

A HISTORICAL OUTLINE OF THE LANGUAGES OF WESTERN INDIA

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I

There are several languages spoken in Western India, of which Gujarātī, Western Rājasthānī, Mālavī, Cutchī, Sindhī and Koṅkaṇī are the principal ones. Of these Cutchī and Sindhī are allied and so are Gujarātī, Rājasthānī and Mālavī. Koṅkaṇī, however, stands apart. It has no affinity with its northern neighbours. In this brief historical outline of the languages of Western India, we shall restrict ourselves mainly to Gujarātī which is admittedly the most outstanding and the richest of these languages.

The area in which Gujarātī is spoken may be roughly outlined thus :— In the north, Gujarātī is spoken as far as Cutch, where it is the court-language and the language of culture. From there it extends to the north up to Mithi, 30 miles to the North of the desert of Cutch. From here it extends to the East to Deesā, Pālanpur, and Mount Ābu. Beyond Mount Ābu, the speech is Gujarātī or its dialectal form mixed with Mārṇwādī. From this northernmost point, the boundary of Gujarātī descends south-eastward including within itself Mahikānṭhā, Iḍar, Dohad and Luṇāwādā, Chhoṭā Udepur and Rājpiplā. To the east and south of the Panchmahāls, Chhotā Udepur and Rājpiplā, Gujarātī slowly merges into the Bhillī dialects. From Rājpiplā the boundary sharply descends southward covering the entire Surat District and a major portion of the Dāngs where it touches the area of Khāndeśī. From here further south upto Umbergāon and Dahānu, Gujarātī is spoken as the principal speech. Beyond this to the south the Koṅkaṇī language is spoken which is claimed to be a dialect of Marāṭhī.

These are then the limits of the area of the Gujarātī speech—from Mount Ābu in the north to the Dāngs and Umbergāon in the south, and from Dvārka in the west to Dohad in the east. Roughly it includes the whole of Saurāṣṭra and almost the entire northern division of the Bombay State which is popularly known as Gujarāt.

The number of persons speaking Gujarātī in Gujarāt and Saurāṣṭra alone comes to over 1,33,00,000. To these must be added 35,00,000 speaking

Gujarātī in the border-lands of Gujarāt and in Cutch. Gujarātī is also the speech of a large and influential section of the population in Bombay. The Gujarātī-speaking population is not negligible in Calcutta, Karachi, Madras, Nagpur, Hyderabad and other important commercial and industrial centres of India. Gujarātī colonies are also to be found in Burma, South Africa, East Africa, Indonesia, and several other parts of the world, where they speak Gujarātī and follow Gujarātī traditions and culture.

II

Gujarātī is thus a very important language indeed both culturally and politically on the western coast-line of India. It is one of the few languages of the world which has a continuous history with full documentary evidence for every stage of its evolution, from the time of its inception right up to the present age. From about 1200 A.D., the date of the first Gujarātī work discovered so far, till the time of the advent of the English when printing was introduced, we find countless works belonging to various subjects composed in Gujarātī. They have been preserved in the various Jaina Jñāna-Bhaṇḍāras or manuscript-libraries attached to Jaina temples and Upāśrayas. Several important cities of Gujarāt are celebrated for their rich manuscript-libraries dating from very early times. In Pāṭaṇ alone, there are Bhaṇḍāras which house no less than 40,000 old manuscripts of different ages, some of which are very rare on account of their antiquity, wealth of illustrations and historical data. Cambay is known for its collection of palm-leaf manuscripts. The other cities in Gujarāt too have such manuscript-libraries, but the rarest manuscript-collection is found to have been preserved in the Baḍā Bhaṇḍāra of Jesalmer situated deep in the heart of Rājasthān. Only a part of this great store of ancient literature, both religious and secular, has come to light so far. Numerous works of great antiquity and literary merit are still awaiting publication.

The fact that Gujarāt was the great commercial centre of India from early times and enjoyed comparative peace and political security for long periods, contributed to the development of the Gujarātī language and literature in no small measure. In this process of development, as we shall presently see, Gujarātī came in contact with several foreign languages and cultures like the Persian, Arabic, Portuguese and English, and was influenced by them to a certain degree.

III

It would be very interesting to trace the history of the language of Gujarāt from the earliest times. We must, however, remember that in earlier times the boundaries of Gujarāt were not the same as they are today. Northern Gujarāt and Southern Rājasthān along with a part of Mālvā then formed the territory known as the Gurjara deśa. Southern Gujarāt was then known as Lāṭa and remained for a long time under the influence of the south.

Situated as the gateway of India, maritime Gujarāt witnessed from early times several immigrations—of Greeks, Bactrians, Śakas, Kṣatrapas, Gurjaras, Hūnas, Arabs, Turks and Mughals, many of whom made it their home.

In the earliest times known to history the language spoken in Gujarāt and Saurāṣṭra was a dialect the conventionalized form of which is known as Vedic Sanskrit. But of this speech we have no written evidence before the Aśokan Inscriptions.

Then—i.e. from 1000 B.C. to 600 B.C.—three or four dialects existed : Udīcyā or the northern, Madhyadeśiyā or the midland, Prācyā or the eastern, and the Pratīcyā or the western. The northern dialect was the nearest to the Vedic and was standardized by Pāṇini in the present-day classical Sanskrit. From the early eastern speech developed the Prakrit dialect spoken by Buddha and Mahāvīra, which was popularly known as the Māgadhī Prākṛit. A close examination of the inscriptions of Aśoka (250 B.C.) reveals, besides the eastern Māgadhī, at least two other distinct dialects—the northern, allied to Paiśācī, and the midland or western, allied to Śaurasenī. The western dialect as recorded in the rock-edicts of Gīrnār contains several linguistic traits (such as the preservation of 'r' in consonant-clusters) which characterized Gujarātī speech from very early times.

These spoken Prakrit speeches fossilized in course of time and resulted in a classical standardized form of common Prakrit which became the medium of literature and was treated by grammarians as the principal Prākṛit. This form of Prākṛit became later known as Mahārāṣṭrī Prākṛit or the language of a large portion of the country (Mahārāṣṭra). The popular speeches of the north, midland and east came to be considered as the dialects of this speech and were termed as Paiśācī, Śaurasenī and Māgadhī. The language Avantījā or Āvantī which Bharata mentions in

his *Nāṭyaśāstra* must be the speech then current in Śaurāṣṭra, Ānarta, Lāṭa and Maru (i.e. the present-day Gujarāt and Rājasthān). This speech may have been identical with or closely allied to the Śaurasenī of the Prākṛit grammarians.

IV

From these early Prākṛit speeches developed the Apabhraṁśa, the language current in a considerable portion of northern India, from the 5th to the 10th century A.D. Some philologists lean to the view that there existed several regional Apabhraṁśas from which New Indo-Āryan speeches or Modern Indian Languages gradually evolved. On the other hand, other authorities believe that there was only one Apabhraṁśa current in Western India with slight dialectal variations.

From the evidence of early grammarians and rhetoricians, Apabhraṁśa has been connected with the Ābhīras. It was that speech that developed into Apabhraṁśa. Their abode extended from the Indus delta to Cutch and Śaurāṣṭra. They adopted the general Prākṛit language, vigorously infusing into it the characteristics of their own speech, resulting in a powerful speech known as Apabhraṁśa. Three varieties of Apabhraṁśa are mentioned, but Hemaçandra, the greatest and the most celebrated grammarian of the Middle Indo-Āryan languages, treats Apabhraṁśā as one homogeneous speech, and cites instances from the current folk-literature of the period. This Apabhraṁśa is basically the Apabhraṁśa of Gujarāt (the Gurjara Apabhraṁśa), though there are traces of dialectal variations in this material. Some call this Apabhraṁśa Śaurasena, while others term it as Nāgara.

Apabhraṁśa too became, in course of time, a standard stylized speech in which considerable literature was composed. For instance, works like *Paumacariaya*, *Kumārapālacarita*, *Bhavisayatta-Kahā*, *Vilāsavaī-Kahā* are all composed in Apabhraṁśa. But linguistically, the specimens from folk-literature cited by Hemaçandra in '*Siddha Hemaçandra*', his Prākṛit Grammar, reflect the speech more faithfully than the stylized form used in literary works. These verses of Hemaçandra are remarkable also from another point of view. Some of them reveal a striking freshness of imagination and a rare poetic charm. Several of these verses are erotic; a few are didactic; while a large number of them are heroic.

The following erotic verses have a rare poetic charm about them :

ढोळा सामला धण चंपावणी ।
 णाह सुवण्णरेह कसवट्टह दिणी ॥
 (Dhollā sāmālā dhaṇa campāvāṇṇi/
 Ṇāi suvaṇṇareha kasavattāi diṇṇī//)

“The husband is dark in complexion, while the wife is fair as a *campaka* flower : (she appears) like a streak of gold on the black touchstone.”

वायसु उड्ढावन्तिभए पिउ दिट्ठउ सहसत्ति ।
 अद्धा वलया महिहि गय अद्धा फुट्ट तडत्ति ॥
 (Vāyasu uddāvantīe piu diṭṭhau sahasatti/
 Addhā valayā mahihi gaya addhā phutṭa taḍatti//)

“While frightening away the crows the lady suddenly saw her husband coming home; half of her bracelets slipped down (while waving away the crow before she sighted her husband), while the remaining cracked with a noise (as a result of the joy which filled her when she saw her husband).”

जइ केव्ह पावीसु पिउ अकिया कुड्ड करीसु ।
 पाणिउ नवह सरावि जिवें सव्वंगे पइसीसु ॥
 (Jai kemvai pāvīsu piu akiyā kuḍḍa karīsu/
 Pāṇīu navai sarāvi jivēṃ savvaṅge paīsīsu//)

“If ever I meet my husband again, I shall do a wonderful thing never done before : I shall enter into all his limbs even as water permeates a new earthen vessel.”

The heroic verses cited below from Hemacandra’s Apabhraṁśa fully reveal the glory that was early Gujarāt :

संगरसएहिं जु वण्णिअइ देक्खु अमहाग कन्तु ।
 अइमत्तहं चत्तकुसहं गयकुंभहं दारन्तु ॥
 (Saṅgarasaehiṃ ju vaṇṇīai dekkhu amhārā kantu/
 Aimattahaṃ cattakusahaṃ gayakumbhahīṃ dārantu//)

“Behold my husband : whose prowess requires mention of hundreds of battles; who breaks the temples of elephants excessively maddened and beyond all control.”

मह्ला हुआ जु मारिआ बहिणि महारा कन्तु ।
 लजेजन्तु वयंसिअहु जइ भग्गा घर एन्तु ॥
 (Bhallā huā ju māriā bahiṇi mahārā kantu/
 Iajjejjantu vayamsīahu jai bhaggā gharu entu//)

“It is well, O Sister, that my husband is killed in battle; for, if he had fled the battlefield and returned home I would have died of shame among my women-friends.”

जइ भग्गा पारकडड तो सहि मज्झु पिण्ण ।
अह भग्गा अम्हं तणा तो ते मारिअडेण ॥
(Jai bhaggā pārakkadā to sahi majjhu piṇṇa/
Aha bhaggā amhaṃ taṇā to teṃ māriaḍeṇa//)

“If enemies are fleeing (from the battlefield), it must be, O friend, because of my husband’s valour; but if our men are running away, then it must be that he has been killed in the battle.”

पाइ विलग्गी अन्त्रडी सिरु ल्हसिउं खन्धस्सु ।
तो वि कटारइ हत्थडड बलि किजउं कन्तस्सु ॥
(Pāi villaggi antraḍī siru lhasiṃ khandhassu/
To vi kaṭārai hatthaḍau bali kijjauṃ kantassu//)

“The entrails hang down and entangle the feet; the head, severed from the trunk, is drooping sideways; yet the hand is firmly on the dagger—I bow to this husband of mine.”

The heroism of these verses captures our imagination and wins our heart.

V

From Apabhraṃśa slowly evolves the New Indo-Āryan Languages. This is not surprising because Apabhraṃśa was always so near and akin to the rising regional languages than to the Prākṛit which was nearer to Sanskrit. For instance, the following Apabhraṃśa verse easily turns into old Gujarātī with only slight phonological changes :

सिरि जर-खंडी लोअडी गलि मणियडा न वीस ।
तो वि गोठडा कराविया मुद्धए उठ-बईस ॥
(Siri jara-khaṇḍī loaḍī gali maṇiyaḍā na vīsa/
To vi goṭṭhaḍā karāviā muddhāe uṭṭha-bāisa//)
(Apabhraṃśa)

सिरि जीर्ण-खंडी लोअडी गलि मणियडा न वीस ।
तोइ गोठडा कराविया मुग्धाए उठबईस ॥
(Siri jīrṇakhaṇḍī lobadī gali maṇiyaḍā na vīsa/
Toi goṭṭhaḍā karāviyā mugdhāe uṭṭhabāisa//)
(Old Gujarātī version)

“Though she has only a tattered *lobaḍī* (woollen cloth) on her head, and hardly twenty glass-beads round her neck—still the beautiful maiden agitated the young men of the hamlet.”

It is not easy always to demarcate the point where Apabhraṁśa ends and old Gujarātī begins. There are, however, some characteristics such as the simplification of conjunct consonants, substitution of post-positions for inflections, and most of all the use of the auxiliary verb *achai-chai*, the precursor of the modern Gujarātī *che*, which indicate the termination of Apabhraṁśa and the evolution of Gujarātī.

VI

The earliest literary work in old Gujarātī that has come to light so far is the *Bharateśvara Bāhubalī Rāsa* of Śālibhadra Sūri, composed in V.S. 1241 (1185 A.D.). The following quotation will reveal how the new speech has just left the Apabhraṁśa stage and started on its career towards modern Gujarātī.

रिसह जिणेसर पय पणमेवी, सरसति सामिणि मनि समरेवी,
नमवि निरंतर गुरुचलणा ॥
भरह नरिंदह तणुं चरित्तो, जं जुगी वसहांवल्य वदीतो,
बार वरस बिहुं बंधवहं ॥
हुं हिव पभणिसु रासह छंदिहिं, तं जनमनहर मनभाणंदिहिं,
भाविहिं भवीयण संभलेउ ॥

(Risaha Jiṇesara paya paṇamevī, sarasati sāmiṇi mani
samarevī, namavi norantara gurucalanā//
Bharaha narindaha taṇuṁ caritto, jaṁ jugi vasahāṁvalaya
vadīto, bāra varasa bihuṁ bandhavaham//
Huṁ hiva pabhaṇisu rāsaha chandihim, taṁ jaṇamanahara
manaṇandihim, bhāvihim bhaviyaṇa sambhaleu//)

“Having bowed to the feet of Rṣabha Jineśvara, having remembered Goddess Sarasvatī, and saluting always the feet of the *guru*;

“The life history of King Bharata, famous in this world from times of yore, (the war between) the two brothers which lasted for twelve years;

“(This) I shall sing in the form of a *rāsā* in verse, so fascinating to the minds of people; may the religious-minded hear it with delight !”

In the century which followed, Gujarātī was developed further and became the vehicle of over a dozen works in poetry. The following verse

in the *Revantagirirāsu* of Vijayasenasūri which describes Saurāṣṭra, will indicate the extent to which the language has evolved.

गामागरपुरवणगहण सरिसरवरि सुपएसु ।
 देवभूमि दिसि पच्छिमह मणहरु सोरठदेसु ॥
 जिणु तहिं मंडलमंडणउ मरगयमउडमहंतु ।
 निम्मलसामलसिहरभरे रेहइ गिरि रेवंतु ॥

(Gāmāgarapuravaṇagahaṇa sarisaravari supaesu/
 Devabhūmi disi pacchimaha maṇaharu sorathadesu//
 Jiṇu tahiṁ maṇḍalamāṇaṇau maragayamaḍamahantu/
 Nimmalasāmalasiharabhare rehai giri Revantu//

“Attractive with its towns and villages, imposing because of its forests, and charming on account of its rivers and lakes, is the beautiful Sorāṭha deśa, the abode of gods, situated in the western direction.

“There stands out the charming Revanta mountain, the ornament of the world : its dark summits forming a majestic emerald green crown.”

With the dawn of the next century (14th century) Gujarātī emerges into the limelight as a fully developed mature language with immense possibilities. Several works are composed in this period, some of which reveal a rare poetic beauty. Of these works the anonymous *Vasanta Vilāsa*, the *Thūlibhadda Phāgu* of Jinapadmasūri, the *Neminātha Phāgu* of Maladhārī Rājaśekharsūri, are most outstanding. The following description of spring found in *Vasanta Vilāsa* is singularly beautiful both in its style and in its conception :

कामुकजनमनजीवनु ती वनु नगर सुरंग ।
 राजु करइ अवभंगिहि रंगिहि राउ अनंगु ॥
 अलिजन वसइ अनंत रे वसंतु तिहां परधान ।
 तरुअर वासनिकेतन केतन किशलसंतान ॥

(Kālā bhūñcha teḍiyā bhoī, gāḍe liṅga caḍāvyaum/
 Rāju karai avabhaṅgimhi raṅgihim rāu anaṅgu//
 Alijana vasaim ananta re vasantu tihām paradhāna/
 Taruara vāsaniketana ketana kiśalasantāna//)

“That forest, the life of the hearts of lovers, is (like) a charming city; (there) rules in full splendour the King Anaṅga (the God of Love).

“Innumerable bees dwell there; spring is there the minister; the trees are the dwelling places, and the mass of tender sprouts the banners.”

Another remarkable work composed towards the close of this century is the *Raṇamalla Chanda* of Śrīdhara Vyāsa, written in a style which is

the parent of the *Diṅgala* or *Cāraṇī* poetry.

चडि चंचलि चाउद्दिशि चंपि थिरथिर थाणदार अरि कंभिइ ।
 कमधजकरि धरि लोह लहक्किइ विवहरि बूंब बूंब बहक्किइ ॥
 निशि खंभनयर उभ्रकिइ धुंभलि धुंस पडिइ धुलक्किइ ।
 प्रहि पोकार पडिइ पट्टणतलि रे रणमल्ल धाडि तव संभलि ॥
 (Caḍi cañcali cāuddiśi campī thirathira thānadāra
 ari kām̐ii/
 Kamadhajakari dhari loha lahakkii bibahari
 būmba būmba bahakkii//
 Niśi khambhanayara udhrakii dhundhali dhumsa
 padii dhulakkii//
 Prahi pokāra paḍii Paṭṭaṇatali re Raṇamalla dhāḍi
 tava sambhali//)

“When he mounts his horse and invades the four quarters, the generals of the enemies tremble with fear. As soon as the sword flashes in the hand of Kamadhajja (*Rāṭhoḍa*) Raṇamalla, wails resound in the harems of the enemies.

“At night Cambay trembles; in the early morning Dholkā is struck with terror; in the morning Pāṭaṇ wakes up with screams—when, O Raṇamalla, people hear of your attacks.”

The 15th century is remarkable for its wealth of old Gujarātī literature. Among the works of this century the pre-eminent in literary merit is the *Kāhnaḍade Prabandha* of Padmanābha, which is a rare saga of Rajput heroism that has ever come down in the Indian Languages. The verses given below from that great mediaeval epic will testify to its great poetic beauty.

काल भुंछ तेडीया भोई, गाडे लिंग चडाव्यउं ।
 आगलि घणी जोतरी त्रीयल, टीली भणी चलाव्यउं ॥
 आगइ रुद्र घणइ कोपानलि, दैत्य सवे तइं बाल्या ।
 तइं पृथ्वी मांहि पुण्य वरताव्यां, देवलोकि भय टाल्या ॥
 तइं बालिउ काम त्रिपुर विध्वंसिउ, पवनवेगि जिम तूल ।
 पन्ननाभ पूछइ सोमईया केथू करयउं त्रिसूल ॥
 (Kālā bhūñcha teḍiyā bhoī, gāḍe liṅga caḍāvyaum/
 Āgali ghaṇī jotarī trīyala, Dhīlī bhaṇī calāvyaum//
 Āgai Rudra ghaṇai kopānali, daitya save taim bālyā/
 Taim Pṛthvī māñhi puṇya varatāvyām, devaloki bhaya
 tālyā/

Taim̄ bāliu Kāma Tripura vidhvamsiu, pavanavegi jima tūla/
Padmanābha pūchai Somaīyā Kethūm̄ Karayaum̄ trisūla//)

“Dark Bhois were called for; and the pieces of Śiva’s liṅga were hauled up in the cart. Several pairs of bullocks were made to draw it; it was thus removed to Delhi.

“O Rudra, in the times of yore you consumed the demons in the fire of your wrath; you spread *punya* in the world and removed the terror which oppressed the gods.

“You burnt down Kāma and destroyed Tripura just as wind blows away cotton. Padmanābha (the poet) asks you, O Somanātha, where have you laid up your *trisūla* now ?”

The other outstanding poets of this period are Narsimha, the poet-saint, and Mirāmbāi the immortal poetess of Rājasthān, whose poetry is the cherished heritage of India; Bhālaṇa, the celebrated scholar who set *Kādāmbarī* to verse; and the great Jaina writers Lāvṇyasamaya and Māṇikyasundara Sūri. Of the latter writers Māṇikyasundara Sūri is celebrated for his remarkable prose classic *Pr̥thvīcandracaritra*, which is an ornament of the Old Gujarātī prose. It stands unique in the entire Old Gujarātī literature on account of its dignified and mellifluous prose-style and the remarkable beauty of its composition. Numerous specimens of Old Gujarātī prose have come to light, but of the ornate literary prose used by scholars of the mediaeval times, *Pr̥thvīcandracaritra* is almost the solitary example.

VII

From the 16th century A.D. Gujarātī assumes almost its present linguistic form. This period is remarkable for its wealth of literature—the well-known *Ākhyānas* of Premānanda, reflecting the contemporary Gujarātī life, the poetical romances of Śāmala, reminding us of the *Kathāsarit-sāgara* and the *Arabian Nights*, and the great philosophical poems of Akho, and the delicately melodious and almost ethereal lyrics of Dayārām.

From the middle of the 19th century Gujarātī language and literature undergo a fateful change on account of the influence of the English language and literature. The prose now became, under the influence of English, more cultivated and complex in nature, capable of expressing involved thoughts. The prose style could now vary from the declamatory and the narrative to the reflective. In content, the literature, which was so far restricted only to religion and allied topics, now embraced every

topic on earth. In respect of form, lyrics, ballads, sonnets and elegies in poetry, and essay, fiction, short story, drama, autobiography, and travel literature now came into existence as a direct consequence of contact with western literature. The still newer forms of literature like the short story, one-act plays and radio-plays have recently come into greater vogue and achieved success.

Such is modern Gujarātī language and literature.

VIII

Besides its standard form in which literature is composed Gujarātī has several interesting dialects which are only spoken forms of speech, though almost universally current among the masses of Gujarāt. They are the Kāthīāwādī, Paṭṭanī or north Gujarātī, Carotarī or middle Gujarātī, and Suratī or south Gujarātī.

The Bhils on the eastern border speak their own dialect—the Bhillī, which bears a close affinity to Gujarātī. To the north beyond Mount Ābu is spoken a language which has traces of Gujarātī within its predominantly Rājasthānī corpus. To the south-east in the Dānga area the speech is an intermixture of Gujarātī and Marāthī—predominantly Gujarātī on the western side, and leaning more to Marāthī on the eastern side.

There are also racial dialects of Gujarātī which are spoken by particular communities. For example, Kāthis and Āhirs of Saurāṣṭra speak an archaic dialect nearer to Apabhramśa than to modern Gujarātī. The Khārvās of the coast-line of Saurāṣṭra have their special dialect known as Khārvī. Parsīs speak Parsī-Gujarātī, while Vohrās of north Gujarāt, Memoṅs of Saurāṣṭra, and Bāraiyaṣ and Dhāraḷās of middle Gujarāt speak Gujarātī with their characteristic dialectal traits. Some of these dialects are given a place in modern Gujarātī creative literature—particularly in the short-story and fiction—in order to impart local colour to the work.

Gujarātī in its long history stretching over a thousand years as outlined above came in contact with several external influences and assimilated some of them. Thus it is that Arabic words like *umdā*,* *insāf*, *javāb*, *kharca*, *taiyār*, *makān*, *vatan*, *śarbat*; and the Persian words like *gulāb*, *gumāsto*, *cālāk*, *jakham*, *dago*, *dastāvej*, *darjī*, *fudino*, *bakhṣīs*, *bāju*, *majūr*, *hajār*, etc.; and the Turki words like *kalgī*, *kābu*, *cakmak*, *camco*, *jājam*,

* These and other loan-words are reproduced in their characteristically Gujarātī form.

top, begum, mughal; and the Portuguese words like *āfūs, ananās, ingrej, ijaner, kāju, tamākū, baṭāṭā, mej, mosāmbi*, have found a place in Gujarātī and have been almost completely naturalized. More recently Gujarātī borrowed several loan-words from English such as *office, appeal, court, doctor, pencil, boot, master, station, hotel*, etc., and gave them a completely indigenous Gujarātī form. This process of borrowing continues even to-day as Gujarātī does not hesitate in borrowing several words from Indian or foreign languages if they are found to express sense in a particularly effective manner in reference to corresponding words of indigenous origin. Herein lies its strength, because this process increases the potentiality of the language. Gujarātī has also improved by being relieved from a surfeit of Sanskrit words which marred its innate beauty and made it heavy and pedantic as in the writings of some of the scholars of the latter part of the last century. This purification owes its origin to Gandhiji. Gandhiji insisted on using the simple and forceful speech of the masses living in the country-side as the standard form of language to be used in all literary compositions. Gandhiji demonstrated in his world-famous 'Autobiography' the inherent strength of this simple speech which could be adapted to the highest literary purposes. A whole school of writers followed his foot-steps and wielded the folk-speech with considerable power and charm even in serious literary works of philosophy, economics, politics and social sciences.

This is the Gujarātī of to-day, full of strength and promise, awaiting a future even more glorious than its hoary past.

