To begin with, the Beas Centre worked as an extension of the Agra Centre founded by Sath Shiv Dayal Singh alias Soamiji Maharaj. But, as the Agra Centre split into many sub-centres after the demise of Soamiji Maharaj, the Beas Centre found an opportunity to develop its own traditions and independent line of action. It did not accept new innovations of any kind introduced by other centres. If, sometimes, any of the Agra Centres adopted critical attitude towards it, however, it never came into clash with them. It won its opponents with toleration and peace. But, before discussing the relations of the Beas and the Agra Centres, it is essential to know about the growth of various Agra Centres which came into existence after the death of Soamiji Maharaj (1878).

AGRA CENTRES

It has already been stated that Soamiji Maharaj founded the Radha Soami Movement at Agra in January, 1861. Later on, in 1876 when the number of his followers increased, he laid the foundations of Soami Bagh, three miles away from

1. See above, p. 44.
Agra City, and hereafter, this place became the main centre of his activities. After his death (June 15, 1078), his disciple Rai Saligram Sahib alias Hazur Maharaj succeeded to the Guruaddi (the seat of the Guru). He started regular Satsanga activities at his own house called Hazuri Bawian in Pipal Mandi, Agra. He visited Soami Bagh only on special occasions. Seth Partap Singh alias Chacha Ji Sahib, the younger brother of Seth Shiv Dayal Singh, conducted regular Satsang meetings at Soami Bagh. After the death of Rai Saligram Sahib (December 6, 1898), Satsangs were regularly held at both the places i.e. at Soami Bagh as well as at Pipal Mandi.

3. Ibid., PP. 121-123.

After Rai Saligram Sahib Satsangs at Pipal Mandi, and Soami Bagh :-

(i) PIPAL MANDI : After the death of Rai Saligram Sahib, his Samadhi (memorial) was built in Pipal Mandi, Agra and the work of Satsang and initiation was taken up by his son Ajudhia Prasad alias Lala Ji Maharaj. He died on November 26, 1926 and his Samadhi was constructed in front of his father's Samadhi in the same hall. Then his son Gur Prasad alias Kunwar Ji Maharaj worked till his death on February 27, 1959. His Samadhi was also built in the same hall.

(ii) SOAMI BAGH : Seth Partap Singh conducted Satsangs and initiation from 1878 to 1909. After his death, his son Seth Sudarshan Singh alias Bhai Sahib took up the work of his father and worked till his death 1935. Afterwards, Madho Prasad alias Babu Ji Maharaj who had assumed leadership in 1913 at Allahabad shifted his head-quarter to Soami Bagh, Agra in 1937. After his death (1949) the work was taken up by Dr. J.N. Hazra. He worked till 1966 and died. He was succeeded by Bibi Rani, the daughter of Madho Prasad.

(Mathur, Agam Prasad., op. cit., PP. 121, 122, 125, 126).
Yet one of Rai Saligram Sahib's disciples, Brahm Shankar Misra alias Maharaj Sahib (1898-1907) started holding *Satsang* at Allahabad. Most of the followers of Soamiji Maharaj and Rai Saligram Sahib considered Brahm Shankar Misra the third Guru and the real successor of Rai Saligram Sahib. He, in order to give the Faith a distinct organisation, established the 'Central Administrative Council' in 1902 and the 'Radha Soami Trust' in 1904. Brahm Shankar Misra died on October 12, 1907 and his *Samādhi* (memorial) was built at Varanasi (Benares). Then his disciple, Kamta Prasad Sinha alias Sarkar Sahib started one more centre at Ghazipur. He cut off his relations with the 'Central Administrative Council' and formed 'Radha Soami Satsang Sabha' on March 26, 1910. He passed away on March 23, 1913 and was succeeded by Anand Sarup alias Sahib Ji Maharaj. In January 1915, he shifted his head-quarter to Agra and founded 'Dayal Bagh Colony' opposite to Soami Bagh, Agra. He founded Radha Soami Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Industries.

**RADHA SOAMI SATSANG AT AGRA**

**SETH SHIV Dyal SINGH 1861-1878**
*(SOAMI JI MAHARAJ)*
**FOUNDER**

---

**AGRA CENTRE**

**SOAMI BAGH AGRA**

- **SETH PARTAP SINGH (CHACHA JI SAHIB)**
  1878-1909

  - **SETH SUDARSAN SINGH (BHAJ SAHIB)**
    1909-1935

  - **SHYAM LAL GWALIAR**

  - **MADHO PRASAD (BABU JI MAHARAJ)**

    - Shifted from Allahabad
    - To Soami Bagh Agra
    1937-1949

  - **DR. J.N. HA2RA**
    1946-1966

  - **BIBI RANI**
    1966-1971

  *(BY: O.P. OAL)*

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**PIPAL MANDI AGRA**

- **RAJ SALIGRAM SAHIB (HAZUR MAHARAJ)**
  1878-1878

  - **AJUDH PRASAD (LALA JI MAHARAJ)**
    1878-1926 Agra

    - **MAHARISHI SHOBRAT LAL**
      SET UP CENTRE IN 1921 GOPI GUNW

      - **BRAHM SHANKAR (MISRA)**
        (MAHARAJ JI SAHIB)
        1898-1907

        - **ALLAHABAD**

          - **MAHESHWARI DEVI (BUA JI SAHIBA)**
            ALLAHABAD
            1907-1913

          - **KAMTA PRASAD SINHA (SAKAR SAHIB)**

            - **GHAZI PUR**

              - **ANAND SARUP (SAHIB JI MAHARAJ)**
                1913-1937

                - **FOUNDER OF Doyal Bagh Agra**

                  - **MADHO PRASAD (BABU JI MAHARAJ)**
                    1913-1936

                    - **ALLAHABAD**

                      - **THEN 1937-1949**

                      - **SOAMI BAGH AGRA**

              - **GURDASS RAM (RAJJI MAHARAJ)**

                - **DABNA**

                - **GHAZIABAD**

                - **GURCHARAN DASS MENTHA JI SAHIB**
                  1971-1975

                  - **AGRA**

                  - **M.B. LAL SAHIB (AGRA)**
                    1975- CONTINUE
He died on June 24, 1937 and was succeeded by Gurcharan Dass Mehta.\textsuperscript{7}

Thus, after the death of Soami Ji Maharaj, three independent centres came into existence at Agra because of the personal convenience and mutual conflict of the succeeding Gurus.\textsuperscript{8} Not only this, the properties of the past Gurus became the bone of contention among the followers of Soami Bagh Centre and Dyal Bagh Centre. After 1923, suits were filed in law courts about the division of property.\textsuperscript{9} Consequently, the relations among the Agra Centres remained strained. Now a brief outline of the relations of Agra Centres with the Beas Centre may be given.

(A) RELATIONS WITH SOAMI BAGH AND PIPAL MANDI CENTRES

The relations of Baba Jaimal Singh, founder of the Beas Centre, with Shrimati Narain Devi alias Mata Radha Ji (wife of Seth Shiv Dayal Singh), Seth Partap Singh of Soami Bagh and

\textsuperscript{7} Mathur, Agam Prasad., \textit{op. cit.}, PP. 127-128; Radha Soami Satsang Sabha Dayal Bagh Agra., Hazur Sahib Ji Maharaj, Sir Anand Sarup Kt., As others saw Him, (1963), PP. 9, 10.

Sahib Ji Maharaj established Model Industries in 1917 in Dayal Bagh. Since then it has been manufacturing a large variety of articles, e.g., high class laboratory balances, surgical instruments, biology sets, electric stoves, ceiling and table fans, gold and silver chains, pads, pens, knives, shoes, suit cases, silk, cotton and woollen cloth. (Dayal Bagh Souvenir, P. 212).

\textsuperscript{8} For details about these centres, see Chart - 5, facing page 227.

Rai Saligram Sahib of Pipal Mandi, were very cordial. In 1890, Baba Ji along with his disciple Bibi Ruko visited Agra. He was treated nicely and on his return the Mata gave him a red silken Pagri (head-gear) of Soami Ji Maharaj (Seth Shiv Dayal Singh), while Rai Saligram Sahib presented a costly cloak to Baba Ji. Similarly, afterwards, whenever Baba Ji along with some of his devoted followers went to Agra to attend the Bhandaras (religious feasts) of his beloved Guru, he stayed there for days together. He was respected by the family members of his Guru and Rai Saligram Sahib as well as by their followers. When unable to go in person, he sent offerings to Soami Bagh, Agra for Bhandara ceremony. He sent 32 maunds of wheat and two hundred rupees in cash to Soami Bagh, Agra for the Bhandara of his Guru in 1898. In 1901, Baba Ji with the help of S. Sawan Singh got constructed two rooms at his own expense at Soami Bagh, Agra, for board and lodging of the Beas Sangat. Thus, the relations among the Beas Centre, Soami Bagh and Pipal Mandi Centres remained cordial up to December, 1902.

10. Manuscript No. 1, PP. 174, 175.
However, after the formation of 'Central Administrative Council' (1902) at Agra, differences arose between the Beas and Agra Centres. It was mainly because Baba Jaimal Singh refused to become the member of the Council. Neither he nor S. Sawan Singh took any part in it. The Council demanded from Baba Ji the list of his initiates (followers of Beas Centre) for registration but Baba Ji showed reluctance. He was annoyed at the changes made by the Council in the basic teachings of Soami Ji Maharaj. To him, the new rules and regulations of the Council seemed somewhat arbitrary, rigid and defective. He thus chose not to associate himself with the innovations.

After the death of Baba Jaimal Singh (1903), his disciple S. Sawan Singh, the second Guru of the Beas Centre also maintained good relations with Seth Partap Singh of Soami Bagh, Agra. The latter also responded with great love to the former. For instance, Seth Partap Singh, on Baba Jaimal Singh's death sent a condolence letter to S. Sawan Singh.

After that S. Sawan Singh invited him to the Bhandara of Baba Jaimal Singh on February 21, 1904. Although Seth Partap Singh could not attend it due to his old age and indifferent health, he sent fifty rupees for it. After the death of Seth Partap Singh (1909), his son Seth Sudarshan Singh alias Bhai Sahib

15. Prem Parsharak, (Special number), Weekly, Urdu, February 6, 1961, (Dayal Bagh Agra), PP. 8, 9.
took the work of Satsang at Soami Bagh, Agra. His relations with S. Sawan Singh remained cordial like those of his father. Both invited each other on the Bhandaras of their predecessors and they exchanged visits with the feelings of love and devotion. In 1925, on the request of Seth Sudarshan Singh, S. Sawan Singh of Beas and Bagga Singh of Tarn Taran, attended the Bhandara of Soami Ji Maharaj at Soami Bagh, Agra. They stayed there for some days and received due respect from the authorities of Soami Bagh. In the same way, when Seth Sudarshan Singh visited Beas on December 25, 1925, he was well looked after. After the death of Seth Sudarshan Singh, Madho Prasad alias Babu Ji Maharaj took up the work of Satsang at Soami Bagh, Agra. In about 1939, he also paid a visit to Beas Centre. He stayed there for some days and received due respect from S. Sawan Singh. Thus, the relations between Soami Bagh, Agra and Beas Centres remained cordial.

(B) RELATIONS WITH DAYAL BAGH, AGRA

As already stated, Dayal Bagh Agr Centre was founded by Anand Sarup alias Sahib Ji Maharaj in 1915. In order to infuse new spirit into the Movement and win over a large

21. See above, P. 226.
following, he introduced some new ideas and practices at his centre such as - his acceptance of 'Radha Soami' as the true name of the Supreme Creator. He was of the opinion that a Sant Satguru (spiritual teacher) is always accountable to Satsangis for their offerings made to him. The Satsangis can question the acts of Sant Satguru. Further, he added, that Soami Ji Maharaj, Hazur Maharaj and Maharaj Sahib were not the owners of offerings or of the properties acquired thereby. Sahib Ji Maharaj, during his life time, laid more emphasis on the development of industries, educational institutions, and dairies. Consequently, the practice of Surat Shabd Yoga, which was the cardinal object of the Movement, became of secondary importance at this centre. It is true that the Radha Soami Movement does not favour inactivity in the world and discards asceticism. But it is also clearly mentioned in


24. Dayal Bagh History, PP. 33-34, 41-42.

25. Dr. Julian P. Johnson M.A., M.D., an American Surgeon resided in Dayal Bagh, Agra for two years in order to know the secret of spirituality but he gained nothing about it. (For details, see Julian P. Johnson, The Unquenchable Flame, (Lahore, 1935), PP. 278, 279).
the teachings of the founder Guru that too much attachment with the material world is undesirable and it would hinder spiritual progress. The Beas Centre did not like such changes of the Dayal Bagh Centre. Therefore, the relations between the two could not remain friendly for many years. The Beas Centre was criticised by the Agra and Allahabad Centres. Specially, the leader of Dayal Bagh, Sahib Ji Maharaj used to pass derogatory remarks about S. Sawan Singh of Beas. On September 11, 1931, he said:

"I know from direct knowledge that Sardar Sawan Singh does not believe that the 'Radha Soami' name is a Dhuniatmak name and also that he does not believe in any Satguru except Soami Ji Maharaj. It is therefore evident that neither the sound of the name 'Radha Soami' reverberates within the Sardar Sahib nor has he any contact with the spirit current Radha Soami." 26

Similarly, the Allahabad centre also criticised the Beas Centre stressing the same point and used to call the followers of Beas Centre as Sat-Namis because they believe in Sat-Nam and not in Radha Soami Name. 27

S. Sawan Singh did not, however, care for such criticism. He, continued his work peacefully. Being liberal minded, he had love for all. Notwithstanding the criticism against him, he on the invitation of Sahib Ji Maharaj, attended jubilee

celebration function at Dayal Bagh, Agra on December 23, 1932. His saintly behaviour at once disarmed his critics. On the following day, a special meeting was held between the leaders of Dayal Bagh and Beas Centre. The doctrines and principles as propounded by the founder, Soami Ji Maharaj, were discussed. Finally, an agreement was concluded and signed by both the spiritual leaders. According to it, in future S. Sawan Singh would explain 'Radha Soami' Name to his followers at the time of initiation. On December 25, 1932 the agreement was read out by Rai Har Narain Dass, the secretary of Beas Centre, in a Satsang at Dayal Bagh, Agra. Afterwards, S. Sawan Singh delivered a brief speech supporting Sahib Ji Maharaj's thoughts and advised the Satsangis to live with love and affection in future.

After that relations between the Dayal Bagh and the Beas Centre remained cordial. On November 26, 1933, Sahib Ji Maharaj alongwith some of his followers paid a visit to the Beas Centre. The leaders of both the Centres delivered a Satsang from the same stage and they were shown every respect by the audience. On the death of Sahib Ji Maharaj in 1937,
S. Sauan Singh sent a condolence letter to Dayal Bagh, Agra.\textsuperscript{32} When after the death of Sahib Ji Maharaj, Gurcharan Dass Mehta took up the reins of Dayal Bagh, Agra in 1937, his relations with the Beas Centre also remained friendly.\textsuperscript{33} On the death of S. Sauan Singh of Beas (April 2, 1948), Mehta Sahib sent a condolence letter to the authorities of Beas Centre and he also sent his personal secretary to Dera Baba Jaimal Singh, Beas at the time of succession of Sardar Bahadur Jagat Singh to the GuruShip of Beas Centre on April 13, 1948.\textsuperscript{34}

Thus, by and large, the relations between the Dayal Bagh and the Beas Centres remained cordial. Inspite of these friendly relations and exchange of frequent visits, the Beas Centre remained quite unaffected with the new trends and development in the Radha Soami Movement of the Agra Centres, particularly that of Dayal Bagh. The Beas Centre adhered to its own principles.

\textsuperscript{32} Prem Parchark, Weekly, Urdu, July 5, 1937, (Dayal Bagh Agra).

\textsuperscript{33} Lajuanti., Sakhian Sant Chariter, Part I, Hindi, (Delhi, 1959), PP. 152-162.

\textsuperscript{34} Munshi Ram, Ruhani Diary, Part III, Urdu, (Delhi, 1966), p. 2.
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN AGRA AND BEAS CENTRES

(A) STRUCTURAL DIFFERENCES

First, the Dayal Bagh Centre laid emphasis on material pursuits of life. It laid stress upon establishing industries, technical institutions, banks, and dairy farms, with a view to popularising this Centre and gaining more money. Attention was also paid towards setting up industrial exhibitions and running shops of their own products in different parts of the country. During the years 1931 to 1935, exhibitions were organised at Lahore (1931), Patna and Ambala (1932), Ajmer (1933), Tinnevely (1934), Allahabad and Delhi (1935). The followers of their own faith were advised to purchase and use goods manufactured at the Dayal Bagh.

On September 5, 1931, Sahib Ji Maharaj Said:

"It is decided that Satygrhis living in Dayal Bagh particularly may take a vow that in future they would not purchase for their use any cloth not manufactured in Dayal Bagh."


Threats of expulsion from Dayal Bagh Colony were given to those who did not obey his command. Once, when it was brought to the notice of Sahib Ji Maharaj that a lady follower of the faith purchased cloth for her daughter's marriage from Delhi, she was immediately asked to explain her conduct. Further, none was permitted to maintain cows or buffaloes in Dayal Bagh, Agra and the residents had to purchase milk and milk products from the dairy run by the Centre.

On the basis of such activities of this Centre, it may be concluded that it had realised the importance of economic aspect in the propagation of a new faith. An economically well-knit community which could ensure the welfare of its members could attract more followers than the mere gospels of the Gurus in Sat sangs.

On the other hand, the Guru of Beas Centre did not approve the idea of establishing dairies, banks, and industries. Even in the very beginning, Baba Jaimal Singh, the founder of this Centre did not agree with S. Sauan Singh to erect buildings in his Dera. Being a spiritualist, he did not want to bind himself with material things. Similarly, his successor,

S. Sawan Singh was not in favour of establishing any industry in this Centre. Once, his disciple, Rai Bahadur Narain Singh of Delhi presented a cheque of one lakh rupees to the Great Master requesting him that on the pattern of Agra Centre, some industries should be started at Beas Centre. But the Master refused to accept the cheque saying:

"There are so many big cities in India where industries can be set up. It is the place of only doing Bhajan Simran and the Surat Shabd Yoga is the only industry of ours. We do not want to disturb the peaceful atmosphere of this place by establishing the materialistic industries."

Thus, the Great Master opposed the idea of founding industries at Beas Centre. According to the teachings of the Radha Soami Movement, too much attachment with the material world is a great obstacle in the realization of God and salvation. That is why the Beas Centre from its inception gave primary importance to the practice of Surat Shabd Yoga through which one could realise God.

Secondly, the Soami Bagh and Pipal Mandi Centres of Agra believe in the construction of Samadhis (memorials) of their past Gurus. In Pipal Mandi Centre, Samadhi of Rai Salig Ram was built after his death. Later on, the Samadhis of his successors like Ajudhia Prasad (1926) and Gur Prasad

After the death of Prasad of Soami Bagh (1949), his Samadhi was built in Radha Bagh. The construction work of Seth Shiv Dayal Singh's Samadhi though started in 1904, is still in progress. Lakhs of rupees have been spent on it. Thus, it appears that the Agra Centres have developed a tradition of building Samadhis.

The Beas Centre on the other hand, has been against such ideas of constructing memorials of past Gurus. Till 1951 three Gurus of this Centre have passed away but no Samadhi has been built. Not only this, S. Sawan Singh did not even permit the followers of Bapuji Singh, the Guru of Tarn Taran centre, to build his Samadhi. He was of the opinion that Samadhi worship is against the Sant-Nab because it increases the idol worship which cannot be helpful in spiritual attainments.

Thirdly, the Agra Centres, instead of paying more attention towards the welfare of the Sangat (congregation) remained busy in running litigations against each other in the

42. Maheshwari, S.D., Radha Soami Faith, p. 85.
43. Ibid., pp. 100, 107.
The law courts held the properties of the past Gurus. A litigation - Dayal Bagh versus Soami Bagh - lasted in the lower and high courts for twelve years and eventually it went up for final decision to the Privy Council in England, where it was decided on March 5, 1935. Thus, lakhs of rupees have been spent upon litigations and on construction and dismantling the Samadhi of Seth Shiv Dayal Singh.

On the other hand, the Beas Centre is against such activities. Instead, it has been investing money in running free libraries, common kitchens and hospitals. Since 1965 this Centre is conducting free eye camp every year regularly. Lakhs of rupees are thus spent for the welfare of the people.

45. Maheshwari, S.D., Radha Soami Faith, PP. 330, 496.
(6) IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES

Ideologically too, these Centres have drifted away from each other.

(i) As already stated the followers of Agra Centres believe in the worship of Samadhis of their dead Gurus. Often they hold congregational prayers at the Samadhis and pay homage to them. They derive a great solace from worshipping the memorials of their Gurus.

The advocates of the Beas Centre however do not entertain such ideas; they advocate to show every respect to the living master. In the words of Maharaj Charan Singh:

"The Saints of the past were doubtless perfect Masters but we cannot benefit from them now. We need a living Master .... " 51

In this context, he further remarks:

"If we need a Master, we always need a living Master. Why do we need a Master? Because God is not at our level, and the living Master is at our level. One who is at our level can guide us back to the level of the Lord. The Masters of the old were great in their own times. But now they have gone back to the Father and have become the Father. So if we look to them to help us, it is the same thing as trying to contact the Lord directly. Because they are at the level of the Lord now, they are not at our level. The only one who can help us is one who is at our own level. That is why there is always the necessity for a living Master." 52

50. Maheshwari, S.D., Radha Soami Faith, PP. 494-495.
51. Charan Singh., The Path, (Delhi, 1970), P. 87.
52. Radha Soami Satsang Bano., Thus Saith the Master, (Delhi, 1974), P. 226.
(ii) The Agra Centres in their discourses recite Shabads (hymns) from the writings of their respective Gurus alone. They do not recite the Bani (speech) of other saints. Besides, they in the beginning or at the end of the Satsang, sing a Bainti (prayer) like - Karun Bainti Dow Kar Jori, Araj Suno Radha Soami Mori. They give it the same importance as the Sikhs give to Ardas (offering) in their daily prayers.

But in the Satsangs of the Beas Centre mode of prayer is quite different. The present Master of Beas Centre in his discourses quotes from the teachings of all the saints irrespective of their religion, caste or creed. Thus,


Not only the present Master of Beas Centre, but also Baba Jaimal Singh, S. Sauan Singh and S.B. Jagat Singh (former Gurus of the Beas Centre) in their discourses used to quote from the teachings of the various saints. (For details, see Manuscript No. 1, PP. 147, 201, 202, 215, 219, 220-304; Radha Soami Satsang Beas, Sant Mat Parkash, Part I, Hindi, (Amritsar, 1963), PP. 2,3,6,13,17,35,139, 143,151,154,155; Ruhani Diary Part I, P. 14; Ruhani Diary Part III, PP. 7,10,11,149; Sauan Singh., Tales of The Mystic East, (Delhi, 1964), PP. 20-23, 202-208, 242-243.). Also see Isaac A. Ezekiel., Saint Peity, (Calcutta, 1977), P. VII; Rasula Sari Duniya, Monthly, Urdu, April 1949; July 1949; August 1949; April 1957; (Dera Baba Jaimal Singh, Beas), PP. 14-16, 12-16, 10-16 and 180 respectively.
Khushwant Singh is wrong when he says that 'the Radha Soamis of Beas accept the teachings of only first five Gurus contained in the Adi Granth and reject the rest'. After studying the discourses of the Gurus of the Beas Centre, it may be said that this Centre has developed a broader religious outlook than that of the Agra Centres.

(iii) The followers of Agra Centres strictly believe that Seth Shiv Dayal Singh, the founder of the Radha Soami Movement was the incarnation of the Supreme Being and had descended from the highest spiritual region and had assumed human form at will. Dayal Bagh Centre claims that, 'Hazur Soami Ji Maharaj had no spiritual Guru and he did not get initiation or the secret of spiritual practice from any person.' Soami Bagh Centre also holds the same opinion. It says that, 'Being the incarnation of the Supreme Being Radha Soami Dayal Soami Ji Maharaj was imbued with spirituality of the highest order. He stood in no need of acquiring any knowledge, spiritual or secular. Accordingly, he had no spiritual teacher or guide'.

But, the Beas Centre does not believe in the incarnation theory. Baba Baimal Singh, the devoted disciple of Soami Ji Maharaj, instructed S. Savan Singh in one of his letters at the

time of printing Sarbachan in Punjabi that,

"The introductory pages of Sarbachan must be completed as early as possible. But, do not write that 'Hazur Soami Ji had no Guru.'"

The followers of Bees Centre contend that Soami Ji got light and guidance from Tulsi Sahib of Hathras and he had great love and respect for his Master. He used to call him Sahib Ji.

They believe, Soami Ji was only a renowned saint like Kabir, Nanak, Namdev, etc.

(iv) As mentioned earlier, there are two kinds of Naam - Varnatmak Naam and Dhuniatmak Naam. The former is a word denoting a thing, while the latter is a thing itself. Varnatmak is the verbal name of God; while Dhuniatmak is the essence of God Himself.

The Agra group believes that 'Radha Soami' is a Dhuniatmak Naam. Only through its help, the soul can go upward from the third eye and one can be released from the cycle of birth and death. Thus, to this group 'Radha Soami Naam' is both a means and end.

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61. Radha Soami Satsang Beas, Tulsi Sahib Saint of Hathras, (Delhi, 1978), PP. 6-8.
62. The detailed information regarding Soami Ji's Guru has already been given. See above, PP. 46-48.
63. See above, PP. 124-126.
But, the Beas group does not believe in this theory.

They consider that the Radha Soami name is \textit{Varnatmak Naam}.

The present Master of Beas Centre says:

"All the names by which we devotedly remember our Maker, such as God, Allah, Radha Soami, Waheguru, etc. are \textit{Varnatmak names}, that is they can be written spoken and read" 64

About \textit{Dhuniatmak Naam}, he remarks:

"The name that all Masters or Saints extol, that they all glorify, that gives salvation, that enables us to control the mind, that helps us to untie the knot of the soul and the mind, that makes us know ourselves and realise the Lord is called \textit{Dhuniatmak} by Saints. This name is the true \textit{Naam}. It is imperishable. It can neither be read nor written nor spoken. Hazur Maharaj Ji used to call it the 'Unwritten Law' and the 'Unspoken Language'... The \textit{Varnatmak} names are our means while \textit{Dhuniatmak} name is our end and object." 65

Sardar Bahadur Jagat Singh, the third Guru of Beas Centre, in this context said:

"In the \textit{Dhuniatmak} name there is the element of complete absorption and ecstasy. It is that music which can be heard only by the soul at the eye centre in our body. This name is called by various saints of the world, with different names such as - Shabd, Anhad, Audible Life stream, Kun, Nad, Word, Kala, Tej, etc." 66

Thus, this is another difference between the two centres.

64. Charan Singh., \textit{Truth Eternal}, (Delhi, 1977), P. 25.
The Gurus at Agra Centres, at the time of initiation of a new entrant used to tell him only to recite the name "Radha Swami, Radha Swami." They are of the opinion that Seth Shiv Dayal Singh, after the foundation of the Radha Soami Satsang in 1861, used to give this holy name of five syllables i.e. 'RA-DHA-SWA-MI' to the entrants for repetition.

On the other hand, the Beas group does not agree with this idea. At the time of initiation the masters of this centre give the Gurmantar (spiritual instruction) of five words instead of five syllables to the neophyte. The Gurmantar is esoteric and those who had been initiated are expected not to divulge it to the non-Satsangis.

Regarding the difference in the Gurmantar of the Agra Centres and the Beas Centre it may be said that if Seth Shiv Dayal Singh had started to impart the repetition of 'Radha Swami' to the new entrants after the foundation of the Radha Soami Satsang in 1861, he must have informed about the change of the Gurmantar to his closest disciple Baba Gaimal Singh, who remained in his contact till 1877. But it was not disclosed to him. Further it was due to this very change that Baba Gaimal Singh did not become the member of the Central Administrative

67. Dayal Bagh Souvenir, P. 220.
68. Ibid., F. 16.
69. Kapoor, Daryai Lal., Charti Par Swarg, PP. 407-413; Metta Pfeifer, A Soul's Safari, (Delhi, 1981), PP. 164,165.
70. Kapoor, Daryai Lal., Charti Par Swarg, P. 15.
Council* which was formed in 1902 at Agra. He was annoyed as to why the Council had made such a fundamental change in the basic teachings of Soami Ji Maharaj. The Gurus of the Beas Centre believe that Soami Ji Maharaj used to give the Gurmantar of five words and not of five syllables. An elaborate description of the five words is found in his book Sarbachan.

(vi) The method of initiation of Agra Centres as well as Beas Centre also differs. So far as the Dayal Bagh group is concerned, the person desirous of joining the Radha Soami Faith is asked by the Guru to study some books on the subject and to attend Satsangs regularly for at least three months. After that, he has to apply for initiation on the prescribed printed form and has also to give his word of honour that he would observe certain rules of the faith. After that his initiation takes place in two stages. In the first stage the seeker is told to do Simran and Dhayan. After sometime, his case is reconsidered and he is then initiated into Bhejan i.e. sound practice.

For difference between word and syllable, see Rishi Gopal., Hindi Ka Bhasha Vaniyan Adhivan, Hindi, (Jullundur, Samvat 2017), PP. 128, 129.
73. Sarbachan Poetry, PP. 222-229.
74. Dayal Bagh Souvenir, PP. 303, 304.
So far as the method of initiation of Soami Bagh Centre and the Pipal Mandi Centre is concerned, in the past the seeker could apply for initiation even by post. He was initiated by any disciple of the Soami Bagh who might be living in the seeker's village or in a city nearby. If no disciple was available as such, the seeker was initiated even by post. He was sent a printed letter containing the Gurmantar either by the Master himself or by any other person authorised by him. In the Pipal Mandi Centre, it was obligatory on the part of every disciple to initiate his wife into the Faith himself.

The Beas Centre, however, follows different method in the matter of initiation. The record of this Centre reveals that from Baba Jaimal Singh to the present Master, the seekers are initiated by the Master himself in India. Before initiation the Master puts some questions to the seeker. If the Master is satisfied with his answers then the seeker is given the gift of Naam by the Master himself. If the Master finds the seeker unfit, he is outrightly rejected. But once a man is initiated, he is told the method of Simran, Bhayan and Bhajan in the very first instance. A husband is not allowed to tell the Naam.

75. Jivan Charit, Baby Ji Maharaj, p. 35.
Baby Ji Maharaj of Soami Bagh, Agra used to impart Gurmantar 'Radha Soami' to his followers. (Jivan Charit, Baby Ji Maharaj, p. 220).
or Gurmantar to his wife if she is not initiated. Also, the Beas Centre does not follow the method of giving Naam by post.\(^7\)\(^8\)

(vii) The Master as well as the followers of the Agra Centres give special importance to the Basant Panchmi Day because Seth Shiv Dayal Singh had started delivering Satsang on this day. They celebrate this occasion with great pomp and show: the followers wear yellow clothes, distribute sweets, and hold musical functions. The Master also applies Tikas (marks) of Gulal (red colour) on the foreheads of his disciples.\(^7\)\(^9\)

The Beas Centre does not give such importance to this day. On the other hand, the followers of this Centre celebrate the Bhandares with great zeal. But on these occasions they neither put on festive dresses nor adorn themselves with any distinguished mark. Satsang is delivered as usual and the Karah Parshad (sweet pudding) is distributed from the common kitchen. The Master lays stress upon doing Bhanj Simran rather than following other rituals.\(^8\)\(^0\)

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78. Information collected from Daryai Lal Kapoor, The Personal Secretary of the present Master of the Beas Centre, and from the followers of the Beas Centre namely Jagdish Rai Vohra of Rai Kot, Vaid Jagannath of Chima, Amrit Lal Passi of Ludhiana and Bibi Lajo of Amritsar.


The followers of Soami Bagh, Pipal Mandi and Oayal Bagh of Agra Centres, strictly believe in performing *arti* (ceremonial worship) of their Gurus. This tradition was started during the times of Soami Ji Maharaj. The followers, putting *jota* (lamps) in a plate, used to move in a circle before the Guru. At that time, a prayer was sung in a sweet voice. 

After the death of Soami Ji Maharaj, the second Guru, Rai Saligram Sahib made some alteration in this system. He introduced silent *arti* while sitting face to face in the presence of the Master.

Secondly, the followers of both the centres used to believe in taking Mith Amrit (water sanctified by ablution of Guru's mouth), and *Charan Amrit* (water with which the feet are washed) from their Gurus. They thought it holy and believed that this water in addition to curing the patients of their ailments, would help them in concentrating their mind upon the third eye or *Tisra Til*. This tradition goes back to the times of Seth Shiv Oayal Singh and remained in practice till the times of Babu 3i Harharaj.
FACSIMILE OF THE FOOTPRINTS OF MADHO PRASAD (BABUJI MAHARAJ)
Thirdly, in Soami Bagh, there is a well which was constructed during the times of Soami Ji Maharaj. The followers of the Soami Bagh as well as the Pipal Mandi Centres consider its water sacred because it contains Charan Amrit and Mukh Amrit of Soami Ji Maharaj in considerable quantity. They preserve its water in their homes.

Fourthly, in Soami Bagh, the worship of Kharans (wooden sandals) of Soami Ji Maharaj and his Samadh is very common among the followers. They touch the Kharans with their foreheads and do Parikrama (circumambulation) of the Samadh. Somewhat strange things were done at the death of Babu Ji Maharaj in Soami Bagh. He died on October 17, 1949. His corpse was preserved in the ice for three days. During this period, the water melted from ice was collected and used as Charan Amrit by the followers. They took new Kharans and touched Guru's feet with them. The Kharans were taken away to their homes for worship. In this way, various articles were touched with the corpse and were considered sacred. In addition, the footprints of the corpse were taken on the papers and handkerchiefs for worship in future.


For a facsimile of such footprints see Document - 2, facing page 250.
However, no such things have been done at the Beas Centre. The followers of this Centre do not perform Arti of their Guru, nor the Guru gives any Charan Amrit and Mukh Amrit to his disciples. They believe in doing Bhajan Simran only.

Thus, we may sum up that the Agra Centres still believe in outward rituals and superstitions. The worship of idol photo, water and Samadh has increased among its followers. As a result of these activities, the Radha Soami Movement became a subject of criticism among other socio-religious reform movements and it suffered a set back in the Uttar Pradesh. Though, the Radha Soamis of Beas Centre were immune from such activities, even they were criticised and defamed by the orthodox sikhs who dubbed them as, "men worippers, eaters of leftovers, believers in ghosts and evil spirits."

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88. Kapoor, Daryai Lal., Cell of the Great Master, (Delhi, 1972), P. XXXIV.