

## Opening the Gates of Peace

### *Agni Yoga, 1929*

*Agni Yoga*, 610. Many think about worldwide peace. But if you dare to utter these words, you will be subjected to the most rude and hypocritical attacks. People are even afraid of peace, for their consciousness cannot accommodate this benevolence. But those who have broadened their consciousness, on the other hand, must untiringly speak about the opening of the gates of peace.

### *Supermundane, 1938*

*Supermundane*, 319. The matter of peace is a standard by which one must test oneself. To test oneself is to know how to draw upon new forces and achieve a new consciousness. It is a self-examination that must be performed within a context of absolute dedication to human evolution. Only then will peace be rightly understood. . . .

Each benevolent thought about peace is helpful in space. The word *peace* should be repeated as a mantram, and it will strengthen all efforts to bring harmony. But woe unto those who promote pseudo-peace, which will lead only to corruption. Our Teaching is the Teaching of Peace, of true peace.

*Supermundane*, 320. Urusvati knows that each one of Us has contributed to the peace of the world in various ways. You remember Orpheus, who gave the people soothing melodies of peace, and how a certain Teacher tried to purify the Teachings so that people would know more and understand life better. Another spiritual Toiler preached that people should first of all make use of the most peaceful methods. And the Unifier of nations taught that peace can flourish only in harmony.

Those who work for goodness and peace suffer

many hardships; where do such unbearable burdens come from? Every evolutionary step evokes the fury of chaos, and such fury is a response to every benevolent aspiration. But peacemakers can testify that their efforts for peace remain with them as their best memories. These efforts are not only recorded in the histories of nations, they are reflected also in the life of the people.

Is not the serenity that is derived from harmonious sounds within the grasp of all? But someone first had to discover ways of attaining peace through music. While many songs were sung in ancient times, it was considered necessary to point out their ability to evoke peace of mind. In this way a new harmony was introduced into the world.

In the same way, the command to use every possible resource for keeping the peace stands for all time to come. Although mankind seems to have forgotten Him who gave this command, it has nonetheless

entered into human consciousness. One should always question whether all peaceful measures have been applied, but without causing the loss of human dignity. One should understand both the mundane and the supermundane measures; only through harmony and dignity can the beauty of peace be realized. Disregard of human dignity can only result in ugliness. He who knows nothing of beauty cannot think of peace, nor can the concept of unity be realized by the ignorant. Yet all people have reverence for the Unifiers. Thus, We labor for peace.

The Thinker contributed greatly, daring to imagine a government of peace. What if people call such daring a dream? We know that dreams pave the road to Eternity!

*“Each benevolent thought about peace is helpful in space. The word peace should be repeated as a mantram. . . .”*

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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,

I shared a snippet of Helena Roerich's writings with you in the last issue (April-May-June) of *Agni Yoga Quarterly*, promising to complete the writing with this issue. It is an essay about three very important keys that Mme Roerich dedicated to her students. Unfortunately, there was not enough space in this issue to include the balance of her writing, so in asking for your patience, we will add her final words with the Oct-Nov-Dec issue.

With love,



President and founder

White Mountain Education Association, Inc.

### The Three Keys (Continued)<sup>1</sup>

Elena Roerich

*Dedicated to my former, present, and future disciples*

My dear young friends,

Let untiring labor be a joy to you and let the undying fire of creativity light up your path.

Try to always keep your thoughts in absolute purity and pay attention to what you can contribute toward improving the life of people and alleviating their sufferings.

Nature overflows with sacred and pure gifts and seeks for appropriate vessels. Let

# Community

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

– *New Era Community*, verse 229

Rev. Joleen D. DuBois



your soul be radiant and crystal clear to be able to receive these gifts. Become a ray of light, leave the world of pipe dreams, and

*"Be cautious and lenient in your judgments of people, for you yourself are yet imperfect."*

utilize your energy in order to untiringly ascend.

Let your soul always radiate light and goodness, warmth and compassion, good spirits, and a desire to help your neighbors. Then you will feel that difficult tasks lose their gravity and the gloomy garments of suffering turn into a snow-white mantle of pure radiant joy.

Be cautious and lenient in your judgments of people, for you yourself are yet imperfect. At the same time be true to yourself and labor unceasingly to correct your own deficiencies.

You will have to endure many obstacles in your life. Only through those will you

take possession of countless treasures. But you can withstand those obstacles, if you arm yourself with judiciousness, steadfastness, and trust in yourself.

If a misfortune befalls you, do not despair. Dejection will merely make you weaker and will slow down your inner growth. You would be better to gather up your strength and think about finding a wise way out of it. Thus, will you increase your steadfastness and multiply your forces.

Transmute each misfortune and bitter experience into a most valuable lesson that will serve as a guide for the future.

Each obstacle on your path tells you what else you need to develop, to be fully equipped for future battles.

However, in the battle you always must remember about the good of your neighbors. Beware of buying well-being for yourself at the cost of your neighbors' suffering. Such well-being is cruel and precarious.

<sup>1</sup> Russian original published as Elena Rerikh, "Tri klyucha," *Utrennyaya Zvezda*, No. 2-3: 1994-1997 (1997), 113-117.



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## *Synthesis as a Requisite [Factor as a Development] for Peace*

Daniel Entin

*Nicholas Roerich and his work for peace, and the Banner of Peace and the theme of Peace through Culture, all of which are very important to this discussion*

We are very involved in peace activities at the museum, and it has to do with the legacy of Roerich and the Banner of Peace and the Roerich Pact. This has to do mainly, for those who don't know it, with the protection, the preservation, of the cultural heritage of mankind everywhere in the world. This was work done for many, many years and became an actual treaty that was signed in Washington in 1935. Last year was the 50th anniversary of that Pact. It's a law in the U.S., recognized by the State Department, that we must revere our cultural heritage, and that this must be protected by the flying of a banner that declares the great cultural sites of the world to be neutral territory, in the same way the Red Cross declares hospitals to be neutral territory and affords that degree of protection. I see at least one button here that shows the symbol of that Banner: three magenta spheres surrounded by a magenta circle. Well, of course, that is a remarkable symbol, which has an ancient history of three-in-one significances. It's a very important part of our work, and in this year, the International Year of Peace, there are groups everywhere in the world that correspond with us about these activities and about these principles. It tends to be a kind of core around which peace groups and other organizations that are interested in peace can operate and still adhere to the highest principles. So, given all of that, I can launch into my speech.

These are things that we can do, synthesizing acts that all of us can in some way



Delegates of the second international conference dedicated to the Roerich Pact. Bruges, August 1932. Above them hangs a banner of peace.

make use of that will lead toward a greater and greater synthesis and of course inevitably, peace. While discussing synthesis and peace, I will be quoting freely from the writings of Nicholas Roerich and from

the books of the Teachings of Agni Yoga, which were just referred to and recorded by Helena Roerich. This is my background and the background from which I draw the material. These two most remarkable mes-



sengers left works with which a lot of you are familiar, works that pay particular attention to the subjects under discussion here.

Peace is a word that means so many things to so many people that it no longer has a clear meaning, and maybe it's beyond precise definition. At the museum, we correspond regularly with people all over the world who think about peace, who teach about peace, and who work for peace. Even though they're all committed to the concept expressed in our motto of "peace through culture," they pursue a vast spectrum of approaches from the most inward to quite activist. We encourage all approaches.

I understand that tomorrow you will have a symposium in which you will try to define "peace." I wish you success. The definition has eluded me and some people with whom I work here. The longer we try to define it, the closer we get to it. Maybe the best approach would be to ask everyone in the room to write the definition of peace on a piece of paper and put them all in a pot, and then instead of choosing one from the pot, just accept them all. After all, they are all views of the same thing, from different vantage points, and in a true sense they are all valid. But you'll examine this question in more detail tomorrow. The discussion today can be taken as a link with that work. And if you try then to develop a clear idea of peace, we'll now pay attention with some of the requisite conditions that will allow that state to be manifested. After all, the Great Ones with Whom we all await must have a properly attuned world in which to work. And a world without peace is of no use for evolutionary processes. A world without peace is a fragmented world, and that fragmentation must be examined; it must be understood so that its opposite, synthesis, can also be understood. And synthesis is another word that is heard in so many ways that it's difficult to build a clear understanding of its meaning. If we consider that synthesis

as a goal, a completely accomplished synthesis, what we might call Great Synthesis, is unattainable; like ultimate Reality, it is an ideal to which we aspire, of which we try to have a glimpse of understanding, but an ideal that recedes always before us into the Infinite. It is a state of final bliss into which all opposites have ultimately been reconciled, and in which there is only unity.

In your meditations you may have a glimpse of some such ineffable perfection. When inspired, you may also have a momentary taste, but it is really beyond our reach and, truthfully speaking, not what we are intended to experience during

*"The unification and harmonizing of the conditions of life that surround us is not unimaginable and unattainable."*

our present sojourn on earth. We cannot really imagine the Great Synthesis; we can't define it; we can't really know it. But the process, the ways of synthesis that will lead ultimately to this Great Synthesis are what will command our attention. The unification and harmonizing of the conditions of life that surround us is not unimaginable and unattainable. We can actually work on developing it; we can decide what steps to take to work toward peace through synthesis.

Peace is a reconciliation of opposing, discordant forces. This reconciliation is the key. All the steps of the ladder leading to great synthesis are steps of reconciliation. We must learn to recognize these steps to great synthesis, to discern how they relate to us as individuals, and how they can work to a peaceful state on earth. We must learn not only to climb the steps, but first

to build them. And how can we build these steps? Well, of course we must think about peace. Thinking points us in the right direction and aligns us with those forces everywhere that work for peace.

We must also feel a great yearning for peace. As the Sufis say, "As a drowning man yearns for air." This yearning also aligns us in the proper way. The yearnings of the heart are great impellers and together with our thinking develop in us a striving, one of our favorite words. Striving is action. And that's it, our thinking about peace, our feelings, our yearnings for peace result in striving action, and we can really do something.

Action here means acts of peace, acts of reconciliation. They're harmonizing acts that each of us can make use of as the small synthesizing steps that will lead to ever greater synthesis and thus to peace. The difficult part is that the steps that each of us takes on this path, indeed on any path, are self-created. Our Teachers may point out a direction for us, may describe for us, may convince us, but we must pave the way. It is as if you were standing in a great rocky, wet field open to the horizon in every direction. You know which way you must proceed, but standing firmly, dryly on a rock, you do not want to step into the mud; so you reach down, you choose a suitable rock, place it carefully in front of you, and you've made your first step. And then another, and then another, and we build our own steps, our own stairway to heaven.

We choose each step and make it secure and proceed. In this way, knowing the goal to be a world of peace, and knowing the way to be synthesis, the reconciling of the disharmonies to achieve a higher harmony, we can examine the possibilities for action; we can examine the extent of our own abilities in order to effectively pursue these acts of peace. In this we must do on our own with the tools that are given to us, our own selves, our own physical selves.

## Roerich Museum Press Message of 1929

Roerich Museum Press New York  
Roerich Museum  
by Frances R. Grant

It is a gratification for the builders of a foundation to see the towers of the structure for which they have laid the base. Hence, a reasonable rejoicing accompanies a retrospection of the year 1929 for the Trustees of the Roerich Museum.

With this year, the progress of the Roerich Museum has become objectified in the new Roerich Museum Building; and its aim of growth as a dynamic force for beauty has become symbolized in its new structure. During the period from January to October 1929, while the architects and laborers were working to raise the great steel and brick massif, the Trustees of the Roerich Museum, in their temporary quarters at 305 West 105th Street, were busy preparing for the "inner" structure, if one may so term it. For, as with any being, an institution has its manifold aspect—and the spirit which is to invest the structure is the most potent. Hence much of the year 1929 was devoted to a silence analogous to the revealing pauses in music, which contribute so creatively to the entire structure of the symphony. Foreseeing the breadth of expansion which would come with the opening of the new building, these months were devoted to intensive planning of new activities which would find outlet in the widened scope afforded by the new building.

The first festival in the new building, so to speak, occurred on March 24th, 1929, when the Cornerstone of the Roerich Museum was laid. Under the canopy of steel network, in the still

## New Era Library

*"When reading the books of the Teaching, please apply first of all to yourself everything that is said there."*

*Letters I, 8 November 1931*



Nicholas Roerich with Mayor James J. Walker and members of the Reception Committee, City Hall, June 18, 1929

unfinished Hall of Nations, the program was held.

A truly festive felicity accompanied the day and the banners of all nations which decorated the Hall seemed to bear evidence of the future international yield of culture which might find outlet in this American hearth of art.

The program of the day, with Mr. Harvey Wiley Corbett presiding, included the following speakers: Hon. Rev. Luis Jules Feliu-H., Chaperon, Hon. Dr. Mario James del Sullivan, Pino, Hon. Dr. John A. Colmo, Q. Tilson, Miss

Frances R. Grant, Dr. Christian Brinton, Dr. Charles Wharton Stork, Mr. Louis L. Horch.

After the dedicatory ceremony, which remains memorable in its beauty of spirit for all who were witness to it, the ancient Rajput Casket, which bore the significant memorabilia of the Institutions, was carried out by Mr. Louis L. Horch, the President, and cemented into the gray granite corner-stone, our work.

Beyond the program, which was held at the Roerich Museum structure itself,

the day found echo in many countries and in the heart of those, in all lands, who work for Beauty. The significance of the day was enhanced by the thousands of messages which reached the Museum from all parts of the world.

The program and occasion of the Laying of the Cornerstone has been printed in detail in "Cornerstone," the publication of the Roerich Museum Press.

The anticipated return of Professor Nicholas Roerich, after his absence of five years, brought the tempo of activity to a prestissimo. The arrival of Professor Roerich on June 18th, 1929, completed a cycle of achievement which began on May 8th, 1923, when Professor Roerich left America for the Roerich American Expedition. So wide has been the attention and interest during the five years of artistic and scientific progress of the Expedition, that only a resume need be here made.

After leaving America, Professor Roerich went, by way of Europe, to Sikkim, traveling through the Tibetan Monasteries of the Red and Yellow Sects. From Sikkim, Professor Roerich crossed India to Kashmere, then over the Soji La Pass to Little Tibet, with all its joyous exuberance of color and its enticing, if hazardous, heights of Karakorum. Crossing the mighty Divide of the Karakorum, Professor Roerich descended into the deserts of Chinese Turkestan, encountering both the inclemencies of nature and climate and the stubbornness of local officials, who arrested their arms and forced them to travel through the desert completely without protection. Influenced by the unfriendly attitude of the local officials, the Expedition changed its route, going to the Altai Mountains, and thence to Mongolia, pausing at Ulan Bator Khoto. At Ulan Bator Khoto, while considering the possibility of proceeding to China, the



*Tibet. Himalayas* by Nicholas Roerich, 1933

Roerich Expedition was approached by the Tibetan representative at Urga, who invited them to cross through Tibet. Professor Roerich consented, with the condition that all necessary papers be obtained for him. This was accordingly done and the Expedition set out through the Gobi for Tibet. They had crossed the Tibetan border and proceeded into the interior for two weeks, when at Nagchu, they were stopped by officials. There they were detained for five months, through the horrible Tibetan winter. Equipped only with summer tents, with limited food and forage, the Expedition lost five of its native followers and ninety pack animals. The Expedition has never been able to obtain from the Tibetan government any explanation for this detention, but suddenly in March, 1929, the Expedition was released, reaching Sikkim in May of that year.

Despite the terrific physical exertions and hazards of his journey, Professor Roerich was able to complete 500 paintings which touch the entire

natural splendor of Asia and also immortalize the saga of her spirit. These paintings have become a permanent part of America's artistic treasury, in the Roerich Museum. In addition, the Roerich Expedition has secured for Corona Mundi, International Art Center of the Roerich Museum, a significant collection of Tibetan Art. A vast fund of scientific and cultural data also was obtained by the Roerich Expedition.

In view of the accomplishments of the Expedition, it is not surprising that the return of Nicholas Roerich to America became of importance not only to the Museum but to the City and Nation. On the day of his arrival on the S.S. *Majestic*, he was welcomed at the pier by a Committee representing Mayor Walker, and was conducted by an honorary police escort past the Museum structure to the temporary Museum headquarters. Thence the escorting committee made its way to the Hotel Biltmore where a tea was arranged in Professor Roerich's honor.



## Music and the Roerichs

During the first years of the Nicholas Roerich Museum's existence, an impressive program of exhibitions, lectures, and concerts was implemented. The series of various concerts that took place were Composers of Finland; Ballads of England, Scotland, and Ireland; Byzantine Music Choir; Songs and Dances of Mexico; Operas of Pergolesi; and dance concerts of Martha Graham, Fokine, and others. Lectures included "Contemporary Russian Composers," "Mysticism and the Gothic," "Spanish Architecture," "Russian Icons," "Kashmir," "Art and Archaeology," "Art, Culture, and Customs of Japan," "Harvests and Civilization," "Problems of a Modern Woman"—a lecture read by Eleanor Roosevelt, and many others.

*The following dialogue is excerpted from My Teachers: Meetings with the Roerichs, from the diaries of Sina Fosdick:*

"At dinner, E.I.<sup>1</sup> remembered the wonders that they witnessed together with Yaruya<sup>2</sup> in London: how an acquaintance of theirs rose into the air with his chair and levitated; how carpets flew around the room and music by Mussorgsky was played by the piano, while E.I. was sitting in a chair, and on top of her there was another chair, which almost squished her. There were materializations of coins and other objects, manifesta-

## The Realm of Beauty

*"In beauty we are united, through beauty we pray, with beauty we conquer."*

N. Roerich



tions of incredible power caused by the presence of the Masters in London.

"Her ears are painfully sensitive ever since she heard the music of the spheres; she describes it as a grandiose rhythmic surge rather than a particular theme and a lack of scale. She and N.K.<sup>4</sup> are not allowed to eat soup and dark meat but are allowed smoked fish and chicken.<sup>5</sup>

"When E.I. heard the music of the spheres, she saw the Dalai Lama. He sat there small and hunched. Marvelous sounds and light were passing by him, but he was not aware of any of them. That happened on the way back from Mongolia."<sup>6</sup>

"In the morning the three of us began to read the book, and then N.K. joined us, who followed me in the Russian version, and E.I. and Frances, in the English. The book is translated very well. Then we had breakfast, and after breakfast, suddenly a heated discussion broke out. E.I. related how Maya Bose used to draw quite well, but her husband made fun of her and so she abandoned [drawing]. And she told E.I. that when a woman is wounded in

such a way, the wound does not heal. Here E.I. said that N.K. gave her such a strong wound when they were young, having said that pianists and interpreters are not creators, for they transmit; that is craft and not creative art. She was so wounded by his words that she, believing him, abandoned music. And so an argument flared up. E.I. insisted that a performer is a creator. N.K. said that we don't know either Beethoven's character or his style, and so we perform according to ourselves, not according to Beethoven. Svetik<sup>7</sup> was on N.K.'s side. So E.I. said that a creator takes his ideas from space, from previous creators, performing a synthesis, for it is said that a significant Teacher begins with imitating a significant creator and

<sup>1</sup> Elena Ivanovna Rerikh (Helena Roerich).

<sup>2</sup> Vladimir Analtolievich Shibayev (1898–1975) (esoteric name: Yaruya): close disciple and secretary to Nicholas Roerich for many years.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> Sina Fosdick, *My Teachers: Meetings with the Roerichs*, 1st English ed. (Prescott, AZ: White Mountain Education Association, Inc., 2015), 264.

<sup>4</sup> Nikolai Konstantinovich Rerikh (Nicholas Roerich).

<sup>5</sup> Fosdick, *My Teachers: Meetings with the Roerichs*, 199.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 272.

<sup>7</sup> Svetoslav Roerich, youngest son of Nicholas and Helena Roerich.

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then adds [what is] his own. We are all performers and imitators! The argument went on for a long time and then we went upstairs and E.I. remarked that she didn't really want to say some things so as not to offend Sv[etoslav] and N.K., but she is familiar with the inner workings of painting, and painters are interpreters, for they borrow ideas for their creations from books, from folk art (thankga, bronze figurines). El Greco borrowed from Veronese; they all borrow from nature, life, and other creations. And in music, the musician who performs the work of a composer is a creator. Art is one. She said that N.K. had once caused her terrible pain by saying to her, in response to her statement about being tired of living by his interests: why didn't she have her own life and her own interests? Then she immediately lost interest in his affairs, the school, his work, and started to study Ramakrishna and Vivekananda and discovered her own world. Then N.K. came into her world, for she was the one who taught him how to paint clouds and how to feel the colors and nature in a way that he hadn't felt before.<sup>8</sup>

"E.I. gave me an array of colors, corresponding to the tones of the musical scale:

C (do) red

D (re) orange

E (mi) yellow

F (fa) green

G (sol) light blue

A (la) dark blue tinged with purple

B (si) dark purple

(Pink is a combination of red and light blue.)

"Mme. Roerich recalled the wonderful chord that Nutsya<sup>9</sup> arranged from the colors of their auras. Do#,

fa, la, si. In the morning we all went for a short walk; then N.K. and I finished "Lakshmi," which he dictated to me from the 1916 monograph. After lunch we went for another short walk. Then I sat down to make copies of the rhythms for everyone; E.I. came up to me and commented on how remarkably they reflected the principle of increase: Mahavan is the culmination, but the sixth rhythm

*"...she [E.I.] was the one who taught him [N.K.] how to paint clouds and how to feel the colors and nature in a way that he hadn't felt before."*

already shows the slowing down and fading. She said that it could be given to every composer; let them try to do something with it, [such as] write a symphony."<sup>10</sup>

The following links will take you to music composed and played by the followers of Agni Yoga:

*Zavadsky, V. V. Flowers of Morya* – a vocal cycle accompanied by a symphony orchestra // YouTube. – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ob-2tw-ZHpDM>

The premiere took place in Paris in April 1924. The second performance – May 30, 2017 in Barnaul, at the State Philharmonic of the Altai Territory. The work is written on the verses of the poetic collection of the same name by N. K. Roerich.

*Kachanov, N.* The Russian Chamber Choir performs at the Roerich Museum in New York. For dates and times go to [www.roerich.org](http://www.roerich.org)

**Grace** – a choral cycle in five parts. Performed a choral cycle in five parts. Performed by the Russian Chamber Choir under the direction of Nikolai Kachanov.

Publications of individual parts:

**Drops** // YouTube. – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZS7TISNLuo>

**Light** // YouTube. – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=unrIHkOf-Jk>

**Paths** // YouTube. – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7FH2J4Jb7NU>

The work is written on the verses of the poetic collection of the same name by N. K. Roerich.

The cycle uses Eastern and Western musical techniques, including harmonic singing in the Tuvan (overtone) and Tibetan (subtone) styles.

*Kachanov, N. Reflections on Stanzas from the Book of Dzyan* – a musical poem for choir, synthesizers and wind instruments // YouTube. – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQnLQ2O7G9k>

In this work, the composer expresses a sense of amazement at the process of creation of the Universe, as it is described in the Seven Stanzas from the Book of Dzyan, which became the basis of the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine* by H. P. Blavatsky: *Cosmogogenesis*.

<sup>8</sup>Fosdick, *My Teachers: Meetings with the Roerichs*, 269–270.

<sup>9</sup>Nutsya is the spiritual name of Maurice Lichtmann.

<sup>10</sup>Fosdick, *My Teachers: Meetings With the Roerichs*, p. 273.



## ENLIGHTENMENT

Nicholas Roerich

Enlightenment has always been a crying need!<sup>1</sup>



“If we gather all the definitions of Culture, we find the synthesis of active bliss, the altar of enlightenment and constructive beauty.”<sup>2</sup>

“Without exaggeration, the treasures of culture are the stronghold of a nation. The entire upbuilding—all enlightenment, spiritual inspiration, happiness, and salvation—will be born upon the foundations of cultural treasures.”<sup>3</sup>

“Today, a large street in the city of Smolensk bears the name of Tenishevskaya Street. Indeed, many were the people who had walked along Tenishevskaya Street to receive enlightenment, and still more were bound to seeking predestined cultural possibilities.”<sup>4</sup>

“Enlightenment has always been the crying need. Even today, not only in Tibet.”<sup>5</sup>

“Enlightenment and construction are the panaceas that are at the basis of all Buddhist teachings.”

“Is it the moment to talk of peace when wars are raging? Certainly, it is now that we ought to proclaim, on all hands, the doctrine of peace, enlightenment, and goodwill.”

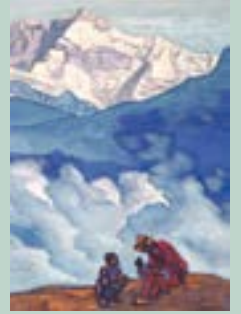
“Only peace that arises from tireless efforts to construction and enlightenment can bring happiness.”<sup>6</sup>

“Only active enlightenment can give us a proper perception of the world.”<sup>7</sup>

“...Tathāgata has gained the enlightenment of the Middle Path, which produces insight and knowledge, and tends to calm, to higher knowledge, enlight-

## Thoughts on Agni Yoga

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



enment, Nirvāna.” (Samyutta, v, 420).<sup>8</sup>

“The man who is spiritually virtuous, who wishes to become steadfast, evokes steadfastness in those around him. Wishing to become enlightened, he is interested in the enlightenment of those near him in order to make others that which he desires for himself.”<sup>9</sup>

“Majestic are the gifts of Tolstoy and Tagore to humanity. They are not selfish misers but most generous donors; they give and give endlessly. Tagore’s heart strives to spread real education. Santiniketan—this stronghold of enlightenment—is forever linked with a host of great names. So many artists and cultural leaders of India and many foreign coworkers participate in the ideals of Santiniketan.”<sup>10</sup>

“In all institutions of enlightenment, from children’s classes on, the concept of boredom should be driven out by all possible means.”<sup>11</sup>

“Well, let us assume that airplanes do not carry death-bringing sorcerers. May they bring messengers of enlightenment!”<sup>12</sup>

“Enlightenment and construction are the panaceas that are at the basis of all Buddhist teachings.”

“Is it the moment to talk of peace when wars are raging? Certainly it is now that we ought to proclaim, on all hands, the doctrine of peace, enlightenment, and goodwill. . . .

“Only active enlightenment can give us a proper perception of the world.”<sup>13</sup>

“Every labor already contains the striving to perfection and enlightenment.”<sup>14</sup>

“Apart from epidemics of dances and newly devised games, people in all countries are striving for enlightenment.”<sup>15</sup>

“In our internal reconstructions, we must, under the benevolent standard of enlightenment, indefatigably introduce beauty and knowledge among the broad masses of people. We must introduce them firmly and actively, remembering that what now lies before is not ideology, not the work of formulating but the work itself—creation; the essence of which is clear and comprehensible without saying many words about it.”<sup>16</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nicholas Roerich, “Glory to Women, Bearers of Culture,” in *Heroica* (New York: Nicholas Roerich Museum, 2018), <https://www.roerich.org/roerich-writings-heroica.php>.

<sup>2</sup> Roerich, “Real Values.”

<sup>3</sup> Roerich, “Maria Tenisheva.”

<sup>4</sup> Roerich, “The Supernatural.”

<sup>5</sup> Roerich, “Peace to All Beings.”

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Nicholas Roerich, “Unfading Flowers,” in *Vigil: Letters from Asia* (New York: Nicholas Roerich Museum, 2019), <https://www.roerich.org/roerich-writings-vigil.php>.

<sup>8</sup> Roerich, “Beyond the Great Wall.”

<sup>9</sup> Roerich, “Tagore and Tolstoy.”

<sup>10</sup> Roerich, “The Birth of Boredom.”

<sup>11</sup> Roerich, “Gates to Peace.”

<sup>12</sup> Roerich, “Peace to All Beings.”

<sup>13</sup> Roerich, “Combating Ignorance.”

<sup>14</sup> Roerich, “From Beyond.”

<sup>15</sup> Nicholas Roerich, “Beauty and Wisdom,” in *Diary Leaves* (New York: Nicholas Roerich Museum, 2019), <https://www.roerich.org/roerich-writings-diary-leaves.php>.

July 9, 2002

*Agni Yoga.org*

Dear —,

Please permit us a proud moment. Last night, after lots of time and lots of effort, the Agni Yoga Society's Web site ([www.agniyoga.org](http://www.agniyoga.org)) went online. Please visit it and offer comments, criticisms, and suggestions to me at [director@...](mailto:director@...)

The site makes available all the books of the Teaching, for study or downloading, free of charge. For me this is especially gratifying because one of my great dreams for the world—the free flow of information—is being fulfilled in at least this little pocket of world activity.

There will be a steadily increasing number of compilations available, too, on many subjects. And later, we hope to include a search engine that will make study of the texts easier.

The effort to develop this site was made by committed volunteers, whom I won't embarrass by naming them. Let's just send them our thoughts of gratitude.

Daniel

July 12, 2002

*Turning the books into e-books*

Dear —,

Now, I am very interested in the next step, Tony Ainslie's apparently successful effort to turn the books into e-books. Helena Roerich used to say she wanted the books to be small and flexible, like the little Testaments on Bible paper with soft leather covers, so they could be carried in the pocket, available to be read at all times. Well, now we can carry ALL the books in a pocket. That is a revolution!

On the Web site, we will soon have

## Conversations with Daniel Entin

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



Helena Roerich's other books, *On Eastern Crossroads* and *Foundations of Buddhism*. It would be good to have there everything that is on our booklist.

Also on the Museum site, we will one day have the texts of Nicholas Roerich's books, not only those available today, but all those that have been long out of print. There's no end to what can be made available! All that's needed is the time and dedicated effort of people.

Daniel

July 14, 2002

*Agni Yoga*

Dear —,

It's interesting, this question has come up twice in two days. I was always told that this was the ancient tradition, and if H.P.B. and/or E.I. wrote it, they were simply repeating that standard.

But what exactly does that mean in our world? The tradition, in earlier centuries, had to do with seekers finding a guru somewhere who agreed to teach them, face to face, in the guru's home or cave. As soon as a guru attracted a widespread following, there developed a need for institutions and structures, and the need for monetary donations increased. In ancient times the students were usually illiterate, and there were no books. Any activity, such as book publishing, entails expenses

that have to be regained, unless there is a rich benefactor. Gurus often found such benefactors, who provided the income that was needed.

So it's a knotty question, not quite so simple as the statement that spiritual teachings must be given free.

Daniel

July 26, 2002

*Agni Yoga – a gallery*

Dear —,

I don't know if the abundance of creative works, with not enough people to appreciate them, is a new development. There have always been the unrecognized, struggling artists, who continue to work because that is the only thing they want to do.

There are even countertrends. We have a lot of poets here because we conduct occasional poetry readings, and support two poetry prizes. One woman, who had struggled for years without success to find some publisher to produce her book (and even if it were published, it would be in some very small print run, perhaps 500 or 1,000 copies), decided to put her work online, on her own Web site, to make it available free to the public. Her only conceptual leap was in learning to accept the idea of giving her work away. During the first month of being online, more than five thousand people read her poetry! Granted,

the poetry world is a very “tight” one, and poetry enthusiasts would tend to use search engines to find the new sources.

Another benefit is that it becomes possible to more easily distribute and promote unknown artists. The Whitney Museum in New York, for example, started a very heavily trafficked site in which they put the work of artists who, they felt, did not deserve a full-scale exhibit in the museum, but whose works they felt deserved to be better known.

We have no idea yet about the extent of the democratization that is going on in the cultural fields. People all over the world find wonders that they never expected to see. Shortly after our Museum site went online, I received an ecstatic message from a young fellow who lived in some small town in Indonesia, who somehow found the Roerich site, downloaded all of our images, and printed them out on his little inkjet printer. That is a miracle, I think!

But I do know what you mean too. A few years ago, when I was in Riga, I was taken to an apartment that was jammed with wonderful paintings made by someone who had recently died, and the people who showed me the collection had no way to dispose of it properly—no museum wanted it, and only a few were sold (no “market” value).

And a few years ago, one of our old members died in a fire in his home/studio, and his entire life’s output was partly destroyed, and partly saved. We took what was rescuable and gave them away to whoever knew him and wanted his works.

Maybe there has to be a revolution in the way art is thought about, exhibited, and distributed. It should not be a way for an artist to get rich; it should be a way for him/her to enrich society. Maybe it should belong to the people, the world, from the time of its creation, and some new, still-undiscovered way be found to compensate and support the artist. Then, as you say, the creative output would truly be for the Common Good.

The Internet is revolutionizing many fields of life. We are just beginning to see the upheavals and strains that come at any time of change.

Sorry for the outburst; you just touched on something that I have been thinking about a lot lately, maybe because of the copyright controversies.

Daniel

**July 28, 2002**

*Agni Yoga – a gallery*

Dear —,

I could not agree more. The gradual dissolving of borders is one of my great dreams, certainly nothing that I will see in this lifetime. I never thought that cultural and informational borders would dissolve before the political ones. But that is happening, partly due to quick and easy travel, partly due to the marvels of communication of the twentieth century—radio, television, telephone, etc., and mostly the Internet. Of course, it frightens many people. We need only see the strains that Europe is experiencing, now that people who are members of the European Community can live and work wherever they want. At my age, I remember how things were when I was very young, and realize how vastly different—how greatly improved—so many things are today.

Daniel

**June 2, 2004**

*Agni Yoga – a vegetable diet*

Dear —,

You reminded me of two terrible instances of application of principles taken to the extreme. In both cases, a comment in the Teaching that above certain altitudes, it is not necessary to eat physical food (referring to highly advanced souls, of course), caused these self-deluded individuals to

try just that when on mountain expeditions. Of course, they became very ill and had to be taken down the mountains for revival.

And that reminds me of a tale told by Pir Vilayat Khan many years ago, about his guru, who lived in a hovel or a cave, high in the mountains, and lived on nothing but prana. Pir Vilayat had just come back from a stay with his guru, who, he said, had complained that the pollution, even at that altitude, had forced him to supplement his nourishment by licking rocks!

Daniel

**June 21, 2004**

*Agni Yoga – honoring sacred books*

Dear —,

I am not aware of any such rules in Agni Yoga (if I have missed these, someone please point me to them). Each religion has its rules against desecration, maintaining the sacredness of things connected with the religion. Some people in the Teaching believe that one must not lend an Agni Yoga book to others, because of the vibrational aspect.

Daniel

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