

The Origins of Sant Mat, The Five Names, and the Identity of Tulsi Sahib's Guru, by James Bean



On the Usage of the Term "Sant Mat" and the Tulsi Sahib Connection

Very much like "Buddhism" or "Sufism" are terms used by many to refer to any number of organizations or spiritual paths, "Sant Mat" is a fairly widely used general term for a certain kind of Eastern spirituality, gnosticism or mysticism. Even as there are hundreds of Sufi Orders and diverse forms of Hinduism, there are millions of people and satsangs,

thousands of ashrams, and scores of teachers or organizations in, and outside of, India that describe themselves with the label "Sant Mat".

"Sant Mat" can be defined as: "The Teachings ('Mat') of the Saints ('Sants') or Sages" or "Path of the Masters". In India it's common knowledge that the term "Sant Mat" was coined or adapted by Param Sant Tulsi Sahib of Hathras during the 19th-century. "Sant Mat" was adopted and popularized by Tulsi Sahib as a new name for this spiritual path or genre of mysticism, but the Sant tradition, with its many guru-lineages or branches, is a spiritual movement that dates back many centuries to ancient India.

Sants of Antiquity Long Before the Time of Kabir

It's unknown who the first Sant was in ancient times. There are references in Krishna/Vaishnava texts to Sants. A few of the Rishi Sages who authored certain Upanishads pertaining to the Formless God, Inner Light and Sound Meditation or Nada/Shabda Yoga (some dating back many centuries B.C.E.) also seem to be at the same level as Sants. In somewhat more recent times, in some circles associated with the Tulsi Sahibis, Gorakhnath, a 11th-century Nath Yogi, is considered to be a Sant. Baba Gorakhnath did teach Surat Shabd Yoga. The Kabir Panth tradition of northern Sants includes much Nath Yogi terminology and apparently was somewhat influenced by the Nath tradition. The 15th century poet-mystic and spiritual master Kabir can be credited with helping to expand greatly the influence of the Sants in India, but Kabir was not the first Sant, and it is unknown who his guru was. (Some traditions describe Baba Ramananda as the guru of Kabir, but not everyone agrees with this view.) The first Masters formally called Sants that are usually mentioned in Sant literature are the 12th-century poet Jayadeva, author of the Gita Govinda, and, Visoba Khechar, who was Sant Namdev's spiritual Master (Sant Satguru).

Seeing references in Krishna/Vaishnava Hindu scriptures, Sant Tulsi Sahib of Hathras was of the opinion that the Sant movement dates back to the time of Krishna thousands of years ago, that Krishna knew of Sants during his day.

An Example of Sants Mentioned in a Hindu Scripture Called the Bhagavad Purana

"Such individuals who have achieved the unity of atman (soul) and Param-atman (Supreme Soul, God) are known as Sants. According to the Bhagavad Purana there is no one greater than a Sant in the eyes of the Divine. Lord Krishna says to his disciple Uddhava Ji: 'All devotees like you are very dear to me. They are dearer to me than Lord Brahma, Lord Shankara, my brother Bal Ram, Goddess Lakshmi and even my own soul. Therefore, I walk behind these Sants hoping that the dust arising from their holy feet would touch my body and purify me.'" (Hindu scripture quoted by Swami Vyasanaand of the Tulsi Sahib/Maharshi Mehi Sant Mat lineage in his book, "The Inward Journey of

the Soul", new Amazon Kindle e-book)

"There is no end to the number of Sants who appeared in the Yugas [Epochs] of Sat, Treta, Dvapara, and Kali [Yuga]. I sing of the celebrated one I have heard of, and bow my head to all the others." (Jan Gopal, disciple of Sant Dadu Dayal of Rajasthan in, *The Life Story of Dadu Dayal -- The Book of Janma*, translated into English by the scholar Winand M. Callewaert, in, "The Hindi Biography of Dadu Dayal", Motilal Banarsidass.)

Of course, mere references to "Sants" in antiquity doesn't really shed light on the specifics of what their teachings and meditation practices might have been, though it can be said that all the elements of Sant Mat are to be found in various older Hindu scriptures. In the section below titled: *Vedic Dharma vs. Santana Dharma*, see the link to the research of Maharshi Mehi Paramhans.

Commonly used words like "Sant", "Sat", and "Mat", with their roots in Sanskrit, are found in the literature of many spiritual paths originating in India. "Santmat", as a single word referring to the efficacy of following the teachings of Sants does turn up on a couple of occasions in Sant literature during the centuries prior to the time of Tulsi Sahib. It is present in a few verses of Kabir, and is in at least one verse of a poem of Sant Goswami Tulsidas, author of the epic *Ramcharitmanas*: "Ihaan na pachhapaat kachhu raakhaun. Ved puran santmat bhaakhaun". Clearly however, "Sant Mat" or "Santmat" as the universal name or label for this school of spirituality or Sant tradition begins with Tulsi Sahib during the 19th Century in Hathras, and now has been embraced by millions of souls and scores of spiritual paths based in India.

"The teachings of all Saints are essentially the same. They speak of the 'Kingdom of Heaven' which is within. They show the path and impart instructions to attain it. They do not claim to teach something new or different from what other Saints have taught. Tulsi Sahab declared that he was giving the same teachings as those of Kabir Sahab, Nanak Sahab, Dadu Sahab and other Saints. Tulsi Sahab, for the first time, used the expression 'Sant Mat' or 'the teachings of Saints' to stress the basic unity of the teachings of all Saints." (From the entry for Sant Tulsi Sahib in, "RadhaSoami White Paper on the Religion of Sants and RadhaSoami Faith", published by Dayal Bagh in Agra)

"While the title of Sant Mat (translated as 'Teachings of the Sants') was not coined until the late 19th century by Tulsi Sahib, the philosophical mindset was indeed prevalent for many centuries." (Andrea Diem-Lane, Ph.D., "Lions in the Punjab: An Introduction to the Sikh Religion", from Chapter One, *The Sikh--Sant Connection*)

Param Tulsi Sahib of Hathras originated the term "Sant Mat" as recorded in the *Ghat Ramayan* also according to the scholar Parashuram Chaturvedi in his book "Sant Parampara", cited by Mark Juergensmeyer. (See footnote 23, in the chapter titled, "The

Radhasoami Revival", by Mark Juergensmeyer, on page 337 in, "The Sants, Studies in a Devotional Tradition of India", Edited by Karine Schomer and W.H. McLeod, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1987)

"One thing that all factions agree upon, though, is that Tulsi Sahib consolidated the teachings of nirguna bhakti, expounded the path of surat shabd yoga, and was largely responsible for the popular usage of the term Sant mat. His teachings are embodied in Ghat Ramayana, Ratan Sagar, and Shabdavali." (David C. Lane, "The Radhasoami Tradition, A Critical History of Guru Successorship", Garland Publishing, 1992 edition, page 39)

"Tulsi Sahib, for the first time, used the expression 'Sant Mat' or 'teachings of Saints' to stress the basic unity of the teachings of all Saints. Swami Ji later adopted the same expression, 'Sant Mat', in his works." (Janak Raj Puri and V. K. Sethi, "Tulsi Sahib, Saint of Hathras", 1981 edition, Mystics of the East Series, Radha Soami Satsang Beas, Book Department, page 18)

"For all the religious traditions of India, the nineteenth-century was an age of rationalistic reform, during which the attempt was made to systematize beliefs and make practices consistent with doctrines. Tulsi Sahib of Hathras (ca 1760-1843) was at once heir to certain esoteric tendencies in later Sant tradition and a precursor of the new spirit.

Stressing the unity of the Sants as a parampara, he taught what he believed to be the common core of doctrines implicit in all the Sants ('sant mat'), and tried to reverse the spread of saguna beliefs and practices among the followers of nirguna panths. Heavily indebted to him was Shiv Dayal Singh (1818-1878), founder of the modern Radhasoami movement." (Karine Schomer, "The Sants", Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, page 7)

"Tulsi Sahib, a Sant of Hathras from the nineteenth century, recognized that Sants drew upon the teachings of other Sant figures as spiritual resources. Pointing out the common spiritual roots, he identified this movement as a coherent religious tradition, which he called 'Sant Mat', simply meaning a 'Sant faith'." (Andrea Diem-Lane, "The Gnostic Mystery, a Connection Between Ancient and Modern Mysticism", Mount San Antonio College Press, Walnut, CA, 1992 edition, page, 29)

Said Tulsi Sahib: "The principles and tenets of Sant Mat are one and the same, only there is a difference in terminology. Since the same principles have been stated using different names, you become confused and do not understand them. Sat Saheb, that is, Sat Purush, has been described as Sat Nam. And Sar Shabd (True Shabd) has been called A-Nam. The name Nirgun has been given to Niranjan and it is the mind which has been called Ram. What Kabir had said, has been said by other Sants, too. Kabir explained Sant Mat in his own way, other Sants in other ways. The religion of all those who have gained access within is one and the same. Those who lack true understanding, adhere to

dogmas and blind beliefs. Those who have spoken on the basis of inner experiences, have sung of the same Panth or path for reaching the Lord."

"Listen, O Phool Das, I have given out the same true secrets which Sants like Kabir Saheb, Dadu Saheb, Rai Das Ji, Darya Saheb, Guru Nanak, Soor Das Ji, Nabha Ji and Mira Bai have spoken of. They, too, have composed similar hymns describing the bliss of the highest spiritual region, whose glory I also have sung, blessed by the grace and the dust of the holy feet of Sants". (Ghat Ramayan, "Param Sant Tulsi Sahib", translated by Sant Das Maheshwari, Agra)

Vedic Dharma vs. Santana Dharma -- Sant Mat or Way of the Sages/Sant Satgurus

I've gotten to know many in the Tulsi Sahib branch of Sant Mat for over a decade now. This includes the followers of Maharshi Mehi and his spiritual successors. Maharshi Mehi Paramhans and others closely associated with the Tulsi Sahib branch of Sant Mat have been in the cultural context of Hinduism what Pythagoreans, Sufis, Gnostics, Jewish and Christian Mystics have often been in relation to their prospective traditions: focusing on the esoteric passages contained in their scriptures and contemplative traditions of meditation practice. They find mystic "jewels" or "gold" embedded in the "mud" of tradition. With many Sants of India this includes references to teachings about a Formless State or God beyond other gods-with-form (nirguna bhakti), and a Yoga of Inner Light and Sound. Some in the west know about the Nada Bindu Upanishad and Hatha Yoga Pradipika with their references to inner Sound meditation, but there are many, many other texts as well. For a comprehensive exploration of mystical elements present in scores of Hindu scriptures, see the book, "Satsang Yoga", Volume One, by Maharshi Mehi Paramhans, translated into English by Sidheshwar Mallick, published by Maharshi Mehi Ashram, Kuppaghat, Bhagalpur, Bihar. Also see this online article: "Maharshi Mehi -- The Bridge Between Hindu Scriptures and Sant Mat", by Pravesh K. Singh:

<https://medium.com/sant-mat-meditation-and-spirituality/2fadde15060d>

Who Was Tulsi Sahib's Guru? Our One-And-Only Solid Clue

Everyone in contemporary Sant Mat has a clear idea about their own recent history of masters, at least dating back a few generations. Most trace their lineage of gurus back to Sant Tulsi Sahib of Hathras, India. Tulsi Sahib (1763-1843) is viewed as the adi-guru or founding guru, the "great grandfather" of modern-day Sant Mat. The identity of Sant Tulsi Sahib's guru has understandably been of great interest to many students of Sant Mat history. It's quite normal for followers of a spiritual path to be curious about "the family tree" of previous masters, wanting to know where their spiritual path comes from. So, who was the guru of Tulsi Sahib? And who was that individual's guru? Who was the guru before that? And so on.

Some believe that Tulsi Sahib, the great Saint of Hathras, never mentioned the name of his guru in the writings of his that have survived. For them there is no answer to this question. Tulsi's guru is simply unknown to history, period. In recent years I have established my own view and have come to believe that Tulsi did mention the name of his guru on numerous occasions. This name has been there the whole time. All we need do is notice it in the writings attributed to Tulsi Sahib.

But, Before We Get to That, Let's Talk About the Ratnagar Rao Doctrine

One guru -- Kirpal Singh -- at some point proposed a theory that Tulsi's spiritual master was someone by the name of "Sant Ratnagar Rao", and that this hypothesized missing link guru was a successor of the Tenth Sikh Master: Guru Gobind Singh. This name doesn't appear in the teachings of Sawan Singh, Kirpal Singh's guru. As far as I am aware, the name Ratnagar Rao was not mentioned by anyone in India or the Sant tradition prior to the time of Kirpal Singh. The name Ratnagar Rao in connection with Tulsi Sahib seems to first emerge during some of Kirpal Singh's satsang talks in the 1950's or early 60's. In the late 60's and beyond, the name "Ratnagar Rao" started to be included in the books and other publications of Kirpal Singh. Respectfully, I disagree with this particular theory and, as you'll see below, I make the case for someone else -- a person known to history -- being the likely initiating guru of Param Sant Tulsi Sahib of Hathras.

There are a few apocryphal tales about Guru Gobind Singh faking his death, living a secret life perhaps under an assumed name, and appointing a successor guru according to several smaller branches of the Sikh religion. The Namdhari Sikh sect is one of those. Ratnagar Rao is another version or variation of this.

In Sikh legend there are several stories about Guru Gobind Singh surviving his assassination at Nanded and living a secret life unknown to his disciples from that point forward, in some accounts for a few years, and in others he is portrayed as living many decades to a super ripe old age of well over a century. For instance, the Namdhari version says Guru Gobind Singh violated the laws of physics and lived to be one hundred and forty six years old! "Namdharis believe that Gobind Singh lived for 146 years (1666-1812), eventually bestowing the succession on Balak Singh of Hazro in 1812." (see:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Namdhari#Leaders>)

In each of these highly hailographical stories, like the ones mentioned above, someone is named as being the spiritual successor of Guru Gobind Singh, thus inventing a connecting link between the Tenth Sikh Guru to one of several different rival sects or institutions. The specific details, dates, locations, and named spiritual successors vary

from one account to another. Each of these is highly contested and disputed by historians.

The Ratnagar Rao version goes like this: Guru Gobind Singh did not die on October 7th, 1708, in Nanded, India after all, but allowing everyone to believe he had passed on, in reality, after his official funeral he lived a secret life incognito, traveling widely from the Himalayas in the north to the Deccan in southern India. As the story goes, eventually the Tenth Sikh Guru acquired a student by the name of Ratnagar Rao or Ratanrav, and at some point made him his spiritual successor. This Rao would have initiated a disciple by the name of Sham Rao or Shyamrav, at some point making him his spiritual successor. This Shyamrav came to be known as Tulsi Sahib, who eventually relocated to Hathras. Thus, this would create a kind of "apostolic succession" from the Tenth Sikh Guru, Gobind Singh, to Ratnagar Rao, then to Sant Tulsi Sahib of Hathras.

*So many "IF'S" have to be
perfectly lined up in a row
in order for this "Rao doctrine"
to be so.*

And this is why, at every step, the main points of this belief are strongly disputed by Indian scholars. There's nothing particularly Sikh about Tulsi Sahib either. None of the icon images of Tulsi Sahib displayed at the various ashrams directly connected with his lineage in India and Nepal depict him as wearing a turban. No turban. Though there is one section of Tulsi's Ghat Ramayan devoted to a dialogue with a Nanak Panthi with a few quotes from Guru Nanak, not found in the writings of Tulsi Sahib is any frequent usage of the Adi Granth, as one might expect if Tulsi viewed himself as being directly in the lineage of the Sikh Gurus. Quotes from Sikh Gurus including Guru Gobind Singh are rather sparse. And it should also be mentioned that there is no historic record of there ever being a Sant by the name of Ratnagar Rao living in any century of the past. No hymns (bhajans) composed by someone by that name exist. There is no memory of an ashram associated with such a sage -- no old group claiming succession from anyone by that name. There is no evidence for a samadh tomb either -- none of the usual tell-tale signs of a holy man who would have been highly esteemed by at least some small group of devotees or satsangi initiates living in a remote, rural enclave of India. None whatsoever.

Professor Agam Prasad Mathur, one of India's top historians, weighed in on this theory:

"Tracing the background of the formative influences on the Radhasoami Faith, Shri Kirpal Singh links up the history of spiritual heritage with last Sikh Guru Gobind Singh. He holds that Guru Gobind Singh traveled far and wide and went to Poona in

Maharashtra and brought in his fold many a member of the Peshwa family. He presumes, but without any historical basis, that Sham Rao, the elder brother of Bajji Rao Peshwa must have come into contact with Ratnagar Rao, a disciple of Guru Gobind Singh and ultimately Sham Rao settled at Hathras and came to be known as Tulsi Saheb. But this statement is not historically true. Guru Gobind Singh died in 1708. The same year Sahu, son of Shivaji, became king of Maharashtra and appointed Balaji Vishwanath as the first Peshwa in 1713. Bajji Rao I became Peshwa in 1720 and he was the eldest son of his father (Balaji Vishwanath)." ("Radhasoami Faith, A Historical Study", published in Agra:

http://www.radhasoamisatsang.org/rsfaith/radhasoamifaith_2_2.htm)

Though not many are aware of this, even Kirpal Singh himself described his Ratnagar Rao theory as up-in-the-air and tenuous at best, not a clear-cut established or verifiable history that links Tulsi Sahib to a historic person by the name of Ratnagar Rao or to the Tenth Sikh Guru of the Sikhs. His research into this did not pan out but, perhaps was his noble attempt to sort through apocryphal tales and miracle-stories, desiring to address an obscure chapter of Indian history. Not an easy thing to accomplish to be sure. Indian history is extremely complex. Even basic things such as birth and death dates of major figures like Kabir are very much disputed. Kirpal Singh said:

“History is generally written later on, when nobody any longer knows. I tell you, I was going to write about Tulsi, a great Saint from the East. I wanted to find out His lineage, in connection with the life of Baba Jaimal Singh I wrote. I could not find it. He was the eldest brother who was to succeed to the throne of the Hulkar family. He left the scene, became a recluse, and later on turned out to be a Saint. And the second brother sat on the throne. I tried to find out whether his name was Sham Rao Hulkar, but his name was also not given in history. What was I to do?” (from a talk given at Tustin, California, December 18th, 1963, also republished in the December 1976 issue of Sat Sandesh. See the Sat Sandesh section of the RuhaniSatsangUSA website. Also see: "No New Faith, Mind That": <http://www.ruhanisatsangusa.org/nonew.htm>)

No aspect of history should be turned into a dogmatic article of faith that one must be compelled to agree with. I don't believe in a faith-based history to be accepted without question. Am reminded of this saying of Kirpal Singh: "Sant Mat does not ask for blind faith or acceptance on mere authority. It is purely personal and practical. Any belief not based on personal experience and verification of facts has little value." (Some American Press Cuttings, The Washington Daily News, Friday, February 25, 1955, "What is Ruhani Satsang?" http://www.ruhanisatsangusa.org/tours/55/SS55_08.htm)

"I would rather have questions that can't be answered than answers that can't be questioned." (Richard Feynman)

Finding Evidence For Tulsi Sahib's Spiritual Master or Group Affiliation -- Noticing Examples of Guru Bhakti in Sant Texts

In the first part of “Sar Bachan Prose”, Huzur Maharaj Rai Saligram Bahadur provides an introduction to the “Essence of the Teachings of Param Guru Soamiji Maharaj”, the founder of the Radhasoami Faith, a major branch of Sant Mat founded in 1861. It includes Sant Radhasoami Sahib's (Soamiji's) list of India's greatest Saints including the name of one fairly unknown guru during those days, a contemporary master by the name of Tulsi Sahib:

“The names of some of the perfect and true Sants, Sadhs and Faqirs who manifested themselves during the past seven hundred years are Kabir Saheb, Tulsi Saheb, Jagjiwan Saheb, Garib Das, Paltu Saheb, Guru Nanak, Dadu Saheb, Tulsi Das, Nabhaji, Swami Hari Das, Sur Das and Rai Das. And some of the Muslim names are Shams Tabrez, Maulvi Rumi, Hafiz, Sarmad and Mujaddid Alif Sani. A perusal of their writings would give an idea of their spiritual attainments.” (“Sar Bachan Prose”, Book One, A Summary of the Teachings of Soami Ji Maharaj, Agra)

And we know just how significant a reference that turned out to be! “One of these things is not like the others”, or in other words, one of the names on Soamiji's list is quite different from the rest, in that it's the name of a contemporary guru, not a classic Sant who lived centuries earlier. This inclusion of the name Tulsi Sahib on his list is pregnant with meaning. After all, we know that Tulsi Sahib was the guru of Soamiji Maharaj. Soamiji and his wife Radhaji were part of the Tulsi Sahib Satsang community, as were their families and extended families. Furthermore, after the death of Tulsi Sahib in 1843, Soamiji became closely affiliated with a spiritual successor of Tulsi Sahib in the Tulsi Sahib community by the name of Maharaj Girdhari Sahib all the way up till his passing in August of 1860, then a few months later Soamiji officially inaugurated his public satsang in Agra, during February of 1861.

For information about the connections between Seth Shiv Dayal, Girdhari Sahib and the Tulsi Sahib Satsang, see the earlier issue of Sach Khand titled, "Maharaj Girdhari Sahib, The Unknown Guru of Radhasoami History". I also have a revised/updated version of this article here:

<https://medium.com/sant-mat-meditation-and-spirituality/maharaj-girdhari-sahib-a-spiritual-successor-of-sant-tulsi-sahib-and-friends-with-soami-ji-maharaj-2f8ffcb7d342>

A similar list of Saints was made by Maharshi Mehi Paramhans, and can also be quite instructive, providing us with another example of how to recognize guru bhakti present in the writings of Sants. Here we find the same pattern of earlier gurus of Indian history being listed as the greatest of Sants along with one obscure, contemporary name that is "not like the others", thus revealing who Mehi's guru was:

"Great praise to all the Saints!
In which manner will one pray to them?
My mind is so very dirty and inexperienced,
Saints being destroyers of sorrows do away with the worldly traps,
They are the treasure-troves of knowledge and meditation,
Highly proficient in the techniques of single-minded concentration
and the Yoga of Sound,
They propagate the same in plain language all over the world;
Great are the Sages and Saints like Buddha, Shankar and Ramanand
for eliminating sins,
Sacrifice to the magnificent Saints like Kabir, Nanak,
Goswami Tulsidas and Tulsi Sahib,
Dadu, Sundar Das, Sur Das, Swapach, Ravi Das, Jagjivan, Paltu, etc...,
They are all great benefactors, delivering human beings
from the fears of the world,
Satguru Devi and other Saints are also highly adorable,
Maharshi Mehi sings their magnificence and lies prostrate
at their sacred feet with faith and love."
(Maharshi Mehi Paramhans, Book of Padavali, Hymn #2: Hail to the Sants)

In this case, "Satguru Devi" is the significant name "not like the others". It's the name of his guru. "In 1909 Maharshi Mehi met Baba Devi Sahab in Bhagalpur, Bihar. Maharshi after receiving the practice from a true master was deeply satisfied. Maharshi continued practicing what Baba Devi Sahab had taught him." (Life History of Maharshi Mehi, on page ten of, "Moksha Darshan/Philosophy of Liberation") "Guru Baba Sahib propagated the secrets of Santmat. We were all marching ahead in darkness, not being acquainted with the inner secrets of Santmat. Guru Baba Sahib explained to us all about these secrets." (Padavali, from # 102) "Mehi says that these secrets of the saints lay concealed under various externalities and illusions. Due to Devi Sahib's grace, all these got fully revealed." (Padavali, Hymn # 71) "Maharshi Mehi always praises Baba Sahib, his Guru, time and again." (Hymn # 101)

The same pattern of guru bhakti references embedded in hymns can also be observed with Tulsi Sahib. He too had similar lists of all-time greatest Saints in the history of India. And one name in particular that appears is pregnant with meaning "different from all the others", one relatively obscure contemporary guru he proclaimed and elevated as being of the same status or stature as Kabir, Dadu, Soor Das, Nanak, Mirabai, etc... The name of that guru is Sant Dariya Sahib of Bihar.

In Tulsi's spiritual classic known as the Ghat Ramayan a follower of the Kabir Panth asked Tulsi: "Who can be called a Guru? What is the true Panth or path or religion? To

what religion do you belong?" During the lengthy discourse that follows, Tulsi Sahib lists names of some of the Saints he considers to be the greatest:

"Listen, O Phool Das, I have given out the same true secrets which Sants like Kabir Saheb, Dadu Saheb, Rai Das Ji, Dariya Sahib, Guru Nanak, Soor Das Ji, Nabha Ji and Mira Bai have spoken of. They, too, have composed similar hymns describing the bliss of the highest spiritual region, whose glory I also have sung, blessed by the grace and the dust of the holy feet of Sants." (Ghat Ramayan section, "Param Sant Tulsi Sahib", translated by Sant Das Maheshwari, 1979, Agra, page 148)

Also from the same Maheshwari translation, again during Tulsi's dialogue with Phool Das of the Kabir Panth about the true teachings of Kabir, Sant Dharam Das, and the Anurag Sagar: "Nanak, Dadu, Dariya Saheb, Mira Bai, Soor Das, Kabir and Nabbaji have all reached the Nabh (sky [Mystic Sky], high region) and have given out the secrets. Their souls have got across and merged there." (page 128)

"To mention a few Sants, I pick up the names of Dadu, Mira, Nabha, Nanak, Dariya Sahib, and Soor Das. Kabir's name I mention again." (Ibid., page 120)

On page 125 we can notice that Tulsi quoted a full-length hymn (shabd) of Sant Dariya Sahib.

And in another section of the Ghat Ramayan recently translated into English by the Tarn Taran Radhasoami Satsang, 2011, in a dialogue with a Nanak Panthi, Tulsi again mentions Dariya, including him on a list of highest Saints: "Guru Nanak Dev Ji, Kabir Sahib, Dadu Sahib, Dariya Sahib, etc... are all against the killing of living beings." (from a pro-vegetarian section, page 256 of Baba Kehar Singh's commentary on the, "Ghat Ramayan")

It is somewhat unusual for Tulsi to have frequently mentioned the relatively obscure name of Dariya Sahib, giving him equal status as Guru Nanak and Kabir, but I believe the explanation for this is quite understandable. He's answering the question: "To what religion do you belong?" I am told there are many more references to Dariya in the as yet untranslated portions of his writings currently only available in Hindi. Tulsi has mentioned the name of Dariya Sahib many times in his various satsang discourses and hymns because that's the name of his spiritual master, or the founder of the school of Sant Mat he had been affiliated with. Tulsi authored several books including: Ratan Sagar, Ghat Ramayan, Shabdavali, and Padma Sagar. These references to Sant Dariya in the writings of Tulsi Sahib are there for us to notice. They provide us with our one-and-only solid, tangible clue about the identity of Tulsi Sahib's guru. As with Maharshi Mehi's references to Baba Devi Sahib, and the high praise displayed in early Radhasoami texts for Sant Tulsi Sahib and Maharaj Girdhari Sahib, these references to

Dariya in the writings of Tulsi Sahib suggest his guru affiliation. In the same way, they give us the name of the Sant Mat community Tulsi Sahib had been associated with.

The Sant Mat We Know Can Be Traced Back to Sant Dariya Sahib

(Note: In Sant Mat history there was another Dariya: Dariya Sahib of Marwar, who passed on in 1758.)

Tulsi was born in 1763 and passed on in 1843. He would have been in his teens when Dariya Sahib of Bihar was still alive -- old enough to have perhaps received initiation from Dariya Sahib of Bihar or one of his representatives, in other words. Dariya was a towering figure occupying some of that space in history between the time of Kabir and that of Sant Tulsi Sahib of Hathras. Dariya passed on when Tulsi was around seventeen years of age. Dariya Sahib appointed several Saints to be his spiritual successors: Fakkar Das, Basti Das, Sant Tika Das, and, Sant Guna Das, also contemporaries with Tulsi Sahib, who likely spent some time in Bihar. Bihar was, and remains, home-base of the Satsang of Sant Dariya Sahib.

"He [Tulsi Sahib] has freely used words of Braj, Avadhi, Rajasthani (Marwari), Gujrati, Punjabi and Maithili, which leads one to conclude that, like many other Saints, he must have traveled widely in V.P., Rajasthan, Gujrat, Punjab and Bihar." (J.R. Puri, and V.K. Sethi, "Tulsi Sahib, Saint of Hathras", 1981, RS Books, page 19)

If Tulsi hadn't received initiation directly from Dariya by the age of seventeen, the references to Dariya Sahib in Tulsi's writings still make sense if he received initiation from one of Dariya's successors, which is another possibility. Anyone initiated by those successors would likely have much reverence for Dariya Sahib, the "great master" of Sant Mat during those days. According to texts from the Sant Dariya group, those spiritual successors of Dariya Sahib were authorized by him to initiate people into Surat Shabd Yoga:

“Sat Purush is the living Lord, and His own son serves as the ladder. That ladder is continued through me, says Dariya. Fakkar Das, Basti Das, and Guna Das are the ladders proceeding from me. Whomsoever they appoint as their successors would also be known as ladders. Thus will my line of succession continue.... Those souls who remain in obedience to these successors, shall cross the Ocean of the world.

“How long will this line of succession continue? Kindly relate it to us in your own words, asks Fakkar Das. ‘Listen mindfully, O Fakkar Das, I explain this to you, says Dariya:

‘As long as the discipline of the Sound Current

is preserved unadulterated,
The line of succession will truly continue.
But when it is mixed with outer rituals
and display of external garbs,
My Sound Current will part company.
My Divine essence will depart,
And the souls will go into the mouth of Kal.
I shall then come to this world,
And shall proclaim the teaching
of the Sound Current again.
Proclaiming the teaching,
I shall found the line of succession [again].
And emancipating the souls,
I shall take them to my Abode....
For aeons I have been coming,
And imparting the teaching
of the true Sound Current.”

(Bhajan of Sant Dariya Sahib translated by K. N. Upadhyaya in, "Dariya Sahib -- Saint of Bihar", RS Books, pages 193 & 194)

The above-quoted hymn of Dariya sounds a lot like the Dharamdasi text known as the Anurag Sagar, which describes a Gnostic Manichaeian struggle between devotees of the Sound Current and the forces of Kal Niranjana, the negative power, lord of death, time, and illusion. Indeed, the composition style and vocabulary of Dariya seems very close to the Anurag Sagar. According to Upadhyaya's book quoted above, Dariya referred to Sant Dharam Das as the "spiritual successor of Guru Kabir" (see page 4), which very much suggests Dariya and Dariya's initiating guru "Sat Saheb" were likely connected with the Dharam Das/Anurag Sagar/Kabir tradition, as they are the one-and-only branch of Kabir Panth that views Sant Dharam Das as the chief disciple and primary spiritual successor of Guru Kabir. Also it should be stressed that, though the book known as the Anurag Sagar is popular in various branches of Sant Mat these days, historically, this text has its origins with the Dharam Das branch of Kabir Panth, and was only used by them. The Anurag Sagar is not valued by the other branches of Kabir Panth, and of course was totally unknown to Guru Gobind Singh, other Sikh Gurus or other Sant panths. Anurag Sagar is a Dharamdasi sacred text.

Both Dariya Sahib and Tulsi Sahib directed quoted the Anurag Sagar. Both Dariya Sahib of Bihar and Tulsi Sahib of Hathras (also known as Dakhani Baba, meaning, "Saint from the South"), became mystical hardcore reformist voices somewhat critical of the overall direction the older Sant panths were headed in. Tulsi's and Dariya's teachings are identical, representing the same esoteric school of Sant Mat, what Mark Juergensmeyer calls "Esoteric Santism" in his book, "Radhasoami Reality". In my view, the teachings of

Tulsi Sahib most resemble those of Dariya Sahib, to the degree that, based on a close examination of the internal evidence provided in the writings of Tulsi Sahib: theology, vocabulary, style, imagery, quoted materials including the Anurag Sagar (an obscure Dharamdasi scripture), stance towards the mainline Kabir Panthis and other Sant panths, that the primary influence upon Tulsi was Dariya Sahib and the "Dariya School of Sant Mat." And Tulsi himself ended up becoming one of those "ladders" or gurus himself -- a huge influence, central figure and founding master (adi guru) for many in the world of Sant Mat as it is now known. Even for the popular usage of the term Sant Mat we have to thank Tulsi Sahib.

"During the later stages of Sant tradition, figures have arisen who have spoken out against the established panths as providing little access to the true Sant teaching, which is perceived as leading to inner experience. Soamiji was one. Tulsi Sahib, his predecessor, argues sharply with panthi characters in his Ghat Ramayana. Earlier, in Bihar, Dariya Sahib was taken as an incarnation of Kabir, come again, to spread the true teaching on seeing the degeneration of his panth." (Daniel Gold, "The Sants", page 325)

Background About Sant Dariya Sahib of Bihar, a Towering Figure in Sant Mat History Just Before the Time of Sant Tulsi Sahib of Hathras and the Radhasoami Movement

“Dariya Sahib of Bihar (1674-1780) was born at village Dharkandna in Arrah district near Dumraon [in the State of Bihar] at the house of his maternal grandfather. He was the son of Puran Shah (a Muslim of Ujjain) whose ancestors ruled Jagdishpur near Buxar. He is believed to be the incarnation of Kabir, who affirmed this to his mother when he was one month old, and it was Kabir who christened him as Dariya.* At the age of 9 he married but before it could be consummated, at 15, he renounced worldly pursuits, although he continued to live as a householder. At the age of 20, he acquired higher spiritual knowledge and at 30, he set up his congregation. Being a Muslim by birth, a large number of his followers even today offer prayers in the Muslim style...His major works are Dariya Sagar and Gyan Deepak. He declared that his goal was Sattpad (HAQ), which is far beyond the pale of the Koran, the Vedas, and above the three lokas viz. Pind, Und and Brahmand. He declared that Ram... Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh, etc. cannot be the instruments of emancipation from transmigration and that it is only the SATTNAAM which is the Sar Shabd (the Seminal Name) and which can obtain deliverance from the claws of Brahman (Kaal) and Maya (Prakriti). The dervish is one who is not involved in Kalima or Aumkar but who follows the Alif, the symbol of One, Absolute Satt Purush. The seeker must have only meditation to rely upon, one desire (aas), one conviction (vishwas or biswas), only the love and certitude of the Great Name, and such a seeker alone can be the true slave (daas) of a saint, fully capable of discriminating between the fleeting and the permanent (vivek)." (entry for Dariya Sahib in the, "Dictionary of Indian Religions", by M.G. Gupta, M. G. Publishers and Huma

Books, Agra)

*Kabir appearing: Kabir/Sat Saheb/Sat Purush: In other accounts, the living master who gave Dariya his name and eventually initiated Dariya into Sant Mat Meditation (Surat Shabd Yoga) was called "Sat Saheb". "Dariya never looked upon him as a human being, and always referred to him as the Lord or Sat Purush." (K.N. Upadhyaya)

Sant Dariya was born in 1674 in the Rohtas District of Bihar, India. He was brought up and remained at that place for most of his life. Dariya was apparently given his name by the family guru, Sat Saheb. "Dariya's birth was celebrated with great festivity. After the baby was one month old, a holy man visited his place and the mother brought the baby before him. This holy man carefully looked at the baby from head to foot, asked the mother to take very good care of the baby and named him Dariya, to be so recognized later. Dariya never looked upon him as a human being, and always referred to him as the Lord or Sat Purush." Sant Dariya got enlightenment at the age of twenty years. He was initiated into Inner Light and Sound Meditation, Shabd Naam, by the same Satguru mentioned above, Sat Saheb, that had been a major influence on Dariya's life. (See the book, "Dariya Sahib, Saint of Bihar", by K.N. Upadhyaya, RS Book Department, Science of the Soul Research Centre)

Rare Quotes From Sat Saheb, Dariya's Guru:

“The ultimate Realm is Akah* (Unspeakable)
Which is fully contained within the inner mirror.
The Akah* is the source of true Naam (the Sound Current)
This (Naam) is the truest spiritual technique.”
(Sat Saheb)

*The term “Akah” has been used by Kabir also as the ultimate Abode of Anami Purush. One can wonder if this Sat Saheb was a disciple of Sant Dharam Das or his son and successor Churamani Naam, or Shundarshan Naam -- in other words, one of the early masters in the Kabir/Sant Dharam Das line of gurus.

“You have been given the seal to imprint the souls,
And you know that the transaction is carried on
through the True Name (SATNAM).

“Whosoever comes, bearing the imprint of your hand
I will take him to the other shore.

“Priceless indeed, is my Name.
Let one hold fast to it with proper concentration.

Near such a person Kal [lord of time, death and illusion] shall not go.
While rising or sitting, let him fix his attention on it,
And let him develop love for the Divine Light within.
Let him abandon all deceptive worship
of the gods and the goddesses.
Let him be absorbed in his real Lord,
realizing Him to be the Truth.
While rising and sitting, the Supreme Lord
should be the center of his attention,
And let him remain merged into the Sound Current.
By taking refuge under the Truth in such a way,
he will certainly overcome Kal.”

-- Sat Saheb the spiritual master of Dariya Sahib (speaking to Dariya about his future mission as a Sant Sat Guru. The quote is from Upadhyaya's book, one of the few in English to feature excerpts from the many writings of Sant Dariya. And, via email, Domain Singh of the Sant Dariya Mission has expressed to me his approval of Upadhyaya's book.)

Sat Saheb, Dariya's spiritual master, must have been associated with the Sant Dharamdas/Kabir line of Masters, as Dariya's writings reveal he was greatly influenced by the teachings of Kabir, Sant Dharamdas, Dharamdasi literature like the Anurag Sagar, and according to those affiliated with the Sant Dariya branch of Sant Mat, Sant Dariya Sahib of Bihar is even believed to have been a reincarnation of Guru Kabir. (see the Sant Dariya Mission website, Atreya, page 66, and “Darshana International”. Also see Wikipedia:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bihari_culture#Religion) Domain Singh, the webmaster for the Sant Dariya Mission website told me that the name Sat Sukrit is considered to be a very sacred name in the Dariya Panth. According to the Dharamdasi tradition of Kabir Panth, Sat Sukrit is Kabir's original name during a previous age and epoch of time known as the Sat Yuga: "In Sat Yuga my name was Sat Sukrit...." (Anurag Sagar, page 96: http://www.spiritualawakeningradio.com/anurag_03_kabir.pdf)

“This connection between Dharamdasis [Kabir-Dharamdas group/Esoteric Santism] and Radhasoamis, to which the Anurag Sagar has lead us, is confirmed by another set of writings venerated by Radhasoami leaders but little known outside of Radhasoami and Dharamdasi circles: the poetry of Dariya Sahib [who authored around twenty-three books]. Dariya Sahib was an eighteenth-century poet who lived in a Dharamdasi region of Bihar and referred to both Kabir and Dharam Das as his predecessors. Like the author of the Anurag Sagar, he viewed Kabir as a divine and mystical force and enumerated aspects of the ascending realms of consciousness in a manner remarkably similar to that one sees in Swami Shiv Dayal's 'Sar Bachan'. Dariya Sahib is listed by Brahm Sankar

Misra as one of India's great saints..." (Mark Juergensmeyer, "Radhasoami Reality -- The Logic of a Modern Faith", 1991, Princeton University Press, page 29)

See, "The Anurag Sagar", published by Sant Bani Press:

<http://www.spiritualawakeningradio.com/anurag.html>

See, "Dariya Sahib, Saint of Bihar", published by Science of the Soul/RS Books;

See the Sant Dariya Mission website:

<http://www.SantDariya.org/Default.aspx>

or my back-up copy of that Sant Dariya Mission website at:

<http://TheHolySound.com/sant-dariya-saheb-bihar/index.html>

By the way, "The Anurag Sagar" or "Kabir's Ocean of Love", of course was not authored by Kabir but probably was composed by Sant Dharam Das or one of his successors. No doubt many have written under the name "Kabir". For instance, a similar book featuring a dialogue between Dharam Das and Kabir called "Sukh Nidan" was composed around "1729", and another Dharamdasi text, Amar Mul, "is of still later origin", according to G. H. Westcott in, "Kabir and Kabir Panth", 1907. These are but a few volumes of a large corpus of Dharamdasi literature known as, "The Kabir Sagar."



IMAGE -- Sant Dariya Sahib: Takhat Saheb, now venerated as a sacred place by the Sant Dariya Satsang, is a location where Sant Dariya Sahib of Bihar used to spend much time in meditation. A room dedicated to Sant Dariya now encloses the site. The icon image is that of Sant Dariya Sahib of Bihar. The photo is courtesy of Domain Singh of the Sant Dariya Mission website.

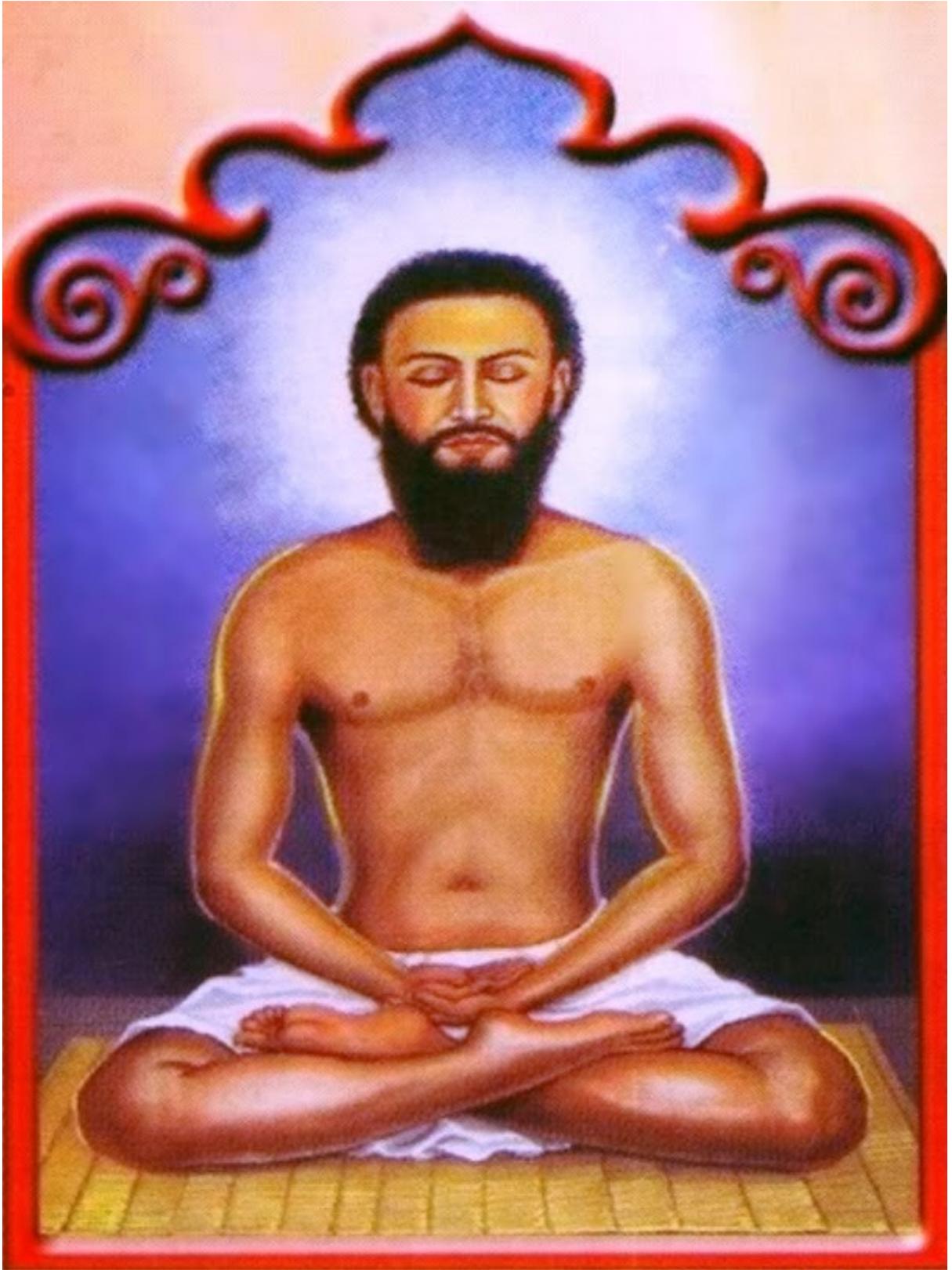


IMAGE -- Sant Tulsi Sahib: Sant Tulsi Sahib (younger) of Hathras Meditating

I can't help but noticing that Tulsi had an appearance quite similar to Dariya: the bare-chested yogi sitting in the lotus position with a puffy beard. Not always, but sometimes spiritual successors adopt a similar appearance and clothing as their master. Of course there's no hard and fast rule about this, and it is the soul and inward state of enlightenment that matters, not appearances, but nevertheless it's common for there to be styles and customs unique to certain regions, satsangs and time periods. Shri Surswami looked a lot like his guru Sant Tulsi Sahib, wearing a similar blanket made up of a patchwork of many colors. Some of the Agra Radhasoami Masters had a distinctive kingly or majestic appearance. The one contemporary Sant Satguru that Sant Tulsi Sahib mentioned in his writings was Sant Dariya Sahib of Bihar.

The Origin of the Five Names, the Panch Naam Mantra

In some branches of Sant Mat and Radhasoami, part of the meditation instructions includes the use of five special names. These particular five names serve as the mantra -- sacred names used during meditation practice and simran/zikhr (remembrance). These names appear in the Sar Bachan Poetry of Seth Shiv Dayal Singh, (Soamiji Maharaj, a.k.a. Sant Radhasoami Sahib, founder of the Radhasoami Satsang). The consensus is that Seth Shiv Dayal Singh had been given instruction about the use of these five names or panch naam by his guru: Tulsi Sahib.

These five names are in fact used by the Tulsi Sahib group based in Hathras. David Lane, accompanied by Mark Juergensmeyer, recalling a visit to India and an encounter with Sant Prakash Das of the Tulsi Sahib Ashram or Mandir: "...The Mahant we spoke with in Hathras (1978) said Tulsi gave out the five names.... He was part of Tulsi's lineage." (Radhasoami Studies Yahoo Group)

So, who was using the panch naam mantra -- these five names -- prior to the time of Sant Tulsi Sahib? It's an important question as it may shed further light on the identity of Tulsi Sahib's guru and the origins of this spiritual path called Sant Mat. If Tulsi Sahib did not invent the usage of the five names himself, then it's rather likely he was continuing the practice he had learned at the feet of his own guru, reflecting an even older tradition of Sants. It would be most informative to know the identity of this earlier Sant Mat path that represents the "people of the five names", if you will, those who chanted these sacred mantra-words during earlier centuries.

There is a great chapter in, "Radhasoami Reality" titled, "Remembering a Hidden Past", that explores the origins of "Esoteric Santism" and it's connections to the Kabir Panth, specifically the Dharamdasis -- the Sant Dharam Das branch of Kabir Panth, Anurag Sagar, Dariya, Tulsi Sahib, and Seth Shiv Dayal Singh:

"Dharamdasi teachings about the cosmic realms are quite similar to Radhasoami's; like

the Beas branch it gives the panch nam (five names) as one of its mantras at the time of initiation; Dharamdasi practitioners listen for the sacred sound from the right-hand side, as Radhasoami devotees do..." (Mark Juergensmeyer, "Radhasoami Reality", page 28)

My fellow Sant Mat researcher and friend Lars from Sweden shared a copy of a letter with me that he received from Prakash Muni Saahab, the Aacharya of one of the major branches of Dharamdasis, with headquarters at the Shree Sadguru Kabir Dharmdas Saahab Vanshawali in Damakheda, Distt. Raipur (M.P.). In this letter, the Kabir Panth guru (or his secretary writing on his behalf) was replying to various questions. This is an interesting paragraph from this letter referring to an initiation (Nam Daan) that includes a form of panch naam -- five names:

"Yes, one has to take 'Nam Daan' from the guru. Nam Daan (introducing five names) is a religious ceremony started by Guru Kabir Saheb himself when he gave 'The Five Names (Saarshabd) to Dhani Dharamdas Saheb at Bandhavgarh Dist., Umaria Pradesh."

That name "Prakash Muni" is one of the "forty two" spiritual successors of Kabir mentioned at the beginning of the Anurag Sagar. In both of the main branches of the Dharam Das Kabir Panth (a line of married gurus in one branch, and celibate gurus in the other line) the names of the gurus are assigned based on this list of "forty two" names.

Based on my research into the Dharam Das Kabir Panth I am NOT of the view that the paragraphs above from Mark Juergensmeyer and Prakash Muni constitute proof of the the five names of Tulsi Sahib being used by Dharamdasis, but it does suggest that we are at least getting very close to the source: the world of Guru Kabir and Sant Dharam Das. From various correspondence I've learned that the five names (panch naam) used by this Kabir Panth group based in Damakheda are actually a different group of names. They are beautiful words, all of which correspond to the Sach Khand level and are names for the Sound Current. They are not however the same five names corresponding with the astral, causal levels, Bhanwar Gupha, etc.... used by Tulsi Sahib and in some of the more recent forms of Sant Mat. The Kabir Panth also gives initiates something called "the Guru Mantra", a long phrase.

The Many Names of the One Nameless God (Anadi, Anami)

Mantra words seem to vary greatly over time, from group to group -- even within the same group! guru to guru, and from location to location. Some current and past well-known gurus of Sant Mat have had the practice of initiating Indian and western disciples with the five familiar names and Muslim disciples with a different group of five Sufi-sounding names. These are Persian or Arabic words with a beautiful cadence that have essentially the same meaning as the five Hindi names. Am not sure how far back this

practice goes, but I have seen these five Sufi-looking names in the Sar Bachan Poetry of Soamiji, other Agra Radhasoami writings, and they were mentioned by Maharshi Mehi.

I do recall seeing some of them in the writings of Tulsi Sahib as well. This practice could date back prior to the time of Kirpal and Hazur Baba Sawan Singh, in other words. The Dadu Panth of Rajasthan has a mantra in the public domain, so I can say what it is:

Satya Raam. Raam is a name often mentioned in the hymns of the early Sants like Namdev and Kabir. As I mentioned, some in the Kabir Panth use a (different) group of five names, and/or the Guru Mantra. There is one "TRUE NAME" that turns up quite universally in the teachings of Sikh Gurus, Kabir, Dariya, Tulsi, and Radhasoami traditions -- one of the five names many are familiar with. Tulsi Sahib, Seth Shiv Dayal Singh and his early initiates all used the same five-name formula of panch naam.

According to Agam Prasad Mathur in, "Petals of Love", during 1886 the name Radhasoami was introduced by Seth Shiv Dayal Singh and his close disciple Huzur Maharaj Rai Saligram Bahadur. Like Satya Raam, Radhasoami is a public domain mantra, not a secret name or phrase. Many in what became known as the Radhasoami Satsang of Agra adopted the new mantra Radhasoami. Other close disciples of Seth Shiv Dayal Singh, though embracing the new name for their Sant Mat path (which became known as the "Radhasoami Faith") nevertheless retained the older practice of the five names. One early disciple of Seth Shiv Dayal Singh by the name of Sant Gareeb Das (Garib Das) followed a "middle way" or kind of "middle path" approach between those two major factions and began using both the five names and the new name Radhasoami.

I've been corresponding with a satsangi affiliated with the Sant Gareeb Das Radhaswami Satsang. Yes, they are still around! with a satsang remnant in Agra, and they have a small center at Sarai Rohilla, Delhi. Sant Gareeb Das was another major disciple of Soamji (Shiv Dayal), and provides another alternative source of valuable insight into the teachings of Seth Shiv Dayal Singh (questions about Tulsi Sahib, Girdhari Sahib, panch naam vs. Radhasoami naam, etc... Plus, Gareeb Das was probably a follower of the Tulsi

Sahib group in Hathras before he embraced Seth Shiv Dayal Singh as his spiritual master). I took the opportunity to ask this initiate if he was taught to use the five names or Radhasoami. He said in this group they use the five names AND Radhasoami -- "the six names", if you will. In their view, they quite rightly see all of these names of the One God as interchangeable: the five names equals Radhasoami; Radhasoami equals the five names:

"When you sing the name 'Radhasoami', you do the simran of the 'Five Names'."
(Gareeb Das, disciple of Soamiji Maharaj, Book of Anmol Bachan) This is also the teaching of Seth Shiv Dayal Singh in his Sar Bachan Radhasoami Poetry volumes.

Also see, "The Last Words of Soamiji Maharaj":

<https://medium.com/sant-mat-meditation-and-spirituality/document-the-parting-instructions-last-words-or-commandments-of-soamiji-maharaj-shiv-dayal-seth-b717191c7a57>

As with the three types of Hindi and Sufi panch naam, the Guru Mantra used by the Dharam Das Kabir Panth is a secret mantra that devotees aren't supposed to reveal publicly. **It's somewhat of a disadvantage for me here to both be discussing the use of secret mantra words and yet honoring these traditions by not divulging them.**

My work-around solution is providing links and screen captures to online documents containing the panch naam/five names used by Tulsi Sahibis, and by some other Sant Mat and Radhasoami paths. Those who are acquainted with these names already will be able to search for them and verify that they are indeed present in these fascinating documents, and should be sufficient proof.

As initiates of Sant Mat who are acquainted with the Sikh scriptures know, the third name of this panch naam or five name mantric formula used by Tulsi Sahib is completely missing from the Gurmukhi, Punjabi world of the Ten Sikh Gurus and Adi Granth (Sikh scriptures), which of course is another death-blow to the Ratnagar Rao theory mentioned above. If all five of the names are not present in the language and tradition, not being used in the Sikh line of masters, how could they have been communicated by Guru Gobind Singh, the Tenth Sikh Guru, to a hypothetical missing link guru given the name Ratnagar Rao, and from there communicated to Tulsi Sahib (Dakhani Baba, the Saint of the South)??

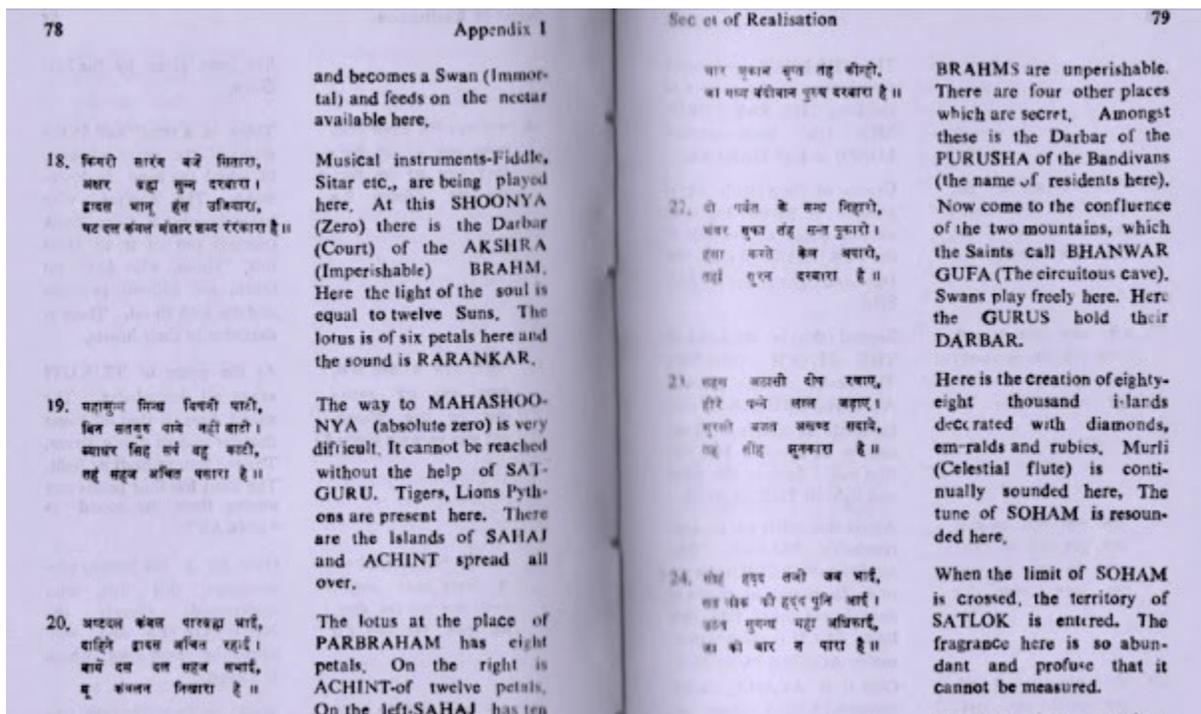
The Panch Naam Words Traced Back to Kabir/Dharamdasi Texts

One of the five names is nowhere to be found in the Sikh world, however, the third name -- indeed all five of the names of Tulsi Sahib's panch naam mantra -- are to be found present in the Sant literature associated with Guru Kabir and Sant Dharam Das! **I can not say with certainty when these five names were first adopted by a Kabir Sant Satguru (or Dariya's Guru, Dariya or Tulsi) as a mantra in this Kabir line of masters, but I will say that these names, which are associated with the inner cosmology and Sound Currents of the Sants are to be found in certain writings of the Kabir tradition, and in other Sant writings that make use of the literature of this Kabir tradition. The "people of the five names" and "the people of the Anurag Sagar" are one and the same community: the Dharamdasis. This is the source-group and Sant tradition for the five names that existed in India prior to the time of Dariya Sahib, Tulsi Sahib, and Seth Shiv Dayal Singh!**

See this mystical poem attributed to Kabir about the Ascension of the Soul called: “Kar nainon didar mahal men piara hai” (“See Your Beloved Lord in the Temple of Your Own Body”). Follow the link and you'll find two translations of this "Esoteric Santism" type mystical poem of Kabir that contains panch naam words. The first translation is popular in Radhasoami circles and quoted by Sawan Singh. The second version comes from the original Sri Ram Chandra group, a lesser-known Sant Mat/Sufi path that often quotes Dharamdasi Kabir literature, especially an esoteric Kabir text called the, "Granth Adibhed". The page also contains screen captures of certain pages along with icon images of Kabir, Dariya and Tulsi Sahib:

<https://medium.com/sant-mat-meditation-and-spirituality/great-poem-of-kabir-about-the-ascension-of-the-soul-called-kar-nainon-didar-mahal-men-piara-hai-db2b0fcdc644>

From the Sri Ram Chandra group, containing some of the five names, is, "The Secret of Realisation", by Dr. H. N. Saksena: <https://www.scribd.com/doc/103894359/The-Secret-of-Realisation-by-Dr-H-N-Saksena>



Screen Capture IMAGE of a page from a section of Kabir’s “Kar nainon didar mahal men piara hai” found in, “The Secret of Realisation”, by Dr. H. N. Saksena -- the third name is NOT missing in the Kabir tradition.

This is a link to a book from the Sri Ram Chandra group called, "The Science and Philosophy of Spirituality", by R. K. Gupta. Note, there is a document search engine at Scribd:

<https://www.scribd.com/doc/103895433/The-Science-and-Philosophy-of-Spirituality-by-R-K-Gupta>

The 'Anami Loka' is full of light and various sounds, which attract millions of souls, who rest here immersed in this light and sound. *Shabda* is the base of this *Loka*. The *Avigat Purush* created this *Loka* with five words, the secret of which is known only to those, who have reached this state. Similarly the *Adi Maya* also revealed five words, which are: *Sohum*, *Ni: Akshar*, *Rarankar*, *Omkar* and *Niranjan*. All these five words are echoing continuously in all human beings and in the universe, but only some saints have acquired their knowledge. The place of the origin of the *Shabda Sohum* is near *Bhanwar Gufa*; *Ni: Akshar* originates in *Mahashunya*; *Rarankar* in the *Shunya*; *Omkar* near the *Trikuti* and *Niranjan* near the *Agya Chakra*. The actual location of these Chakras has been discussed below. These five *Shabd*s are the sources of tremendous powers and are continuously echoing in all human beings. Rarely, however, people are aware about their presence in them. They have forgotten the powers of these *Shabd*s and their own reality. Only some saints have known them and they have merged their selves in these *Shabd*s. Those who are not aware of the powers of these *Shabd*s may laugh at it, but the stories of the lives of such saints leaves no room for any doubt in this regard. It is also equally true that most of the saints did not go beyond this state as they got stuck with the wonders and charms of these *Shabd*s.

Screen Capture IMAGE of a page from a section of, "The Science and Philosophy of Spirituality", by R. K. Gupta, also from the Ram Chandra Sufi/Sant Mat group -- some familiar names are here on this and other pages of the book.

Lord of Light in the Astral Level of the Thousand-Petaled Lotus -- Sufi and Sant Terms

The Sufi Saint Lalaji, a.k.a. Ram Chandra of Fatehgarh commenting on the teachings of Kabir using a lesser-known Dharamdasi text from a smaller branch of the Kabir group that sees itself as "the real line of Dharma Das":

"Saint Kabir has talked of twenty-one Lokas or Chakras in his treatise 'Granth Adibhed'. Giving an account of the process of creation, Saint Kabir refers the Absolute Truth as 'Purush Ninavam' i.e. 'the Nameless'....

"...The 'Second Void' is at the 'Trikuti' in the human body. The Sufi saints call it as 'Musallasi'. This is the place of the revelation of the four Vedas or the other divine books that descended as a divine order according to the belief of different religions. Here the sound of 'Omkar' echoes. The Sufi Saints have described this sound as 'Hoo-Hoo' [HU]. This is the place of the origin of the five gross elements and the three 'Gunas', which are created by the 'Prakriti' and 'Purush'. The creation beyond this was the material creation and the 'Jeevas' (embodied souls) descended from the 'Nirgun Parbrahma'.

"The 'First Void' is at the 'Sahstradal', which is located at a height little above the eyebrows and towards the backside of the head in the human body. It is called 'Alam-e-Jabroot' by the Sufi Saints and is also known as the abode of Lord Trilokinath. The 'Avigat Purush' has taken the form of 'Niranjan' and tremendous Light here."

ALL FIVE of the panch naam names are present in Dharamdasi Kabir writings and writings by this Ram Chandra Sufi/Sant Mat path that's using the "Kabir Granth Adibhed."

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The Pindi Mana (physical mind) being gross, has its highest approach upto this place. For journey onwards it cannot go. The Brahmandi Mana takes its place. It is minute. The gross elements end here and above it is all minute.

Triloki
Nath or
Jyoti
Niranjan

—

Here the soul gets darshan (glimpse) of Triloki Nath, the lord of the three Lokas below, viz the Hradya, Nabhi and Indriya Chakras, also named as Jyoti Niranjan. The followers of the various religious beliefs felt satisfied on reaching this stage on seeing the profuse light and thought that it is the highest stage and discontinued further ascent. Just above it is a very thin route to be crossed for onward journey, for which the Pindi Man, as big as an elephant has to be converted into minute Brahmandi Mana to cross it—known as Bunknal. The sufies call it Aalam-e-Jabroot. Brahmand begins from here.

— —

The Sufi name of this place is MUSLASI. Triangular in shape, it is the place of Brahm. The soul enjoys a lot of pleasure here and stays here for some time in comfort. Another name of the Sufi is Aalam-e-Lahoot. It is the place of saints, not of the yogies.

It's hard to know for sure the exact dates of the first gurus in the Dharam Das Panth and other Kabir Panths, as this seems to be somewhat obscured by the fog of history, but the panch naam mantra names might even have been used during the time of the historic Kabir. The reason I suspect they might have been is because of the possibility that the five names were in use in the Nath Yogi tradition that existed in India prior to the time of Kabir and Sant Dharam Das.

List of Dharam Das Mahants

1. Churamani Nam (Son of Sant Dharam Das)	16. Uditmani Nam	31. Sanlokh Nam
2. Sudarshan Nam	17. Mukundmani Nam	32. Chatrik Nam
3. Kulpañ Nam	18. Adh Nam	33. Dadhi Nam
4. Pramodh Nam	19. Udai Nam	34. Neh Nam
5. Kewal Nam	20. Gyan Nam	35. Adi Nam
6. Amol Nam	21. Hansmani Nam	36. Maha Nam
7. Surat Sanehi Nam	22. Sukrit Nam	37. Nij Nam
8. Haqq Nam	23. Agrmani Nam	38. Sahib Das Nam
9. Pak Nam	24. Ras Nam	39. Udhawa Das Nam
10. Praghat Nam	25. Gungmani Nam	40. Karuna Nam
11. Dhiraj Nam	26. Paras Nam	41. Uddhar Nam
12. Ugra Nam	27. Jagrat Nam	42. Drigh Nam
13. Daya Nam	28. Bringmani Nam	43. Mahamani Nam
14. Gridhmani Nam	29. Akah Nam	
15. Prakash Nam	30. Kanthmani Nam	

After Daya Nam Sahab, the succession of Dharam Dass' line split into – the line in which Ardh Nam Sahab is, based in Kharsia and Lahartara consisting of unmarried hajurs, and the other based in Damakheda and consists of married hajurs. The present hazur there is Prakashmani Nam.

IMAGE: Kabir to Sant Dharam Das, Churamani Nami (the son of Sant Dharam Das) and the “42” Dharamdasi Kabir Panth Gurus of Kali Yuga

The Ten Sikh Gurus are quite well-known. The Adi Granth (Guru Granth) is easy to get. There are even several translations of Sikh scriptures accessible to anyone for free on the web. I can see why it would be so easy for English-speaking westerners interested in Sant Mat to see the Ten Sikh Gurus as being a kind of "primary line of masters" before the time of Soamiji Maharaj. However, the world of Kabir and successors, Kabir Sagar volumes, bhajans of Dharam Das, other compositions of Kabir lineage gurus, Sat Saheb, Dariya Sahib with his twenty three books, and the four or five volumes of Sant Tulsi Sahib are far more obscure. For the most part, these are available only in Hindi, virtually unknown to most, especially in Europe and North America. There is a great need to focus on what has been translated, the information which has come to light, and begin the process of researching that Sant Mat history prior to the time of Soamiji Maharaj and Sant Tulsi Sahib. For me, what comes into view is another "line of masters", a treasure-trove of Sant Mat literature, and a much more precise history of the Path.

Kabir to Dharam Das Lineage to Sat Saheb to Dariya Sahib to Tulsi Sahib and Successors

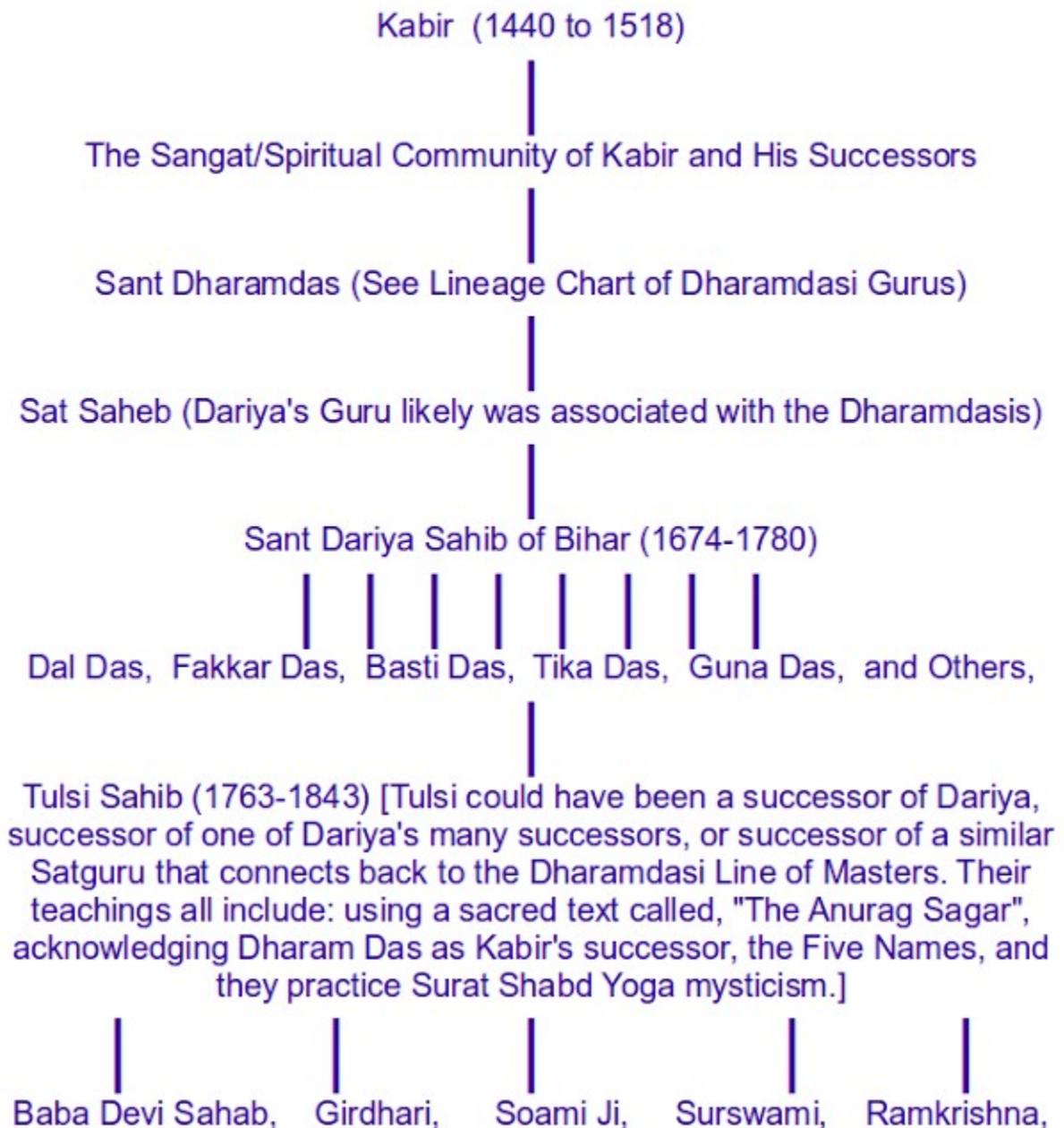


IMAGE: A Big-Picture View of Succession, from Kabir to Contemporary Sant Mat, with Some Key Figures In Between

A Panch Naam of the Nath Yogis?

A possible connection to the earlier Nath Yogis is something I have yet to research thoroughly, but scholars often point out that Nath terminology is very much present in hymns attributed to Kabir, Dharam Das and other Sants: "It is perhaps not surprising to find that the Nath's have had a close and formative influence on the Dharamdasis." (Mark Juergensmeyer, "Radhasoami Reality", page 30) On the relationship between Kabir and the Nath Yogis, also see Linda Hess, "Studies in Kabir", pages 122-125. Charlotte Vaudeville in her book, "Kabir", volume I, 1974, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, writes: "Circumcised or not, Kabir was officially a musalman, through it appears likely that some form of Nathism was his own ancestral tradition. This alone would explain his relative ignorance of Islamic tenets, his remarkable acquaintance with Tantric-yoga practices and his lavish use of its esoteric jargon. The fact is that, though Kabir is not himself a Nath-Panthi, though he ridicules the Gorakhnath's paraphernalia and even more their pretensions to immortality, he appears far more conversant with their basic attitudes and philosophy than with the Islamic orthodox tradition." (page 89)

That particular Kabir book by Vaudeville is a great resource showing the dominant influence of Nath teachings present in the Sakhis of Kabir, including references to Surat Shabd Yoga as a central practice. For the moment however, it is yet to be fully confirmed by me whether the five names are also part of this shared Nath terminology. Seems very likely though.

"Gorakhnath taught his fellow men to stop searching for God in idols and look for Him in their own hearts. 'Turn your gaze inwards'. Gorakhnath and his disciples cried out for God using these sacred words, Alakh Niranjana. Alakh meaning invisible and Niranjana meaning unblemished, immaculate, purest. The Gorakhnathi Yogis consider the Guru to be equal to God. Gorakhnath has showed the path of Laya Yoga to the world. Laya Yoga includes easily practicable meditations of Anahata Nada Sound, the Atma-Jyoti (light of the soul in the third eye) and so on." ("Great Yogi Gorakhnath, The life of Yogi Gorakhnath and his legends. His influence on Indian spirituality through the ages": <https://www.scribd.com/doc/28679027/Great-Yogi-Gorakhnath>)

If you Google "Gorakhanath", and a few of the five names, one finds a few documents online that show some of the five names are present in the Nath Yogi tradition -- for instance:

<http://documents.mx/documents/vihangam-yoga-divya-jeevan-katha.html>

Some are saying this about the five names being in the Nath Yogi tradition but truly reliable sources would be direct translations of Nath writings including the Granth of Gorakhanath. I do notice that many of those have now become available in English. This is the next frontier of research for me. //////////////

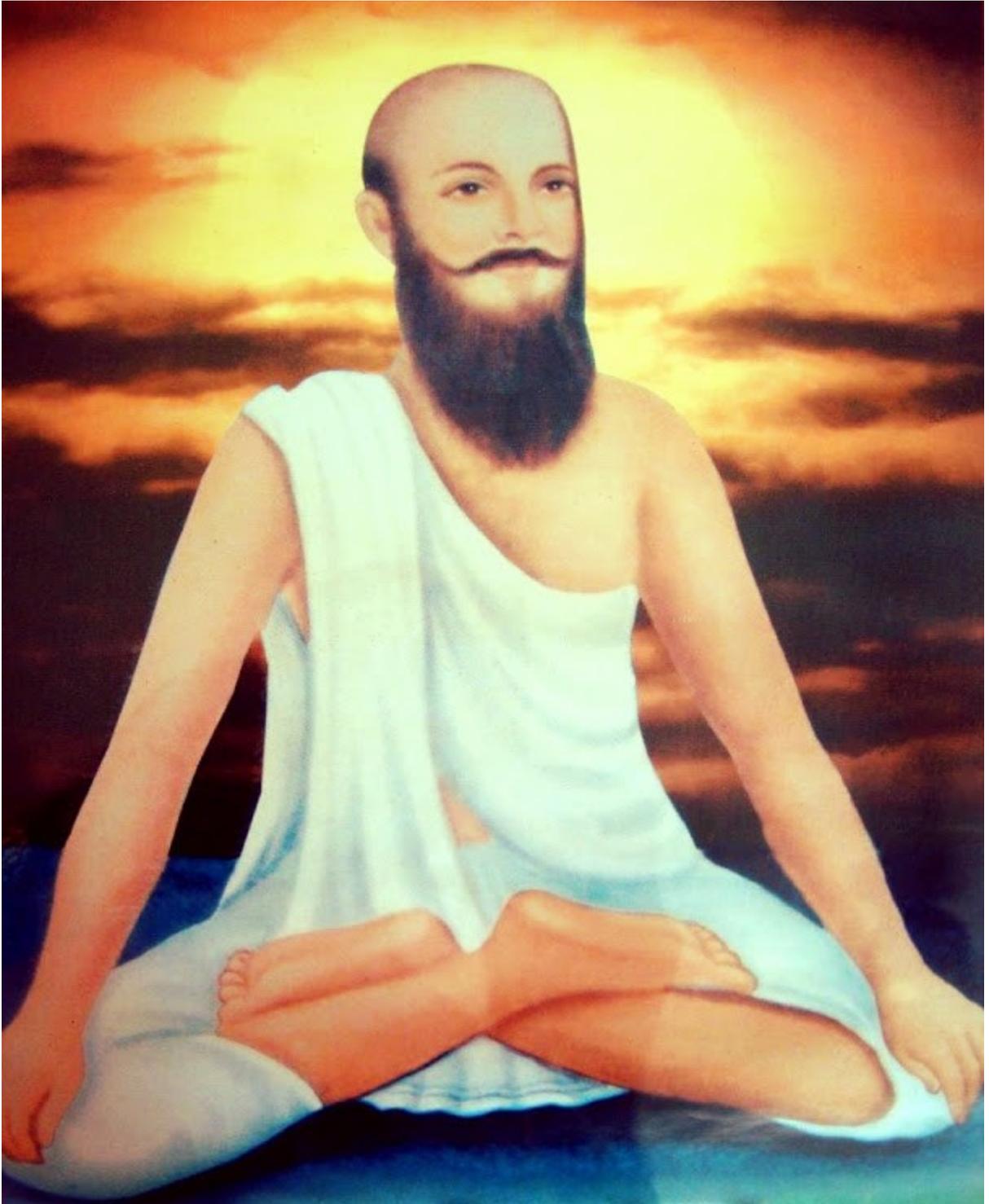


IMAGE: Sant Dariya Sahib of Bihar