

AGNI YOGA

QUARTERLY

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For the Good of the World

Supermundane

102. The attraction to the higher worlds is tremendous, and We must exert great effort not to be torn away from Earth, where Earthly burdens have been chosen voluntarily and consciously. Such sacrifice is forged by love and by the experiences of former lives that kindled love for those who suffer. Experience can either kindle love or sharpen hatred, and who will be the one to burn on the stake of hatred? Will it not be the one who hates? Love must become wise and active. This concept is very subtle and one can easily stumble over it, or fall prey to hypocrisy. Only labor for the good of the world will afford the proper balance. Labor evokes joy and cognizance of Infinity, and imparts a realization of the mobility of the worlds.

“Labor evokes joy and cognizance of Infinity, and imparts a realization of the mobility of the worlds.”

Fiery World I

443. The most difficult yet indispensable discipline is comprised in actions for the good of the world. It is not easy to watch oneself in order to reject egoistic thoughts and actions. But when the entire personality is consecrated to the world, discipline is not only easy but is even not felt.

594. A fiery consciousness will not forget the goal of life when it serves the good of the world. People often do not know how to think about the good of the world, regarding themselves as insignificant. This is wrong, because the spirit, the fiery seed, emanates from the One Fire and strives toward the Light Eternal. It does not matter where burns the torch that points out the way to the lost traveler!

Fiery World II

14. At a time when one sacrifices his soul for the good of the World, the other sits upon the water. While one offers his heart for the salvation of his fellow-men, the other flounders in the manifestations of the Subtle World. The saints of Great Service have no psychism, because they are always striving in spirit towards Hierarchy, and their heart resounds to the anguish of the World.

Heart

211. Let everything be done for the Good. Let every action lead to a new achievement. Let thought of the general welfare accompany every deed. Let the command of the Good influence everything, just as the vivid image of the Teacher does. Indivisible from the Good is the Teaching of the Heart.

Letters of Helena Roerich II

17 May 1937. My young friend, from all your questions it is clear that you wish to enter the Path of Great Service, therefore, seriously test your strength to the fullest. Service requires great self-renunciation and tension of all forces. Earthly happiness is replaced by realization of the wisdom of higher happiness, which comes to the student only in rare glimpses. Persecution, slander, obstacles grow in proportion with progress, because the servant of Light lights up the gloomy hiding places of the servitors of darkness. There is no higher attainment than Service for the good of humanity, nor is there a more difficult one. If your spirit is strong, you are blessed.

All paragraphs are sourced from the Agni Yoga Series, available online at the Agni Yoga Society: <https://agniyoga.org>. All paintings by Nicholas Roerich are used with the permission of the Nicholas Roerich Museum.

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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 of Agni Yoga,

The keynote article for this first issue of 2025 includes information about Svetoslav Roerich, the youngest son of Nicholas and Helena Roerich, the founders of the Agni Yoga Society. The Agni Yoga Society embraces a living ethic encompassing and synthesizing the philosophies and religious teachings of all ages.


Most all our readers are aware that Helena Roerich is recognized as the Mother of Agni Yoga and Nicholas Roerich is best known as a master painter and philosopher. Nicholas Roerich "believed that peace on Earth was a prerequisite to planetary survival and the continuing process of spiritual evolution, and he exhorted his fellow man to help achieve that peace by uniting in the common language of Beauty and Knowledge."¹

Kenneth Archer contributed the insightful keynote article to this issue's *Agni Yoga Quarterly*. Mr. Archer lives in London. About Svetoslav, Kenneth says, "It was a joy and a privilege to spend time with Svetoslav. He was most kind and generous with his knowledge, learning a great deal from him. He was very respectful toward his father and was reluctant to tell me anything about his own life and work until he had answered every question I had to ask him about Professor Roerich and, in fact, Mme Roerich as well. But Svetoslav was more than

Community

"Begin to build the community as a home of knowledge and beauty."
New Era Community, para. 229

Rev. Joleen D. DuBois



**AGNI YOGA:
THE PATH OF
SELF-PERFECTION**

Annual Conference Schedule:
March 21–23, 2025



WHITE MOUNTAIN
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, INC.



kind and knowledgeable. There was a profundity about him that one seldom encounters."

On another note, I would like to invite you to visit the WMEA International March Agni Yoga Annual Conference website: <https://wmea-world.org/conference2025/>. The conference website includes registration information alongside information about the speakers and their presentation topics. The theme for this year's conference is: *Agni Yoga: The Path of Self-Perfection*.

Two new presenters at the conference this year will be Kenneth Archer and his wife Millicent Hodson of London. Since the late 1970s, they have taken an active interest in the work and creativity of the Roerich

family and have traveled extensively to research this subject. They established an Agni Yoga group in London in the 1960s, which continues through today. Kenneth is an art historian and scenic consultant. Millicent is a dance historian, choreographer, and graphic artist. Their first and most important work was the reconstruction of the 1913 ballet, *The Rite of Spring* (Stravinsky, Roerich, and Nijinsky), which they staged with the Joffrey Ballet in Los Angeles and New York in 1987, which toured around the United States and internationally. They have since staged it with ballet companies and opera houses on four continents.

(continued on page 10)

¹. Roerich.org



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Svetoslav Roerich on Agni Yoga

by Kenneth Archer

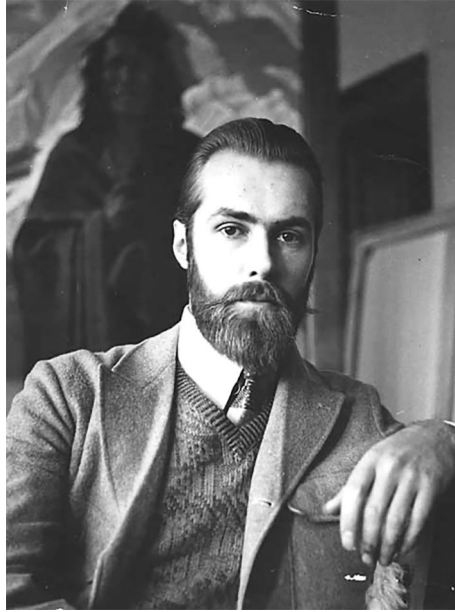
The Russian painter, Dr. Svetoslav Roerich, was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, in 1904 and died in Bangalore, India, in 1993. He was the younger son of Prof. Nicholas Roerich, the famous Russian painter and theatrical designer, and his wife, Helena Roerich, who had acted as amanuensis for the writing of the Agni Yoga Series.

Dr. Roerich left Russia around 1917 and completed his education in Finland, Sweden, England, and the USA, where he travelled with his parents and brother, George, who was a linguist and Orientalist. From 1923 onward, he made several trips to India and, in 1932, settled there. During the twenties and thirties, he combined his work as an artist with executive roles in his parents' cultural institutions.

His outstanding gift was in portraiture, and from 1940 he acted, it could be said, as court portraitist for the Nehru family. His artistic career was crowned in 1960 by much-acclaimed exhibitions in New Delhi, Moscow, and Leningrad. A man of tact and discretion, he served, at Indira Gandhi's request, from 1960 onward, as an unofficial cultural ambassador between India and the USSR.

Conversations in London, October 1974

Shortly after the centenary of Nicholas Roerich on 9 October 1974, Dr. [Svetoslav] Roerich came to London with his wife, the former Indian film actress and producer, Devika Rani. They had been to the Soviet Union to take part in Prof. Roerich's centenary activities at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow and elsewhere, and had decided to visit Paris and London before returning to their home in Bangalore. Their purpose in going to Paris was



Svetoslav Roerich, Naggar, India, 1934

to meet with Romola Nijinsky, widow of Vaslav Nijinsky, the famous Russian dancer who had collaborated with Roerich and Igor Stravinsky in the creation of the groundbreaking 1913 *Rite of Spring* for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes.

Their purpose in coming to London was to meet with the group of Agni Yoga students who had set up a Nicholas Roerich Society in London in 1972 to make early preparations to celebrate the Roerich Centenary in the UK. Dr. Roerich had accepted an invitation to be the Society's honorary president, and Vladimir Shibayev, Prof. Roerich's former secretary, had agreed to be its honorary vice president. Robert Horniman, who, as a member of the Ramakrishna Mission, had visited the Roerich family in Kullu, India in 1947, acted as chairman of the Society.

Jean Archer and I, who hitherto had helped with the work of World Good-

will and the international educational campaigns of the United Nations, acted as the Society's treasurer and secretary, respectively. We kept in touch with overseas preparations through Sina Fosdick and Daniel Entin at the Nicholas Roerich Museum in New York, and Dr. Roerich and Devika Rani at the Roerich Estate Office in Bangalore. Shibayev, who had regular correspondence with colleagues in the Soviet Union, kept us apprised of activities there.

Like his father, Dr. Roerich was both artistic and scholarly; and similarly, he shared his mother Helena's strong interest in spiritual teachings. His visit to England provided an opportunity for Jean and me to speak with him about the work of both his parents: the artistic and cultural work of his father and his mother's writings on Agni Yoga. What he said about his father's work has been dealt with elsewhere. The present article focuses on the answers he gave to questions relating to his mother's writing.

At that time in 1974, the Agni Yoga Series, as it was available in English, comprised the thirteen volumes, written and published between 1920 and 1937. The English-language books were published by the Agni Yoga Society, Inc., in New York,¹ which also published the two volumes of Mme Roerich's correspondence with students and coworkers: *Letters of Helena Roerich*, Volume I (1954) and Volume II (1967). The four volumes of *Supermundane*, started in 1938, had not yet been published.

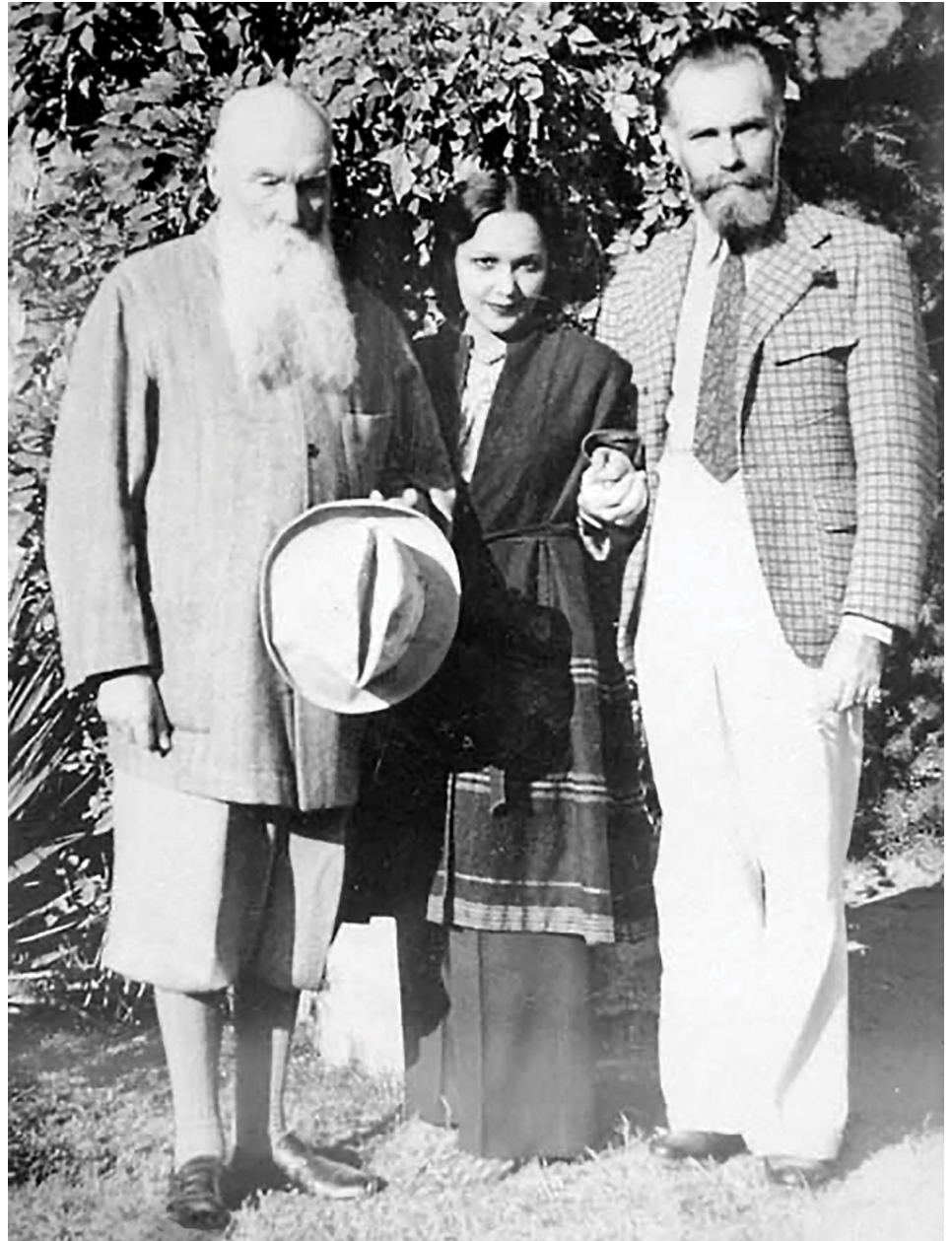
Our conversations with Dr. Roerich and Devika Rani took place at the Grosvenor Hotel in London's Park Lane, where they were staying. We began by

asking Dr. Roerich what he thought was the best way to approach his mother's writings and what was the most effective way in which to read the Agni Yoga books. He said that it was important to bear in mind that the books contained advice that had been given to a group of people to help them with the problems they faced in life and in the work they were doing. He said that anyone who read the books would find that the advice given to that group could apply to them.

Some people have said that the Agni Yoga Teaching contains various levels of meaning, which reveal themselves sequentially after years of study. Others have said that the Teaching is comprised of a series of esoteric hints. Mme Roerich, herself, had said much the same in her *Letters* (Vol. I, p. 498). I mentioned these comments to Dr. Roerich and asked what he thought. Naturally, he did not reject these assessments but said that it was not really necessary to approach the books with such things in mind. It was probably better, he maintained, for the average student to accept what was said in the Teaching in its simplest and most straightforward sense and to act upon the advice given, making it part of his or her life.

Various readers have mentioned that they were attracted to one or another single book of the Teaching and have made a study of that one volume without going on to read any of the others. When we discussed this approach, Dr. Roerich did not advise against the practice, feeling no doubt that it was a matter of individual choice. But he did seem to be very much in favour of starting with the first book and reading the books through in the sequence in which they had been written. He also advised reading just a little each day rather than reading a large amount at irregular intervals.

In the course of our conversations, we asked what he thought was the most im-



(Left to right): Nicholas Roerich, Devika Rani (Svetoslav's wife), Svetoslav Roerich (1945)

portant thing to do at that time in connection with the Agni Yoga Teaching. Dr. Roerich did not hesitate for a moment and said that it was important not just to study by oneself but to join a group or form a group and link with others in discussing what one was reading. He felt that there was much to be gained from asking other students questions and sharing one's own understanding.

Due to her work as a fashion model, Jean could not take part in all the conversations, but when she was available, Dr. Roerich spoke with her at length. She said later that one piece of his advice remained uppermost in her mind. He told her that everyone should have a goal in life, and they should keep it constantly in mind. In doing so, they should imitate the method of the snake, which keeps its head pointing in the direction it wishes

to travel. In its serpentine movement, its body undulates from side to side, but its head steadfastly points ahead. No matter how much one deviates in response to life's events, one must keep moving toward one's goal.

Dr. Roerich also spoke with Robert Horniman. A one-time student at Oxford University, he had, at Helena Roerich's request in the nineteen fifties, rendered the first volume of her translated letters into good English before it was published. Horniman spoke no Russian, but his familiarity with the subject matter and his command of English made him a suitable person to amend the manuscript, which had been translated by Mme V. L. Dutko, a non-native English speaker. Mme Roerich, it seems, was pleased with the overall results. Nevertheless, Dr. Roerich said that here and there her meaning had inevitably been lost due to the process of collaborative translating.

A further topic that was discussed was the series of small booklet compilations from the Agni Yoga books that had been prepared by Vladimir Shibayev. They had been put together and edited at Cardiff University in Wales, where Shibayev worked as a lecturer in Russian Studies. As a faculty member, he could make use of the university's facilities to devise teaching aids within his syllabus, and the latter included the writings of the Roerichs. He made copies of his booklet compilations available to his students and others under the titles of *Gems from the Call*, *Gems from Illumination*, *Gems from Community*, and so forth.

Shibayev was accustomed to reading the Agni Yoga books daily in accordance with an annual rhythm that enabled him to finish all thirteen volumes in the course of a year. Every day he noted those few sentences that for him were most significant. At the end of a decade or more of such reading and noting, he



Svetoslav Roerich, *The Snowy Mountains*, 1930

compared his annual selections and decided to include those most frequently noted in his series of booklets. One could see the immediate advantages of the *Gems* in as much as they were small and light and could easily be carried in a pocket and referred to at odd moments during the day. And the fragments they contained could be used as seeds for reflection and meditation. But Shibayev wondered if they might not be too much of a personal choice or if they might distract students from reading the actual books themselves. Dr. Roerich shared none of his doubts, and, far from being a distraction, he felt that the *Gems* would be a suitable adjunct to the Teaching and serve a useful purpose. He felt they could provide an introduction to the books themselves.

Interviews in Bangalore October/November 1983

Nine years elapsed before I had the chance to speak with Dr. Roerich again. With funding from the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Millicent Hodson and I travelled around India for six

weeks in October and November of 1983 to carry out graduate research. Millicent was completing a PhD programme with the University of California at Berkeley, and I was doing MA research with Antioch International. We spent two weeks photographing and documenting Roerich paintings in collections around India and two weeks doing the same at the Roerich family home in The Hall at Naggar in the Kullu Valley.

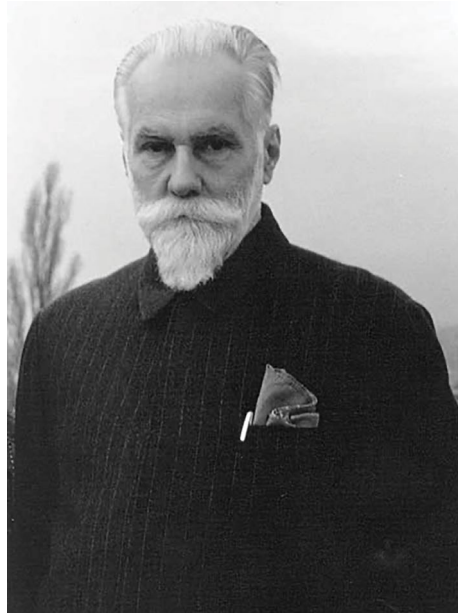
The other two weeks were spent in Bangalore, where we spoke with Dr. Roerich and Devika Rani each weekday in their estate office. On the weekend, we visited them at their home on their estate. The main focus of our research was on the lives and artistic work of Dr. Roerich and his father. We also needed to discuss with him his father's roles as designer and joint scenarist for the 1913 *Rite of Spring* and his relations with his two collaborators and with Diaghilev. We also included in our interviews a number of questions on Mme Roerich and Agni Yoga.

Helena Roerich wrote in her "Letters"

that, for people making an approach to the Agni Yoga Teaching, it would be helpful to familiarize themselves with the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna² and *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*,³ as well as reading *The Secret Doctrine*⁴ and the other writings of H. P. Blavatsky. We assumed that Dr. Roerich would have followed his mother's advice and were interested to know when in his life he would have read these works.

We asked him first about Ramakrishna, whom he had already mentioned in passing when we were talking to him about his childhood. We were mindful of the importance given to the words of this nineteenth-century Indian saint in the Agni Yoga Teaching. As early as paragraph 33 of the first book, *Leaves of Morya's Garden*, Volume I, his teaching is cited, "Ramakrishna says: 'Love, and all will come unto thee.'" And again, in paragraph 52 of the same book, it states, "I reveal to you the profundity of Ramakrishna's simple teachings." The two of us had taken an interest in Ramakrishna's life and knew that his disciples believed him to be an Avatar—an incarnation of God—and that he was accordingly referred to as *Paramahansa*, the title that Hindus give to the highest spiritual teachers: those who have attained enlightenment. And we knew that, like most great spiritual teachers, Ramakrishna himself wrote nothing down but that what he taught was noted, recorded, and published much later by his pupils. Dr. Roerich told us he had started reading these books on Ramakrishna in Russia as long ago as 1914, at the age of ten, at the time his parents first took a strong interest in Ramakrishna's teachings. Dr. Roerich said that since then they had been a constant source of inspiration:

About the teachings of Ramakrishna, as I said, I first contacted his books when I must



Svetoslav Roerich, Switzerland, 1974

have been around ten years old. Yes, and I have read them always. I mean in the subsequent years. They were my very close companions, amongst so many others. And I find them most inspiring and most satisfying.

Mme Roerich greatly esteemed the letters written to A. P. Sinnett in India by the Mahatmas Morya and Kuthumi in the years between 1880 and 1884. And the letters were referred to in the book *Heart*, published in 1932: "Some will ask why *Our letters of fifty years ago do not resemble Our writings of today*" (paragraph 531). She valued them so much that she translated the most important excerpts into Russian and published these in the nineteen thirties under the title, *Chasa Vostoka (The Chalice of the East)* so that her Russian-speaking students could have access to them. Her efforts in this regard were also mentioned in the book, *Heart*: "In the letters of the Mahatmas, which are being translated" (paragraph 578). The actual book entitled *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, as compiled and indexed by Trevor Barker, was published by the latter in 1923. Predictably, in view of his

mother's strong interest, Dr. Roerich told us that he had read a copy soon after its publication while he was in America.

Mme Roerich was equally devoted to Helena Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine* and later in life translated the two volumes of this huge book into Russian—again for the benefit of her Russian-speaking students. Dr. Roerich confirmed that he started to read *The Secret Doctrine* at about the same time he began studying *The Mahatma Letters*. Bearing in mind that he was just twenty years old and pursuing the active social life of a student at Harvard University, his penchant for such profound texts indicates an unusual depth of mind:

The Mahatma Letters I contacted at some time in the middle twenties, I should think. The middle twenties, that is, there in America. And *The Secret Doctrine* I contacted at the same time.

Although the Roerich family were strongly drawn to the work and writings of Mme Blavatsky, they had their own paths to follow and did not get involved in the work of the Theosophical Society, either in London, during their stay in England from 1919 to 1920, or in New York, while they were in the United States from 1920 to 1923. In 1924, Nicholas Roerich visited Adyar, the Theosophical Headquarters in India, and spoke there with Annie Besant, the leading spirit in Theosophy after the death of Blavatsky. Roerich's main purpose on that occasion was to present to the Society his painting *The Messenger* so that it could hang in the museum at Adyar in honour of Blavatsky's life and work. Many American Theosophists took an interest in Prof. Roerich's painting and theatre work as well as his cultural activities during the nineteen twenties and thirties. Dr. Roerich said that while he may have visited the Theosophical headquarters a couple of times, he had studied Blavatsky's writings on his own and not with other people:

I do think I have been to the Theosophical Society in America once or twice. But yes, of course, the study I would do by myself, because I had all the books, and was not actually what you call actively in touch with the members, though we knew a great many of them.

Dr. Roerich was with his family, on and off, for long periods, while his mother was receiving and recording the Agni Yoga Teaching. He was with both his parents in London, for instance, on 24 March 1924, when the first words of the Teaching were given, and he was with them again for varying amounts of time at Naggar in the British Himalayas in the late nineteen thirties when his mother was recording the final books. During the interim years, he was separated from his family from time to time, first of all, while studying architecture at Harvard, and later when his artistic expertise was needed at the Roerich Museum in New York at a time when his parents and his brother were in the late stages of their Central Asian Expedition. They were, though, a closely-knit family group, and Svetoslav spent as much time with them as circumstances permitted. After university, George always resided with their parents, but both brothers were closely involved with the Teaching and kept up to date as it was unfolding. Dr. Roerich said the family did not spend time discussing the Teaching but got on with the many tasks that arose in association with it:

Yes, of course, we read the Agni Yoga Teachings as they were being

given—that we did—we read the Agni Yoga books. There was not a great deal of discussion among ourselves. No, the Teachings were actually given and actively accepted as such. Among ourselves, we would not—or perhaps would not need to—discuss them.

Vladimir Shibayev had explained to me that, over the years, the manuscripts of each successive Agni Yoga book were

“Many American Theosophists took an interest in Prof Roerich’s painting and theatre work as well as his cultural activities during the nineteen twenties and thirties.”

sent to the Agni Yoga Society in New York as soon as it was completed, and that Sina Fosdick, an executive of the Society, would translate the Russian text into English. As was the case with the Roerich family, English was by no means Sina Fosdick’s first language, and she needed help in rendering her draft manuscript into suitable English. The person who did much of this work was the director of the Roerich Museum Press, Frances Grant, a graduate of the Columbia School of Journalism in New York. Shibayev recalled that before the

English manuscript was passed for publication, Roerich family members and he himself would go through it to suggest any changes they considered necessary. Dr. Roerich confirmed what Shibayev had said about the translation process and his own part in it, then pointed out the limitations of the process. The fact that so many people were involved resulted in inaccuracies that should have been corrected before publication:

Did I help in putting the Agni Yoga books into English? With some of them, I did, yes. The actual translation of the books is not even, as it passed through different hands and, perhaps, it could have been corrected. Miss Grant did quite a lot of work, and she was very good.

In the late twenties and early thirties, the Roerichs were taking more than a passing interest in the Central Asian teaching known as the Kalachakra, a word that may be translated from the Sanskrit as the “Wheel of Time.” Mme Roerich described the Kalachakra in a letter as “*the Teaching ascribed to the various Lords of Shambhala*,”⁵ while Nicholas Roerich spoke of it in his writings as “*the Yoga utilizing the high energies*.”⁶ In the same period, a paragraph included in *Fiery World*, Volume 1, published in 1933, seemingly comments on their interest in that teaching and its neglect hitherto: “*You observed justly that the facts about the Kalachakra are passed*

(continued on page 11)

Registration is now open for the upcoming 2025 WMEA International Agni Yoga – Living Ethics Conference, “Agni Yoga: The Path of Self-Perfection.”

With its focus on Agni Yoga, which features speakers from around the world, we look forward to sharing this special Conference with you!

The dates of the 2025 WMEA International Agni Yoga – Living

Ethics Conference are March 21–23, 2025. To register and for all other Conference information, go to:

www.wmea-org/conference2025.

Agni Yoga Society International Headquarters:

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Attentiveness

“**P**eople often speak about their striving, keenness, or vigilance, but they ignore the simplest trait, attentiveness. . . . It is true that an expanded consciousness brings with it natural attentiveness, but there are not many such consciousnesses. The Thinker said, ‘Look under your own feet, or you will stumble.’”¹ Awareness and awakeness are instrumental to one’s ability to be attentive. The more attentive the aspirant or disciple, young or old, the more awake the person is. The more awake the person is, the more awareness of future is found in their consciousness. The greater their broadness of consciousness, the more attentive is the person. Future refers to what we are going to be on the path of our Divine destiny. On this path, we had a past, which is very remote and lost in the darkness of eternity. We also have the future, lost in the light of Infinity.

We have developed apparatuses through which we are able to see the great Cosmos and also the smallest things: atoms, protons, electrons, etc. There are other things that we did not see before but are just starting to see, such as human emotions, human radiations, and human thoughts. For example, if we could see the effect of a word going from someone’s mouth into Space, it would be more amazing than anything in the world. Some clairvoyants say that every word we utter creates a geometrical figure, and then it changes into a color. When it goes from the etheric level to the astral plane, it becomes a mathematical symbol. In the mental plane, it turns into words again; in higher planes, it plays the colors of music. A great Sage, speaking about speech, says that devas do not hear, but they see the colors of your emotions and your thoughts. We need to develop attentiveness and observation plus a keen

Thoughts on Agni Yoga

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



sensitivity to develop these abilities. This is our future.

There are many things waiting for us in the future. The future is a state of human awakening. Most of what humanity is doing here on Earth is nothing else but sleeping in their physical body. Very few people are awakened. Very few people are attentive. Very few people can see. Let us develop attentiveness when we are young. Let us teach ourselves, our children, and our grandchildren to be attentive.

*For a true understanding of psychic energy, one must first develop attentiveness.*² The more aware one is of the flow of psychic energy, the more creative they are. Psychic energy inspires striving. Striving inspires progress and unfoldment.

Psychic energy is the flow of energy that comes out of our Innermost Center, our creative Core, electrifying and charging all of our vehicles with the energy of life, love, and light. It is energy that brings to our vehicles the harmony, bliss, and serenity of the Inner Self. Psychic energy is a fire released from the Higher Self, the Inner Core. Psychic energy increases attentiveness.

Psychic energy galvanizes one’s nervous system. It is energy for the nerves. Psychic energy cannot operate if one is not rested, healthy, or whose heart is not filled with the beauty of service, of “otherness.” Psychic energy cannot operate if one is blind and filled with self-interest because

psychic energy is a conscious Entity in all Its actions and in relation to everything. Attentiveness helps to release more psychic energy from our Inner Core.

Observation asks for attentiveness. It is an effort to see and understand how a cause creates an effect, how an effect is annihilated by a cause, how a cause turns into an effect, and how an effect annihilates itself. So, observation is the faculty of seeing and understanding how life functions in all departments of nature and how a person can consciously cooperate with it.

I recall an exercise my Teacher shared regarding the “test of attentiveness.” He would place an object on the floor and then invite a student into his office for conversation. If the student noticed the object on the floor, an object that was out of place, and would pick it up, then he knew that the person was attentive to his or her surroundings and could be counted on to handle responsible positions. If the person, on the other hand, passed the object by, not noticing, not being “attentive” to the misplaced object, he would not position the person into any responsible labor or leadership roles.

1. *Supermundane*, 1938 (New York: Agni Yoga Society, 2020), para. 730.

2. *Agni Yoga*, 1929 (New York: Agni Yoga Society, 2016), para. 551.

January 29, 2008

[Agni-Yoga] Agni Yoga

Dear —,

Awareness of this important subject started a long time ago. In the sixties, there was a very influential book called *A Diet for a Small Planet* by Frances Moore Lappe that everyone was reading. It pointed out the resources that were required to produce cattle for food, but carbon imprints were not yet on the horizon of our consciousness. That book now has a recently published new edition.

Before we get all self-congratulatory about our vegetarianism, let's examine the things we do every day that are hugely wasteful of energy. Do we eat imported food or buy imported underwear and socks? I drink a cold tea that I love that comes all the way from Japan. Every time I open one of those small bottles, I think about how far it has come just for me, and I feel guilty. After guilt comes action. Iced tea in the fridge from now on!

On another subject closer to the mission of this group, I wonder how many people who have a historical interest in the "Roerich movement" have explored the new archival section on our website, www.roerich.org, which contains about a thousand letters. If any of those letters provoke any comments or questions, please write to me, either privately or here.

Daniel

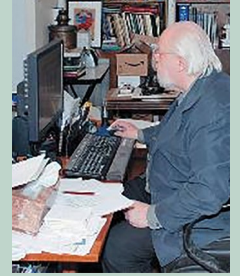
January 29, 2008

[Agni-Yoga] Archive's collection of letters

Dear —,

Conversations with Daniel Entin

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



There is some opposition to our having created this archive, mainly from people who use the "pearls before swine" argument, or the idea that material made available to newcomers must be prechewed and censored before being fed to the ignorant. You can tell by my description of their arguments that I disagree strongly. These objectors come mainly from outside the country, and I think there is a difference in cultural conditioning that accounts for it.

When I was young, the greatest discovery for me was that I could, as a child, go into the public library all by myself and have the entire contents of the library, without exception, available to me. It never occurred to me that it could be otherwise, that freedom of inquiry was not universal. But apparently, it is otherwise in many places in the world, where interested members of the public have to prove their right to access information, with those rights strictly defined. This offends me deeply. I am a fervent believer in the free flow of information, meaning that it should be freely available, like water and air, there for the taking. Only then will the germ of genius that resides in every human heart be able to grow freely, to the benefit not only of the individual but of the whole world.

I'd like to tell a true little story. One day, a few years ago, a friend of mine in Moscow wanted to find out more about the Roerichs' visit to that city in 1926. It was, he felt, very significant because the expedition had been put on hold that summer just so the Roerichs could go to Moscow. It was known that the KGB had files on Roerich from that time, and my friend went to them to ask to see the files. He was immediately turned away. He went again, and the same thing happened. He persisted and went once more, and the person behind the desk exploded in annoyance and yelled out, "You will never be given that material here. If you want to see it, you will have to find it in America!" My friend was astonished and asked what was meant. He was told that the entire archive of the Kremlin and the KGB from that decade was at Stanford University, being processed to be made available to scholars. He wrote to me and asked me to investigate. I did and found that yes, indeed, the archives of that Soviet period were precisely there, being scanned at the Hoover Institute.

I called the Hoover Institute, and a cheery young voice answered the phone. I immediately blurted out, "Is it true that you have the archives

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of the Kremlin and the KGB there being scanned?" "Yes," she replied. "Even the letters of Lenin?" "Yes," she continued in her cheery way, "Would you like a catalog? You can order copies of whatever you want."

Now that's freedom of inquiry and freedom of information. What I also learned from that episode was that in some countries, one is a researcher, a scholar, a historian only after much development of qualifications. Not anybody is considered to have the rights of a researcher. But in this country, just having the interest, the curiosity, the desire to explore and research, makes one a researcher. The democratization of scholarship.

So, I reject those "pearls before swine" arguments. They are really just an excuse for the control of resources by the information elite.

Thanks for putting up with my rant.

Daniel

February 1, 2008**[Agni-Yoga] The "F" word**

Dear —,

This all sounds very quaint. The Teaching warns us about using rude words, not, I think, out of prudery but out of a desire not to debase our thinking or our language. But the borderline between rude and acceptable keeps moving. It's interesting that in one of the bibles of English language usage, the eminent authority Fowler writes that in English many meanings are duplicated—once in the early, simple Anglo-Saxon term and also in the later versions introduced by the continental languages. Fowler comes down on the side of the simple, original English words whenever possible. After all, they

mean the same thing. What makes one arrangement of letters acceptable and another not, except the rules made by people? Miguel is right about the effects of aging—now, in my advanced state of geezerhood, there is little in language that bothers me.

Actually, it is a matter of intention and writing style. Sometimes, for emphasis, a short, powerful word is needed, and sometimes, for a more mellifluous or more glancing effect, one uses the derivative of the Romance languages. Everything in life has its uses.

Daniel

August 15, 2008**[Agni-Yoga] Karma's gut punch**

Dear —,

We all tend to forget that there is injustice in the world. That is, bad things happen that are undeserved, that are the result of ill will from someone with free will, someone who is willing to start a new chain of karma by committing an unjust act. Not everything that happens to you (good or bad!) is deserved.

When I was a teenager, I decided to explore the services of different religions (in New York, that was always easy). One day I went to a Buddhist temple, here on Riverside Drive right near the old Roerich Museum. The sermon was on karma. The congregants were all upper-middle-class Asians, and the sermonizer was pandering to them. He told them that everyone with wealth deserved it because it was proof of good deeds in previous lives. Now, would you accept that about some of the famous mafioso types in the world, or the so-called robber barons, or some of the more recent oligarchs? I just stood up and left.

Daniel

Networkers' Letter*(continued from page 2)*

Another new presenter at this year's conference is Manju Kak. Her curatorial work in visual ethnography and art/sociocultural studies on the Himalayas include an exhibition "A Craftsman and his Craft: Iconography of Woodcarvings of Kumaon"; *They Who Walked Mountains* (documentary); *Nicholas Roerich: A Pact for Peace*; and *Kashmiri Pandits: A Community in Exile—a Vintage Album*. She has authored *In the Shadow of the Devi—Kumaon Himalayas* and *Nicholas Roerich: A Quest and A Legacy* (Ed.).

As a development journalist and as a panelist on national television, Manju has advocated justice, women's rights, and peace, having spent twenty-four years in the Voluntary Sector, currently as Hon. Secretary General of the All India Women's Conference (est. 1927), India's largest NGO, where she has helped promote women's rights. She is a former VP of International Alliance for Women, a Geneva-based NGO; current Convener of the Peace Commission; and Trustee in the government-funded Lal Bahadur Shastri Memorial Trust.

For a complete list of presenters and topics, please visit the conference website <https://wmea-world.org/conference2025/>.

With love,



Joleen Dianne DuBois

President and founder

White Mountain Education Association, Inc.

Svetoslav Roerich on Agni Yoga
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over in silence” (paragraph 97).

Shortly thereafter, George Roerich, talented linguist and Orientalist that he was, started to write a series of scholarly papers on the Kalachakra based on his research. Concurrently, it seems that a statement of confirmation was made and likewise included in *Fiery World*, Volume I: “I approve of the Kalachakra, now being compiled. The fiery Teaching is covered with dust, but it should be proclaimed” (paragraph 212). When the first paper was finished, George Roerich published it in the *Journal of Urusvati* under the title, “Studies in the Kalachakra I.”⁷

Our interest was sparked by all these references to the Kalachakra, and we asked Dr. Roerich to say something further about it and how Agni Yoga related to it. He described Agni Yoga as a new and detailed presentation of one particular section of the *Puranas*—the ancient Hindu Scriptures—namely the *Agni Purana*. He went on to say that the Kalachakra was also a teaching of ancient origin and that it had derived from the same inner group of teachers and initiates that he had spoken to us about in connection with his father’s paintings. He indicated that the Kalachakra had some connection with Tantrism and identified Atisha as the Indian teacher who disseminated it in Tibet in the eleventh century:

What is the relationship of the Teachings of Agni Yoga and those of the Kalachakra? The Teachings of Agni Yoga comprise a whole set of new expositions of teachings upon the old systems of the Agni—the Agni Yoga—the schools of the Agni Purana. And the Kalachakra is one of the teachings, which was also a very ancient teaching and which was an approach, to some extent,



Svetoslav Roerich, Bangalore, India, 1987

through the Tantric path. We had many very enlightened teachers here in India who professed that teaching—Atisha, the Indian teacher, for example, who came to Tibet and brought the teaching there. Or rather, he worked on the spread of that teaching, because these teachings were the original teachings, which were preached, as I said before, by his Inner Circle, the Inner Group of Teachers and Initiates.

We went on to raise further spiritual questions with Dr. Roerich. A number of these inquiries concerned the possibility that his father’s paintings might, in some cases, constitute a presentation of the Agni Yoga Teaching. Other questions related to the extent that his mother played an active role in her husband’s painting process—something considerably more vital than the part played by the traditional muse. These two subjects are to be addressed in future articles.

NOTES

1. The Agni Yoga Society, Inc., is based at 319 West 107th Street, New York, NY 10025, USA.
2. *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* recorded by M. and translated by Swami Nikhilananda, Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre, 17 East 94th Street, New York, NY 10128, USA, 1942.
3. *The Mahatma Letters*, transcribed and compiled by A. T. Barker, Rider and Company, New York, 1923.
4. *The Secret Doctrine* by H. P. Blavatsky, The Theosophical Publishing Co. Ltd., London, 1888.
5. *Letters of Helena Roerich*, Volume I, New York, 1954, p. 401.
6. *The Heart of Asia*, by Nicholas Roerich, Roerich Museum Press, 1930, p. 103.
7. *Journal of Urusvati*, Volume II, Himalayan Research Institute, Naggar, Kulu, India, 1932, pp. 11 to 22.

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