

Hello learners. Welcome to the module on Indian languages.

In this chapter, we'll introduce Indian Languages and Literature, the role of Sanskrit, and the significance of scriptures to current society.

Introduction to Indian Languages

Indian languages are languages spoken in India that are classed as Indo-European particularly the Indo-Iranian branch, Dravidian, Austroasiatic particularly Munda, and Sino-Tibetan Tibeto-Burman in particular.

Assamese, Bengali or Bangla, Dogri, Gujarati, Hindi, Kashmiri, Konkani, Maithili, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, and Urdu are all members of the Indo-Aryan group of Indo-Iranian languages.

The Dravidian language family includes Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil, and Telugu.

The Tibeto-Burman branch of the Sino-Tibetan language family includes Manipuri or Meitei spoken in Manipur and Bodo spoken in northeastern India. The Munda language family includes Santali.

Except for the Khasian languages spoken in Meghalaya, northeastern India, and the Nicobarese languages spoken in the Nicobar Islands in the Andaman Sea, just to the northwest of the Indonesian island of Sumatra—both of which are classified as part of the Mon-Khmer subfamily of Austroasiatic—the other Austronesian languages are spoken in Southeast Asia.

The Indo-Aryan languages, which are spoken by 78.05 percent of Indians, belong to multiple linguistic families.

Dravidian languages are spoken by 19.64% of Indians, and both groups are frequently referred to as Indic languages.

The remaining 2.31 percent of the population speaks Austroasiatic, Sino-Tibetan, and Tai-Kadai languages.

According to the Census of India of 2001, India has 122 major languages and 1599 other languages.

India has 22 major languages with approximately 720 dialects written in 13 distinct scripts.

The official languages of India are Hindi which has 420 million speakers and English which is also widely spoken.

The census of 2011 acknowledges 1369 rationalised mother tongues and 1474 names that were handled as 'unclassified' and consigned to the 'other' mother tongue category out of 19,569 raw linguistic connections.

Introduction to Literature

Literature is a broad term that refers to any collection of written material, but it is also used to refer to writings that are considered to be art forms, such as prose fiction, drama, and poetry.

The term has broadened in recent decades to include oral literature, most of which has been transcribed.

Literature can have a social, psychological, spiritual, or political purpose in addition to recording, preserving, and transferring knowledge and amusement.

Nonfiction genres such as biography, diaries, memoir, correspondence, and the essay can all be considered part of literature as an art form.

Nonfictional books, articles, and other printed information on a particular subject are included in the broad definition of literature.

The name comes from the Latin *literatura/litteratura*, which means "learning, writing, grammar," and was originally "writing produced with letters," from *litera/littera*, which means "letter."

In spite of this, the term has also been applied to spoken or sung texts.

Print technological advancements have enabled an ever-increasing diffusion and proliferation of written works, which now includes electronic literature.

Literature helps us to travel through time and learn about life on the planet from those who came before us.

It can have a deeper understanding of and appreciation for different cultures. It can help us to learn about history through the ways it is documented, such as manuscripts and oral history.

Literature serves as an enormous information base.

Great inventors' research papers and literary works by famous scientists frequently tell anecdotes about their significant discoveries and inferences.

Current scientific and technological developments are chronicled so that the rest of the world is aware of them.

Several ancient scriptures presenting accounts of human evolution and narratives of human life in those times have proven to be extremely beneficial to humanity.

As a result, literature has always been a reliable source of information.

Sanskrit

Sanskrit is considered the oldest language in Hinduism, having been used by the Hindu Celestial Gods for communication and dialogue, and then by the Indo-Aryans.

In Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism, Sanskrit is commonly used. The title 'Sanskrit' comes from the combination of the prefix 'Sam' meaning 'samyak,' which means 'completely,' and 'krit,' which means 'done.'

Thus, the name denotes communicating, reading, listening, and the use of vocabulary to transcend and communicate an emotion that is totally or entirely done.

Despite being an extremely complicated language with a large vocabulary, it is still frequently used in the reading of sacred books and hymns today

In Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism, the Sanskrit language has long been the primary medium of communication.

Sanskrit literature has a long history of use in ancient poetry, drama, science, and religious and philosophical books.

Let's now look at the role of Sanskrit.

Many Indian languages have their roots in Sanskrit. Sanskrit is used to write the Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, and Dharmasutras.

A wide range of secular and regional literature is also available. We will be able to better comprehend our civilization and appreciate the diversity and complexity of our culture by reading about the languages and literature developed in the past.

Our country's most ancient language is Sanskrit. It is one of the Indian Constitution's twenty-two official languages.

Sanskrit is maybe the only language that has crossed geographical and cultural boundaries.

There is no portion of India that has not contributed to or been touched by this language, from north to south and east to west.

Kalidasa's writings have added to the treasury of Sanskrit writings' beauty.

Significance of Scriptures to the Current Society

Scriptures from the Latin Scriptura, which means "writing" are sacred texts that serve a range of roles in a religious tradition's individual and collective existence.

Scriptures can be utilised to generate a deeper relationship with the divine, communicate spiritual truths, foster collective identity, and guide individual and communal spiritual practice.

The study of Scripture has become an intellectual pursuit in modern times.

Sacred texts from different civilizations are increasingly being studied in academic settings, mostly to improve understanding of other cultures, whether ancient or modern.

Even for casual readers, the easy accessibility to scriptures from all faith traditions has aided mutual understanding and appreciation for the importance of all religions.

Spiritual searchers of all faiths can discover guidance throughout the world's scriptures to help them on their way.

Scripture plays a range of aspects in a religious community's spiritual life.

In a religion, scripture serves three purposes: personal direction and inspiration, collective

worship and instruction, and bibliomancy using scripture for magical purposes.

For many years, restricted literacy and crude copying methods impeded the general circulation of religious books, but scripture has always had a personal dimension—at least for those who have access to it.

With the advancement of literacy and the invention of printing and telecommunications, many people can now personally encounter the scriptures from their own faiths.

The Internet, television, and computers have altered the way and frequency with which information, especially scriptures, is shared.

Most religious books and masterpieces from throughout the world have been archived electronically on the Internet and are available to read in a variety of languages.

Conclusion

Language is what allows people to express things, thoughts, and attitudes in a comprehensible manner and to communicate the results to others.

India has always been a country with many different countries and languages. India, being a civilisation state, has a vast linguistic diversity, with hundreds of languages spoken even today.

Modern India gives the right representation in the constitution, respecting the opinions of people of different languages.

With this, we come to the end of our session. In today's session, we discussed Indian Languages and Literature, the role of Sanskrit, and the significance of scriptures to current society.

I hope you would have got a fair understanding of Indian Languages.

Thank you and Happy Learning!

Hello everyone,

Today in this session, we will discuss on the **Other Sanskrit literature**

Development of Sanskrit literature

The development of Sanskrit grammar began with **Panini** in **400 BC** with his book **Ashtadhyayi** being the oldest book in Sanskrit grammar. The chaste form of Sanskrit developed **between 300 to 200 BC** and was a refined version of Vedic Sanskrit. The first evidence of the use of Sanskrit can be found in the **inscriptions of Rudradaman at Junagarh** in the present Southern Gujarat region. However, The Gupta period when the use of Sanskrit in poetries can be traced. This is totally a period of creation of pure literature which is evident in works such as Mahakavyas (epics) and Khandakavyas (semi-epics). In the field of Sanskrit literature, The Gupta period is known as the period of unique creation because a variety of literary works developed during this reign. Another important aspect of it is related to the ornate style in literary works. Many of the plays developed during the Gupta period were also written in Sanskrit. However, it is to be noted that one of the features of these plays was the use of Sanskrit language by the characters of high varna and the use of Prakrit language by women and Shudras.

Classical Sanskrit Literature

- Most of the literature in Sanskrit has been divided into the Vedic and Classical categories.
- The two epics: Mahabharata and Ramayana are also part of the classical category. Irrespective of their centrality to the Hindu religion, these epics can also be considered to be the pre-cursors of Sanskrit Kavya (epic poetry), nataka (classical drama), and other treatises on medicine, statecraft, grammar, astronomy, mathematics, etc.
- Most of this Sanskrit literature was bound by the rules of grammar that have been explained brilliantly in Panini's Ashtadhyayi, a treatise on the rigid rules which bind the Sanskrit language.

Ashtadhyayi:

- The only surviving foundational and analytical *source of Sanskrit grammar*, Ashtadhyayi (literally, "eight chapters"), was written by **Panini** and is believed to have been published in the 4th century BCE.

- Despite the fact that India has more than 5000 spoken languages, everyone agrees that Sanskrit is the only sacred language and the source of all known sacred literature. The standardization of the language, which is still used in various forms now, was done by Panini.

Sanskrit Drama

- One of the most popular genres of lyric poetry and prose is the popular romantic tales whose sole purpose was to entertain the public or Lokaranjana.
- These were usually written in the form of stories and yet they gave a unique perspective on life. These were usually written in the form of elaborate dramas.
- The rules regarding performance, acting, gestures, stage direction, and acting have been illustrated in the Natyashastra by Bharata.
- Major dramas written during the ancient period are:
- **Malavikagnimitra**-The love story of the maiden of Queen and Agnimitra the son of Pushyamitra Shunga.
- **Kalidasa-Vikramorvasiya**-The love story of Vikram and Urvasi.
- **Abhigyan Shakunthalam**-The recognition of Shakuntala.
- **Sudraka-Mricchakatika (The little clay cart)**-The love story of young brahmin Charudatta with a wealthy courtesan.
- **Vishakadatta-Mudrarakshasa-Devi Chandraguptam**-Is a political drama and narrates the ascent of king Chandragupta Maurya to power in India-
- **Bhavabhuti-Uttara Ramacharitham (The latter life of Rama)**-It was written in 700 AD.
- **Bhasa-Svapnavasavadatta (Vasavadatta in dream)-Pancharatra-Urubhanga** (story of Dhuryodhana during and after his fight with Bhima).
- **Ratnavalli**-About the love story of princess Ratnavalli, daughter of the King of Ceylon and King Udayana. The mention of the celebration of Holi for the first time can be found here.

- **Harshavardhana-Naganandha** -Story of how Prince Jimutavahana gives up his own body to stop a sacrifice of serpents to the divine Garuda. One unique character in this drama is an invocation to Lord Budha in the Nandi verse.
- **Priyadarsika**-Union of Udayana and Priyadarsika, daughter of king Dritavarman.

Sanskrit Poetry

- This genre is also called Kavya or poetry.
- Unlike the drama section where the story is the main focus of the text, poetry concentrates more on the form, style, figure of speech, etc.
- One of the greatest Sanskrit poets is **Kalidasa** who wrote **Kumarasambhava** (the birth of Kumar or Kariya, the son of Shiva and Parvati), and **Raghuvamsa** (the dynasty of the Raghus).
- He also wrote two smaller epics called **Meghaduta** (the cloud messenger) and **Ritusamhara** (medley of seasons).
- One should not forget to mention the contribution of poets like **Harisena** who wrote during the Gupta period.
- He wrote several poems in praise of the valor of Samudra Gupta and it was so well appreciated that it was inscribed on the Allahabad pillar.
- Another extremely popular Sanskrit poet was **Jayadeva** who wrote **Gita Govinda** in the 12th century. It concentrates on the life and escapades of Lord Krishna. The text combines elements of devotion to Lord Krishna, his love for Radha, and the beauty of nature.
- Other major poems are **Kiratarjuniya** written by **Bharavi** in 6th century AD and **Sishupalavadha** written by **Magha** in 7th century AD.
- **Other Major Sanskrit texts**
- Several books were written about the sciences and state governance in Sanskrit.
- **Dharmasutras:**

- Historians argue that between 500 to 200 BC, several major books on law were written and compiled, which are called the **Dharmasutras**. These were compiled alongside the smritis that are known as **Dharmashastras**.
- These are the basis of the laws governing the subjects of most of the Hindu kingdoms. These not only elucidate the rules according to which property could be held, sold, or transferred but also elaborate on the punishments for offenses ranging from fraud to murder.
- **Manusmriti (laws of Manu):**
- Which defines the role of men and women in society, their interaction at a social plane, and the code of conduct that they were supposed to follow. The Manusmriti might have been written and compiled between 200 BC and 200 AD.
- **Arthashastra:**
- One of the most famous texts about statecraft from the Mauryan period is **Kautilya's Arthashastra**.
- It concentrates on the economic and social conditions of the Mauryan empire.
- The due focus was also given to the military strategy which should be employed by the State.
- The text mentions that ' Kautilya ' or ' Vishnugupta ' wrote it. Historians argue both these names were an alias for Chanakya who was a learned scholar at the court of Emperor Chandragupta Maurya.
- While Sanskrit was the preferred language of the courts in the ancient period, it got an impetus in the Gupta period, which employed many great poets, dramatists, and scholars of various subjects. In this period Sanskrit became the preferred language of communication of cultured and educated people.
- **Scientific texts in Sanskrit**

• Pingala	• Chandasastra (Book on mathematics)
• Charak	• Charak Samhitha (Book on medicine)

• Sushruta	• Sushruta Samhitha (Book on surgery)
• Madhava	• Madhava Nidana (Book on Pathology)
	• Pancha Sidhantika (Book on mathematical astronomy)
• Varahamihira	• Brihat Samhitha (Book on wide-ranging subjects like planetary movements, geology, architecture etc.)
• Aryabhata	• Aryabhatiya (Book on astronomy and mathematics)
• Lagadha	• Vedanga Jyotisha

Conclusion

- Sanskrit has a long and revered history that is commonly linked to worship and devotion. It started out as a Vedic language, and it has been modified over time as a result of different interpretations, precise grammar, and the complexity of its application.
- Which many people have shied away from because of its indomitable scope and depth.
- Many ancient books and manuscripts are translated from Sanskrit today despite its extensive vocabulary and complex grammar and prose because no other language can offer such a lavish literary grasp of the past while yet acting as a vehicle for faultless human expression.

3.2 Indian Philosophy

Hello everyone,

Today in this session, we will discuss on the great Epics of our country, Ramayana and Mahabharatha

- Our two great epics are the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. The Ramayana of Valmiki is the original Ramayana. It is called Adikavya and Maharishi Valmiki is known as Adi Kavi. The Ramayana presents a picture of an ideal society.
- The other epic, the Mahabharata, was written by Ved Vyas. Originally, it was written in Sanskrit and contained 8800 verses and was called “Jaya” or the collection dealing with victory.
- These were raised to 24,000 and came to be known as Bharata, named after one of the earliest Vedic tribes. The final compilation brought the verses to 100,000, which came to be known as the Mahabharata or the Satasahasri Samhita. It contains narrative, descriptive and didactic material, relating to conflict between the Kauravas and the Pandavas.
- The Mahabharata and the Ramayana have several renderings in different Indian languages. The Mahabharata contains the famous Bhagavad Gita which contains the essence of divine wisdom and is truly a universal gospel.
- Though it is a very ancient scripture, its fundamental teachings are in use even today.
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Let's see the significance of these epics one after other

- The characteristics of Hinduism, as just set forth, are best reflected in the Bhagavad-Gita which may, indeed, be regarded as the principal scripture of this new religious ideology.
- They are also reflected in the character of Krsna, its enunciator, as portrayed in the great epic, **the Mahabharata**
- Mahabaratha and its Reference with 4 purusharthas.
The four purusharthas are Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha.
- Mahabaratha, as an epic, Its vastness is aptly matched by the encyclopaedic nature of its contents and the universality of its appeal.

- The claim is traditionally made, and fully justified, that in matters pertaining to dharma (religion and ethics), artha (material progress and prosperity), kama (enjoyment of the pleasures of personal and social life), and moksa (spiritual emancipation), whatever is found in this epic may be found elsewhere; but what is not found in it will be impossible to find anywhere else.
- The Mahabharata, which must have assumed its present form in the first centuries before and after Christ, is traditionally believed to consist of 100,000 stanzas divided into eighteen parvans.
- The kernel of the Mahabharata story is briefly this:
- The Pandavas, headed by Yudhisthira, and the Kauravas, headed by Duryodhana, descended from common ancestors.
- Duryodhana becomes jealous and, coveting the crown invites Yudhisthira to a game of dice.
- As the result of a rash wager, Yudhisthira loses his kingdom to Duryodhana and is then forced to go into exile, together with his brothers and DraupadJ, the common consort of the Pandavas, for twelve years, followed by one year during which they must live incognito.
- But even when the stipulated period is over, Duryodhana refuses to give even a fraction of his territory to Yudhisthira, the rightful owner.
- A grim battle ensues. The Kauravas are routed and ruined, and the Pandavas regain their lost kingdom.
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- In the Bhagvad Gita, Krishna explains to Arjuna his duties as a warrior and prince and elaborates on different Yogic and Vedantic philosophies with examples and analogies.
- This makes Gita a concise guide to Hindu philosophy and a parochial, self-contained guide to life.
- In modern times Swami Vivekananda, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi and many others used the text to help inspire the Indian independence movement.
- This was mainly because the Bhagvad Gita spoke of positiveness in human actions. It also spoke of duty towards God and human beings alike forgetting about the results.
- You will appreciate the fact that the Gita has been translated nearly in all the main languages of the world

Ramayana

- If the Mahabharata (with the Harivamsa) glorifies the Krishna incarnation, the other epic, the Ramayana, gives an account of the Rama incarnation.
- This incarnation is traditionally believed to have been earlier than the Krishna incarnation; composition of the Ramayana, however, which is largely the work of a single poet named Valmiki, seems to have begun after that of the Mahabharata, but ended before the Mahabharata assumed its final form
- It has seven kandas-the entire seventh kanda evidently is a later interpolation. It contains several sections of religious significance, such as the Surya-stava (which is also called Aditya-hridaya- stotra) by Agastya and the Rama-stuti by Brahma (both in the Yuddha-kanda).
- Its principal religious appeal, however, springs from the idealized domestic and social virtues which its characters embody. Indeed, this appeal has, through the centuries, proved to be direct and sustained
- Dasaratha, king of Ayodhya, is about to install his eldest son, Rama, on the throne.
- Kaikeyi, Rama's step-mother, wants her own son Bharata to be crowned king, and Rama to be sent into exile for fourteen years.

- The old and infirm king, though reluctant, has to agree.
- Rama goes to live in the forest, accompanied by his consort, Sita, and his brother, Laksmana.
- The demon-king of Lanka, Ravana, abducts Sita.
- Rama, determined to rescue Sita, wages a dour war against Ravana who is ultimately vanquished and killed.
- Rama comes back to Ayodhya and assumes his position as king, with Sita as queen. The story of the genuine portion of the epic ends here.
- In the last Book, which is suspected by many modern scholars to be spurious, it is narrated that the people of Ayodhya speak ill of Rama for taking back Sita from Ravana's custody and Rama banishes her in deference to public opinion.
- The Ramayana and the Mahabharata represent the ethos of our nation.
- Tradition places the Ramayana earlier than the Mahabharata.
- The Puranas are a very important branch, of the Hindu sacred literature. They enable us to know the true import of the ethos, philosophy, and religion of the Vedas.

Dear Learners, in this session we learnt about the great epics of our country, in the next session we will discuss on the literatures of south india

Famous Tamil Literature of South India.

Hello Everyone,

In the last session, we discussed on Introduction to Indian Philosophy and Famous Sanskrit literatures of India. Today in this session, we will discuss on Famous Tamil Literature of South India.

- South India, with its rich history and stunning landscapes, has provided the setting for some of the greatest epics in the ancient world.
- In ancient times the association or academy of the most learned men of the Tamil land was called ‘Sangam’ (or ‘Cankam’), whose chief function was promotion of literature. Later Tamil writers mention the existence of three literary academies (Sangams) at different periods. The last academy is credited with the corpus of literature now known as ‘Sangam Works

Let’s see the ancient and famous literatures of South India, starting with Tolkappiyam

- Tolkappiyam, the name signifying the ancient book or ‘the preserver of ancient institutions’, was written by Tolkappiyanar and is the oldest extant Tamil grammar dating back to 500 B.C.
- It lays down rules for different kinds of poetical compositions drawn from the examples furnished by the best works available at that time.
- Iyal is elucidated clearly and systematically in Tolkappiyam.
- Containing about 1,610 suttirams (aphorisms), it is in three parts-ezhuttu (orthography), Sol (etymology), and porul (literary conventions and usages)-each with nine sections.
- While the first two parts are interesting from both linguistic and philological points of view, the third, poruladhikdram, is most valuable as it gives a glimpse of the political, social, and religious life of the people during the period when the author of this treatise lived.
- The principal works of the third Sangam have come down to us in the shape of anthologies of poems. The two compilations forming the corpus of the poetry of the third Sangam are Ettuttogai (eight anthologies) and Pattuppattu (ten idylls),
- The anthologies of the third Sangam consist of poems divided into two broad categories-aham or interior and puram or exterior. The former concerns all phases of love between men and women. An allegory of the different stages through which the soul of man passes from its manifestation in the body to its final unification with the Supreme Being is seen in aham. The puram covers varieties of distinctive poems, mostly relating to man’s social behaviour.
- corresponding to five major regions of Tamil Nadu, these poems describe five types of tracts with their distinctive features. These are: kurinci (mountainous region), mullai (forest region), marutam (agricultural region), neytal (coastal region), and

pallai (desert region). True love, which is either karpu (wedded) or kalavu (furtive), is considered under five aspects, namely, punartal (union), pirital (separation), irutal (patience in separation), irangal (bemoaning), and udal (sulking), and these are made to correlate with tinai, the fivefold physiographical divisions.

- The delineation of the early Tamil society in these poems is remarkably clear and a great deal of light is thrown on the civilization of the Tamils.
- Sangam works provide us with valuable information regarding religion, social life, government, commerce, arts, music, dance, courtship, manners and customs, and the daily life of the Tamils.

One another notable piece of work by Tiruvalluvar's '(c. first century B.C.) is Tirukkural or Kural,

- Tirukkural which is in the form of couplets and deals with the three aims of life-aram (righteousness), porul (wealth), and inbam or kamam (pleasure).
- It consists of 133 chapters each containing ten couplets. Conveying noble thoughts couched in concised language, each couplet is a gem by itself. The first part of Kural (arattuppal) gives the essentials of Yoga philosophy. Besides, it deals with the happy household life as well as guiding towards the path of renunciation. The thoughts of Kural in its second part (porutpal) centre on polity and administration, including citizenship and social relations, in an admirable way. The third part (inbattuppal or kamattuppal), consisting of couplets in dramatic monologues, treats of the concept of love.

Post-Sangam period: The Epics

- The five major epics-Silappadikaram, Manimekalai, Jivaka-cintamani, Valaiyapati, and Kundalakesi-are the outstanding contributions of the post-Sangam period.
- In this session we will explore two of the 'Five Great Jewels' of Tamil literature: The Lay of the Anklet (Cilappatikāram) and The Dancer with the Magic Bowl (Maṇimēkalai). These epics were composed sometime between the 1st and 8th centuries CE and present a view of the societies, religions, and cultures of ancient South India. The central narratives of both epics follow the adventures of female protagonists: Kaṇṇaki, a devoted wife turned goddess, and Maṇimēkalai, a dancer-courtesan turned renunciant.
- These two epics are also connected through their female characters, as Maṇimēkalai is the daughter of Kaṇṇaki's husband Kōvalan and his mistress Mātavi. In conjunction with reading these fascinating tales, we will also explore their literary and historical contexts and their significance within the Jain and Buddhist religious traditions.
- Silappadikaram - contains all the three aspects of Tamil literature, viz. iyal, isai, and natakam, it has been designated as a muttamizh-kappiyam. It is, therefore, invaluable as a source-book of ancient Tamil dance and classical music-both vocal and instrumental. The author of this work is the ascetic-poet Ilanko Adikal.
- Manimekalai, a direct sequel to Silappadikaram, is also a great source of information on ancient Tamil society. Written by Cittalai Cattamar, this epic marks a new

development in Tamil literature by presenting philosophical and religious debates in mellifluous style.

With this, I hope you had a brief understanding of Sangam Literature, i.e, Tamil Literature which is the ancient literatures of South India.

Thank you

Tamil Literature

Tamil literature **goes back to the Sangam Era**, named after the assembly (sangam) of poets.

Sangam Period

- The period roughly between the 3rd century B.C. and 3rd century A.D. in South India (the area lying to the south of river Krishna and Tungabhadra) is known as Sangam Period.
- It has been named after the Sangam academies held during that period that flourished under the royal patronage of the Pandya kings of Madurai.
- At the sangams, eminent scholars assembled and functioned as the board of censors and the choicest literature was rendered in the nature of anthologies.
- These literary works were the earliest specimens of Dravidian literature.
- South India, during the Sangam Age, was ruled by three dynasties-the Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas.

Three Sangams

According to the Tamil legends, there were three Sangams (Academy of Tamil poets) held in the ancient South India popularly called Muchchangam.

- The First Sangam, is believed to be held at Madurai, attended by gods and legendary sages. No literary work of this Sangam is available.
- The Second Sangam was held at Kapadapuram, only Tolkappiyam survives from this.
- The Third Sangam was also held at Madurai. A few of these Tamil literary works have survived and are a useful source to reconstruct the history of the Sangam period.

Sangam Literature

The Sangam literature includes Tolkappiyam, Ettutogai, Pattuppattu, Pathinenkilkanakku, and two epics named – Silappathikaram and Manimegalai.

- **Tolkappiyam:** It was authored by Tolkappiyar and is considered the earliest of Tamil literary work.
 - Though it is a work on Tamil grammar, it also provides insights on the political and socio-economic conditions of the time.
 - It is a unique work on grammar and poetics, in its three parts of nine sections each, deals with Ezhuttu(letter), Col (word) and Porul (subject matter).
 - Almost all levels of the human language from the spoken to the most poetic lie within the purview of Tolkappiyar's analysis as he treats in exquisitely poetic and epigrammatic statements on phonology, morphology, syntax, rhetoric, prosody and poetics.
- **Ettutogai (Eight Anthologies):** It consists of eight works – Aingurunooru, Narrinai, Aganaooru, Purananooru, Kuruntogai, Kalittogai, Paripadal and Padirrupattu.

- **Pattuppattu (Ten Idylls):** It consists of ten works – Thirumurugarruppadai, Porunararruppadai, Sirupanarruppadai, Perumpanarruppadai, Mullaippattu, Nedunalvada, Maduraikkanji, Kurinjippattu, Pattinappalai and Malaipadukadam.
- **Pathinenkilkanakku:** It contains eighteen works about ethics and morals.
 - The most important among these works is **Tirukkural authored by Thiruvalluvar**, the tamil great poet and philosopher.
- **Tamil Epics:** The two epics **Silappathikaram** is written by **Elango Adigal** and **Manimegalai** by **Sittalai Sattanar**.
 - They also provide valuable details about the Sangam society and polity.

Medieval Tamil literature

- The medieval period, spanning from the 11th and 13th centuries, was one of harmony amongst Tamil people. Avvaiyar, a female poet whose name translates to ‘respectable woman’, created poems during this era that continue to be taught in Tamil schools today. Avvaiyar is one of the most crucial poets of Tamil history, as her poems appeal to children. Her well-known poem, Aathichoodi, demonstrates to children how to live a life full of moral genuineness with the use of the Tamil alphabet.

Vijayanagar and Nayak period

- The Vijayanagar and Nayak period, reigning from approximately 1300 to 1650 C.E., was a period in Tamil history where the Tamil country would be affected by an invasion, and ultimately conquered. As a result, the rise of the Vijayanagar kingdom and Nayak governance came about. Exemplary works in Tamil literature were still produced in this era. For example, Thiruppugazh by Arunagirinathar.

Thiruppugazh

- Thiruppugazh, created in the 15th century, is a work of religious songs praising Lord Murugan. The background behind Arunagirinathar’s reason for writing Thiruppugazh is quite intriguing. According to Arunagirinathar, Lord Murugan saved him when he was going to end his life at a temple. Ultimately, this reformed his life. Consequently, Arunagirinathar decides to make devotional songs to thank Lord Murugan for saving him.
- This period demonstrated the devotionality to religion prominently, especially with the use of literature. As seen throughout this article, the Hindu religion is prominently valued among Tamil people.

The modern era of Tamil literature

- The late 18th to 19th centuries brought the Modern era in Tamil literature. This gave us the works of Subramanya Bharathi, who was a writer and an important member in terms of social reform. Bharathi was very influential, both with his literature and activism.
- Bharathi’s work is often cited as the inspiration for modern Tamil literature. His work is said to involve both modernist and classical techniques. Additionally, his poems

show how outspoken he was about social issues, and often display rebellious remarks. Bharathi covered a variety of topics in his works, from children's songs to praising those fighting for India's independence.

Here is Bharathi's commentary on the Indian caste system:

There is no caste system.

It is a sin to divide people on caste basis.

The ones who are really of a superior class are the ones
excelling in being just, wise, educated and loving.

The rise of Tamil novels

- The modern era of Tamil literature was accompanied by a rise in novels. Ramanichandaran would contribute to this rising trend with the composition of modern romance novels in the 20th century. She is currently the best-selling author in Tamil literature, with 178 novels written.
- Ramanichandran's focus on romance novels does not include the idea of caste systems, which is a common controversy within South Asia because the caste system is still used to this day.
- One of her famous books, Kanney Kanmaniey, illustrates Madura and her lover, Sathyan. Madura's brother loses money while betting on horses, causing her and her brother to work at Sathyan's hotel. Sathyan unknowingly believes that Madura betrayed him and ends up marrying another woman, but his wife ends up dying. Conflicted with revenge and undying love, Sathyan is confused about how to act towards Madura. In sum, the story follows Sathyan's journey of love and figuring out his feelings towards Madura.
- As a result, these types of stories are very popular among Tamil women because it allows them to live through these stories.

Cultural and linguistic significance in anthropology

- Tamil, being one of the oldest recorded languages in linguistic history, has a diverse library of literature. With commentaries on ethics and struggles, to songs depicting the beauty of nature before the rise of demolition of the environment, Tamil literature gives us a deep insight into the values of South Asian culture.
- Some of these values are still appraised today. In retrospect, the Tamil people were seemingly advanced in terms of thought and transcribing it into literature.
- The exploration of this language allows for a better understanding of the Tamil culture and its customs.
- In addition, there is linguistic significance when looking at the history of Tamil literature as well. Though most, if not all, literature from the 6th Century BCE does not remain today, it is still evident that the Tamil people took time to record their thoughts.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THIRUKURAL

INTRODUCTION:

- Tirukkural, (Tamil: “Sacred Couplets”) also spelled Tirukural or Thirukkural, also called Kural, the most celebrated of the Patiren-kirkkanakku (“Eighteen Ethical Works”) in Tamil literature and a work that has had an immense influence on Tamil culture and life.
- It is usually attributed to the poet Tiruvalluvar, who lived in India in the sixth century, though some scholars place it earlier (1st century BC)
- The Tirukkural (Tamil) also known as the Kural, is a traditional Tamil sangam treatise on the art of living. There are 133 chapters in total, with 1330 couplets or kurals.
- The Tirukkural has been compared to the great books of the world's major religions for its practical concerns, poetic insights into daily life, and universal and timeless approach.

ABOUT TIRUVALLUVAR:

Little is known about Tiruvalluvar, the work's author, except that he was born in Mylapore (Chennai, Tamilnadu) and belonged to the weaver community. He is also known by many other names, including Nayanar, Theivappulavar, and Perunavalar. The work is frequently referred to as Tamil Marai, a reference to its association with the Vedas.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION:

- It is believed that Valluvar wrote the work in response to a request from his close friend and student Elela Singan. When the work was finished, Valluvar took it to Madurai, as was the custom of reading new compositions in public in front of critics and scholars.
- The conceited scholars of Madurai insisted on measuring the greatness of the work by placing it with other works on a plank kept afloat in the tank of the great temple and seeing if the plank remained afloat. The significance of this is that the greatness of a work is realised based on the divine qualities of the work rather than the weight of its manuscript (written on Palm leaves).
- The Sangam Plank is said to have shrunk in size to hold only the Kural manuscript, throwing out the rest, much to the surprise of the critics.

- Idaikkadar had praised Kural, saying that his greatness was such that Valluvar had packed the essence of all knowledge from the vast world spanned by seven seas inside a mustard seed. Anu had substituted the term kadugu (mustard) for Auvaiyar (meaning an atom).
- It is interesting to note that the concept of Atom had already been established in the Tamil country two thousand years ago.

THREE DIVISIONS IN THIRUKURALS:

- BOOK I – Aram (அறம்): Book of Virtue (Dharma), dealing with moral values of an individual and essentials of yoga philosophy (Chapters 1-38)
- BOOK II- Porul (பொருள்): Book of Polity (Artha), dealing with socio-economic values polity, society and administration (Chapters 39-108).
- BOOK III- INBAM (இன்பம்): Book of Love (Kama), dealing with psychological values and love (Chapters 109-133).

STRUCTURE OF THIRUKURAL:

Tirukkural is a collection of 1330 couplets, each of which follows the structure of "Kural Venba," a grammatical construction consisting of two lines of four and three words. The piece is divided into 133 Adhikarams, each with ten couplets.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THIRUKURAL:

- Thirukkural equally emphasizes the vital principles of vegetarianism, castelessness, and brotherhood. The Thirukkural's lessons are so powerful that they can be regarded as a source of inspiration for people of all ages.
- The sage Valluvar, who was unanimously elevated to the rank of Thiruvalluvar, observed both the goodness and the weaknesses of governance at various levels and encouraged men and women to lead moral lives based on strong values such as righteousness, justice, truth, love, honesty, courage, and compassion through various couplets. He described the lives and characteristics of ordinary citizens, wives, husbands, and kings, among others.
- Thirukkural has become a research topic in many universities and learning institutions around the world. It has been translated into over 40 languages, and its universality has been universally acknowledged and praised.

OTHER INDIAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

Introduction

Richness of any culture can be seen and appreciated but when it comes to language and literature it is to be read and heard. We have to appreciate and take pride in this particular aspect of our culture. We must make it a point to read as many books written during those times as it will help us to understand so many things that happened in those times. It will help us to read more books and become familiar with so many things that are happening around us today.

NORTHERN INDIAN LANGUAGES & LITERATURE

We have already seen how languages evolved in India right up to the early medieval period. The old Apabhramsha had taken new forms in some areas or was in the process of evolving into other forms. These languages were evolving at two levels: the spoken and the written language. The old Brahmi script of the Ashoka days had undergone a great change. The alphabets during Ashoka's period were uneven in size but by the time of Harsha, the letters had become of the same size and were regular, presenting the picture of a cultivated hand. The studies have indicated that all the scripts of present northern Indian languages, except that of Urdu, have had their origin in old Brahmi. A long and slow process had given them this shape. If we compare the scripts of Gujarati, Hindi and Punjabi, we can easily understand this change. As for the spoken word, there are over 200 languages or dialects spoken in India at present. Some are widely used while others are limited to a particular area. Out of all these, only twenty-two have found their way into our Constitution. A large number of people speak Hindi in its different forms that include Braj Bhasha, and Avadhi (spoken in Oudh region), Bhojpuri, Magadhi, and Maithili (spoken around Mithila), and Rajasthani and Khadi Boli (spoken around Delhi). Rajasthani is another variant or dialect of Hindi. This classification has been made on the basis of literature produced by great poets over a length of time. Thus, the language used by Surdas and Bihari has been given the name of Braj Bhasha; that used by Tulsidas in the Ramacharitmanasa is called Avadhi and the one used by Vidyapati has been termed as Maithili. But Hindi, as we know it today is the one called Khadi Boli. Though Khusrau has used Khadi Boli in his compositions in the thirteenth century its extensive use in literature began only in the nineteenth century. It even shows some influence of Urdu.

PERSIAN AND URDU

Urdu emerged as an independent language towards the end of the 4th century AD. Arabic and Persian were introduced in India with the coming of the Turks and the Mongols. Persian remained the court language for many centuries. Urdu as a language was born out of the interaction between Hindi and Persian. After the conquest of Delhi (1192), the Turkish people settled in this region. Urdu was born out of the interaction of these settlers and soldiers in the barracks with the common people. Originally it was a dialect but slowly it acquired all the features of a formal language when the authors started using Persian script. It was further given an impetus by its use in Bahamani states of Ahmadnagar, Golkunda, Bijapur and Berar. Here it was even called *dakshini* or *daccani* (southern). As time passed, it became popular with the masses of Delhi. Urdu became more popular in the early eighteenth century. People even wrote accounts of later Mughals in Urdu. Gradually it achieved a status where literature—both poetry and prose—started being composed in it. The last Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar wrote poetry in it. Some of his couplets have become quite well known in the Hindi and Urdu speaking areas. Urdu was given its pride of place by a large number of poets who have left inimitable poetry for posterity. The earliest Urdu poet is supposed to be Khusrau (1253-1325). He started writing as a poet in the reign of Sultan Balban and was a follower of Nizam-ud-din Auliya. He is said to have composed ninety-nine works on separate themes and numerous verses of poetry. Among the important works composed by him are *Laila Majnun* and *Ayina-i-Sikandari* dedicated to Alau-din-Khalji. Among other well-known poets are Ghalib, Zauq, and Iqbal. Iqbal's Urdu poetry is available in his collection called *Bang-i-dara*. His *Sarejahan se achcha Hindostan hamara* is sung and played at many of the national celebrations in India. No army parade is considered complete without the army band playing this tune. In big Indian cities like Delhi these are many programmes in which famous singers are invited to sing nazams or Ghazals written by famous poets like Ghalib, Maum, Bulley Shah, Waris Shah besides many others. So you can imagine how rich our language and literary culture must have been to continue till today. It has enriched our lives and is central to people meeting and intermingling with each other. Among the best prose writers were people like Pandit Ratan Nath Sarshar, who wrote the famous *Fasanah-i-Azad*. Even in the early days, Munshi Prem Chand, who is supposed to be a doyen of Hindi literature, wrote in Urdu. Urdu has given us a new form of poem that is called a nazm. Urdu was patronised by the Nawabs of Lucknow, who held symposiums in this language. Slowly it became quite popular. Pakistan has adopted Urdu as the state language.

Development of Literature during the Mughal Period

There was a tremendous development in the field of literature during the Mughal times. Babar and Humayun were lovers of literature. Baber was himself a great scholar of Persian. He wrote a book known as *Tuzek-e-Babari* which is highly esteemed by the Turkish Literature. Humayun got the treatise translated into Arabic. He too was a lover of learning and had established a big Library. *Humayun Nama*, tops the books written in his times. Akbar was very fond of learning. '*Akbar Nama*', *Sur Sagar*, *Ram Charitamanas* are prominent among the books written during his time. *Malik Muhammad Jayasis Padmavat* and *Keshav's Ram Chandrika* were also written during the same period. Jahangir greatly patronized literature. Many scholars adorned his court. He too was a scholar of a high caliber and wrote his life story. During Shah Jahan's time there was a well known scholar named Abdul Hameed Lahori. He wrote *Badshah Nama*. The literary activities suffered during Aurangzeb's time. Urdu literature started developing during the last days of the Mughal emperor. This credit goes to Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan and Mirza Galib. The language of Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan was very simple and impressive. His compositions inspired the other Urdu writer Mirza Galib, who was a famous poet of his time. He made an important contribution to uplift Urdu poetry. There were some other writers also who took interest in Urdu poetry and enriched the Urdu literature. Maulvi Altaf Hussain Ali, Akbar Allahabadi and Dr. Mohammed Iqbal are some famous names. As Persian was the language of the court, much of the literature produced in this period was written in Persian. Amir Khusrau and Amir Hasan Dehelvi wrote superb poetry in Persian. Historians like *Minhas-us-Siraj* and *Zia Barani* and *Ibn Batuta* who came to India during those days wrote accounts of rulers, important political events and incidents in this language. In the medieval period, Persian was adopted as the court language. Several historical accounts, administrative manuals and allied literature in this language have come down to us. The Mughal rulers were great patrons of learning and literature. Babar wrote his *tuzuk* (autobiography) in Turkish language, but his grandson Akbar got it translated into Persian. Akbar patronized many scholars. He got *Mahabharata* translated into Persian. Jahangir's autobiography (*Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*) is in Persian and is a unique piece of literature. It is said that Noorjahan was an accomplished Persian poetess. Quite a fair amount of Persian literature has been produced by the courtiers of the Mughals. Abul Fazl's *Akbarnamah* and *Ain-e-Akbari* is a fine piece of literature. From there we get a good deal of information about Akbar and his times. Faizi wrote beautiful Persian poetry. Several collections of letters of the Mughal period (*insha*) have come down to us. Besides shedding light on Mughal history, they

indicate different styles of letter writing. Another name in prose and history writing is that of Chandra Bhan, a writer of Shahjahan's days. Similarly, we have a work named Tabqat-i-Alamgiri, shedding light on Aurangzeb. Badauni was another writer who belonged during Akbar's time. In the twentieth century, Iqbal wrote good Persian poetry. All this has now become a part of Indian heritage and culture. Among the noted Hindu poets of this period were Kabir, Tulsidas, Surdas and Rahim. Kabir's dohas are still so popular today while Tulsidas's Ramcharitmanas has become the most sacred book of the Hindus. Behari's Satsai written during Akbar's reign is very famous. Alankarashekhara by Keshav Mishra was produced in Akbar's court. It was a great Sanskrit work on the styles of writing. Akbar also got many Sanskrit books like Bhagwad Gita and Upanishads translated into Persian.

HINDI LITERATURE

There was a tremendous growth of regional languages like Hindi, Bengali, Assamese, Oriya, Marathi and Gujarati during this time. In the South, Malayalam emerged as an independent language in the 14th century. The emergence of all these languages resulted in the decline of Sanskrit as they came to be used as the medium through which the administrative machinery functioned. The rise of the Bhakti movement and the use of these regional languages by the various saints helped in their growth and development. We have already noted the various dialects that developed in northern and western India. Prithviraj Raso is supposed to be the first book in the Hindi language. It is an account of exploits of Prithviraj Chauhan. In its imitation several other rasos were written. The language went on changing as the area where it was used expanded. New words to express new situations were either coined or taken from areas coming under its influence. Hindi literature looked to Sanskrit classics for guidance and Bharata's Natyashastra was kept in mind by Hindi writers. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries there started a movement in southern India that was called the Bhakti movement. As its influence reached the north, it started affecting the prose and poetry that were being composed in Hindi. Poetry now became largely devotional in nature. Some of the poets like Tulsidas wrote poetry in a language which was of that region only, while others like Kabir, who moved from place to place added Persian and Urdu words as well. Though it is said that Tulsidas wrote Ramcharit Manas based on Valmiki's Ramayana, he also alters situations and adds quite a few new scenes and situations based on folklore. For example, Sita's exile is mentioned in Valmiki's version but it is not mentioned in Tulsidas's account. Tulsidas has deified his hero while the hero of Valmiki is a human being. Hindi evolved during the Apabhramsa stage between the 7th and 8th centuries A.D. and the 14th C. It was

characterized as Veergatha Kala i.e. the age of heroic poetry or the Adi Kala (early period). It was patronised by the Rajput rulers as it glorified chivalry and poetry. The most famous figures from this period were Kabir and Tulsidas. In modern times, the Khadi dialect became more prominent and a variety of literature was produced in Sanskrit. Similarly, Surdas wrote his Sur Sagar in which he talks of Krishna as an infant, a young lad indulging in pranks and a young man engaged in dalliance with the gopis. These poets made a deep impression on the minds of the listeners. If the festivals associated with Rama and Krishna have become so very popular, the credit goes to these poets. Their versions became the source of inspiration not only for other poets but also for painters in the medieval ages. They inspired Mirabai, who sang in Rajasthani language, and Raskhan, who, though a Muslim, sang in praise of Krishna. Nandadasa was an important Bhakti poet. Rahim and Bhushan were a class apart. Their subject was not devotion, but spiritual. Bihari wrote his Satsai in the seventeenth century; it gives us a glimpse of shringar (love) and other rasas. All the above-mentioned Hindi poets, except Kabir, expressed their sentiments essentially to satisfy their own devotional instincts. Kabir did not believe in institutionalised religion. He was a devotee of a formless God. Chanting His name was the be-all and end-all for him. All these poets influenced the north Indian society in a manner that had never happened earlier. As it is easier to remember poetry than prose, they became immensely popular. During the last 150 years, many writers have contributed to the development of modern India literature, written in a number of regional languages as well as in English. One of the greatest Bengali writers, Rabindranath Tagore became the first Indian to win the Nobel Prize for literature (Geetanjali) in 1913. However, it is only with the beginning of nineteenth century that Hindi prose came into its own. Bharatendu Harishchandra was one of the earliest to produce dramas in Hindi which were basically translations of texts written in Sanskrit and other languages. But he set the trend. Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi was another author who wrote translations or made adaptations from Sanskrit. Bankim Chandra Chatterji (1838-94) wrote novels originally in Bangla. They came to be translated into Hindi and became very popular. Vande Mataram, our national song, is an excerpt from his novel, Anand Math. Swami Dayanand's contribution to Hindi cannot be ignored. Originally a Gujarati and a scholar of Sanskrit, he advocated Hindi as a common language for the whole of India. He started writing in Hindi and contributed articles to journals essentially engaged in religious and social reforms. Satyarth Prakash was his most important work in Hindi. Among other names who have enriched Hindi literature, is that of Munshi Prem Chand, who switched over from Urdu to Hindi. Surya Kant Tripathi, 'Nirala', achieves recognition because he questioned the orthodoxies in society. Mahadevi Verma is

the first woman writer in Hindi to highlight issues related to women. Maithili Sharan Gupt is another important name. Jaishankar Prasad wrote beautiful dramas.

Hindi Language Makes Progress in Modern Period

Hindi Language: The development of modern language started at the end of the 18th century. The main writers of this period were Sadasukh Lal and Enshallah Khan. Bhartendu Harishchandra also strengthened Hindi language. Similarly Raja Lakshman Singh translated Shakuntala into Hindi. Hindi continued to develop in adverse circumstances as the office work was done in Urdu

Hindi Language Makes Progress in Modern Period

Hindi Literature: Bhartendu Harish Chandra, Mahavira Prasad Dwivedi, Ramchandra Shukla and Shyam Sunder Das were the main among the prose writers of Hindi literature. Jai Shanker Prasad, Maithalisharan Gupta, Sumitranandan Pant, Suryakant Tripathi 'Nirala', Mahadevi Verma, Ramdhari Singh 'Dinkar' and Haribans Rai 'Bacchan' made great contribution to the development of Hindi poetry. Similarly, Prem Chand, Vrindavan Lal Verma and Ellachandra Joshi wrote novels and enriched Hindi literature.

If we look at the above writers, we find that they all wrote with a purpose. Swami Dayanand wrote in order to reform the Hindu society and rid it of false beliefs and social evils. Munshi Prem Chand tried to draw the attention of the society to the miserable existence of the poor and Mahadevi Verma recipient of Padma Vibhushan, the second highest civilian award highlighted the conditions of women in the society. 'Nirala' became the pioneer of awakening of Modern India.

BENGALI, ASSAMESE AND ORIYA LITERATURE

After Hindi, the next significant literature was the one that developed in Bengal. The Baptist Mission Press was established in Serampore near Calcutta in 1800. East India Company founded the Fort William College in the same year. It provided training to civil servants of the Company in law, customs, religions, languages and literatures of India to enable them to work more efficiently. The growth of the Bhakti movement and the composition of various hymns associated with Chaitanya provided a stimulus to the development and growth of Bengali. Narrative poems called the Mangal Kavyas also grew popular during this period. They propagated the worship of local deities like Chandi and transformed Puranic Gods like Siva and Vishnu into household deities. In this regard, a very important landmark was achieved by William Carey, who wrote a grammar of Bengali and published an English-

Bengali dictionary and also wrote books on dialogues and stories. It may be noted that the grammar and dictionaries are important in the development of a literature. They guide the writers as to the correctness of a sentence and also help them in finding suitable words for a particular situation and idea. Although the aim of the press run by the missionaries was mainly to propagate Christian faith but other presses run by local people helped in the flourishing of non-Christian literature. Scores of pamphlets, small and big books and journals were produced. In the meantime education spread, although at a very slow pace. But after 1835, when Macaulay won the battle against Orientalists, it spread at a faster pace. In 1854 came Sir Charles Wood's Despatch and in 1857 the three universities of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay were established. Besides textbooks for schools and colleges, other literature were also produced. However it was Raja Ram Mohan Roy who wrote in Bengali besides English that gave impetus to Bengali literature. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar (1820-91) and Akshay Kumar Dutta (1820- 86) were two other writers of this early period. In addition to these, Bankim Chandra Chatterji (1834-94), Sharat Chandra Chatterji (1876-1938), and R.C. Dutta, a noted historian and a prose writer, all contributed to the making of Bengali literature. But the most important name that influenced the whole of India was that of Rabindra Nath Tagore (1861-1941). Novels, dramas, short stories, criticism, music and essays, all flowed from his pen. He won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913 for his *Geetanjali*. However, a few things need to be noted about the influence of Western ideas which permeated Bengal and later on other parts of India. Upto 1800, most of the literature produced was limited to religion or courtly literature. The Western influence brought the writers closer to the man in the street. The subjects were mundane. Some religious literature was also produced but it hardly said anything new. The final years of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century saw a new subject, nationalism, being taken up. Two things were seen in this new trend. The first was the love for old history and culture and an awareness of the facts of British exploitation. The second was a clarion call for arousing the Indians to drive out the foreigners, both by persuasion and force. This new trend was expressed by Subrahmanyam Bharti in Tamil and Qazi Nazrul Islam in Bengali. The contributions of these two writers in arousing the nationalistic sentiments in the readers was tremendous. Their poetry was translated into other Indian languages. Assamese - Like Bengali, Assamese also developed in response to the Bhakti movement. Shankardeva who introduced Vaishnavism in Assam helped in the growth of Assamese poetry. Even the Puranas were translated in Assamese. The earliest Assamese literature consisted of buranjis (court chronicles). Shankardev has left several devotional poems, which people song with rapturous pleasure, but it was only after

1827 that more interest was shown in producing Assamese literature. Two names, Lakshmi Nath Bezbarua and Padmanaba Gohain Barua cannot be forgotten. From Orissa, a couple of names are worth mentioning and these are Fakirmohan Senapati and Radha Nath Ray, whose writings deserve considerable attention in the history of Oriya literature. The works of Upendra Bhanja (1670 - 1720) were important as they ushered a new period of Oriya literature. In Orissa the works of Saraladasa are regarded as the first works of Oriya literature.

PUNJABI AND RAJASTHANI LITERATURE

Punjabi is a language with several shades. It is being written in two scripts, Gurmukhi and Persian. The Gurmukhi script till the end of the nineteenth century was almost limited to the Adi Granth, the holy book of the Sikhs. Only a small number of people tried to learn the script except the granthis, who recited the holy Granth in the gurdwaras. However, the language did not lack literature. Guru Nanak was the first poet in Punjabi. Some other contemporary poets, mostly Sufi saints, used to sing in this language. These Sufis or their followers used the Persian script if they wanted to commit their poetry to writing. In this list, the first name is that of Farid.

His poetry has found a place in the Adi Granth. The Adi Granth also contains poetry of the next four gurus. All this literature belongs to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Amongst the later gurus, the poetry of the ninth guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur has also contributed to the Adi Granth. Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth guru, was educated in Patna (Bihar), where he learnt Persian and Sanskrit. He has composed two savaaiyyas in Punjabi but these are not a part of the Adi Granth. But it was the love stories of Heer and Ranjha, Sasi and Punnu and Sohni and Mahiwal, which gave this language its theme in the early days. Even the story of Puran Bhagat found favour with some poets. Beautiful poems written by some known and some unknown poets have come down to us. These are being sung by local singers for the last two or three hundred years. There are several other poetic stories which have been composed by the locals. This folklore has been preserved. The most important of these is Heer of Waris Shah. It is the most popular of the early works. It is a landmark in Punjabi poetry. Similar is the popularity of Bulley Shah who was a Sufi saint. He has left a large number of songs. One of his popular forms of compositions was called kafi; it was sung in a classical musical form. Kafis are sung by people with great fervour. In the twentieth century, Punjabi had come into its own. Bhai Vir Singh composed an epic, named Rana Surat Singh. Puran Singh and Dr. Mohan Singh are among the best known writers. Essays, short stories, poetry, novels, criticism and all other forms of writing have adorned the Punjabi literary

scene. Rajasthani, a dialect of Hindi, had its own part to play. The bards (itinerant singers) moved from place to place, providing entertainment and keeping the stories of heroes alive. It was from these ballads that Colonel Todd collected the heroic stories of Rajasthan and put them in the Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan. But the devotional songs of Mira Bai have a place of pride in the history of language as well as devotional music. Mira Bai's love for her lord (Lord Krishna) is sometimes so intense that it transcends this mundane world and transports one to the land of this singer. The development of the Bhakti movement led to the rise of the different regional languages like Hindi, Gujarati, Marathi, Punjabi, Kannada, Tamil and Telugu.

GUJARATI LITERATURE

Early Gujarati literature is available in the form of Bhakti songs of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It still follows the old tradition which is popular in Gujarat. Narsi Mehta's name is the foremost in this respect. The people of Gujarat wove these devotional songs in their folk dances and their religious forms often find expressions in their celebrations. Narmad's poetry gave a fillip to the Gujarati literature. Saraswati Chandra, a novel by Govardhan Ram, has become a classic and has given great impetus to other writers. But probably a name that cannot be forgotten is that of Dr. K.M. Munshi. He was a novelist, an essayist and a historian, and has left a plethora of historical novels. In these books he exhibits his ability to mix fact with fiction. Prithvi Vallabha is one of his finest novels. A special mention must be made of Narsi Mehta whose songs in praise of Krishna not only made him a very popular figure but also made Gujarati language popular.

SINDHI LITERATURE

Sindh was one of the important centres of Sufis, who established khanqahs at various places. The Sufi singers with their devotional music made the language popular. The credit for creating literature in Sindhi goes to Mirza Kalish Beg and Dewan Kauramal.

MARATHI LITERATURE

Maharashtra is situated on a plateau where a large number of local dialects were in use. Marathi grew out of these these local dialects. The Portuguese missionaries started using Marathi for preaching their gospel. The earliest Marathi poetry and prose is by Saint Jnaneshwar (Gyaneshwar) who lived in the thirteenth century. He wrote a long commentary on the Bhagavad Gita. He was the one who started the kirtan tradition in Maharashtra. He was followed by Namdev (1270- 1350), Gora, Sena and Janabai. All these sang and

popularised the Marathi language. Their songs are sung even today by the Verkari pilgrims on their way to Pandharpur pilgrimage. Almost two centuries later, Eknath (1533-99) came on the scene. He wrote the commentaries on the Ramayana and the Bhagawat Purana. His songs are very popular all over Maharashtra. Then came Tukarama (1598-1650). He is supposed to be the greatest Bhakti poet of them all. Ramdas (1608-81), who was the guru of Shivaji, is the last of these hymn writers. He was the devotee of Rama. He inspired Shivaji. The closing years of the nineteenth century saw an upsurge in the Marathi literature. It was a nationalist movement that made Marathi prose popular and prominent. Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1857-1920) started his Journal Kesari in Marathi. This helped the growth of Marathi literature. But the role of Keshav Sut and V.S. Chiplunkar was no less. Hari Narayan Apte and Agarkar wrote novels which became very popular. All these prose writers made great contribution to the development of Marathi literature. The name of H.G Salgaokar is remembered for writing inspirational poetry. Besides, the names of M.G. Ranade, K.T. Telang, G.T. Madholkar (poet and novelist) are no less important.

KASHMIRI LITERATURE

Kashmir shot into literary prominence, when Kalhana wrote Rajatarangini in Sanskrit But this was in the language of the elite. For locals, Kashmiri was the popular dialect. Here also the Bhakti movement played its role. One Lal Ded, who lived in the fourteenth century, was probably the first to sing in the Kashmiri language. She was a Shaivite mystic. After Islam spread in this area, the Sufi influence also came to be visible. Haba Khatoon, Mahjoor, Zinda Kaul, Noor Din also known as Nund Rishi, Akhtar Mohiuddin, Sufi Ghulam Mohammad and Dina Nath Nadim wrote devotional poetry in Kashmiri. These people contributed to the growth of Kashmiri literature. The Western influence did not reach Kashmir till the end of the nineteenth century. In 1846, after the first Sikh War, the Dogras of Jammu became the rulers there. The Dogras were more interested in Dogri language than in Kashmiri. There were hardly any schools or education. There was widespread poverty and economic backwardness. All these led to a lack of good literature in Kashmir. Though the list of Modern Indian languages can have many languages, the constitution of India has originally about 15 languages as national languages i.e. Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kashmiri, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Urdu, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam. Three more languages i.e. Nepali, Manipuri and Konkani have been added now to the list.

Indian Languages and its Significance in International Context

Indian Literature: Vedas from India

Four Vedas-Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva are from most ancient text available from India, which have reached throughout the world through mostly English, but through other languages like German translations as well

Ancient Texts-Philosophical and Creative

Vedas, particularly Rig-Veda is known for its creative and aesthetic poetry as well. Upanishads and texts of Shaddarshanas-Six Schools of Indian philosophy, including non believer Samkhya philosophy, Buddhist, Jainism, Atheist Lokayata are more of theoretical texts. These are all known to the world through translations. Apart from these philosophical texts, there is a rich heritage of Sanskrit creative literature as well.

Creative Sanskrit Literature

Sanskrit has been language of philosophical and creative literature-both. Apart from Mahabhartta, Ramayana and texts like Panchtantra and Hitopadesh, Sanskrit literature is known world over for its poetry and drama with Kalidas as most known name.

Shakespeare and Kalidas!aa

It is common refrain among literary critics in India to refer Kalidas as 'Shakespeare of India', though Kalidas lived nearly one thousand years before Shakespeare, that is why some critics will put it in reverse order as well-'Shakespeare as Kalidas of England'! Whatever way, but it reflects the concept of 'World Literature' and also Comparative study of literature, which would never have been possible without translations of the texts.

Shakuntala Translation

Translation of Abhigyan Shakuntalam in English was first done by William Jones in 1789 and after that by Sir Monier Williams in prose form in 1853, later more than 46 translations in twelve European languages appeared and now complete dramas and poetry collections of Kalidas are available in many English translations. English and other languages translations of many other Sanskrit classic writers are also available like that of Bhavbhuti , Kiratarjun etc.

Contribution of Indian Creative Writing to World Literature

Apart from classical Sanskrit literature, medieval period Indian literature is also known to the world, particularly Indian Bhakti movement poets like Kabir, Guru Nanak, Akka Mahadevi and many more through their translations. In modern period, big number of translations were done from Indian languages literatures. India has 22 national languages in 8th schedule of Indian constitution and 24 recognised by Sahitya Akademi-Academy of Letters for purpose of awarding annual best book prizes.

Translations of Mirza Ghalib(Mirza Beg Asadullah Khan also known as Mirza Ghalib was an Urdu and Persian poet of the 19th century Mughal and British era in the Indian Subcontinent)

Many scholars, even from non literary background have been fascinated by Ghalib's philosophical Urdu ghazals. Aijaz Ahmad and many other scholars and translators have rendered Ghalib's poetry and prose in English. Mirza Ghalib lived during 1857's first war of Independence of India and went through lot of hard times as well, but his poetry is claimed to be as national heritage by both India and Pakistan, though there was no Pakistan during Ghalib's times

Role of Translation in First Noble Prize of Literature to India

Rabindranath Tagore, most eminent Indian writer of Bengali language got Noble prize for literature in 1913, till now only Indian to receive this award for literature. Interesting part of this narrative is that Tagore himself translated 103 of his Bengali poems in English and took them to England.

Geetanjali...

Tagore recited his translations in many gatherings and W.B Yeats, the great English poet was so impressed that he wrote forward to these poems and the small collection was published in English.

Tagore received the award for his Bengali poetry, but facilitated by his own English translation of the poems.

Tagore's example of his own translation and Noble prize on it, underlines the significance of Translation as tool of literary communication in the world. Now almost all the Bengali writings of Tagore are available in English and many Indian languages translation, some in other world languages translations as well.

Premchand and his novel 'Godan'

Premchand, a Hindi and Urdu writer published his classic novel-Godan in Hindi and Urdu both, few months before his death. The novel based on the real life of Indian peasantry became Indian classic and has been twice translated into English.

Godan (Novel written by Premchand)

Jai Rattan and P. Lal did first English translation of Godan in 1957, which became quite popular. Later Gordon C Roadarmel did English translation of Godan in 1968, which is considered better than earlier one.

The novel was selected by UNESCO to be translated into many world languages and so it has been. Apart from Godan, many other fiction writings of Premchand are now available in English and other languages. Ghalib, Tagore and Premchand represents India as the best faces of Indian literature on world literary scene.

Importance of Translation in Indian literary Scenario

As mentioned earlier, India itself is storehouse of huge literature written in various Indian languages, which reaches other Indian languages through translation among Indian languages. There are two major source languages of inter Indian literary translation-Hindi and English. Text of any Indian language is first translated into either Hindi or English and then through that medium it is translated into many more Indian languages.

Inter Indian Translations

Generally literature of North, West and East Indian languages like-Punjabi, Urdu, Marathi, Gujarati, Bengali, Assamese etc. is first translated into Hindi and then from that medium to many other Indian languages.

Translations from South Indian languages are generally done first in English and then from that medium, these are translated into other Indian languages. Southern languages are part of Dravidian group and other three regions languages are from Indo-Aryan group of languages

Inter Indian Languages Translations

These translations are done sometimes without the help of a medium language like Hindi or English too, like Tamil to Bengali or Marathi to Assamese etc.

Sahitya Akademi by instituting National Translation Prize among inter Indian languages translations has encouraged this process as well. This author has also received National Translation Prize from Sahitya Akademi-Indian Academy of Letters for Inter-Indian language translation.

Revolutionary poet Pash and his poetry

Pash created a niche for himself as trendsetter poet in the seventies as a radical poet.

As he was against both Khalistani terrorism and state terrorism, he was assassinated by Khalistani terrorists on 23rd March, his Punjabi poetry in Hindi, which was published in different volumes, one of which mentioned above-Samay O'Bhai Samay'(Time O' Brother Time) ,published in 1993, was awarded National Translation Prize by Sahitya Akademi in 2002.

Hindi translation of Pash clicked so much that poet became more popular in Hindi than his own mother tongue Punjabi. Many more translations were done from Hindi translation of the poet in Marathi, Gujarati, Urdu, Bengali, Malayalam, Telugu etc.

Indian languages and thus designating him as major Indian poet rather than being just a Punjabi poet. His poetry was compared to Pablo Neruda (got noble prize in Literature, 1971) by some critics, so bringing him to the scenario of world literature as English translation of his poetry were also done.