

Subject	World Literatures in Translation (ENG-311)
Presentation Topic	Sachal Sarmast
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Sachal Sarmast (1739-1827)

Introduction:

Sachal Sarmast-a mystic was born in 1739 in Sindh which is also known as the place of Sufi's or place of mystics. His real name was Abdul Wahab Farouqi. Sachal was yet a child when his father passed away. He remained under the care of his uncle Faqir Abdul Haq, who later became his spiritual guide and also his father-in-law. Faqir Abdul Haq lead Sachal Sarmast to mysticism and he was the one who gave him the name 'Sachal Sarmast'. Sachal means 'truth' and Sarmast means 'mystic or someone who is intoxicated by the love of God', because Sachal often used to be in a state of 'Divine Ecstasy'. Thus Sachal Sarmast means 'Truthful Mystic'.

Against the Rigid Mindset of Clergy:

Clergy means a class of religious people. Sachal himself was a Hafiz-e-Quran. He was that kind of Hafiz whose Diwan is considered so sacred that his devotees consult it for augury in times of difficulty and distress. Like Hafiz, Sachal castigated Mullas and Maulvis. He kept himself unpopular with religious hierarchy of his time. He became unpopular with Muslim religious leaders not only because of his harsh criticism of them but also because he loved music. He was a great lover of music. Touched by music, he would often cry profusely. Couplets would pour out from his lips, which his followers or fellow dervishes would immediately inscribe. Moreover he loved singing openly of wine and beauty and most importantly because of his calling himself God. Although Sachal was an ardent believer of Wahdat-ul-Wujood. Once he was in deep meditation and suddenly he broke silence with the title of 'Ana-AL-Haq' which means 'I am God' and from that day he became famous as Mansoor Saani (second Mansoor, the first Mansoor raised the same slogan of Ana-AL-Haq and was put to death). Sachal Praised Mansoor and his mission all the time and he suggested his followers "to be Mansur and forget what you are". He said;

***"The brave speak the truth
Let others like it or not;
For the talk of false friendship, we care not"***

Sachal wanted the people to know themselves, to scrutinise the God's words and will by themselves and not to follow the saints

***Ignore the paths of others,
even the saints' steep trails.***

*Don't follow.
Don't journey at all.*

Themes of Sachal Sarmast's Poetry:

Sachal was influenced by Rumi. He called him immortal poet. Like Rumi, the themes of Sachal's writings are: Love, Purification of Thoughts, Self Realization. The poet has emphasized the need of self-realization. The knowledge of self-realization leads to God's love. The poet says that man's stay on the Earth is temporary; he should make himself ready for the life hereafter. The only secret of this preparation is self-realization.

*You by yourself, know what is in your form!
Why chant 'Allah Allah'? Find Allah within you.
You listen, you see, Allah's word is witness,
There is no doubt, O Sachal! that the Lord is One!*

His poetry emphasised on Haqeeqi Ishq (divine love) as he was ardent believer of Wahdat-ul-Wujood (unity of existence). In his poetry, one can feel that he strongly believed in tolerance among races, caste and genders.

Sachal as Mystic:

Sachal is a true mystic. Like other mystics he has both the love of God and the love for humanity. He does not believe in the boundaries of religion. Sachal is influenced by Guru Nanak, thus he advised his disciple Fakir Yousaf to adopt Fakir Nanak Yousaf as his takhlus or pen name. On the instruction of his mentor Sachal Sarmast, one of his chief disciples, Faqir Nanak Yousaf, travelled to Sikh shrines. He says;

*'Tis not in religion I believe
'Tis love I live in.
When love comes to you.
Say Amen!*

Sachal is also called '**shair-e- haft zaban** ' (poet in seven languages) as he composed poetical pieces in Arabic, Sindhi, Seraiki, Punjabi, Urdu, Persian and Balochi. Whatever he wrote is replete with Divine Love. Since he wrote in seven languages, his poetry touched every aspect of the spiritual, social and economic life of everyone who got to read it.

It is believed that Sachal was destined to become a mystic as he was born in the land of saints, his grandfather was a darvesh, his father died when he was young boy, he was brought up by his uncle who lead him to mysticism, the name of his village was Daraz, which is also interpreted as Dar-e-raaz in Persian. 'Dar' means 'door', 'raaz' means 'secret or mystery'. Thus Dar-e-Raz means 'The Gate of Divine Mystery'.

Legends even said that as a young boy Sachal visited Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, the other great mystic of Sindh, who prophesied that Sachal **"would take the lid off the cauldron I have set to boil."** He meant that Sachal would uncover the divine secrets which Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai kept concealed.