

REGIONAL LITERATURE IN INDIA

Abstract

India is a highly diverse nation that welcomes individuals from many cultural backgrounds. Moreover, the traditions of Hindu writings and scriptures frequently dominate the country's literature. Indian classical literature is undoubtedly among the world's oldest and most diverse. In addition, the earliest works of this literature involve the transfer of information orally. The origins of Indian literature stretch back to about 1500 and 1200 BCE. In addition, the Sanskrit literature comprises the corpus of literature known as Rig Veda. The researchers employed a qualitative technique to understand the evolution and many forms of classical works from the Renaissance to the present. This paper addresses the Indian Regional Literature comes from many different languages and literary styles. It includes novels, poetry, short stories, plays, and folktales, among other things. Each area of India with its own language and literary style adds to this genre, making it a treasure trove of literary gems that show how diverse India's society is.

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I. INTRODUCTION

India, as a nation, makes an important and substantial contribution to the world of literature (Rathore, 2015). It is a highly diverse nation that welcomes individuals from many cultural backgrounds. Indian Regional Literature is a rich and varied collection of literary works from India's many different cultural and linguistic regions. This type of writing is based on the country's long and rich past, and it shows how each person's identity, customs, traditions, and experiences are unique. Indian Regional Literature is a powerful way to share and keep ethnic traditions alive. It keeps track of historical events, myths, and tales and helps keep indigenous knowledge and wisdom alive through the years. In an age of globalization, this literature is very important for keeping regional languages and cultures safe from the dominating global effects.

Hindu literature comprises an exhaustive collection. But, over time, literature written in other languages also emerged. The country, which has over 22 different dialects, has produced literature in all of them. Some vernacular languages, including Sanskrit, Prakrit, Pali, Bengali, Bihari, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Oriya, Punjabi, Rajasthani, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Lahnda, Siraiki, and Sindhi, as well as English. Hindu sacred texts called the Veda, were the first works of Indian literature. They were written in the Sanskrit language. Commentaries in prose, like the Brahmanas and the Upanishads, were added to the Veda. From about 1500 BCE to about 1000 CE, Sanskrit literature was written, and it was at its best from the 1st to the 7th century CE. There were also court poems, plays, and narrative folktales. Sanskrit philosophies have been the basis of philosophic writing in subsequent pieces of literature, and Sanskrit rhetorical schools were crucial to the formation of court poetry in several contemporary kinds of literature. Tamil, a South Indian language with a classical past, is an exception to this trend of Sanskrit influence. Sindhi and Urdu are also exceptions. Starting in the 19th century, notably at the height of British authority over the subcontinent, Western literary styles influenced Indian literature, with the most notable outcome being the widespread adoption of vernacular writing. Novel and short story genres, as well as realism and a concern with social issues and psychological depiction, were embraced by Indian writers. In addition, a tradition of English literature was formed throughout the subcontinent.

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF ANCIENT WORKS OF INDIAN LITERATURE

Indian Regional Literature (Regional Indian Literature, n.d.) has been around for hundreds of years, and some languages have a written history that goes back to ancient times. Throughout history, these regional works have thrived under the support of different rulers, dynasties, and empires, changing, and adapting to the changing social and political landscapes. Indian Regional Literature's stories have been shaped in large part by the oral tradition, folk tales, and classical works. This has given modern writers a strong base on which to build. One of the most interesting things about Indian Regional Literature is how closely it is tied to the identity of each area. Authors often write about the unique customs, values, and philosophies of their areas. They also write about issues that are both universal and unique to their area. There are recurring themes in this literature, such as caste dynamics, the split between rural and urban areas, gender roles, and cultural clashes. These themes show how India's diverse population faces many different problems.

Indian Regional Literature (Indyatour, n.d.)

1. **Assamese literature** was written for the first time in the ninth century using the Charyapadas script. Some prominent writers of Assamese literature include Indira Goswami, Nirupama Bargohain, Birendra Kumar Bhattacharya, Homen Borgohain, Amulya Barua, Nabakanta Barua, Arupa Patangia, and Hiren Bhattacharya.
2. **Bengali literature:** Bengali literature was initially written using the Charyapadas script in the ninth century. The Nobel Prize-winning author Rabindranath Tagore is both the finest author in Bengal and the author of the Indian national song. Sharat Chandra Chattopadhyay, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Michael Madhusudan Dutt, and Kazi Nazrul Islam are among the well-known Bengali authors.
3. **Hindi literature:** Throughout the medieval period, the Avadhi and Braj languages were utilized to form the script for Hindi literature, which was composed primarily for religious purposes. Some prominent writers of Hindi literature are Kabir, Tulsidas, Devaki Nandan Khatri, Munshi Premchand, Prem Bajpai, Jaishankar Prasad, Mahadevi Varma, Maithili Sharan Gupt, Agyeya, Harivansh Rai Bachchan, and Dharmveer Bharti.
4. **Gujarati literature:** The earliest Gujarati literature was composed in the 10th century, and currently it is gaining popularity among Indian citizens. Hemchandra Acharya, Narsinh Mehta, Mirabai, Akho, Shamal Bhatt, Dayaram, Dalpatram, Govardhanram Tripathi, Umashankar Joshi, Suresh Joshi, and Rajendra Keshavlal Shah are well-known authors of Gujarati literature.
5. **Urdu literature:** Urdu literature is developed mostly from the combined vocabulary of the Arab and Persian languages, and it is frequently utilized in India to compose ghazals and religious writings of devotion to Allah written by Muslims. They include Bhojpuri literature, Kannada literature, Marathi literature, Tamil literature, Telugu literature, Oriya literature, Manipuri literature, Punjabi literature, Malayalam literature, Nepali literature, Rajasthani literature, Sanskrit literature, Sindhi literature, Kashmiri literature.
6. **Rig Veda**, an ancient gathering of 1028 hymns compiled in Vedic Sanskrit, is the oldest known piece of Indian literature. Even though most of the ancient Indian texts that have survived are religious texts, it would not be fair to describe ancient Indian literature only by religion. It includes everything that can be called "literature" in a broad sense, including religious and everyday writing, epics and lyrics, dramatic and educational poetry, narrative and scientific prose, oral poetry and song, and anything else that can be called "literature."

The Yajur Veda, the Sama Veda, and the Atharva Veda came after the Rig Veda. After the Vedas, there are other works called Brahmanas and Aryankas, and then there are the philosophical ideas of the Upanishads. The Shruti literature includes these.

7. **The Yajur Veda** gives instructions on how to do the Yajnas. Sama Veda is about how to sing hymns to the tunes that are written down. Atharva Veda is about how to do ceremonies and rites. The Brahmanas give detailed explanations and instructions about Vedic literature. The Aryankas is a treatise about the forest that talks about rituals and the philosophical ideas of the Brahmanas.

They show how the ritual symbols of the Brahmanas changed into the philosophical ideas of the Upanishads. Upanishads are a collection of philosophical ideas written in poetry and prose. They talk about the beginning of the universe, death and rebirth, and the material and spiritual worlds. Brihad-Aryanaka and Chanddogya are the two oldest Upanishads. They use simple and beautiful images to describe what ancient sages thought were the highest thoughts a man could have.

- 8. Vedangas** are another type of early work that includes astronomy, grammar, and phonetics. For example, *Ashtadhyayi*, which was written by Panini, is a book about the grammar of Sanskrit. These epics are the source of Hindu mythology's various gods and goddesses. Lord Rama's narrative is the central theme of the *Ramayana*. The *Mahabharata* is a family epic in which relatives from the Pandva and Kaurav families battle for control of a kingdom.
- 9. Ramayana:** It is made up of 24000 verses distributed throughout seven volumes known as *Khandas*. It is written in the form of poetry, which both entertains and informs. It is Rama's narrative, and it explains how to fulfill the fourfold goals of human existence (*Purushartha*), namely *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama*, and *Moksha*. *Dharma* refers to good behavior or religion. *Artha* is the attainment of worldly wealth and success. *Kama*-satisfaction of cravings. *Moksha* is the ultimate state of freedom.
- 10. The Mahabharata:** It has one lakh lines split across 10 books, making it the world's longest poem. It is known as the *Ithihasa Purana*, which means "Mythical History". Vyasa wrote it on the right of succession to the throne between the Pandavas and the Kauravs, with various episodes intertwined to produce an epic. Along with the primary theme of conflict, the *Bhagavad Gita* subsequently adds an integrated picture of *Dharma*.
- 11. Puranas:** Puranas aided in the evolution of pre - Vedic religion into Hinduism. Purana means "to revive the old" in Sanskrit. They were composed to demonstrate to the people the veracity of the Vedas. Puranas use popular folklore and mythical stories to express philosophical and religious truths. Puranas, when combined with the *Ithihas* (*Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*), contains many stories and anecdotes from India's religious, social, and cultural past.
- 12. Shastras and Smriti literature:** Shastras comprise philosophical and scientific works. They cover topics such as art, mathematics, and other sciences. *Arthashastra* is a treatise on governance science. *Smritis* are concerned with the execution of duties, customs, and rules that are mandated by *Dharma*. *Manusmriti*, often known as *Manu's laws*, is the most prominent example.
- 13. Early Buddhist Literature:** The *Sutta Pitaka* is a collection of discussions between the Buddha and his disciples. The *Vinaya Pitaka* is concerned with monastic organization norms. *Milindapanho* is a collection of debates between the Buddhist *Nagasena* and the Indo-Greek ruler *Menandar*. The most significant are those of *Sankaracharya*. *Panchatantra* and *Kathasarit-sugar* both contain collections of tales.
- 14. South Indian literature:** The ancient Indian texts in Southern India were originally written in four Dravidian languages, each with its script and literature: Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam. Tamil is the oldest of them, with literature stretching back to

the early years of the Christian period. This evolved during three Sangams (assembly of poets and scribes) held on various dates. The Sangam literature is rich in themes of battle, love, and politics. These works include *Tolkappiyam*, *Ettutogai*, and *Pattuppattu*. *Thiruvalluvar* is the most well-known author of these times, and he wrote *Kural*, a book about many elements of life and religion.

15. Tamil Sangam: During the first few decades of the first millennium BCE, the Pali Canon and Tamil Sangam literature evolved at the same time as the Classic Sanskrit Literature. In addition, the Tamil Sangam literature has been a vital component of Indian literature since antiquity. It currently spans more than two thousand years.

In addition, it is renowned for its poetic character, philosophical content, and writers' secular outlook. The writings of Tamil authors encompass the social, economic, and political elements of Tamil history. In addition, the vast majority of Tamil Sangam authors hail from southern India. *Tolkappiyam*, a treatise on Tamil grammar, is the first surviving piece of literature from that period. In addition, the Tamil Sangam literature known to historians today is believed to have developed during the Third Sangam.

III. CONCLUSION

Classic literature has also contributed significantly to the advancement of education and academics by serving as a rich source of information and insight (Team, 2022). Several famous literary works are learned in schools and colleges throughout the globe, and they have had a significant effect on how individuals think about literature as well as the world. Classical literature has helped advance the field of education by providing a foundational book for literary study. Students may learn how to evaluate and interpret texts, as well as get a greater grasp of the literary strategies and devices utilized by writers, by studying classic literature. In the past few years, Indian Regional Literature has become known around the world. This is because translations have made it possible for people all over the world to read these works of literature and enjoy the richness of India's cultural mosaic. This growing interest has also led to cross-cultural conversations, which have helped people learn more about India's complicated social structure and built respect between different groups.

In closing, Indian Regional Literature is a great example of how diverse and different India is as a whole. It shows the nation's collective mind through its unique mix of regional identities and universal themes. Indian Regional Literature is still an important way to learn about the many different parts of India's society, bridge gaps, and promote a sense of unity despite the country's beautiful variety.

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