

Literature is the reflection of life and loyalty. Literature is the word derived from Latin *litterae* (plural); letter) is the art of written works and literature, and is bound to published sources (although, under circumstances unpublished sources can be exempt). Literally translated, the word *literature* means "acquaintance with letters, as in the "arts and letters. The major classification of literature are poetry, prose, plays, fictions, novels and short stories etc.,

Indian literature refers to the literature related in India. The Republic of India has officially recognized 24 languages as on the basis of Sahitya Akademi of India.

The earliest works of Indian literature were orally transmitted. Sanskrit literature begins with the Rig Veda a collection of sacred hymns dating to the period 1500–1200 BCE(Before Christ Era). The Sanskrit epics *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* appeared towards the end of the first millennium BCE. Classical Sanskrit literature flourished in the first few centuries of the first millennium BCE.

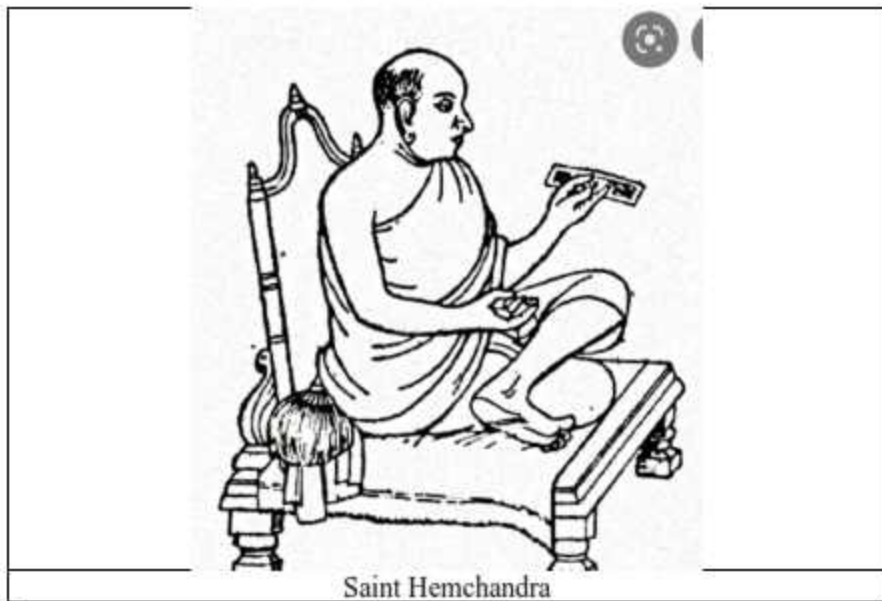
In the medieval period, literature in Kannada and Telugu appeared in the 9th and 10th centuries respectively. Later, literature in

Marathi, Bengali, various dialects of Hindi, Persian and Urdu began to appear as well. Early in the 20th century, Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore became India's first Nobel laureate. In contemporary Indian literature, there are two major literary awards; these are the Sahitya Akademi Fellowship and the Jnanpith Award.

Gujarati literature

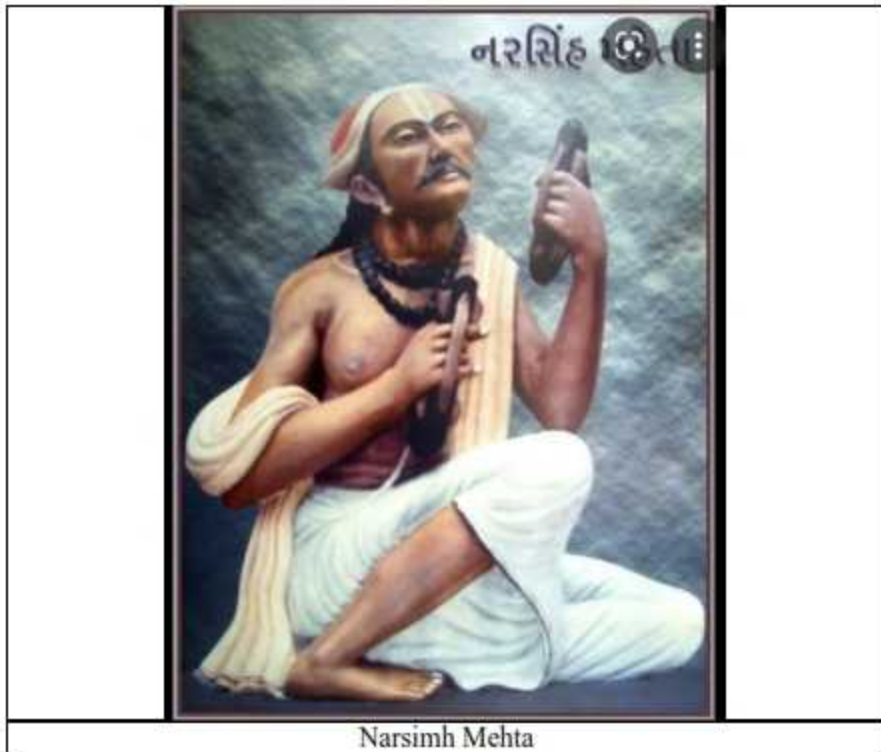
literature of the Gujarati language, a major tongue of India. The oldest examples of Gujarati literature date from the writings of the 12th-century Jain scholar and saint Hemachandra. The language had fully developed by the late 12th century. There are works extant from the middle of the 14th century, didactic texts written in prose by Jain monks; one such text is the *Balavabodha* ("Instructions to the Young"), by Tarunaprabha. A non-Jain text from the same period is Gunavanta's *Vasanta-vilasa* ("The Joys of Spring"). Two Gujarati bhakti (devotional) poets, both belonging to the 15th century, are Narasimha Mahata (or Mehta) and Bhalana (or Purushottama Maharaja). The latter cast the 10th book of the *Bhagavata-purana* into short lyrics.

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Narsinh Mehta, also known as Narsinh Bhagat, was a 15th-century poet-saint of Gujarat, India, honored as the first poet, or *Adi Kavi*, of the Gujarati language. Narsinh became a devotee of Krishna, and dedicated his life to composing poetic works described as bhakti, or devotion towards Krishna. His bhajans have remained popular in Gujarat and Rajasthan for over 5 centuries. Most notably, his composition "Vaishnav Jan To" was Mahatma Gandhi's favorite and became popular with freedom fighters across India



Narsimh Mehta

By far the most famous of the bhakti poets is a woman, the saint Mira Bai, who lived during the first half of the 16th century. Though married to a mortal, Mira Bai thought of the god Krishna as her true husband. Her lyrics, telling of her relationship with her god and lover, are among the warmest and most moving in Indian literature.

Mirabai was born into a Rathore Rajput royal family in Kudki (modern-day Pali district of Rajasthan) and spent her childhood in Merta. She is mentioned in Bhaktamal, confirming that she was widely known and a cherished figure in the Bhakti movement culture by about 1600 CE.

Most legends about Mirabai mention her fearless disregard for social and family conventions, her devotion to Krishna, her treating Krishna as her husband and being persecuted by her in-laws for her religious devotion. She has been the subject of numerous folk tales and hagiographic legends, which are inconsistent or widely different in details.

Millions of devotional hymns in passionate praise of Krishna are attributed to Meerabai in the Indian tradition, but just a few hundred are believed to be authentic by scholars, and the earliest written records suggest that except for two hymns, most were written down only in the 18th century. Many

poems attributed to Meera were likely composed later by others who admired Meera. These hymns a type of bhajan, and are very famous across India.

Hindu temples, such as in Chittorgarh fort, are dedicated to Mirabai's memory. Legends about Mirabai's life, of contested authenticity, have been the subject of movies, films, comic strips and other popular literature in modern times.



One of the best known of the non-bhakti Gujarati poets is Premananda Bhatta (16th century), who wrote narrative poems based on Purana-like tales. Though his themes were conventional, his characters were real and vital, and he infused new life into the literature of his language.

Deeply influenced by the advent of British rule, the Gujarati literary scene in the year 1886 saw the *Kusumamala* ("Garland of Flowers"), a collection of lyrics by Narsingh Rao. Other poets of the late 19th and early 20th centuries include Kalapi, Kant, and especially Nanalal Dalpatram Kavi, who experimented in free verse and was the first poet to eulogize Mohandas K. Gandhi. Himself a Gujarati, Gandhi admonished poets to write for the masses and thus inaugurated a period of poetic concern with changes in the social order. Many incidents in Gandhi's life inspired the songs of poets. That period in Gujarat, as elsewhere, gave way to a period of progressivism, as seen in the class-conflict poetry of R.L. Meghani and Bhogilal Gandhi. In postindependence India, poetry tended toward introspection. However, the modern forms have not superseded the traditional verse of devotion to God and love of nature.

Among novelists, Govardhanram Tripathi (1855–1907) stood out. His *Sarasvatichandra* was the first social novel and became a classic. In the

period after independence, the Modernists embraced existentialist, Surrealist, and Symbolist trends and gave voice to a modern sense of alienation. Later Gujarati writers include K.M. Munshi, Harindra Dave, Umashankar Joshi, Pannabhai Patel, Rajendra Shah, and Bhagwati Sharma.

Sanskrit literature

The famous poet and playwright Kālidās, wrote two epics: *Raghuvamsha* (*Dynasty of Raghu*) and *Kumarasambhava* (*Birth of Kumar Kartikeya*); they were written in Classical Sanskrit rather than Epic Sanskrit. Other examples of works written in Classical Sanskrit and which is standardized the grammar and phonetics of Classical Sanskrit. The *Laws of Manu* is an important text in Hinduism. Kālidāsa is often considered to be the greatest playwright in Sanskrit literature, and one of the greatest poets in Sanskrit literature, whose *Recognition of Shakuntala* and *Meghaduuta* are the most famous Sanskrit plays. He occupies the same position in Sanskrit literature that Shakespeare and John Milton occupies in English literature. Some other famous plays were *Mricchakatika* by Shudraka, *Svapna Vasavadattam* by Bhasa, and *Ratnavali* by Sri Harsha. Later poetic works include *Geeta Govinda* by Jayadeva. Some other famous w

Epic Sanskrit literature: Indian epic poetry

Ved Vyasa's *Mahabharata* and Valmiki's *Ramayana*, written in Epic Sanskrit, are regarded as the greatest Sanskrit epics.

Hindi literature:

Hindi literature started as religious and philosophical poetry in medieval periods in dialects like Avadhi and Brij. The most famous figures from this period are Kabir and Tulsidas. In modern times, the *Khadi* dialect became more prominent and Sanskrit.

Chandrakanta, written by Devaki Nandan Khatri, is considered to be the first work of prose in Hindi. Munshi Premchand was the most famous Hindi novelist. The *chhayavadi* poets include Suryakant Tripathi 'Nirala', Prem Baspai, Jaishankar Prasad, Sumitranandan Pant, and Mahadevi Varma. Other renowned poets include Ramdhari Singh 'Dinkar', Maithili Sharan Gupta, Agyeya, Harivansh Rai Bachchan, and Dharmveer Bharti.

Marathi literature:

Marathi literature began with saint-poets like Dnyaneshwar, Tukaram, Ramdas, and Eknath. Modern Marathi

literature was marked by a theme of social reform. Well-known figures from this phase include Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, Lokhitwadi, and others. Prominent modern literary figures include Vishnu Sakharam Khandekar, P.L. Deshpande, Vijay Tendulkar, Indira Santand Vishnu Vaman Shirvadakar (*Kavi Kusumagraj*). *din mor* Early Marathi Literature (before 1800 CE) Though the earliest known Marathi inscription found at the foot of the statue at Shravanabelgola in Karnataka is dated . 983 BCE, the Marathi literature actually started with the religious writings by the saint-poets belonging to Mahanubhava and Warkari sects. Mahanubhava saints used prose as their main medium, while Warkari saints preferred poetry as the medium. The early saint-poets were Mukundaraj who wrote Vivekasindhu, Dnyaneshwar (1275–1296) (who wrote Amrutanubhav and Bhawarthadeepika, which is popularly known as Dnyaneshwari, a 9000-couplets long commentary on the Bhagavad Gita) and Namdev. They were followed by the Warkari saint-poet Eknath (1528–1599). Mukteswar translated the great epic Mahabharata into Marathi. Social reformers like saint-poet Tukaram transformed Marathi into an enriched literary language. Ramdas's (1608–1681) Dasbodh and Manache Shlok are well-known products of this tradition.

The first English Book was translated in Marathi in 1817.

The first Marathi newspaper started in 1835. Many books on social

reforms were written by Baba Padamji (Yamuna Paryatana, 1857), Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, Lokhitwadi, Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade, Hari Narayan Apte (1864–1919) etc. Lokmanya Tilak's newspaper Kesari, set up in 1880, provided a platform for sharing literary views. Marathi at this time was efficiently aided by Marathi Drama. Here, there also was a different genre called 'Sangit Natya' or Musicals. The first play was V.A. Bhave's Sita Swayamvar in 1843. Later Kirioskar (1843–85) and G.B. Deval (1854-1916) brought a romantic aroma and social content. But Krishnaji Prabhakar Khadilkar (1872~1948) with his banned play Kichaka-Vadh (1910) set the trend of political playwriting. Later on this "stage" was ably served by stalwarts like Ram Ganesh Gadkari and Prahlad Keshav Aatre. The Drama Flourished in 60s and 70s with few of the best Indian actors available to take on a variety of protagonists. Mohan Agashe, Sriram Lagoo, Kashinath Ghanekar, Prabhakar Panshikar playing many immortal characters penned by greats like Vasant Kanetkar, Kusumagraj, vijay Tendulkar to name a few. This Drama movement was ably supported by Marathi films which did not enjoy a continuous success. Starting with V.Shantaram and before him the pioneer DadaSaheb Phalke, Marathi cinema went on to influence contemporary Hindi cinema. Director Raja Paranjape, Music director Sudhir Phadke, lyricist G.Madgulkar and actor Raja Gosavi came together to give quite a few hits in later period. Marathi Language as spoken by people here was throughout influenced by drama and

cinema along with contemporary literature. Modern Marathi poetry began with Mahatma Jyotiba Phule's compositions. The

later poets like Keshavsuta, Balakavi, Govindagraj, and the poets of Ravi Kiran Mandal like Madhav Julian wrote poetry which was influenced by the Romantic and Victorian English poetry. It was largely sentimental and lyrical. Prahlad Keshav Atre, the renowned satirist and a politician wrote a parody of this sort of poetry in his collection Jhenduchi Phule. Sane Guruji (1899–1950) contributed to the children's literature in Marathi. His major works are Shyamchi Aai (Shyam's Mother), Astik (Believer), Gode Shevat (The Sweet Ending) etc. He translated and simplified many Western Classics and published them in a book of stories titled Gode Goshti (Sweet Stories). Vishnu Sakharam Khandekar (1889–1976)'s Yayati won him the Jnanpith Award for 1975. He also wrote many other novels, short stories, essays etc. His major works are Don Dhruv (Two Poles), Ulka (Meteorite), Krounchavadh, Jalalela Mohar, Amrutvel. The another major paradigm shift in Marathi sensibility began in the nineties with the another avant-garde modernist poetry of poets associated with Abhidhanantar and Shabadavedh. In the post nineties, this 'new little magazine movement' gained momentum and poets like Manya Joshi, Hemant Divate, Sachin Ketkar, Mangesh Narayanrao Kale, Saleel Wagh, Mohan Borse, Nitin Kulkarni, Nitin Arun Kulkarni, Varjesh Solanki, Sandeep Deshpande, Vasant Gurjar

touched the new areas of post- modern life. The poetry collections broughtout by Abhidhanantar Prakashan and the regular issues of the magazine Abhidhanantar is taking Marathi poetry to the global standards.[1] Another leading wave in contemporary Marathi poetry is the poetry of non-urban poets like Arun Kale, Bhujang Meshram, Pravin Bandekar, Shrikant Deshmukh, Veerdhaval Parab etc. They insist on native values in their poetry. Marathi is also the one of the few Indian languages (and possibly the only one) where there is a stream of science fiction literature. A few well known Marathi science fiction authors are Dr. Jayant Narlikar, Dr Bal Phondke, Subodh Javadekar, and Laxman Londhe.

Many writers like Dnyaneshwar Mulay have added new dimensions and enriched Marathi with their literary talent. His autobiographical book 'Maati Pankh Aani Aakaash' was considered to be among the best ten autobiographies of last 100 years in Marathi by a survey conducted by Antarnaad, a respected marathi literary magazine. His other books are 'Russia Navya Dishanche Amantran' a book that captures post 1992 Russia. It is popular because it is probably the only work of its kind in Marathi. His recent poetry collection 'Swatahteel Awakash' won the state literary award of government of Maharashtra. He writes regular columns in Marathi dailies like Lokmat and Loksatta and Sadhana, weekly published from Pune.

Telugu literature:

Telugu, the Indian language with the second largest number of speakers (after Hindi), is rich in literary traditions. The earliest written literature dates back to the 7th century. The epic literary tradition started with Nannayya who is acclaimed as Telugu's *Aadikavi* meaning the first poet. He belongs to the 10th or 11th century. **Vemana** was a prince, also called Pedakomati or Vemaa Reddy, who lived in the 14th century and wrote poems in the language of the common man. He questioned the prevailing values and conventions and religious practices in his poems. His philosophy made him a unique poet of the masses. **Viswanadha Satyanarayana** (*Veyipadagalu*) (1895–1976), a doyen of conventional yet creative literature, was the first to receive the Jnanpith Award for Telugu followed by C. Narayana Reddy. Srirangam Srinivasarao or **Sri Sri** (born 1910) was a popular 20th century poet and lyricist. Srisri took the "Telugu literary band wagon that travelled in roads of kings and queens in to that of muddy roads of common man".

Literary Movements: Old Era: Telugu literature has been enriched by many literary movements like Veera Shaiva movement which gave birth to *dvipada kavita* (couplets). Bhakti movement which gave us immortal compilations by Annamayya, Kshetravayya and

Tyagaraja and Kancharla Gopanna (Ramadasu). The renaissance movement heralded by Vemana stands for the old Telugu literary movements.