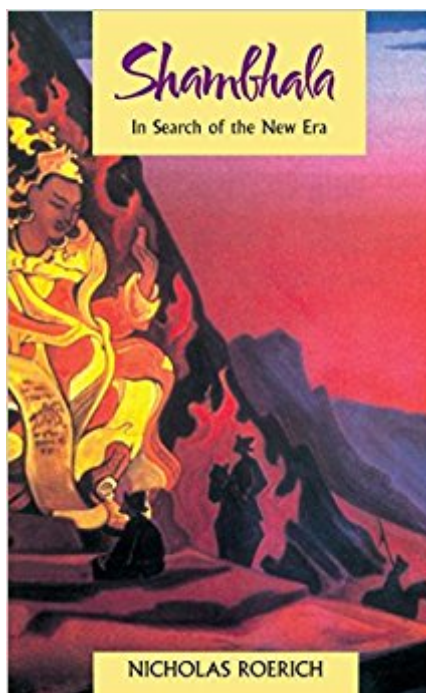


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Shambhala: In Search Of The New Era



Synopsis

Nicholas Roerich--prolific artist and writer, renowned philosopher, educator, and explorer--relates the remarkable encounters and events of his travels through central Asia and Tibet at the turn of the century. Through his detailed diary notes and the chronicling of legends and parables, he reveals the many facets of the tale of Shambhala, the long-awaited realization of paradise on earth. In Western mythology, Shambhala appears as the mythic land of Shangri-la. In the prophecies of the East, it is seen as both a physical place and the dawning of a New Era of enlightened consciousness. Roerich found signs of the imminent arrival of Shambhala at every juncture of his journey--in the legends of local villagers and within their rock paintings and engravings. In keeping with the ancient traditions, Roerich felt that Shambhala would be attained not inevitably or without effort, but only as a result of "the Noblest and most intensive activity." A living example of this philosophy, he worked unceasingly for peace through culture, believing that "obstacles are only new possibilities to create beneficent energy." Chapters on Tibetan art, the desert cities, subterranean dwellers, and the Great Mother give the reader crystalline glimpses of Roerich's manifold vision and the vast panorama of his life journey toward a new age of human achievement.

Book Information

Paperback: 332 pages

Publisher: Inner Traditions; Revised ed. edition (August 1, 1990)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0892813059

ISBN-13: 978-0892813056

Product Dimensions: 5.4 x 0.8 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 8 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #437,727 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #24 in Books > Travel > Asia > Tibet #216 in Books > Travel > Asia > China > General #1031 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Other Eastern Religions & Sacred Texts

Customer Reviews

"I recommend this Nicholas Roerich collection as essential for any metaphysical library. The scope is breathtaking, it is deep, but at the same time wide ranging. It is a true exemplar of the 'Perennial Philosophy' that is essential to all higher learning." (Jennifer Hoskins, New Dawn, Sept-Oct 2005)

Text: English (translation) Original Language: Russian

Strange but informative

great book! lots of information to think about. This book will certainly give you new insight and help you on your journey for more light.

I have read most of Nicholas Roerich's books. One is better than the next. This is actually the second time I'm reading "Shambala" so I am sure not to miss anything. This is an excellent read. I recommend his work to all. John Dewender

Nicholas Roerich and his lovely wife, Helena Roerich contributed to this wonderful book which details their mystical trip to the Himalayas and the unknown mythical city of Shambala, also known as Sangri La or Agartha. The book is extraordinary with many themes about esoteric knowledge and transcendental wisdom from the elusive Mahatmas of the Great White Brotherhood, who later wrote the Agni Yoga series of the most profound arcane wisdom on earth!!!

To fully appreciate this book, I would recommend that the reader first read something about Roerich's life. I sell two very good biographies of Roerich on this site: "Messenger of Beauty: The Life and Visionary Art of Nicholas Roerich" and "Nicholas and Helena Roerich, Revised Edition: The Spiritual Journey of Two Great Artists and Peacemakers". If one is not somewhat familiar with Roerich's life, parts of the book could indeed seem enigmatic. There are incidents to which he refers which I could understand better after having read his biography. One does have to keep in mind the time and circumstances under which this book was written. It is true that the book treats other subjects which are only related to Shambhala perhaps in a wider sense, but I found these subjects interesting as well. Roerich points out fascinating parallels among the religions and folklore of the different cultures which he encountered on his travels, and the book does not adhere to any one religion as such. A big theme of Roerich's is the ability of art and beauty to uplift the world. Some of his dreams for humanity seem not to have come true yet, but Roerich was ever striving against often difficult odds, and still he found the strength to continue his work. I found Roerich's thoughts in this book to be deep and inspiring, and believe that it would appeal to students of the Ancient Wisdom teachings, as well as many who are interested in the art, history, and folklore of the East and of Russia.

As such, this apparent diary of an artist called "Shambhala" does not have much to do with its named subject, and rambles into insubstantial subjects. Only the first chapter, "Shambhala, The Resplendent," seems to have anything to do with the namesake of the book. But even then, that chapter reads more like a riddle, and intentionally so. This reviewer hopped that the book would provide a more substantive discussion about the place Shambhala; rather, Roerich projects his preconceived notions about the place and concept, while throwing in proper nouns that are generally associated the subject. Yes, he knows these words -- Bodhisattva, Lama, Kalachakra, Kalagiya and Rigden-jyepo -- but one is left with the impression that Roerich never understood what these ideas and concepts might represent in the ultimate truth in Buddhist thought, rather than mere conventional truth. This book gets "two stars" particularly because he rails against Tibetan Buddhism. In the chapter "Buddhism in Tibet," Roerich openly doubts that Buddhism even exists in Tibet, and uses such words and phrases "low Shamanistic conversions," "the law of the Buddha is circumvented," "uncultured lamas," "market of ignorance," "sacrelidge," "ignorant and harmful falsifiers," and "stupid" to describe some lamas and the goings on in that country. Many Buddhist may interpret such comments as slanderous against the Dharma, which is generally forbidden and offensive. In light of the above, one must also remember that Roerich was denied entry into Lhasa, Tibet on his journey through the region. One wonders if his lashing out could be related to a perception of being rejected, thus, he ironically attacks his own protagonist that inspires his own ideas. The rest of the book is a constant ebb and flow of thoughts, and appears to be intentionally written to sound like a deep and esoteric riddle, but there is very little substance here. If you are looking for an informative discussion of Shambhala, or even much on the description of Roerich's travels through Asia, look elsewhere. If you're looking for a long, flowery poem that uses the words "Buddha," "Maitreya," "Bodhisattva," and "Shambhala," you've come to the right place.

Roerich, Nicolas. Shambhala. This is a collection of dispatches during travels in Tibet and the borderlands of the eastern Russian frontier by the Russo-American painter, poet and mystic which date from the late 20's and early 1930's. If you like Gurdjieff, Roerich will interest you. He believed that Beauty was a divine principle that could be used to transform the world. Though the central section did not hold my attention, the first chapters about a Tibet long gone were fascinating. This was partly due to Roerich's idiosyncratic spelling which cast a new light on the meaning of certain Sanskrit words.

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