

Don Diego, Rudra or Thatha?

Translated from original, here: <https://educasectas.org/shiva-nagar-1/>

This era of confinement has put many cultic communities in quarantine, as it is the case of the community founded around Don Diego (in clear allusion to Carlos Castañeda) or Rudra, founder of two communities: [the Hindu Shiva Nagar community in Borriana \(Castellón\)](#) and the [shamanic-ayahuasquera community of Sachavacay](#). The above-mentioned Don Diego or Rudra, is "a medical shaman", "a healer of the soul", "an initiated person", dedicated to helping the spiritual awakening of those who come to him, initiating them on the path to achieve enlightenment. It should be clarified that although Don Diego-Rudra is ambiguous in this regard and never explicitly claims to be enlightened, it is not difficult to draw that conclusion by listening to his messages.

We know that, during his adolescence, he wandered erratically through the Amazon jungle with the help of hallucinogenic substances that convinced him of being destined for a transcendent task: "[When I was 17 years old, I met a native of the Amazon jungle who recognized me as his apprentice](#)", he tells us. And in fact his adolescence must have been accompanied by a lot of plant-medicine intake, because Don Diego himself has gone so far as to say that he has taken so much ayahuasca that just by closing his eyes he managed to enter a hallucinatory state or, as the ayahuasqueros say, managed to "enter ceremony". After a few years, he went from being called Diego to becoming Don Diego, [or even Don Diego López](#), a shaman, "[a man of deep-seated spirituality ... who brings pure healing](#)." And for further endorsements, "[his ability to teach the healing arts effectively in many cultures is fostered by his extensive studies in Psychology and Medicine](#)." We do not know well what he should refer to with such a curricular presentation, nor what extensive studies he must have completed, probably referring to various skipped courses that he claims to have carried out on "medicinal plants" or "phytochemistry" at some supposed university located in Iquitos (Peru) . At the same time, he claims to have completed a study of "natural medicine" at the University of Alicante, where he also says that he studied "[Jungian Psychology, Neurolinguistic Programming and Bach Flowers](#)", alleged courses that, as far as I know, are not held in such University.

In any case, after that initiatory stage in Peru - which leads to proclaiming his own guarantor of shaman status-, he made a trip to India, where he would meet [Kodi Thatha Swami, an old man who mythically ensures that he lived some 300 years until he left his body in 1993](#), and who is also said to have spent twelve years in the yogic position of the tree without moving, not even to sleep, eat or relieve himself. Needless comments in this regard. But the contact with Thatha in India has supposed a before and after for the life of Don Diego and his community. It will be from this moment on that Don Diego begins to call himself Rudra, after the spirit of Kodi Thatha supposedly possessed him for the first time, entering his body to speak through him. In this way, he went from being a shaman to acting as a channeler for Thatha. This fact must have shocked him in such a way that he concluded that it was best to transmit his teachings, both at the level of taking ayahuasca as a shaman through ceremonials both in Spain and in the United States, and through Hindu religious practice in which Don Diego works as the Rudra master.

The shamanic-ayahuasquera community of Sachavacay

At first, and as he himself explains, after his adolescent enlightenment with drugs, [Don Diego creates a shamanic-ayahuasquera community under the name of Sachavacay](#). Its origin, he says, dates back to the Amazon jungle of Peru, where [he built a network of cabins so that people could have an experience of personal transformation and spiritual evolution taking hallucinogenic plants such as ayahuasca, among others](#). Although in the meetings that are regularly held with ayahuasca, Thatha is never mentioned - that would rather belong to Hindu practice -, the truth is that Don Diego displays an indoctrinating style in relation to lifestyle, spirituality, etc. that are very close to the teachings that will later appear with Rudra. In fact, almost all the people who will later go to the Borriana hermitage is because they have previously met Don Diego and the community in an ayahuasca ceremony, perhaps after having gone through various courses of the new age nebula. The practical purpose of these ayahuasca ceremonies is to attract new potential followers, while allowing them to finance themselves easily and illegally, to which must be added the hallucinogenic potential of the substance itself. And so that initial control that Don Diego exercises among his followers is based, fundamentally, on the use of ayahuasca, which he uses to probe all the fragile points of the person, to later put pressure with many questions about the same fragilities that mislead or give a feeling of a unique connection. Another resource for obtaining information from the shaman comes from the information that other participants will provide about the person who begins to attend such encounters.

[On some occasions, their workshops have already aroused complaints, especially in the sense of the possible economic scam as a result of a course held in the United States](#).

And the fact is that a day of retirement with ayahuasca implies a full income of approximately € 4,000 that goes to Don Diego's pocket and of which not a single euro is declared. That is justified later, when one already attends the hermitage, excusing himself for the high expenses of the hermitage and the community, which are totally expendable and unnecessary since, according to him, Thatha, so little material it was, that did not even want the light to reach the hermitage. In any case, in the ayahuasca ceremonies, the shaman uses the help of a couple of followers, who accompany him and attend him in case he requires it, and who also help the assistants during the process of taking ayahuasca. These same people must pay for their travel and do not obtain any economic income for such activity. To justify his abuse, Don Diego makes it known that it is very good for each assistant to pay for his travel and accommodation "because they are merits in the eyes of Thatha" (which in his eyes, is therefore good in the eyes of God) , while "demonstrating their detachment and commitment to the community." He has several people in charge in different places to organize their ayahuasca ceremonies and it is through them that their ayahuasca taking workshops are held. These ceremonies are held in different provinces of Spain; [in Euskadi, they have taken place in rented spaces at the Amalurra hotel](#), in [Catalonia they have taken place in a rented place near Alcover \(Tarragona\)](#), in the ["Casa Joferberi" \(Joferberi / Mas de Llaneta\)](#), as well as in the province of [Manresa in the "Mas Gras" farmhouse](#) or in [Mallorca in a place near Inca, specifically in "Casa Ienmaya"](#) where meetings of the Santo Daime Tradition were also held", another Brazilian community of ayahuasqueros.

[The person in charge of managing and organizing some of these ayahuasca shots, as well as spiritual retreats \(pilgrimages\) in the United States, is a social worker who claims to be an expert in dissociative disorders, and who is ultimately also devoted to Rudra-Thatha.](#) In fact, she makes use of her status as a social worker to develop filtering and psychological probing functions of the people who arrive at these shots, thus obtaining a clear x-ray of their personality in order to subsequently transmit it to Rudra and so that her on stage before the new participants be even more gimmicky if possible; this social worker is designated by the guru as "the grandmother" and tends to pass on the essential information of each convert, so that Don Diego has more solid tools, even if possible, to manipulate his followers. [This same social worker was also involved in Rudra's project to establish an association \(Friends of Sachavacay Preserve Inc\), an association, which was dissolved in 2009.](#)

Apart from ayahuasca, it must be added that Don Diego also administers other plants, such as the 7 roots, a substance that in some retreat held in Asheville (North Carolina, United States) left some people in a state of paranoia and destabilization and his incompetence became evident as he seemed to be unaware of what to do in this situation that had gotten out of hand (since he himself had supplied the hallucinogenic plant). In addition, he showed a certain snub towards these women - not typical of a teacher who guides and wants the best for his disciples -, hoping that they themselves would come out of that hallucinogenic state induced by himself and criticizing them for not living up to what the community awaits. The idea is that each person should take ayahuasca (or another substance supplied by him) and resolve their situation on their own, without external help, as this will allow them to "learn a lesson". Showing weakness or doubts when leaving these states is systematically interpreted by the shaman as evidence of how bad the person is. To make it clear: it is as if a father hits his children excusing himself on the idea of making them stronger and then reprimand them even more if they complain about the blows. And so in the eyes of others, Don Diego has "great wisdom" and everything he does is for the good of each one, that is, if he supplies a drug and it produces hallucinations or even some harmful effect, it is always for the sake of the followers and to enhance spiritual awakening.

The shaman likes drugs. And it has set up a system by which the followers themselves finance it, apart from other things. In his repertoire of toxins, he also uses marijuana, "to cleanse karma." The guru seems to enjoy when someone in his community falls apart after taking substances, videotaping the images and then showing them in private and laughing openly at this or that person who lost his mind. That attitude, so unspiritual as it is, he justifies telling others that, in reality, all this helps people (the guru can do whatever he wants, even humiliate, laugh or tell the secrets of others, for example: such person has AIDS). Or when on other occasions he tells a convert that her behavior is "like that of a bitch at home," he also justifies it by saying that it is something he does for the spiritual growth of said convert. This type of functioning has become usual, and as I point out in my last book, [¡Captados!](#), the institutionalization of abuse is one of the features of the cultic functioning.

Additionally, in his inner circle, he may make offensive comments or ridicule the people who, in a take of ayahuasca, fell apart or showed symptoms of breaking down. The shaman's comments in this situation were of the kind "she is hooked" or "she is crazy".

These offensive or humiliating comments from a spiritual master can have a double effect on the followers who listen to them, making them feel uncomfortable or violent inside, since they do not feel good at the mockery / humiliation, but with the aggravating circumstance that the shaman or the teacher has an important spiritual ascendancy, apart from the fact that such humiliation occurs in a context of greater weakness due to the taking of the substance itself. Other participants will feel guilty and shameful because somehow Don Diego-Rudra will lead them to become accomplice in this situation by the added fear that on another occasion they could be the victims of this type of humiliation, which leads them to a position in which they become indifferent and that closes the group process where the shaman begins to function as a spiritual master.

The Hindu Shiva Nagar community

Along with his ayahuasquera practice, the other side of Don Diego is that corresponding to his alter ego, Rudra, spiritual teacher of the Hindu community Shiva Nagar. Its headquarters is located in Borriana, where Rudra, as a teacher or guru, has built a hermitage in which the god Shiva is worshiped and from where they intend to spread the messages of Thatha, since "he uses Rudra's body to pour out his blessings to the world ", transmit messages to enlighten humanity and, in addition, guide their followers, and even make miracles in their lives. Rudra assures that thanks to being in contact with Thatha, thanks to being able to channel him, "he can send very pure energy to the hermitage of Borriana and its children" (all followers from inside and outside the community). In other words, followers will be on the path of spiritual growth if they remain linked to the community. This staging will end up stimulating a progressive dependence among his followers, who will be compelled to ask advice about any aspect of their lives to Thatha, who is supposed to know the ultimate truth of things and stands above good and evil. But what initially is offered as a loving experience of spiritual evolution, gradually becomes a situation that generates guilt and fear.

In the first contacts, Rudra shows himself friendly and even helps financially, as a way to generate a feeling of debt in his future followers. Maybe someone is going to spend a retreat at the hermitage and, in addition to paying the stay and the retreat, they have him working in gardening or masonry, working long hours, exploiting him/her, and then giving him/her a small amount of money as a thank-you, when in reality, it still means taking advantage of the capacity of this or that person for one's own benefit. Or perhaps another participant, in one of his ayahuasca ceremonies, gives him certain objects, which will make that person feel special or chosen, because the guru has given him this or that object of symbolic value. Those signs of "generosity" are nothing more than a poisoned chocolate, because later on the guru will demand living up to the occasion (which translates into attracting more people to the ceremonies, keeping secrecy about certain activities, not questioning, organizing activities in Bilbao or Mallorca, etc.). And at the same time, he uses that same strategy to instill guilt, in the sense that, if he was so generous in the past, why isn't the convert now giving all his time, energy, and money to the community?

This "gift", in addition to having been wrapped under the assumptions of love and disinterest, is accompanied by two closely related hidden nuances: the impossibility of rejecting it and the haste to accept it.

And since Rudra does not allow doubt, there is no room for reflection and in cases of need he always goes to the typical: "you cannot miss this gift" or "you must decide now." The gift ultimately comes from God, and the mere act of hesitating to accept it is an insult and a lack of respect before God Himself. In practice, anything that comes out of Rudra's mouth is a gift and there is no possibility of even doubting it. At the beginning, when the convert shows a certain interest and is in the outer layers of the organization, seduction is exercised through material gifts. But as the convert enters the community, the gifts become more subtle, but more profound, until it comes to the point that anything coming from the guru is a gift (even if it is a look full of hatred and destruction, it is "necessary" for spiritual evolution). In the first stages of seduction, the convert innocently accepts the gifts without realizing the perversion that they hide, and as they become part of the organization, the gifts are received with some joy and also with a lot of pressure, since it requires more of their commitment to the cause and more dedication to it. For a convert, it is very difficult to notice this pressure because the very fact of feeling it can be interpreted as a rejection and this causes an internal conflict that grows over time. In addition, that pressure cannot be questioned, since Rudra does not give the space or the time to think about it and if it is asked, he answers with rebuff or even anger, depending on the degree of confidence, which causes greater guilt.

Once within the Shiva Nagar community, Rudra fosters detachment and renunciation, essential requirements to advance on the spiritual path; But, strikingly, it turns out that he owns several houses or farms and leads a luxurious lifestyle with the excuse that the teacher has to live well to carry the weight of the community. According to him, all the money that is raised is invested in the hermitage or in the community and also for "the children of Thatha". An example of this is the construction of a school in Peru, donating food to Thatha's followers in India or providing kitchen items and food so that Thatha volunteers can feed visitors (although on many occasions the followers pay to be in the hermitage, so it can be said that it is included). By the way, he tries to demonstrate that the donations and the collections of the followers are at the service of the community, since it is a space that serves the children of Thatha (after all, everything is supposedly to worship Thatha and help his children scattered around the world). According to Rudra himself, with all these tasks he is spending a lot of money. Which does not prevent him from remodeling the hermitage, installing solar panels, beautifying it (painting, building altars illegally, buying very expensive statues that he brings from India, paying in cash for the maintenance of the gardens, buying trees and plants, etc.). But in essence, Diego-Rudra has a great dream: that the hermitage become a majestic and opulent place, not to create a space of peace and inner encounter, but to highlight its economic-spiritual power and personal greatness. This is what he needs to be someone and fill his infinite inner emptiness.

Don Diego-Rudra owns two houses and lives with all possible comforts: underfloor heating, giant Jacuzzi, fully equipped kitchen, bluetooth speakers throughout the house or wooden parquet brought from Peru. He has a good car worth an amount of more than € 20,000. And he owns the hermitage. All this together with a standard of living far superior to that of an average worker, regardless of expenses when he deems them necessary: he buys clothes, eats in restaurants, buys first-class plane tickets.... It is far from a spiritual life in the sense of away from the material. To justify it, he is perfectly right, saying Thatha told him to do that. But if he was a true spiritual master, shouldn't he apply the same thing he preaches?

In fact, and according to Rudra himself, Thatha has asked him from the beginning for austerity and humility in the hermitage, something that he does less and less because he adorns and adorns the hermitage with more and more comforts. In spite of everything, he demands detachment and resignation, which at first would seem reasonable to lead a spiritual lifestyle, but as these ideas permeate his followers, detachment and resignation result in the abandonment of their lives (life social networks, friends, later family) and, ultimately, of themselves. Once the convert reaches this point, Rudra is in complete control of their lives and can bend them at will. Rudra always moves in ambiguity and never says anything explicitly, but he suggests it, insinuates it, so that the responsibility always falls on the convert. The following message from Rudra illustrates the above: "If the other desires are more powerful in our minds than God, then we will not find time. Detachment and renunciation are the keys". Rudra's real job is to send messages or have others do it for him to be present in the lives of his followers and to penetrate, little by little, in their hearts and, above all, in their minds. In this invisible spiral: how can we ignore the teacher? How can you not get closer to God if they are giving you the keys?

In this regard, it must be added that Rudra, in a WhatsApp group through which he communicates with his followers, says things like "Thatha has opened the hermitage to solve people's problems", or also that "Thatha is Shiva (that is, God) and Shiva is Thatha", and that "God and the guru are the same thing". These types of messages are constant and permeate the minds and hearts of the followers of Rudra, who end up thinking that Thatha is God and, by extension, deduce that Rudra (for being in contact with Thatha and being the teacher of the community) is somehow God and for this reason Rudra knows what is best for each one, for the group as a whole and even for whole humanity. The purpose of all these messages (both those that are shared in the WhatsApp group and those that are given personally) is to persuade the followers to start detaching themselves from everything material and, ultimately, from themselves, and at the end, obey all the commands of Master Rudra, who, through the promise of evolving spiritually, ends up dominating the life and decisions of everyone who wants to get closer to him. So much so that the followers of the community, once they have given, directly or indirectly, their lives to Rudra, "his kind teacher", they depend on him to take any decision. And so Rudra uses all the confessions that his followers make to him (or Thatha) to ultimately use all that information for his own benefit and thus enrich himself personally. In fact, converts are encouraged to make donations to the teacher (dakshinas) as "a symbol of deep detachment ... and especially of the search for truth." Some abandon their lives, their jobs, they even put their houses in the teacher's name and dedicate themselves body and soul to satisfying the needs of the community without realizing that, behind this dedication, the ultimate objective is to exercise control and dominate their lives.

Some of those who left the community corroborate that, despite the exaggerated image that Rudra wants to give of himself regarding the enormous effort he makes for the community (meditating, bidding, ceremonies, speak / guide the entire community, prayers, messages, readings of sacred texts, fires, etc.), in his daily life, where almost nobody has access, he makes little effort, and sometimes none, to carry out these activities, especially that of meditating. In fact, he tends to blame others for not being able to carry out his tasks properly, even behaving in an angry manner.

And along with this staging based on seduction, deception and scam, the guru also ensures that, with their ceremonies, prayers, etc., people can improve or heal (themselves and others) of serious diseases, such as degenerative, autoimmune diseases or even mental disorders, multiple sclerosis or AIDS. This is one of the elements that make many people end up more and more committed to the Borriana community, hoping to improve their quality of life. In practice, Rudra-Thatha does not usually explicitly assert that he is going to heal someone or that he is going to grant him such a miracle but, rather implies it using ambiguous language. In this way the responsibility can never fall on him.

The guru maintains that the whole of his "spiritual work" is pure and truthful because it is born out of God. He maintains, on the one hand, that to achieve the best energetic and spiritual conditions, a strictly vegetarian diet is necessary, avoiding fats, processed foods or the like; and while he does not eat meat or fish, the truth is that he has a predilection for processed foods, especially his favorite donuts and Mercadona's chips or hummus (when the group repeatedly tells him that these types of foods contain very low energy that hinder spiritual development!). In this sense, his evident overweight is justified by him with several stories: for example, being in the jungle, they bewitched him one day and since then, even if he fasts or eats healthy, he cannot lose weight; or that on one occasion, after many ayahuasca shots in a row, he had to stop at a friend's house, who took care of him and gave him a lot of juices for his recovery, which caused a change in his metabolism that made him become overweight. The stories can vary. Apparently, it must embarrass him in such a way that, according to those who lived close to him, he continually asks in secret if other people will think of him as being overweight. Which is clearly yes. To make matters worse, in addition to justifying his overweight with the most varied cartoons, he also justifies himself before others, citing the example of enlightened teachers who also had a prominent belly. How do you explain it? Well, according to Rudra himself, once you become enlightened, it does not matter if you eat a lot or even smoke like a highwayman because real life is not earthly. Another effective way to justify his bulky body is saying that Thatha has given him that body to endure all the sadhana (spiritual practices) that he carries out. The converts, removed from any gap of reasoning, give all the credibility to the different stories that he tells them of himself. It is curious in this sense that by rewarding his lifestyle as neat, healthy and pure, Rudra could justify for some time that he smoked because Thatha had ordered him to clean the karma of "his children". What he does not tell is that just before this has happened he went on a trip with a smoker friend who, curiously, smoked the same rolling tobacco that he would later himself smoke. This friend encouraged him to smoke and his unwillingness made him fall back into this addiction. To justify such impudence in the eyes of others and to be able to enjoy his cigarettes, he invented that story of world liberator who by smoking cleaned the karma of the world.

He also maintains that sexual abstinence is essential for at least three days before an ayahuasca ceremony, although in practice he does not respect that precept. He justifies this transgression of his own doctrine by saying that being a shaman himself, he can have sexual intercourse when he feels like it, without affecting in any way his spiritual ceremonies. In fact, he sells to his followers the image of maintaining almost a life of sexual abstinence because according to himself he says: "I have worked hard to channel my sexual energy and this has triggered my ability to concentrate" (understand that concentration is a basic quality of the spiritual aspirant to achieve enlightenment).

Furthermore, the guru takes advantage of his spiritual ascendancy to gain carnal access to some of the followers of the community, whom he ends up abusing emotionally and verbally, to justify his own impotence. Another thing that does not match the almost ascetic lifestyle that he intends to sell is that, whenever he performs a ceremony or a retreat, he is accompanied by a group of women who are at his service so that the teacher does not lack anything. At the top of the hermitage there is a room in which Rudra rests between practice and practice. In those moments it is very common to see the teacher lying on a mattress while his "servants" kneel before him and go out of their way to serve him something to drink, massage him, give him a conversation, manage his income or simply adore him, in exchange for that minute of attention of the teacher so, so precious.

As for the guru getting up early to meditate, the truth is that, in his daily life, in those moments when almost no one is with him, he meditates rather little, to say the least, arguing that if he does not meditate more it is either because others energetically prevent him, or because the members of the community themselves are responsible for his meditating little. Additionally, in periods when there are no retreats or ceremonies, Rudra has plenty of time per day, and yet he does not meditate.

Another notable aspect of Rudra is his bad mood and his little patience, according to those who lived nearby. His closest followers know this well, although they justify his behavior behind the image of an enlightened being. In fact, his bad mood is often translated into outbursts of anger (very unlike a spiritual master, by the way) that are followed by humiliations that serve to blame the followers for their attitudes that, on the other hand, on many occasions he himself indirectly causes. This serves to make them see the bad state they are in or to convince them that they are upset, to convince them in a second moment that they need his help (and from Thatha). At this point, the followers who suffer these behaviors are filled with fear, sometimes panic, guilt and above all, much confusion (many times his outbursts of anger are caused by them not doing something according to his criteria, of course always for trivial things). What true spiritual master can justify this deal if what he is expected from him to do is teach, perhaps firmly, but always with love?

This process unfolds in a context in which the essential, according to Rudra, lies in the destruction of the ego. In fact, one of the deities that Rudra venerates is precisely the goddess Kali (goddess associated with destruction), of whom he has an image in his own room. In the Borriana hermitage there is a tiny temple of the god Ganesh (Hindu deity who is represented with an elephant's head) and on one side of the facade this goddess is represented with the image of Rudra's severed head in her hand, meaning that she has cut off his head, and therefore that Rudra has defeated the ego. Visual collage that is a symptom of an ego that comes out of its seams.

When a convert goes into the spheres closest to Rudra, without being in his inner circle, the teacher's attention alone is already a priceless gift. His mere attention is savored as the elixir of the gods. He knows it and when he wants to receive something in return, then he dedicates time and attention to the convert from whom he needs some service. In fact, the convert quickly learns that "the teacher has a very busy life" and that the little time he has cannot be spent on "trifles" (meaning, concerns of his followers).

And if in all this process of cultic alienation the convert has doubts or thinks for himself, the recommendation to neutralize that negative energy is to repeat and repeat incessantly the mantra "Om Namah Shivaya" and visualize the image of Thatha, "who always wants the best for his children". Because in Shiva Nagar there is no room for doubt, not even to ask awkward questions. For otherwise the result is expulsion, the invitation to leave, and to fall into nothing.