



Theos-Talk Email List

[\[MASTER INDEX\]](#) [\[DATE INDEX\]](#) [\[THREAD INDEX\]](#) [\[SUBJECT INDEX\]](#) [\[AUTHOR INDEX\]](#)

[\[Date Prev\]](#) [\[Date Next\]](#) [\[Thread Prev\]](#) [\[Thread Next\]](#)

Notes on Rai Salig Ram, Shiva Dayal Singh, etc.

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by [Daniel H. Caldwell](#)

Notes on Rai Salig Ram, Shiva Dayal Singh, etc.

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In the latter part of 1883, A.P. Sinnett, a well-known Theosophist, wrote about a deceased seer who had lived at Agra, India and one of his followers then living in Allahabad, India:

". . . up to within a few years ago, a very highly spiritualised ascetic and gifted seer [Shiv Dayal Singh, the acknowledged founder of Radhasoami] was living at Agra, where he taught a group of disciples and by their own statement has frequently re-appeared amongst them since his death. This event itself was an effort of will accomplished at an appointed time. I have heard a good deal about him from one [Rai Salig Ram] of his principal followers, a cultivated and highly respected native Government official, now living at Allahabad. . . ." Quoted from Sinnett's article titled " 'The Brothers' of Theosophy", LIGHT (London), December 22, 1883, pp. 557.

Dayal Singh died in Agra in 1878.

Earlier in 1883, Sinnett had given more information about Dayal Singh and Salig Ram in his book ESOTERIC BUDDHISM:

". . . I know one native [Rai Salig Ram] of India, for example, a man of European education, holding a high appointment under Government, of good station in society, most elevated character, and enjoying unusual respect with such Europeans as are concerned with him in official life, who will only accord to the Brothers of Tibet a second place in the world of spiritual enlightenment. The first place he

regards as occupied by one person [Shiv Dayal Singh, the acknowledged founder of Radhasoami], now in this world no longer --- his own occult master in life --- whom he resolutely asserts to have been an incarnation of the Supreme Being. His own (my friend's) inner senses were so far awakened by this Master, that the visions of his entranced state, into which he can throw himself at will, are to him the only spiritual region in which he can feel interested. Convinced that the Supreme Being was his personal instructor from the beginning, he is naturally inaccessible to suggestions [as given in Mahatma Letter No. 40] that his impressions may be distorted by reason of his own misdirected psychological development. . . . " Quoted from Sinnett's book titled ESOTERIC BUDDHISM, 1st ed., June 1883, p. 9-10.

According to S. D. Maheshwari, "On the 28th April, 1881, he [Rai Salig Ram] had the unique honor of being the first Indian to be made the Postmaster General of the North Western Frontier Provinces. . . . " BIOGRAPHY OF HUZUR MAHARAJ [Rai Salig Ram], by S.D. Maheshwari, p. 62

It would appear that in the latter part of 1881, Sinnett had met Rai Salig Ram in Allahabad. Salig Ram told Sinnett about his deceased guru Shiv Dayal Singh. Sinnett, who was at the same time in correspondence with Madame Blavatsky's teachers, wrote to Master Morya inquiring about Shiv Dayal Singh, Rai Salig Ram and their claims. Master Morya answered Sinnett's queries as follows:

". . . Suby Ram [Rai Salig Ram] -- a truly good man -- yet a devotee of another error. Not his guru's voice -- his own. The voice of a pure, unselfish, earnest soul, absorbed in misguided, misdirected mysticism. Add to it a chronic disorder in that portion of the brain which responds to clear vision and the secret is soon told: that disorder was developed by forced visions; by hatha yog and prolonged asceticism. S. Ram is the chief medium and at same time the principal magnetic factor, who spreads his disease by infection -- unconsciously to himself; who inoculates with his vision all the other disciples. There is one general law of vision (physical and mental or spiritual) but there is a qualifying special law proving that all vision must be determined by the quality or grade of man's spirit and soul, and also by the ability to translate divers qualities of waves of astral light into consciousness. There is but one general law of life, but innumerable laws qualify and determine the myriads of forms perceived and of sounds heard. There are those who are willingly and others who are unwillingly -- blind. Mediums belong to the former, sensitives to the latter. Unless regularly initiated and trained -- concerning the spiritual insight of things and the supposed revelations made unto man in all ages from Socrates down to Swedenborg and 'Fern' -- no self-tutored seer or clairaudient ever saw or heard quite correctly."

"No harm and much instruction may come to you by joining his [Radhasoami] Society. Go on until he demands what you will be obliged to refuse. Learn and study. You are right: they [Salig Ram and his devotees] say and affirm that the one and only God of the Universe was incarnated in their guru [Shiv Dayal Singh, the acknowledged founder of Radhasoami], and were such an individual to exist he would certainly be higher than any 'planetary.' But they are idolators, my friend. Their guru was no initiate only a man of extraordinary purity of life and powers of endurance. He had never consented to give up his notions of a personal god and even gods though offered more than once. He was born an orthodox Hindu and died a self-reformed Hindu, something like Kechub-Ch-Sen but higher purer and with no ambition to taint his bright soul. Many of us have regretted his self-delusion but he was too good to be forcibly interfered with. Join them and learn -- but remember your sacred promise to K.H. . . . M."

Mahatma Letter No. 40

<http://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/mahatma/ml-40.htm>

Concerning Morya's comment that Rai Salig Ram had "a chronic disorder in that portion of the brain which responds to clear vision and the secret is soon told: that disorder was developed by forced visions; by hatha yog and prolonged asceticism."

Compare this with what Prof. A.P. Mathur writes about Rai Salig Ram:

"Huzur Maharaj [Rai Salig Ram] has criticized the various forms of yoga prevalent in the country since the days of yore . He discards hathayoga as a purely external exercise which, instead of generating love for the Supreme Being, gives rise to pride and conceit. It is devoid of any spiritual benefit. Discussing the practice of pranayam, he says that it is difficult to perform it in the modern age. Its ancillary observances are so hazardous that a slight lapse or neglect may result in serious illness or even death. Huzur Maharaj holds that even ascetics find themselves incapable of practising pranayam. For persons leading a family life, it is impossible to achieve any success. He further asserts that even if it is correctly and successfully performed, it will not lead to true salvation, because its gains are limited to the region of Brahmand." Quoted from:
<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Academy/9563/chapter4.html>

Regardless of what Mathur writes above, it has been documented that earlier in life, Rai Salig Ram had practised pranayama. See Radhasoami Reality: The Logic of a Modern Faith by Mark Juergensmeyer.

Compare the above with what Master KH writes about another person who had practised pranayama:

". . . he has nevertheless, by the injudicious practice of pranayam, developed in himself to some extent mediumship --- IS TAINTED FOR LIFE WITH IT." caps added. quoted from:
<http://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/mahatma/ml-56.htm>

Compare this again with what is given in Volume III of THE SECRET DOCTRINE, p. 502:

"Now, the science of Hatha Yoga rests upon the 'suppression of breath,' or Prāṇāyāma? . . . Prāṇa, as said, is not Jīva, the eternal fount of life immortal; nor is it connected in any way with Pranava, as some think, for Pranava is a synonym of AUM in a mystic sense. As much as has ever been taught publicly and clearly about it is to be found in Nature's Finer Forces. If such directions, however, are followed, they can only lead to Black Magic and mediumship. . . . The science of the Five Breaths, the moist, the fiery, the airy, etc., has a twofold significance and two applications. The Tantrikas take it literally, as relating to the regulation of the vital, lung breath, whereas the ancient Rājā Yogīs understood it as referring to the mental or 'will' breath, which alone leads to the highest clairvoyant powers, to the function of the Third Eye, and the acquisition of the true Rājā Yoga Occult powers. The difference between the two is enormous."

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

Encyclopedia Britannica says the following about Radhasoami religious movement:

"Radha Soami Satsang . . . also called Radhasvami Satsang, esoteric religious sect of India that has followers among both Hindus and Sikhs. The sect was founded in 1861 by Siva Dayal Saheb [Shiva Dayal Singh] (also called Sivdayal), a Hindu banker of Agra, who believed that human beings could perfect their highest capabilities only through repetition of the sabd ('sound'), or nam ('name'), of the Lord. Radha soami signifies the union of the soul with God, the name of God, and the sound heard internally that emanates from God. Great emphasis is placed on the 'congregation of truthful people,' the satsang."

"On the death of Siva Dayal Saheb, the Radha Soami sect split into two factions. The main group remained [under the leadership or guruship of Rai Salig Ram] at Agra. The other branch was started by a Sikh disciple of Siva Dayal Saheb named Jaimal Singh. Members of this latter group are known as the Radha Soamis of Beas, because they have their headquarters on the bank of the Beas River, near Amritsar."

Quoted from: "Radha Soami Satsang" Encyclop~~o~~dia Britannica
<<http://www.britannica.com/eb/article?eu=63974>>

SHIV DAYAL SINGH

"Soamiji Maharaj"

Ministry Dates: Mid-1850's to 1878.

Guru: Tulsi Sahib of Hathras (according to Beas); no guru (according to Soami Bagh and Dayal Bagh).

Successors: Rai Salig Ram; Jaimal Singh; Gharib Das; Sanmukh Das; Partap Singh; and Narayan Dei (Radhaji).

Center: Panni Gali and Soami Bagh, Agra.

Distinctions: Regarded as the founder of Radhasoami; popularized surat shabd yoga; expressed the teachings of Sant mat in a simplified and easy to understand manner.

Sources: Sar Bachan Radhasoami (both the prose and poetry volumes) by Soamiji Maharaj; Biography of Soamiji Maharaj by Chachaji Maharaj [Partap Singh]; and Last Discourse of Soamiji Maharaj and Letters of Soamiji Maharaj & Huzur Maharaj .

Quoted from David C. Lane's The Radhasoami Tradition, Appendix One,
<http://members.tripod.com/~dlane5/g1.html>

RAI SALIG RAM

"Huzur Maharaj"

Ministry Dates: Early 1880's to 1898 [apparently started gathering his own initiates around 1884]

Guru: Shiv Dayal Singh

Successors: Brahm Shankar Misra; Ajudhia Prasad; and Shiv Brat Lal. Center: Peepal Mandi, Agra.

Distinctions: Responsible for articulating Radhasoami mat as the Supreme Incarnational religion of all time; expanding membership in the Radhasoami movement; publishing the writings of Shiv Dayal Singh as well as his own.

Sources: Prem Patra (six volumes) by Huzur Maharaj [Rai Salig Ram]; Biography of Huzur Maharaj by S.D. Maheshwari; and Holy Epistles (Volumes One and Two).

Quoted from David C. Lane's The Radhasoami Tradition, Appendix One,
<http://members.tripod.com/~dlane5/g1.html>

David C. Lane writes:

"Scholarly attention was first paid to the Radhasoami movement indirectly when Max Mueller included a small section on Rai Salig Ram in his often quoted, Ramakrishna: His Life and Work (1899). Prior to this time, however, Salig Ram and Radhasoami were mentioned in passing in several Theosophical books. Due to the diligent research of Daniel Caldwell of Tuscon, Arizona, an authority on the early days of Theosophy, a number of references to Salig Ram and his teachings have been located. First, there is a paragraph on Salig Ram on page 151 of the "Appendix to Fourth Edition" in The Occult World by A. P. Sinnett (London: Trubner & Company, 1884). Second, there is a brief mention of him in Esoteric Buddhism by A. P. Sinnett in 1885 (San Diego: Wizards Bookshelf, 1981) on pages 9 and 10. Third, there is a short description of Salig Ram and his guru in a letter allegedly received around February 1882 on page 251 of The Mahatma Letters (Adyar, Madras: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1979). And fourth, Salig Ram's name appears as a subscriber in the December 1880 issue of Theosophist magazine. . . . "

Quoted from David C. Lane's The Radhasoami Tradition, Introduction: The Birth of a Guru, <http://members.tripod.com/~dlane5/rsintro.html>

David C. Lane writes:

"Rai Salig Ram, according to this perspective, did [see Note 1] not start the Radhasoami Faith, as such, but was rather the first disciple and the only true gurmukh . . . to have the Mehr (Grace) to recognize the unique stature of his guru. Subsequently, Shiv Dayal Singh was pleased to reveal the nij mat (original doctrine/path) of Radhasoami Purush (the Absolute Supreme Lord) to his beloved disciple which he had not done previously to anyone. . . . "

[Note 1]: "I have termed Rai Salig Ram's perspective as incarnationalist in my M.A. thesis, Radhasoami Mat (Berkeley: Graduate Theological Union, 1981), since he believed that his guru, Shiv Dayal Singh, was the FIRST ABSOLUTE manifestation of the Supreme Lord on earth. . . . " caps added.

Quoted from David C. Lane's The Radhasoami Tradition, Chapter One, <http://members.tripod.com/~dlane5/rs1.html>

For biographical sketch of Shiv Dayal Singh, see:

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Academy/9563/chapter3.html>

"The first guru of the Radhasoami faith was Shri Shiv Dayal Singhji who was later named Soamiji Maharaj. . . . "

For biographical sketch of Rai Salig Ram, see:

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Academy/9563/chapter4.html>

"The second guru of the Radhasoami Faith, Rai Saligram Bahadur, popularly known as Huzur Maharaj, was born in a kayastha family of Peepal Mandi, Agra, on 14 march 1829. . . . "

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

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