

Haqiqat Rai

Haqiqat Singh (Born Haqiqat Rai Bakhmal Puri) (Punjabi: ਹਕੀਕਤ ਰਾਜ ਬਾਖਮਲ ਪੂਰੀ (Gurmukhi), *حقیقت رائے باکھمل پوری* (Shahmukhi); Hindi: हकीकत राय बाखमल पुरी) was an 18th-century Hindu martyr from Sialkot, who was executed in Lahore (Mughal India) for refusing to convert to Islam.^{[1][2][3][4]}

Early life

Haqiqat Rai was born into a Hindu Puri Khatri family^[5],^[6]^[7]^[8] in Sialkot, Punjab, Mughal India His father's name was Bagh Mal Rai, a wealthy Hindu trader. At the age of 14, Rai was sent to a Maulvi to learn Persian. One day some of his Muslim classmates were making fun of various Hindu deities, ridiculing his religion. In return, he asked them how they would feel if anyone insulted Muhammad or Ayesha. For this, his classmates reported this to the Maulvi as it was taken as an insult of Islam.^[9]^[10]

When he was summoned he appeared, where he was given an option to convert to Islam to save his life but he refused and leave his Hindu faith. As a result, he was beheaded at a young age. He attained martyrdom at the age of 14, during the governorship of Zakariya Khan. Quasi Abdul Haq, who was responsible for the Fatwa, was also beheaded later on by Sardar Dal Singh and Saradar Mana Singh and shown around the city of Batala^[11] Different sources give different dates of his death, including 1732,^[12] or 1735.^[13]

Life and Work

In 1782, a Sikh poet named Aggra (aka Agra or Aggar Singh) wrote a Punjabi var (ballad) titled *Haqiqat Rai di Var*.^[14] Maharaja Ranjit Singh particularly revered Haqiqat Rai as a Sikh martyr.^[15]

In the first decade of the twentieth century (1905–10), three Bengali writers popularized the legend of Haqiqat Rai's martyrdom through their essays. The three accounts differ greatly.^[9] The Arya Samaj organized a play *Dharmaveer Haqiqat Rai*, advocating deep loyalty to Hinduism. It also printed copies of the legend, and distributed them free of cost or at a nominal price of 2 paisa.^[16]

Before the partition of India in 1947, Hindus and Sikhs used to gather at his samadhi in Lahore, during the Basant Panchami Festival.^[17] His samadhi in Sialkot was also a place of worship.^[18] In 2004, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, a Pakistani daily opposed Basant Panchami celebrations in Pakistan, arguing that the festival celebrated Haqiqat Rai's insult of Muhammad.^[19]

Another samadhi dedicated to Haqiqat Rai is located in Boeli of Baba Bhandari (Hoshiarpur district), where people gather and pay obeisance to Haqiqat Rai during Basant Panchami.^[20] In Gurdaspur district, a shrine dedicated to him is located at Batala.^[21] The town also has a samadhi dedicated to Sati Lakshmi Devi, said to be the wife of Haqiqat Rai.^[22]

Haqiqat Rai



Hindu Dharma's Martyr Hakikat Rai Puri listening to Gita from Pandit

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| Born | <u>Sialkot</u> |
| Died | <u>Lahore</u> |
| Other names | Haqiqat Rai Bakhmal Puri |
| Citizenship | <u>Mughal India</u> |

Many cities in India have localities named after Haqiqat Rai, mostly the ones where the partition refugees settled; for example, Haqiqat Nagar in Delhi. An ISBT located in Sarai Kale Khan in Delhi, India is also named after him.

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