. K. Roerich in the USA, France, and India—George Chklaver and Vladimir Shibayev (secretary). The circle appeared in October 1919 and set its task to promote communication among Russian youth, as well as to help emigrant “organizations fighting Bolshevism.” (At the same time,



At the Hairdresser by George Roerich

as stated in the charter, no party political goals were pursued.)

The personality of the future scientist developed in completely unusual circumstances. The parents of Yuri Roerich, in addition to art and social work, were passionate about Theosophy. In July 1920, shortly before leaving for the United States, they became members of the London section of the Theosophical Society. At the same time, Nikolai Konstantinovich established contacts with famous theosophists—Besant, Jinarajadasa, and Weaver. The door to the spiritual world of the “spirits” opened, and the Roerichs held High conversations in their apartment on Queen’s Gate Terrace, 25–A. The spring of 1920 was a happy one for them. They met their Leaders, Himalayan Teachers. Then it was the beginning of the records known subsequently as the philosophical and ethical doctrine “Living Ethics,” or “Agni Yoga.” Naturally, Yuri and his family joined the esoteric knowledge. . . .

In the spring of 1920, Yuri Roerich applied to the dean of the Department of Philosophy at Harvard University (USA). In a letter dated April

23, he informed them that he wanted to “continue and complete his Oriental education.” His interests at that moment were concentrated in the study of philosophy and comparative philology. Two months later, a positive response came from Harvard. In July, Yuri Roerich received an examination certificate, signed by the director of the School of Oriental languages, confirming his education as a specialist in Persia.

CAMBRIDGE

The Roerichs arrived in the United States on October 1, 1920, and the ship moored in the seaport of New York. The whole family settled in Manhattan, on the famous island of lights and light advertising (1 West 67th Street). In the same month, Yuri Roerich went to study at Harvard University (Cambridge, Massachusetts).

The school year began on October 21 with classes from the famous Indologist Professor Charles Rockwell Lanman. A promising student, thanks to his enthusiasm Yuri Roerich immediately attracted the attention of his university teachers. Three compulsory subjects constituted an elementary



Painting by George Roerich



Painting by George Roerich

course—state law, Sanskrit, and Pali. A week later, Charles Lanman offered a course in other Indo-European languages, and Yuri Roerich added Greek to his curriculum. The thirst for knowledge and the natural talent of the young man immediately brought results. Yuri Roerich appeared to be more knowledgeable than all his fellow students. The required degree at Harvard University was indeed obtained in just two years.

The meeting of Yuri Roerich with the outstanding Indologist Charles R. Lanman determined the professional path of the future scientist because in the person of the professor, he

had found the long-awaited teacher. The American professor in correspondence with his student signed “your old guru,” and the word “guru,” that is, “spiritual teacher,” he always wrote in Sanskrit.

Yuri Roerich was in fact lucky—Charles R. Lanman specialized in Vedic and Buddhist literature. He was known as a world-famous scientist, who founded the “Harvard Oriental Series,” which published translations into English of ancient Indian manuscripts; and years later, a grateful student remembered his teacher with reverence. The first issue of the magazine *Urusvati*, which was edited by Yuri Roerich, is dedi-

cated to him. For the eightieth anniversary of the famous Orientalist, the article “Professor Charles Rockwell Lanman and His Work in the Field of Indology” was published there.

But before that, in 1929, Charles Lanman was elected vice president of the Urusvati Institute of Himalayan Studies, founded by the Roerichs in Indian Punjab, in the Kulu Valley. (N. K. Roerich personally sent him a welcome telegram.) Undoubtedly, the listed facts emphasize the enormous role that the American professor played in the formation of Yuri Roerich as a scientist.

At Harvard, Yuri Roerich worked a lot. He took classical Chinese lessons from Dr. Chao. He listened to the lectures on “Central Asian Influences on the Art of Southern Russia” by Russian professor emigrant Michael Rostovtzeff. In these lectures, the topic of the origins of Russian art, which interested him in London, was touched on.

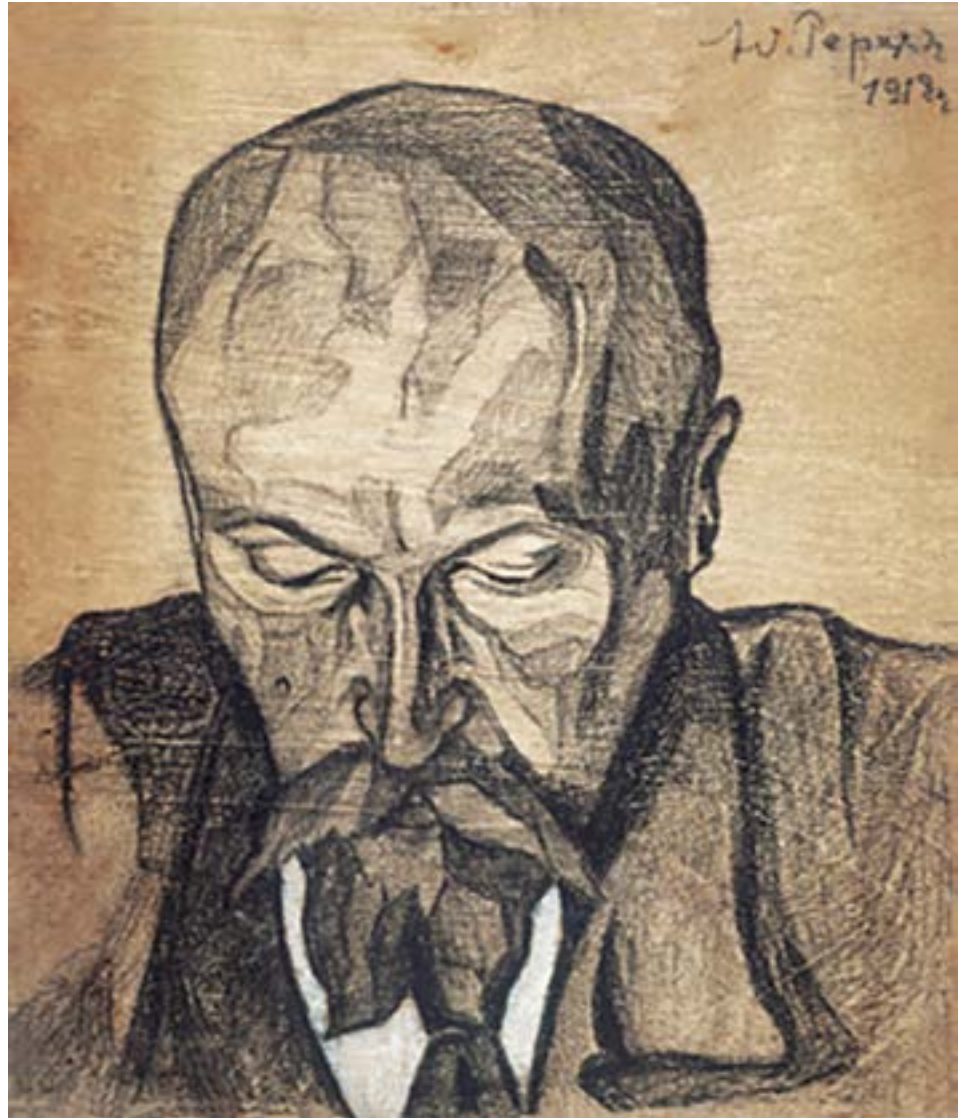
Interest in Scythian art very quickly gave concrete results. In several years after completing the Tibet expedition (1927–28), Yuri Roerich published the book *The Animal Style among the Nomad Tribes of Northern Tibet* (1930). It was written on material collected directly during the traveling and was published literally after the book of Michael Rostovtzeff, *Central Asia, Russia, China and the Animal Style* (1929).² The former student came close to the level of knowledge of his teacher and supplemented it with his own scientific discoveries. Rostovtzeff helped to organize the publication of an expeditionary diary, *Trails to Inmost Asia: Five Years of Exploration with the Roerich Central Asian Expedition* (1931), at Yale University Press.

While studying at Harvard Uni-

versity, Yuri Roerich organized a student group from among Russian youth. It was called the “Cambridge Circle.” The new association, in comparison with the London circle, had a completely different orientation; this was the union of three mystically minded young men. In addition to Yuri Roerich, it included Vladimir Pertsov (1898–1976) and Vladimir Dixon (1900–1929). The first was subsequently a well-known biochemist, and the second was a budding poet and translator who passed away early by absurd chance (complications after an operation for appendicitis). Harvard students, united in a group of like-minded people, decided to devote themselves to science, spiritual improvement, and the search for truth.

The father and mother carefully watched the development of the son and provided all kinds of help, up to including clues regarding his prospects in science. Elena Ivanovna advised to engage in a “new theory” of Tokhar tribes. The Tokhar problem as a scientific direction was identified in the last century. By the early of the 1920s, major scholars such as Feist and Pelliot became interested in it. It is generally accepted that the Tokhars belong to an ancient group of tribes distributed in the Pamir and Tibet region.

The Tokhar tribes had a very wide range of linguistic dialects; they were mobile and spread both toward China (Yue-Chi) and to the borders of India, forming the Kushan Empire. However, most important is the fact that the Tokhars gave a powerful cultural impetus to the surrounding peoples. It was during the heyday of the Kushan empire, in the first century A.D. that Buddhism was established. It led to the strengthening of such centers as Khotan and Kucha (basin of the Tarim River). Based on Buddhist values, cultural unity and cultural exchange arose. Thanks to caravan routes, the unique culture of Gandhara



Portrait of Nicholas Roerich by George Roerich

spread throughout Central Asia, right up to the Aral Sea and the Middle East. The ideas of Yuri Roerich about the “cultural unity of Asia,” as expressed by him in his youth, increasingly acquired a modern sound; they were especially consistent with the latest archaeological discoveries; for example, Tarim mummies.”

In September, Professor Pelliot arrived at Harvard with lectures, and the student drew up the theses for the arrival of the French scientist, or rather a short article on the Tocharian issue. This visit encouraged bold decisions: after receiving a Harvard University diploma, he

continued work on this topic in Europe. Yuri Roerich dreamed of studying at the Sorbonne, one of the best universities in the Old World. He wrote a letter to the University of Paris to continue his studies and write a dissertation.

The choice of both the topic and the supervisor turned out to be successful, since Paul Pelliot was a leading specialist in Tokharians.

PARIS

France, in the fate of Yuri Roerich, became a turning point.

In August 1922, he went from New



Lama Procession sketch by George Roerich

York to Paris to complete his Indological education. On the advice of his parents, he settled with old friends, the Chklavers, on Vaugirard Street (270 Rue de Vaugirard). The Chklavers were familiar to the Roerichs, as they had met them in Vyborg and maybe even in Petersburg, and they also met each other later in London.

Before the revolution, the head of the family, Gavriil (Gabriel) Grigorievich Chklaver, was one of the leaders in the business world in Russia. The banker Chklaver was known as a statesman, had great connections in St. Petersburg, and could meet with Roerich. Yuri Roerich became close to Chklaver's son, George, who studied in the Sorbonne in the Department of Law and Economics. Friends spent time together in Paris and traveled around Europe. In Paris, Yuri Roerich began his studies at the College de France with the famous Sylvain Levy, whom he met with at Harvard and at the Institute of Slavic Studies. At the same time, he attended lectures at the University of Paris, visiting the Indian and Mongol-Tibetan branches, and improved

his knowledge with the famous linguists Jacques Bacot and Antoine Meillet. But first, Yuri Roerich discussed his doctoral work with Paul Pelliot, who was considered among the French luminaries to be the most significant specialist in Orientalism.

In the 1922–23 academic year, Yuri Roerich also studied at the military unit in the Sorbonne, where he listened to a course of lectures by the Russian general N. N. Golovin. Passion for military sciences was very useful to him in his wanderings in Central Asia. During the trip, he ensured the safety of the caravan when crossing through the swarming areas of Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, and Tibet.

In Paris, Yuri Roerich spent a lot of time in libraries and museums. He often visited the Louvre to study oriental collections. The greatest impression on him was made by the Buddhist bronze from the collection of Paul Pelliot: the charm of Buddhist sculpture, gracing the gilded bodies, cannot leave indifferent the one who studies the iconography of the Buddha and his Arhats.

After a few years in India, he would write the book *Tibetan Painting* (Paris, 1925). The publication was richly illustrated with Tibetan icons (*tankas*). It came close to being the first European study of Buddhist iconography.

Very quickly, Yuri Roerich shaped into a real scientist. In the winter of 1923, on the recommendation of Prof. Meillet, he was elected as a member of the Linguistic Society. He received an offer to create a scientific publication about Russian art in the Parisian magazine *La Vie des Peuples* ("The People's Life").

He managed to test his scientific powers through journalism. In search of earnings, Yuri Roerich became a freelance employee with the magazine *French Pages*, and from February 1923, he headed the department of the eastern chronicle there. Every week, his correspondence was published under the heading "Literary and Political News."

Once in Paris, Yuri Roerich became close to the de Manziarli family. This family had Russian and French roots. The head of the family, Stepan Manziarli de Delinesti, was a Frenchman of Italian descent (the French name "Etienne") but a citizen of the Russian Empire. As a mining engineer, he, like the senior Chklaver, was a member of the business elite of Russia, served as chairman of the board of the Donetsk coal association "Korenev and Shipilov," and was a member of the board of the Belgian coal society. The management office of the coal enterprise was in Kharkov. It was there that the Manziarli family lived and their four outstanding children were born: three daughters—Marcelle, Iolanthe, Mima—and son Alexander. They left Russia before the First World War and settled in France. Stepan de Manziarli died in Paris in 1920.

Irma Vladimirovna remained the soul and center of attraction of the family,

herself gifted with many talents, including literary ones. Once in France, she not only participated in the life of the Russian emigration (publishing the famous magazine *Numbers*), but also was an active figure in the worldwide Theosophical movement. Her fascination with Theosophy brought her closer to Annie Besant, president of the Theosophical Society. She often visited London and Indian Adyar, where the headquarters of the Theosophical Society was. Both prominent women were united by the patronage of the rising theosophical star, the Hindu Jiddu Krishnamurti. The children of Irma Vladimirovna, as well as their mother, were followers of Krishnamurti, who was predicted to be the future messiah, and often accompanied him on trips to the mountains of Switzerland, France, and Italy.

I. V. Manziarli's personality was much larger than it might seem at first glance. She was friendly with the philosopher Nikolai Berdyaev. She engaged in the translation from Sanskrit of classical Indian texts—first in Russia and then in Paris. Some Upanishads were published in Russian with her translation, and the Bhagavad Gita was published as a separate publication. In addition, Irma Vladimirovna was actively working in the French section of the Theosophical Society, led a study group on *The Secret Doctrine* and "Speech Circle," gave lectures in various cities in France, and wrote "Letters to Children" in *Petit Theosophe* magazine (The Little Theosophist). Moreover, she was the closest assistant to the publisher of the *Order of the Knights of the Round Table* by Raymond van Marle. And with her children, she entered the "Order of the Star in the East," headed by Krishnamurti.

On the advice of his parents, on September 30, 1922, Yuri Roerich paid a visit to the de Manziarli family. He enthusiastically helped to trans-



St. George Defeats the Beast by George Roerich

late the Bhagavad Gita from Sanskrit and took part in communication with the Teachers in the so-called "wires." This was the lifestyle of the Manziarli family, and Yuri Roerich easily plunged into the atmosphere, probably reminding him of Saturday evenings at Cambridge.

One of the daughters of Irma Vladimirovna, Marcelle, who in the family circle was named Mara became a close friend and like-minded person of Yuri Roerich. A mutual feeling flared up between them. Marcel de Manziarli, despite her youth (in October 1922, she turned twenty-three), had already gained fame in France and even in Holland as a talented composer. Her works are interesting and original and, according to Yuri Roerich, have that "occult something" that is so strongly felt in Scriabin.

Over time, Marcelle de Manziarli gained fame as an outstanding composer and performer of her own music. Her concerts in America made

a splash; there she became famous for her *Sonata for Notre Dame de Paris* (1944), dedicated to the liberation of the French capital from the Nazis.

While in India in 1924, Marcelle met with Rabindranath Tagore, and this meeting encouraged her to study the Indian tonal system in music. November 17, 1922, there was a declaration of love of between Yuri Roerich and Marcelle Manziarli, and they decided to unite their destinies. The Manziarli family announced their engagement, and the wedding was scheduled for January 19, 1923.

The young people were spiritually close to each other. Together they visited museums, most often the Central Asian department of the Louvre. Yuri Roerich told Mara about his beloved hero, the Asian conqueror Timur, and she had the idea for a large orchestral poem, *Tamerlane*. She completed her musical work only a few years later. This symphony was like a hymn to unfulfilled love. But in the spring of 1923, Yuri Roerich and Marcelle Man-



Above: *Autumn Landscape* by George Roerich
 Below: *Outdoors in Winter* by George Roerich



ziarli were still together. The harmony between them reached a high glow. Both were directed to Allal-Ming and continued to write down the instructions and decrees given by the Master for spiritual improvement.

However, the wedding in January did not take place; it was to be postponed until the groom's parents arrived from America. At that time, Yuri Roerich was not yet twenty-one years old, the age of maturity for a church wedding. In such cases, either the written permission of both parents, mother and father, or their personal

presence in the church was required.

In May 1923, N. K. and E. I. Roerich came to France. Soon they took their eldest son away from the storms of the soul. The whole family went traveling around Europe. The Roerichs visited Rome and Florence, and then rested in a mountain resort in Switzerland. In the fall they returned to Paris.

Ahead was a difficult expedition into the depths of Central Asia. In this expedition, Yuri Roerich was assigned the role of a translator, organizer of the caravan, and, of course, a research scientist. On November 17, 1923, exactly

one year after the declaration on the Rue Lafontaine, Yuri Roerich and his parents left for India on a steamer. The Asian journey, which lasted five years, required the full absorption of mental strength. The Roerich family settled in East India. For over a year, preparations were underway for the main stage of the expedition, which began in the summer of 1925 from Kashmir. Soon after the breakup, Marcelle Manziarli also arrived in India. Together with her mother and sisters, she visited the Theosophists in Adyar. One of the goals of her trip, of course, was a meeting with Yuri Roerich. But the meeting did not take place. The union of hearts broke on the impregnable Himalayas.

Music remained in Mara's life. While in India, she constantly worked; she completed a concert for piano and orchestra. A search was underway for new harmonies for the symphonic poem *Tamerlane*. The creative plans included three more large orchestral works intended for performance in France, Italy, and America.

Soon, Marcelle de Manziarli returned to Paris. She lived in France until the outbreak of World War II, and then moved to the United States, to California. Her idol, Jiddu Krishnamurti, settled down in America; the thinker living in seclusion on his California "island of philosophers." It remains a mystery whether Mara Manziarli and Yuri Roerich met after the Indian trip or not; in France their paths could have intersected in 1929 and 1934. But then, in the autumn of 1923, their farewell was like the time Timur and his beloved Uluta parted before long trips. No one knew what lay ahead—eternal expectation, death, or a new meeting.

¹ Roerich Yu.N. Letter to the University of Paris (1921) // Roerich, Yuri N.: materials of the anniversary conference. M., 1994. p. 9.

² Listed in Google Books as *The Animal Style in South Russia and China* by Michael Rostovtzeff.

Physicians

“If the physicians would become aware of the vibrations of Cosmos, they could discover much that would be useful for healing. A ray may be discovered which would awaken accumulations in the Chalice and thus dispel sluggishness.”¹

“The physician who has an opportunity to study the sacred pains and does not do it is guilty. In studying those pains and comparing them with the actions that cause them, he could prepare the steps for the coming evolution. In reality, during the spiritual development of the world, sacred pains should not exist, but the surrounding imperfections create these pains. Thus, in comparing the conditions and causes, one can foresee the direction of evolution. Certainly, much can be improved in human consciousness if we know that even earthquakes are called forth by the spirit of humanity. One can gradually gather many manifestations of which man is the creator. Thus, the sacred pains are the indicators of the next race in the clutches of the underdeveloped; hence, I say, Guard your health. I say, do not burden others by unnecessary sallies and irritation. The echo of errors resounds not only around you but is carried along the entire Chain of Hierarchy. However, each caution is beneficial not only to you, but it also strengthens space unto far-off spheres.”²

“Verily, humanity is a link between the worlds. One should be used to that thought and try to apply it in life. It is strange that physicians do not avail themselves of the opportunity of becoming carriers of health, applying the knowledge of nerve centers, because precisely these cen-

ters are the spiritual antennae and magnets. Even a physical magnet is placed in a special vicinity so that it may not lose its strength. Do not the nerve centers deserve similar atten-

“The sacred pains are the indicators of the next race in the clutches of the underdeveloped; hence, I say, guard your health. I say, do not burden others by unnecessary sallies and irritation.”

tion? And must not people especially protect the representatives of the next race? The bridge between the shores is especially protected. One may demand of man, ‘Friend, do not evoke earthquakes.’”³

“Unusualness is a happy quality of each decision. Let us take the instance of illness. The physician may give his best diagnoses and all his medicines, but this usual way may not lead to improvement. But a Yogi gives advice, and this unusual

decision creates a strengthening condition. The medicine of a Yogi is not from an apothecary and avoids narcotics, but it contains the secretions of glands, which, like food, strengthen the substance of the nerves. The same property is possessed by the secretions of trees, the resins of which can carry through the pores of the skin the same fortification for the nearest nerves. Certainly, the purified resin can be taken internally. The best purification will be through the solar ray, but this requires a long time because the process of sedimentation is very slow. Each oil may be purified just as slowly, but this purification is not to be compared with any chemical process. Thus, the unusualness of the Yogi’s advice has an advantage over the usualness of that of physicians. Thus act.”⁴

“A physician usually says to his patient, ‘When summer comes, you will go to the country, into the sun. You will be regenerated by the mountain wind or the sea breeze.’ Even an earthly physician cures by projecting into the future. Karma is the sickness of the past. Its cure lies in the future. Precisely, he who wishes to be liberated from the past should strive into the future. Striving with one’s entire being protects one from downfalls; take, for example, the moving heavenly bodies. Thus, remember that I

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 carefully, with discretion and at your own risk.



have pointed out how to walk upon the water, but I have never said that one can stand upon it. Karma can be changed by an irresistible striving.”⁵

“If one combines the complete responsibility of the physician, judge, priest, teacher, architect, and lawmaker, one arrives at a part of the responsibility of a Hierarchy. But just a part. For besides the earthly responsibility, He also belongs to the subtle and mental worlds. We never summon anyone to don the armor of a Hierarchy, because only the spirit itself can choose such a responsibility. The seed of the Hierarchy is generated according to a certain ray. Verily, the might of ascent has no fear of responsibility before the three worlds. This courage is like a link between the worlds, like the pillar of the Covenant, like the Light, all-penetrating! Thus, facing the throne of responsibility, the wings of achievement glow.”⁶

“How necessary it is to learn to understand everything spiritual! We may expect nothing from the heart if our thoughts do not rejoice in the mention of everything spiritual. For we must attain the step where light emanates from our beings; then, we are true co-workers with the higher worlds. Radiating the light of Bliss, we are, at the same time, physicians, creators, and protectors along the descending scale of Hierarchy. First, we see the outer light, then that within ourselves, and only after the

kindling of the ‘torch’ can we radiate Light.”⁷

“‘Sickness rises from sin,’ says the Scripture. We say that sickness comes from the imperfections of past and present. One should know how to approach the cure of sickness. To the regret of physicians, the process toward perfection is the true prophylactic measure. It can be understood that the process toward perfection begins with the heart, and it has not only a spatial but also a narrow material meaning. Mothers carry their children close to their hearts as a panacea for calming them, but usually one is unaware that this holding close to the heart creates a power-

ful reaction. Thus, also in the Subtle World, we gather people close to the heart for strengthening and for cure. Of course, the heart loses a great deal of energy through such strong application. But, then, more than once has the heart of a mother been represented as transfixed by swords and arrows, a symbol of the acceptance into the heart of all actual pains.”⁸

*“How necessary it is to
learn to understand
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We may expect
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rejoice in the mention
of everything spiritual.”*

¹ *Infinity* (1930), Vol. II, (New York, NY: Agni Yoga Society, Inc., 1957, repr. 2016), verse 12.

² *Hierarchy* (1931), 3rd ed. (New York, NY: Agni Yoga Society, Inc., [1933] 1977, repr. 2016), verse 165.

³ *Hierarchy* (1931), verse 166.

⁴ *Ibid.*, verse 222.

⁵ *Ibid.*, verse 290.

⁶ *Ibid.*, verse 330.

⁷ *Heart*, (1932), 3rd ed. (New York, NY: Agni Yoga Society, Inc., [1934] 2013, repr. 2016), verse 38.

⁸ *Heart*, verse 96.



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OF THE
AGNI YOGI

*“Courage comes from
knowing one’s path.
Otherwise, each one who
tries a closed door would
already be a hero.
What awaits behind the
threshold? The Agni Yogi
smiles at this.”*

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APPROACH TO DISCIPLESHIP

The Path

A Talk before the Agni Yoga Society,
January 10, 1963

William Bretthauer

Views on Spiritual Attainment

The path to discipleship implies a known direction of conscientious attainment leading to a bond with Hierarchy and spiritual service. Striving on the path, it is not reputation but character that counts. It involves a rigorous training over many years of our lives.

“Necessary and inevitable do I deem the rise and fall of spirit.”¹

The one on the path must not regard events that transpire as good or bad. Often distasteful experience may lead to the acquiring of a needed quality of character. “Blessed are the obstacles; through them we group says the Teaching.”² While good fortune may give one the tendency to be complacent and stop the striving, all must be viewed from an inner aspect of growth, each one sowing and harvesting the fruits of his own personal karma. Man must find and nourish the seed of his spirit; his true nature. Should he warp his seed-being into a inferior growth?

Belief and Knowledge

“It was after Origen that the false religion of the priesthood began to spread.”³

The one on the path must undergo a complete change of consciousness; many cherished beliefs, thoughts, and concepts in which we were indoctrinated are affronted.

The understanding of the laws of karma and reincarnation are the foun-

Thoughts on Agni Yoga

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



dation of justice revealed by the Teaching.

All base qualities must be transmuted by aspiration to knowledge and spiritual contact. Our concentration is focused on our refinement and spiritualization. We must understand thoroughly the qualities of character, both good and evil. Hence, we don't try to reform the world, but through our spiritual efforts many will be affected for their advance and better karma. When people are conceited, they pass a mean judgment on other persons and life. This attitude is the feeling that there is no divine justice or just karma, and with bitterness it increases the destructive forces of darkness and they fall victims to the lower aspect of mind (separation) or selfishness and place the blame on others.

The Teaching

The Master tells us to learn to express His thoughts in our own words. “The complete Teaching must not be and cannot be expounded; as the entirety of life cannot be contained in pages and the Teaching has no intention to create wound-up mechanical figures. Verily, no Teacher left a complete code of the Teaching. Such a completeness would contradict Infinity and would presuppose the complete limitation of the followers.”⁴

“To burden with an excessive load is unforgivable. To overlook possibilities is unworthy.”⁵

Cosmic Signs

January 1937

By **H.E. Prof. Nicholas Roerich**

New Year's Eve. Three friends had gathered for a chat. One of them recalled the story of an eyewitness of the terrible, instantaneous destruction of Quetta. They are sitting on the veranda, having just returned from a theater in a most happy mood, when they suddenly heard some cosmic roaring. They ran into the garden, and there before their very eyes, in one moment, Quetta collapsed. In this instantaneous destruction of an entire city, burying over fifty thousand victims, was, as if revealed, a terrible cosmic Sign.

One of the listeners remembered ancient indications from various Puranas that predicted how entire cities will perish, how the earth will become dry, how whole nations will become extinguished, and others will revert to primitive worship. He men-

¹ *Leaves of Morya's Garden* (1924), *Book One*. 3rd ed. (New York, NY: Agni Yoga Society, Inc. [1923] 2016 Agni Yoga Society, Inc.), verse 9.

² *Aum* (1936), 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Agni Yoga Society, Inc., [1940] 2016), verse 284.

³ *Leaves of Morya's Garden* (1924), *Book One*, verse 268.

⁴ *Agni Yoga* (1929), 6th ed. (New York, NY: Agni Yoga Society, Inc., [1928] 1997, repr. 2016), verse 468.

⁵ *Ibid.*

tioned the prophecies about the end of the *Kali Yuga* and continued:

“And don’t we see all these signs before our very eyes today! Are not entire cities destroyed by cosmic forces or human hands! Is not the death rate in many countries higher than the birthrate despite all endeavors of governments? Have not some people returned to nature worship? Have not terrible droughts devastated huge areas? In magazines, daily we see pictures of destructions caused by ravaging gales, sandstorms and tornadoes. Some governments already try to prevent the epidemic droughts. Forests disappear, rivers become barren. Grasses are strangled by sand dunes. Every one of us has witnessed such horrible sights of morbid deserts. Some people do not as yet pay attention to such obvious realities. But the farsighted are already on vigil. Seeing all this, how can anyone say that predictions are not true!”

The third interlocutor quoted from Biblical prophecies and added, “One can imagine how the masses who lived at the time of Amos, Ezekiel, and Isaiah scoffed at these seers. Also, nowadays, we know of many discoveries and predictions that are ridiculed and insulted. Ignoramuses never heed anything that is beyond their narrow understanding or threatens their mercenary profits. But true scientists have already proved the transmission of thought, and the world has benefitted by their many beautiful discoveries. And how the ignoramuses laughed at these new possibilities, which they themselves now use daily! Remember how even Edison was declared a charlatan by the academy, how the energy of steam was denounced and railways were derided, and how it was declared by a scientist that the flight of heavier-than-air machines is an ‘absolute impossibil-

ity,’ thus stopping the development of aircraft for almost a century. The list of ignorant mockery and envy is endless. In history we can trace that such insults were not only a thorny crown for the inventors but a testimony of true achievement.”

During this conversation another friend had silently joined the com-

“Ignoramuses never heed anything that is beyond their narrow understanding or threatens their mercenary profits. But true scientists have already proved the transmission of thought and the world has benefitted by their many beautiful discoveries.”

pany. He exclaimed, “Stop this nonsense about fossilized prophecies. My prediction is the best. Yesterday I announced that there will be a boom on the exchange today. And so it is. Before all your prophecies will become reality, mine is already in my pocket. What does it matter whether Quetta was destroyed? Perhaps this will contribute to the rise of my cement factory stocks. And cannot the drought about which you wailed, bring me profit in some way? The more deserts, the better. Humanity will flock into cities. We will feed it with canned goods. My movie shares will rise. You all are not good to me. You may even try to revivify the deserts, and all the urbanists will run away to the country. Here you are drinking some min-

eral water—where is your soda and whisky, and where are your cigars? It is boring to sit with you miserable people! You don’t even understand the advantage of deserts and shelled cities! The more craziness that is manifested in cities, the more it is profitable! Even if your predictions ever prove to be true—when will that be? I am young, but mother earth will last during my time. And remember, it was a king who said, “*Après nous le deluge.*” “After me, let there be a flood!” About whom do you worry—about your heirs? But maybe they don’t deserve any better. And what does it matter if somewhere somebody worships a tree stump. We will manufacture these stumps for him by the thousands. If humanity is to be poisoned by narcotics, tobacco, and alcohol, we will make money on patented medicines. You hopeless people! There stands a gramophone, but I dare not use it. All your Bachs and Beethovens make me sick! You have no jazz, foxtrot, carrioca—and yet you imagine you are up to date! To sit with you is simply to waste an evening!”

And he slammed the door from the outside. He was especially annoyed that the three not only did not lose their temper but, shrugging their shoulders, even looked at him as upon a certain zoological specimen.

The physical drought is menacing, but the spiritual emptiness is far greater. Besides caring for irrigation of the soil, let there also be remembered the need for the uplifting of the human spirit. Without such spiritual fertilization, all attempts at reforestation, grass sowing, and other good efforts will be in vain. All this brings results only when people actually realize why they live and when they will again pronounce the sacred word of Love. In Love, the quality of labor will improve.

In Love, deserts will again flourish.

January 12, 2004

Agni Yoga and the future

Dear —,

The given dogma here, if I may put it that way, one that is expressed in the prologue to the book *Agni Yoga*, is that Agni Yoga is the yoga of the future, while Raja Yoga is the most comprehensive yoga but is of the past. But it makes clear that all the yogas have their purpose (like different branches of one tree) and that none is superior to the others. They are just applicable to different people at different times.

The reference to Karma Yoga was an anecdotal one (though it may be written in the books too). An old friend of mine, long gone, was a missionary in India in the forties, when he made a pilgrimage to Kulu, to present himself to the Roerichs. In his conversations with Helena Roerich, he must have given her a certain impression of his approach to the Teaching, and she firmly reprimanded him, “Mr. Hornimann! The Teaching is not a box of candied almonds (dragées)! It is, first of all, Karma Yoga!” I remember it precisely because he wrote it down verbatim and kept that piece of paper in his pocket for half a century and then sent it to me from England before he died. I think that Helena Roerich was telling Robert that his idealistic and dreamy devotion was not enough, that he had to roll up his (virtual) sleeves and apply himself to the hard

Conversations with Daniel Entin

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



work of self-improvement.

Of course, there are eternal truths, and there are teachings that present those truths. But all teachings are a product of their time and place and contain much that is intended for that time and that place. The

“All teachings are a product of their time and place and contain much that is intended for that time and that place.”

problem that always comes about is that true believers have a tendency to think that everything is eternal. Every time must have its Teaching, which repeats the eternal and adds what is needed for its time.

Daniel

January 24, 2004

Rejoice!

Dear —,

Thank you. It’s so interesting; for more than half a century, I led an essentially invisible life. Then life put me in the front ranks, and I have, ever since then, tried to understand the assignment, and am learning, not too successfully, to be a warrior. I recognize that if I am to fulfill my task properly, I have to expose myself to both praise and ridicule—neither of which is desired. So I have been doing that. As guardian of a remarkable archive, I find many things that surprise me, that force me to modify my established ideas. That excites me—I can almost feel my mind stretching to accommodate new information. And because everyone deserves that opportunity, I put the newly discovered material out there.

Of course, I understand that what I embrace, because it adds to my knowledge, may upset others who

Continued on page 10

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don't want to be relieved of their dogmas. That's OK. I have file folders filled with letters of criticism, condemnation, accusation, and attack. Much of it is valid, and I spend time trying to seek out the valid from the foolish.

So I try to understand the negative reactions, but always reassess my tasks in life to revalidate what I am doing.

It was nice, though, when I was invisible.

Daniel

January 28, 2004

The Path is Hard

Dear —,

What you write reminds me of so much that was similar in the early days of the Agni Yoga movement. Helena Roerich's letters are filled with pleadings for unity. My own teacher, Sina Fosdick, was reprimanded more than once for the zeal with which she reported everyone else's missteps and failings to Helena Roerich.

Yes, we are reminded that the very fact of being on this hard path forces our faults to the surface, where we exercise them, cause pain to others and to ourselves, and ultimately see them for what they are and get rid of them (one would hope!). Everyone in that first group changed, some for the better, some for the worse, all working in their own ways to that Light that draws us all.

Daniel

April 16, 2001

Perfection is ever-unattainable

Dear —,

Absolutely! Can I add, though, a

personal feeling about all this? The ladder of ascent is something we all climb. No one ever reaches the end of it. That means that perfection is ever-unattainable, always drawing us forward as a goal, even though we know we will never quite get there. Every entity, no matter how high, still has an infinity of growth ahead. When I feel that our immediate predecessors are so far ahead of us that we cannot quite reach them, I feel a sense of futility. When true information becomes available that reveals them to be a little closer to my grasp, I feel inspired, energized, more able to see the possibilities in my own struggle to grow. It makes them not less, but more admirable

Daniel

April 17, 2001

We can never get it right!

Dear —,

Thank you for your thoughtful comments. The wonder of it all is that we can never "get it right"; we can never know everything correctly. Fortunately, missteps can be more illuminating than accurate steps. Each of us has to use gut instincts and intuition, and always try to keep a clear mind. It is only the structures, the organizations, that want to impose dogmas for everyone to accept. We have to bravely say, "no, thank you" and do our own thinking, not as rebellious students but as devoted ones.

I was having a good conversation today with some people who are visiting, who want to present more than is generally published, who want to get beyond the dogmas, to accept what is found in the archives as reality, if not truth, and present it to the public in full trust that the readers

will not want to have filters imposed by others, by self-declared authorities, and will want to think for themselves. To that end, we were discussing the many people who were directly touched by and influenced by the Roerichs. What do we know about their lives, the ways in which they were able to understand and utilize what was told more directly to them than we are able to obtain? Students today receive everything with one more level of authorship or interpretation intervening between them and the source (as was described by someone just a day or two ago) than these people did. We will try to assemble materials about such people and have it published. Of course, much is already been done along those lines. The diaries of people on the expedition, and Sina Fosdick's diaries, are examples.

I do think that much will be sorted out in the coming years, as information is more freely available to those who are interested in it. It's all a great adventure, and we need not be afraid to stumble or fall or make mistakes. Those are the times when we learn the most.

Daniel

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