

# AGNI YOGA

QUARTERLY

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## For the Common Good

*New Era Community, 1926, (updated July 2019)*

*New Era Community, 147.* He is a hero who acts self-sacrificingly, unwaveringly, consciously, and who, acting in the name of the Common Good, thus brings nearer the current of cosmic evolution.

*Letters of Helena Roerich II (1935–1939)*

*Letters of Helena Roerich II, 13 August 1938.* [T]he Teaching of Living Ethics is also a call to Love, to Service for the Common Good, which is the highest form of love, because it is devoid of selfhood. Love for humanity demands complete self-abnegation and self-sacrifice.

*Letters of Helena Roerich II, 6 August 1938.* The present era is reminiscent of a certain period in Atlantis. At that time they could not find equilibrium; however, though one is now aware of a like nonconformity, some, more vitally alive nations may find the necessary concordance. We see where the inception of synthesis may be realized. It will not be where the pendulum of life is inert, but where it is swinging to the utmost. There the significance of the Common Good is understood; there it is known that it can originate only with the Common Good. The formula is not yet pronounced; however, it already ripens in the depth of consciousness. . . . Service, above all, discloses the path of realization of the Common Good. Not finery or rituals, but service to mankind. For many centuries words about cooperation have been uttered. Frequently, ideas were in advance of material possibilities, but at present people have found a multitude of useful adaptations, and the time has come when it will be necessary to remember about the Common Good. Thus, look to where the pendulum is swinging to the utmost.

*“All labor, especially if accompanied by good thoughts, brings help to someone.”*

*Supermundane, 1938, (updated July 2020)*

*Supermundane, 472.* Urusvati knows of those moments when one is unable to discern the boundary between the personal good and the Common Good. The mind whispers that personal gain is in conflict with general welfare, but the heart says otherwise. Disharmony between the personal good and the Common Good, but it is possible to imagine a point at which the Common Good becomes the personal. It is a harmonious state that requires an equal harmony of all surrounding conditions.

*Supermundane, 509.* The chief enemy of truth is intolerance, and the more tolerance and benevolence there is the stronger will be the foundation. Every step of truth is directed toward the Common Good—this is the defining criterion.

*Supermundane, 542.* When one’s heart strives toward the Common Good, all of one’s thoughts are attuned to it. The striving can be austere or joyous, or steadily compassionate; all can be the keynote of one’s thinking.

*Supermundane, 611.* Let everyone think how to serve the Common Good. Every farmer sows and reaps not just for himself, but also for others, unknown to him. Let him think that the grain that he produces will bring good to somebody. The thoughts themselves encourage humanity with universal understanding. All labor, especially if accompanied by good thoughts, brings help to someone.

*Supermundane, 360.* The Thinker said, “Whether I serve Nature, or Nature serves me, does not matter. The important thing is that all my knowledge and experience are offered in the service of the Common Good.”

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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,

The WMEA is happy to announce the release of the second edition of *At the Threshold of the New World*, by Helena Roerich, which we now offer in paperback and as a Kindle eBook. *At the Threshold of the New World* may be purchased through the [WMEA online bookstore](#), or on [Amazon.com](#).

Corrections, new information, and index, and easy-to-read footnotes are included in this second edition, which is dedicated to Daniel Entin. If you are a student of Agni Yoga, you will recognize the name of Daniel Entin, whose *Conversations with Daniel Entin* are included in each issue of *Agni Yoga Quarterly*.

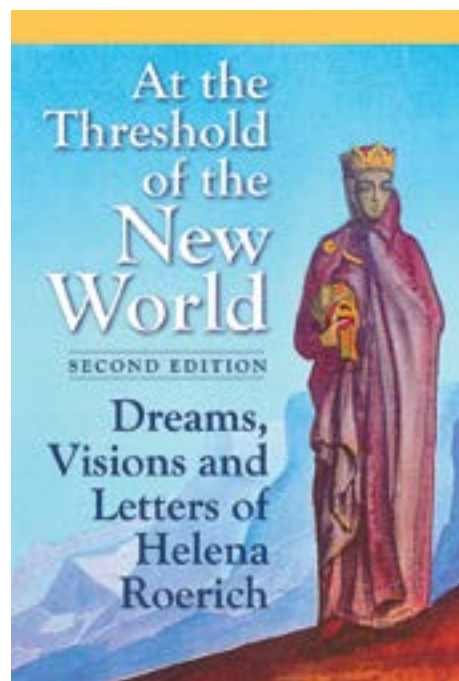
The April/May/June 2017 issue of *Agni Yoga Quarterly* was a special issue dedicated to the life of Daniel Entin—“Daniel Entin, who was the executive director of the Nicholas Roerich Museum and the Agni Yoga Society, in New York City, New York, U.S.A, from 1983 to 2016, and then became director emeritus.” Daniel Entin, Aida Tulskaaya, Max Osinovsky, and Raya Urmalsky were the translators and editors of the first edition of *At the Threshold of the New World*. It is my joy to dedicate this second edition to our beloved friend Daniel.

“Different parts of the essay, ‘Dreams and Visions,’ were written at various times over many years, and it was only

# Community

“Begin to build the community as a home of knowledge and beauty.”  
– *New Era Community*, verse 229

Rev. Joleen D. DuBois



entries were recorded in 1924.<sup>3</sup> “Your spirit receives rays and currents—not only K.H.’s and Mine, but also those of Ter., the Chinese Tara, Moh., Lao Tze, Vaugh[han], Confucius, and, of course, Buddha and Chr[ist]. (So it is still difficult for me to receive other rays, right?) Not difficult, but rather that you cannot discern them. (How does the Ray of Teacher Rak[ozzi] affect me?) It strikes you on your knees. (It is disappointing to me that I cannot yet discern by sound who is talking to me.) Not so important. . . . (During the talk I felt a rotation of the centers in my head.)”<sup>4</sup>

“Urusvati may calmly accept everything. *Inasmuch as self-confidence is blessed in action, so is self-conceit ruinous. Self-conceit is hostile to simplicity. Even great minds are subject to this malady, and*

*continued on page 11*

in 1949 that Helena Roerich herself put them together. She wrote about it in her letter of February 7, 1949,<sup>1</sup> to Sina Fosdick, the director of the Nicholas Roerich Museum in New York.”<sup>2</sup>

*The Fiery Experience*, A typewritten, authorized original of “The Fiery Experience” essay is stored in the Manuscript Department of the ICR in Moscow. All

<sup>1</sup> *At the Threshold of the New World*, Helena Roerich (Prescott, AZ: White Mountain Education Association, Inc., [1998] 2020), 28.

<sup>2</sup> For further information about Sina Fosdick and her experiences with Helena Roerich, see *My Teachers, Meetings with the Roerichs, Diary Leaves*. first English edition (Prescott, AZ: White Mountain Education Association, Inc., 2015).

<sup>3</sup> In the following excerpt from “The Fiery Experience,” M.M. is speaking, and questions and comments made by Helena Roerich are shown in parentheses.

<sup>4</sup> *At the Threshold of the New World*, 164.



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# An Example of the Life of Yuri Nikolaevich Roerich as an Agni Yogi

by I. R. Rudzite

When everyone gathered for the last time in a small dining room, Yuri Nikolayevich never wanted to sit in the place of honor. As my father and sister, Gunta, later recalled, they listened to the record of the heroic Wagnerian opera *Parsifal*, which had just been presented to Yuri Nikolaevich. On the other side of the record was “Funeral March,” which for some reason they also included. And in Yuri Nikolaevich’s brown eyes, a blue gleam of sadness appeared. For some reason, one of the employees presented him with an album about the Bratsk cemetery in Riga, the photographs of which show a statue of the Mother and soldiers of all wars resting at her feet. For some reason, Yuri Nikolaevich spoke of a long trip in the near future, and everyone thought of Buryatia. . . .

Helena Roerich, before her departure, told Yuri Nikolaevich, “When a new star appears, then it’s time to go.”

Nikolai Konstantinovich’s painting *The Star of the Hero* is dedicated to Yuri Nikolayevich, a man ready to undertake another sacrificial feat, that the appearance of a comet was a sign to him that the time had come for a new feat. Then, before the arrival of Yuri Nikolaevich to his homeland, a new star was seen in India. In particular, my father, Richard Yakovlevich Rudzitis, read about this at that time in the Latvian newspaper *Tsinya*.

According to the Bogdanovs, Elena Ivanovna said that Yuri Nikolaevich was going to Russia for three years. Obviously, he knew the date of his departure. Having completed his mission, he left on May 21, 1960. Another big heart took the cup of the poison of human egoism.



George Roerich reading a Buddhist manuscript

From August 1957 to May 1960, my father met with Yuri Nikolaevich Roerich about twenty times; there was also an exchange of letters, which are stored in the archive of Gunta Rudzite in Riga, of which I have photocopies.

Usually my father took my sister, Gunta (now the chairperson of the Riga Roerich Society), and me to Moscow. Due to illness, I did not participate in the first and last meetings, but my sister and I sometimes met with Yuri Nikolaevich, even without our father.

After each meeting, the three of us recalled what was said, and our father wrote down the content of the conversations, which made up the diary of our father, who began to publish the Latvian magazine *Light of Fire* in the November issues of 1980 and 1981.

Today, based on my memories and observations, I wanted to start a conversation about the image of Yuri Nikolaevich Roerich, as a life example of a person who could be described as an Agni Yogi.

The time has come by right to define Yuri Nikolaevich in a new way—as an “Agni Yogi”—precisely because so many people who read the books of Agni Yoga still have little idea of what this really means.

There are so many false gods, false teachers, and false prophets around us! So many righteous people have appeared around the Teaching of Living Ethics and around the Roerich societies who consider themselves almost Adepts, but with a characteristic feature, of not the slightest cordiality in their eyes. Or even worse, on my way I met an infinite number of mediums with different “superpowers”: “seeing” the subtle world, “hearing” voices, dictating all kinds of “new teachings” or possession of so-called “automatic writings,” “clairvoyance,” and even “the ability to fly to other planets”!

Yuri Nikolaevich had none of the above abilities (and my father knew him very well and maintained very close relations with him, as one of the Roerich family’s closest friends).

In his way of life, his norms of behavior in general, Yuri Nikolaevich did not particularly stand out among those around him. As it is said in the book *Agni Yoga*: “Agni Yoga must be introduced into life, but its bearers must not differ externally from others in life. The Agni Yogi lives unnoticed” (187). The only thing Yuri Nikolayevich observed was some austerity: he was unmarried; did not smoke; did

not drink; ate rather modestly, usually vegetarian food; slept on a simple folding bed; and so forth. Regarding smoking, I recall a case: at an exhibition of paintings by Nikolai Konstantinovich, a young man asked how they could work at such a height, to which Yuri Nikolaevich replied that this requires some preparation—for example, you cannot smoke or drink. Hearing this, the young man dropped his eyes.

In Moscow, when in the last year Yuri Nikolayevich felt tired, both he and the Bogdanovs had a decrease in hemoglobin in their blood. Yuri Nikolayevich got up very early and strolled around the nearest square until dawn. Earlier, in Kullu, he went horseback riding every morning.

Yuri Nikolayevich dressed cleanly, neatly, usually in a European suit, light shirts, a tie; he also dressed for traveling in a hiking suit, brought from India, consisting of a tunic and breeches of sandy color with brown leather buttons.

I saw Yuri Nikolaevich several times; what struck me the most? Firstly, the fact that not a single photograph, not even a film shot by his student A. N. Zelinsky, could reflect the true fieriness of his eyes, movements, facial expressions, and hands. His whole being radiated a special energy and an inexhaustible inner strength, along with a special charm and sensitivity.

At the beginning of this story about him, I would like to share a few fragments from my memoirs regarding the description of his appearance:

“At the doorway to the opposite room, a man of medium height and strong build appears. A light, oval face with prominent cheekbones and a short-cropped gray beard. The rise of black-winged eyebrows, and for a few seconds a penetrating look piercing me through and through. And after half a minute, his large almond-shaped, brown eyes light up with a charming smile, and expressive deep dimples appear on his cheeks. He comes to meet



George Roerich studying

us, hugs his father, and warmly squeezes my and Guntā's palms with both hands. He greets me as if we have been the closest friends for a long time. Since then, I never again felt his testing gaze on me.”

“Yuri Nikolaevich was sitting in his chair at the writing table, calmly resting his hands on the armrests, at times crossing his fingers, and only by the constantly changing expression of his face, by the way at times his thick, arched eyebrows were flying high and then calmly down, as in large [missing words]. At times, brown eyes displayed a crafty gaiety, and then a hidden sadness appeared, and then an unexpected radiance flashed; and I understood what wealth of the soul is hidden in this seemingly, so outwardly modest man.

When they talked about the most intimate, the closest, his eyes became seemingly bottomless, going into the infinity of millennia, reminiscent of the mysterious huge black pupils of the statues of Egyptian sarcophagi.”

When Yuri Nikolayevich returned to his

hometown, he joined the work with great tension. During the three years he lived in Russia, he did an incredible amount of work to awaken a true spiritual culture. I must say that these were the incredibly difficult years of “Khrushchevism,” only three years having passed since Stalin's death, and all the activities of the great scientist took place under the shameful supervision of the KGB. I will not list all that he did; I will indicate only a few of what he shared with us in conversations and letters.

Now, after more than seven months, it is difficult to imagine what incredible obstacles, especially on the part of artists, he had to overcome before the first exhibition of Nicholas Roerich's paintings could open in Moscow, which was followed by exhibitions in Leningrad, Riga, Kiev, Tbilisi, and so on. And in 1960, an exhibition of his brother's, Svyatoslav Nikolaevich, took place. Together, they began publishing the literary heritage of Nikolai Konstantinovich: Reproductions, albums, and monographs were published; a film was shot; programs were broadcast on radio and television. He himself read a huge number of lectures about his father, about his painting, literary works, philosophy, and expeditions. With his lectures, he began to clarify questions about Eastern Yogis. He also read a lot of lectures on Eastern literature, philosophy, and religion, and began publishing a series of books on Buddhist classical literature, which was largely hindered by atheist colleagues. He prepared his works for publication and also taught new postgraduate researchers at the Institute of Oriental Studies.

Yuri Nikolaevich conquered obstacle after obstacle, creating as much as he could. Here is another milestone of an Agni Yogi. “Around an Agni Yogi you will always find construction, whose very difficulties are stepping stones in the overcoming of imperfection” (*Agni Yoga*, 403).

The scientist worked hard but harmoniously, without fuss, carefully using his own

and others' time. It was incomprehensible to him the great waste of time spent in frequent, senseless meetings in stuffy, smoky rooms—about which he most recently complained.

In the book *Heart* we read: “An Agni Yogi is economical in everything, not out of stinginess but because he knows the value of the energy that is poured forth from above. Thus, he conserves his own energy as well as the energy around him” (*Heart*, 37).

The life of Yuri Nikolaevich is the path of sacrifice, the path of labor for the Common Good. Few people knew about the spiritual loneliness of Yuri Nikolayevich, or the severe fatigue from the big city, the continuous difficulties and obstacles, or the everyday inconveniences. Sometimes the “sisters,” which was the name for the Bogdanovs, went down to the store for groceries and not being able to stand the huge lines, returned empty-handed. The scientist himself had to replace them.

Everyone came to him for help, advice, energy, and joy. “The Agni Yogi is not only a magnetic focus, but he also improves the health conditions of a locality. . . . Thus . . . the Agni Yogi take[s] upon [himself] the currents of space” (*Fiery World I*, 286).

Few people understood how often Yuri Nikolaevich suffered from people's disharmony. “[E]veryone can burden him, but only few can help” (*Fiery World I*, 286).

Yet almost no one saw signs of fatigue in him, and everyone received a great boost of energy. “Indeed, the highest Agni Yogi creates without tiring in spirit” (*Infinity I*, 263).

And yet, what was the source of the seemingly inexhaustible strength and unceasing renewal of this man?

Yuri Nikolaevich really was an “oriental” person and never spoke about the innermost or spoke so simply, almost imperceptibly, that one could hear it and one could miss it. According to the scientist, “Eastern people are very afraid to say the secret.



Young George Roerich in a winter coat

Better even [to] lie than betray.”

From the diaries of Nikolai Konstantinovich and Yuri Nikolaevich, we knew about the meetings with the Mahatmas and about the Roerichs' visits to the Himalayan Ashrams.

Our friend G. (Golubkina) said that once when Yuri Nikolaevich was leaving the exhibition hall, a woman approached him and asked the question, “Does Shambala exist?” To which Yuri Nikolaevich, looking the woman in the eyes and after some silence, replied, “Yes, I myself was there.”

The next day after the closing of the first exhibition of Nikolai Konstantinovich, other friends besides us from Riga, G. F. Lukin and Br. Yakobson, came to Yuri Nikolaevich. They started talking about personalities close to the White Brotherhood in spiritual qualities, and Harald Feliksovich asked about R. Wagner in this regard to which he received an exhaustive answer: “Yes, Wagner could have come close, but the hard aspects of his life were alienating him. Wagner is a difficult man. Beethoven, in terms of his light, could have been a closer candidate than all the

others. In art, a person does not always correspond to his inner appearance. It must be judged by the inner appearance. Lermontov's beginnings are closer. Pushkin is a great talent, but Lermontov is higher in appearance than Pushkin, if we compare the same-named poems, “The Prophet,” in both. In Russian literature, at this time, Chaadaev was the most advanced as a person. Herzen once said that it was simply impossible not to notice Chaadaev in the crowd, even in his eyes. . . . Raphael also had his weaknesses.

“The main thing is the inner appearance,” Yuri Nikolaevich repeated over and over again. “Ascetics are those in whom all aspects of their character already correspond to their Credo.” And I realized that the same can be said about an Agni Yogi.

What made up this person's Credo? “This is the inner vision and hearing of all life; this is the special receptivity of the qualities of his heart,” which to a large extent corresponds to paragraph 374 from the book *Infinity II*: “Each refined sensation means contact with the Spatial Fire. Therefore, only the highest Agni Yogi transmits to humanity the subtlest receptivity. The entire evolution is based on refinement.”

His heart was so developed that he saw and felt in seemingly ordinary phenomena the signs he was guided by, which determined his choice at decisive moments. “Many signs are bestowed on humanity, only let us not forget them. Each of you remembers these landmarks which are scattered throughout different years of life. When the Tablets are revealed, one must just read them and courageously walk on toward the Light” (*Fiery World I*, 648).

“But only a fiery heart will understand the hidden meaning of subtle signs. Let employees understand that every sign has a purpose. How many High Beings send prayers and hope that they will be understood” (*Fiery World II*, 178).

For example, in a letter dated December 8, 1959, he writes to Richard Yakovlevich:

“The next year, in general, promises to be significant. There have been many different signs lately.” He spoke about many signs in conversations with us. Many times he foresaw good luck and Help in his affairs when, according to him, he noted “good signs” in the various signs of Shambhala; for example, someone had a sign in a medallion on his chest, or somehow he saw books about Shambhala.

“Thus, in everything actions under signs can be seen. The concept of the symbol is nothing but a reminder about a sign. The success of entire nations takes place under a symbol.

“I consider it possible to proceed under the Higher Sign during the most perilous crossings” (*Aum*, 126).

These signs, in different forms and different contents, which Yuri Nikolaevich was guided by, often meant joining the wire of the Cosmic Fire, the wire of the Cosmic Magnet—Reason.

“Contact with the current of the Cosmic Fire imparts a stimulus to the spirit; and a vital action is intensified by this vital fire. Hence, the fiery Agni Yogi senses all cosmic perturbations and tautens all spatial threads” (*Infinity II*, 464).

Yuri Nikolayevich evaluated people by their inner fire, which he simply called enthusiasm, in other words, by the ability to selflessly devote oneself to work for the Common Good. When many turned to him with the question “What to do?” he answered simply, “We need to raise enthusiasm and heroism. It is necessary to maintain enthusiasm in everything and always, if it is directed toward the Common Good.”

What else amazed us at our meetings? This was the encyclopedic nature of his knowledge, open-mindedness, and interest in everything. Each meeting was so educational that my father’s diary, which basically recorded only what we talked about, was about 150 pages.

The breadth of knowledge, the develop-



George Roerich, Moscow (1957–1960)

ment of thinking, are indisputably one of the main qualities of an Agni Yogi.

“Thus knowledge is the fiery path. Is it not inspiring to know how near is the path to the Fiery World?” (*Fiery World III*, 497).

I think it is necessary to touch upon one aspect of the life of the Roerich family, about which I often met misunderstandings and misinterpretations—this was the attitude of Yuri Nikolaevich and the entire Roerich family to religion and, in particular, to orthodoxy. The entire Roerich family was deeply orthodox. The “sisters” personally told me about this, that, in particular, Yuri Nikolayevich wore a cross all of his life and observed rituals when he attended church—he was baptized; [he] lit candles. He traveled to the Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius many times, and I remember how he happily shared with us what an indelible impression this left on him:

“The Church of the Holy Trinity is magnificent. The choir sounded powerful. There were many young people and soldiers.”

At the same time, he said warmly that his father’s painting *St. Sergius Will Save Russia Three Times*, from the Prague collections, was transferred to the Tretyakov Gallery, where it is kept in one of the store-rooms. Local employees, when they go to this hall, say, “Let’s go to Sergius.” Some are baptized, while others kneel to pray.

The historical opening of the first exhibition of N. K. Roerich was scheduled for Sunday, April 12, 1958, at 4 p.m., the day of Orthodox Easter. In the morning, my sister and I came to Yuri Nikolaevich with flowers and a gift, alone, without our father. It so happened that we along with Yuri Nikolaevich and the Bogdanov sisters dined on Easter cake, and Easter and painted eggs; and I remember how Yuri Nikolaevich, assessing the loss of the inner content of the rituals, noted with bitterness that in Russia only eggs and Easter cakes remained from Easter. When we took a taxi with Yuri Nikolaevich to the exhibition, I witnessed his unusually quick reaction to his surroundings, when he, several times, drew our attention to the crowds of people standing near crowded churches in the side streets, which I, unlike him, did not notice.

Indeed, Yuri Nikolaevich had an amazing inner mobility; one might say, he had an “eagle eye,” combined with great calmness and harmony. And since I personally have not developed this quality, that is why it amazed me so many times in communicating with him! So, once at a crowded exhibition of Nikolai Konstantinovich in Leningrad, my father and I had to find Yuri Nikolaevich. Richard Yakovlevich did not feel well and sat aside. And several times I went through the entire exhibition, and not finding Yuri Nikolaevich, I was about to go back to my father, when quite unexpectedly someone’s arms warmly hugged my shoulders, and then that someone turned to face me—it was Yuri Nikolaevich. He did not know that we were here

*Continued on page 11*

## Natalia Dmitrievna Spirina<sup>1</sup>

*Natalia Dmitrievna Spirina (1911–2004), a famous Roerich scholar, poet, founder of the Siberian Roerich Society, and Nicholas Roerich museums in Novosibirsk and Altai*

**N.D.** Spirina was born on May 4, 1911, in China, in Harbin—a large center of Russian foreign countries, to a family of employees. She received an excellent education, graduating from the classical gymnasium and the Higher School of Music. In the 1940s, she became acquainted with the work of the world-famous artist and thinker N. K. Roerich and with the Teaching of Living Ethics. This Teaching became the life and inspiration of Natalia Dmitrievna. For many years she studied it under the guidance of B. N. Abramov, a spiritual student of N. K. Roerich. Reading the books of the *The Secret Doctrine*, imbued with its grandeur and beauty, N. D. Spirina began to write poems in which the thoughts of the *The Secret Doctrine* were reflected in a poetic form.

In 1959, following the Roerich's decree, B. N. Abramov and N. D. Spirina came to Russia. Boris Nikolaevich settled in Venev, in the Tula region; Natalia Dmitrievna, in Novosibirsk, in the Akademgorodok. For many years she worked as a music teacher, but the main business of her life was to study the creative heritage of the Roerich family and the Teaching of Living Ethics. Upon retiring, Natalia Dmitrievna was able to engage more in public activities. In August 1973, an exhibition of 150 works by N.K. and several works by S. N. Roerich was opened at the House of Scientists in

## The Realm of Beauty

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

N. Roerich



Natalia Dmitrievna Spirina

the Akademgorodok.

Natalia Dmitrievna became a permanent guide at this and all subsequent Roerich exhibitions in Novosibirsk. In the 1970s, together with academician A.P., she organized literary evenings with stories about N. K. Roerich and his work.

Several times, N. D. Spirina met S.N., the youngest son of the Roerichs, who lived in India and came to the Soviet Union.

Over time, the circle of like-minded people expanded, as did the cultural and educational activities of N. D. Spirina. In 1991, the Siberian Roerich Society was formed in Novosibirsk, the spiritual focus of which was Natalia

Dmitrievna. On her initiative, SibRO launched publishing activities and began to publish the journal *Before the Sunrise* (later, *Sunrise*). N. D. Spirina remained the editor-in-chief of this journal until the end of her life.

The culmination of N. D. Spirina's life was the creation of two public Nicholas Roerich Museums, in Novosibirsk and in the village of Verkh-Uimon (Altai Republic). Hundreds of enthusiasts from Russia and other countries took part in the construction of these museums.

Natalia Spirina received recognition for her literary work during her lifetime. The first time her poems became known was when they were published in the collections of *Drops* and *Before Sunrise*. Later, prose began to appear in separate collections: *Tales*—philosophical parables, and *Gleams*—articles and speeches on the Roerich heritage and others.

In all of her speeches, slide programs, and conversations, she sought to convey to people the knowledge of the great power of culture—the only factor that could transform the lives of people.

N. D. Spirina passed away on December 10, 2004. The life she lived can be briefly described in these words—serving the Common Good.

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted with the permission of Olga Olhovaya, Director of SibRO, the Siberian Roerich Society.

## Let There Be Light!<sup>1</sup>

Helena Roerich

*The following inspiring message has been kindly sent by Mme. Helena Roerich to the Mira girls, from Nagar, Kulu, in the Himalayas:*

Beloved Sisters,

In the grievous days of cosmic perturbances and of human disunity and degeneration, of forgetfulness of all the higher principles of existence and of those who bestow true life and lead to the evolution of the world, a voice must be raised in calling to the resurrection of the spirit, to bring the fire of achievement into all the actions of life, and certainly this voice must be the voice of woman who has drained the cup of suffering and abasement and who has been tempered in great endurance.

Now let woman—the Mother of the World—say, *Let there be Light!*

Of what sort then will be this Light, and in what manner will fiery achievement consist? In the concept of the banner

*“Let us keep in mind that each limitation leads to destruction and that each broadening will result in construction.”*

of the Spirit on which will be inscribed: Love, Knowledge, and Beauty.

Yes, only the heart of woman, the mother, can collect under this banner the children of all the world, without distinction of sex, race, nationality, or religion.

Woman, mother, and wife, the witness of the development of the male genius, can appraise all the great significance of

## Thoughts on Agni Yoga

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

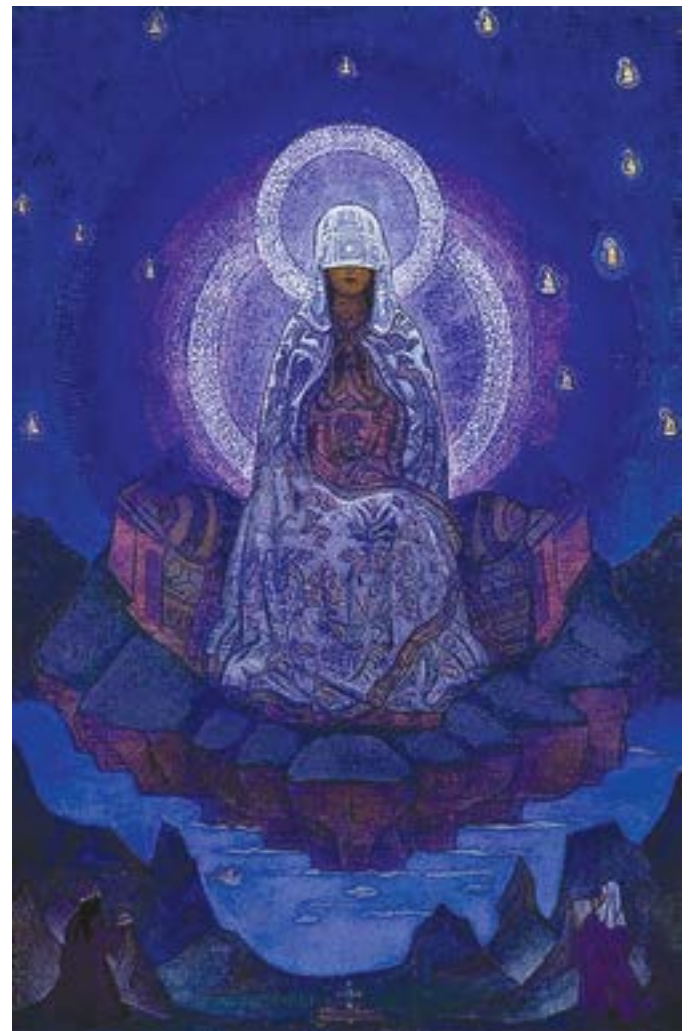


culture, of thought, of knowledge; Woman, the inspiration of Beauty, knows all the force, all the synthetic power of Beauty.

Thus let us immediately set about raising the Great Banner of the New Era, the era of the Mother of the World. Let each woman set aside the limits of her own heart and contain the hearths of the whole world. These multiple hearths will strengthen and adorn her own hearth.

Let us keep in mind that each limitation leads to destruction and that each broadening will result in construction. Therefore, with all our forces, let us strive for the broadening of our consciousness, for the refinement of our thoughts and feeling, in order to kindle our hearths with this fire.

The great Vivekananda said, “The bird of humanity cannot fly on one wing.” Thus, he



*Mother of the World* by Nicholas Roerich

foresaw the coming era of the Mother of the World.

*Helena Roerich*

<sup>1</sup> This article was printed in the magazine *Mira*, May 1938, vol. 4.



September 4, 2002

*Meditation*

Dear —,

I think you are right. Everything changes, all the time. But about meditation, it is not so clear a statement. The one reference I gave, from the book *Agni Yoga*, simply says that meditation is outmoded. (The Russians should give alternative translations for the original; I think outmoded is not exactly right.) But I do know that in her many letters to disciples, Helena Roerich clearly warned them away from meditation practices, from the very routine meditations that we have all practiced and loved. HOWEVER, all through the Teaching, you find the word “communion.” To sit in communion, holding the image of the Master in the mind, is recommended more than once. That may be hardly distinguishable from meditation, and the difference, if there is one, has to be examined.

I think the root of this has, first, to do with Agni Yoga being a teaching of action in the world, and the point is made, strongly, that we learn and grow by our commitment to Love in Action. Second, we are warned against ritualized practices, things that are done in a repetitive, routine way, comforting as they may be.

Daniel

September 4, 2002

*Striving*

Dear —,

The phrase “disease of striving” is problematic if you are looking for parallels with Agni Yoga. “Striving” is a hallowed word in Agni Yoga. The entire Teaching is built on the concepts of striving, action, and effort, even battle.

Daniel

## Conversations with Daniel Entin

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



September 4, 2002

*A Tribute to Helena Petrovna Blavatsky*

Dear —,

Maybe you should not sign such a message with “kindly.” It’s actually quite odious. From the very beginning of the Agni Yoga group formed by the Roerichs when they came to New York, the students were required to study *The Secret Doctrine* and other Theosophical literature. A large portion of Helena Roerich’s letters to her students, throughout the twenties, thirties, forties, and fifties, were devoted to instruction in Theosophical questions. Today, of the Agni Yoga students I know, easily half of them read Theosophical literature regularly—and base their understanding of Agni Yoga on its Theosophical origins.

You often just get carried away with your arguments and sink to a level of nasty insult. That is your right, but please don’t expect us to thank you for it.

Daniel

September 5, 2002

*Odiously!*

Dear —,

Do your homework. — is the founder of this forum; it was established by him according to principles articulated by him, and he has every right to express himself here according to those principles. Many of us agree with him, many do not, but we

don’t fight over every difference. There are other Agni Yoga groups (and new ones could be started) for those who can’t abide him.

There is so much that is of common interest, and that is what we have always tried to adhere to—as he wrote, our commitment to Agni Yoga, our shared desire to help one another understand the Teaching, and to discuss ways to implement it in our lives. Not too bad as a mission, I think.

Why do you threaten an “election” to unseat the moderator? What a horrifying prospect! You would simply be trying to hijack the forum as it has been from the beginning. What’s going on?

Daniel

September 5, 2002

*Odiously!*

Dear —,

Modesty is always good to see. Thank you for yours. [Editor – Daniel is responding to the founder of the forum who commented on the discussion.]

I must go on record right here, however, to say that if there is some movement to get rid of you as moderator, for reasons beyond reason, I would take it as a real attack and would rather see the group dissolved than see it taken over by people who out of their own motives want to transform it. A few people have just appeared in the past few weeks and have decided to raise us up out

of our ignorance, with a persistence and arrogance that is breathtaking. They are convinced that we cannot advance without whatever it is that they have to give us. One wonders why they have chosen to do that.

Now, I have to clarify my own position in the group. Some people have written to me privately, dissatisfied that I have “lost control” of the group. Well, of course, I never had any control. I did not establish the group; I simply joined quite a while after it started, as a new member.

Now another new one tells me that I am just a worn-out old Jew, who is just in the way. Very nice. Where did he come from, and why? What are his intentions? Collecting all his messages shows great lurchings from deep offensiveness to a sometimes conciliatory tone, which I do not trust. What does he want from us? Is he looking for followers?

These people are accusing us of being vile, simply because we respond to their messages as we feel them, from our hearts. Were we vile before they showed up? I don't think so. What is it, then, in them, that provoked such anger in some of us? Why are they doing that? They should read through some of their earlier messages and see who is vile.

And someone gets it all wrong, and sees it as a gender problem, the bad boys duking it out in the schoolyard, while the enlightened women wait patiently for them to stop. Well then, where does — fit in to that picture? What is going on?

Some of our best members have already left in disgust. They liked it the

way it was; they didn't see anything deficient in our discussions. But they felt that the new folks were hijacking the group, and chose to leave.

After each of these occasional outbreaks, always on the same subject, we lose some people. Depending on individual points of view, the departures are seen with regret, or with relief. What does that achieve?

There is a European “umbrella group” for the people in every country who translate and publish the Teaching in their own languages. We have an annual meeting that lasts three days. Almost all the people, especially the Europeans, who translate the Agni Yoga books also translate the Bailey books. There is never any conflict. One year, however, one person was invited to give the opening talk, and he lectured us all for three hours about the Seven Rays. His own colleagues, all adherents of AAB/DK's work, reprimanded him, and a resolution was taken by them to remember that this was an Agni Yoga meeting and that the discussions should explore Agni Yoga concepts. These people had no feelings that one teaching was superior to the other; their feeling was simply about what is appropriate. Just an example, offered for consideration.

Daniel

**September 6, 2002**

*A Sense of Beauty!*

Dear —,

Thank you, — and others, for taking us out of the self-destructive whirlpool in which we find ourselves.

And beauty is a good reminder.

To my mind, there are two beauties. The one, beauty, is what you describe. It is the opposite pole of ugliness. This is a distinction on the level of duality. When we are told to turn away from ugliness, to strive to make everything beautiful, it is that beauty that is meant. We are taught to consciously try to make everything we do beautiful. Both the action and the result of the action must be as beautiful as we can make them.

But then there is Beauty, the Beauty that is the state in which everything exists. The Teaching often uses the term Be-ness, which can only be a state of Beauty. It includes what on the lower level can be seen as ugly. I think we all strive to attain awareness of that sense of Beauty. Beauty is the condition of the Universe, and it is sustained by Love, expressed in Action. This triad is fundamental to Agni Yoga thinking and to the thinking of many other teachings, too, I am sure.

One exercise I undertake is to select something that is unarguably ugly, dirty, or misshapen, broken or sick, and watch it for a long time, to try to discern its Beauty. It's always there.

When I was a young photographer, I used to go to a summer camp for handicapped children, to do some documentary work there. I always arrived in a state of shock because of the assault of “ugliness” on my senses. By the time I left, I saw only beauty all around me. Some magic always occurred, whereby the true condition of all those suffering young people revealed itself.

Daniel

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**Yuri Roerich***(continued from page 6)*

and that we were looking for him, but he could easily perceive our thoughts and the thoughts of others.

I remember once when he felt that people were coming up to his apartment, but without notice, they left, and in bewilderment he asked us who it was. It turned out that two from Riga (the Kalns couple) came to see him, but at the last moment they were ashamed to disturb him and turned back. He fully felt the radiation of people, and I remember how I asked my father not to bother him if a person called who is known as a medium, a psychic, or had a personal interest in him, and the like.

I noticed that in his presence, with all the people who communicated with him, including me, any excitement, tension, shyness, and so on, dissolved, and the person began to feel especially good, as if on par with him. This is truly a sign of a great person, who accommodates all people regardless of their age, education, cultural level, nationality, or religious affiliation.

Despite his high intellectual level, he did not flaunt his knowledge. Everyone received spiritual warmth and inner joy from him.

“The spirit imbued by fiery striving manifests a drawing power for all vital impulses. As each energy reaches its identical element, so also the spirit of the higher Agni Yogi reaches the hearts of those striving to Truth. Thus, each energy of the heart molds people. The lever of the heart sets all the strained strivings. This is why people are attracted to the fiery heart of an Agni Yogi. Thus, the power of the heart affirms the manifested striving of an Agni Yogi. The creativeness of the heart can bring the pledge of Light. I so affirm!” (*Infinity II*, 238). It was said as if about Yuri Nikolaevich!

Yuri Nikolaevich was an exceptionally generous person. He did not condemn anyone but carefully evaluated. So when Harald Feliksovich violently began to attack the person of Napoleon, the scientist stopped him, saying that Kutuzov spoke well of Bonaparte, and as he expressed a reproach to some officer: “Who gave you the right to condemn him?” The father added that when he was in Paris, in the Panthéon of Napoleon, he felt that all the French respected Napoleon very much.

Another time, my sister, Gunta, complained about a guide who told ridiculous things about the paintings of Nikolai Konstantinovich, to which Yuri Nikolayevich only smiled and in response mentioned an anecdote from Tzarist times: when at the exhibition some general, who did not understand at all, spoke devastatingly about a painting of Nicholas Roerich’s; but when he learned that Roerich was the director of the school of the Imperial Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, he apologized and completely changed his mind. I did not participate in the first conversations due to illness, but I sent Yuri Nikolaevich a long letter, to which he answered me later, as if imperceptibly and gradually, during many conversations.

Literally in every meeting, in every conversation, Yuri Nikolaevich touched upon Altai, and it is very painful that people still do not appreciate the full significance of Altai and do not understand the deep reason for which the entire Roerich family, after returning to their homeland, wanted to settle in Gorno-Altai.

Yuri Nikolaevich wanted Altai to be allocated the best paintings for the special Roerich Museum. Unfortunately, this has not yet been done, and the Altai museums still do not have original paintings.

By that time, Yuri Nikolaevich himself wanted to move so that he could work in the Siberian branch of the Academy of Sciences.

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

*must return an additional time to labor until they eradicate this husk. No member of the Brotherhood suffers from this.”<sup>5</sup>*

*“When I lived in the body of Akbar, due to bodily forgetfulness, I began to build a Temple with a pistil in the middle of a square. I consulted the stars, but the dates eluded me. Pisces is His physical sign, but the sign of His *podvig* is Orion. *The Star of the Morning is the sign of the Great Epoch which will flash at the first ray from the Teaching of Christ. For who is to extol the Mother of the World if not Christ, the One so demeaned by the world. Give Us the Arch of the Dome, wherein to enter!*”<sup>6</sup>*

With love,



Joleen Dianne DuBois

President and founder

White Mountain Education Association, Inc.

<sup>5</sup> *At the Threshold of the New World*, 107.

<sup>6</sup> *At the Threshold of the New World*, 136.

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