

# The literature of ancient rome and language



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The literature of ancient Rome, the building in much of Western Europe during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance was written in Latin, the language of ancient Rome. With the expansion of the Roman people Latin came to the whole known world and became the dominant language of Western Europe. Latin was used in higher education and diplomatic relations until the XVIII century and remains the universal language of the Catholic Church, was not native language of Italy, but in prehistoric times Latin was brought into the peninsula of Italy by peoples who came from the north. Latin belongs to the Indo-European language family and is a member of the Italic subfamily, on the other side is the immediate predecessor of the modern Romance languages. In all Indo-European languages, which were not italicized, was related to the Sanskrit and Greek, and Celtic and Germanic subfamilies. Once introduced into Italy it was the dialect of the region of Rome. The Italic languages are comprised of the Latin group to which they belonged to; Latin and some other dialects, and on the other hand, the Oscan and Umbrian less documented (Ouch, 1981, 534). The earliest inscriptions in Latin are from the sixth century BC, while the first written texts are slightly above the third century BC was influenced by the Celtic dialects of Northern Italy, the Etruscan language, which was not Indo-European, and spoken in the central region of the Italian peninsula and the Greek spoken in the south before the eighth century BC Under the influence of Greek language and literature, translated into Latin and in the second half of the third century BC, became a cultural language with literature itself(David, 2001, 179).

Classic oral Latin

The cultivated form of spoken language is documented in the comedies of Plautus and Terence, as well as letters and speeches of Cicero, the Satires and Epistles of Horace and the Satyricon of Petronius. This is learned from speech, known as the *sermo quotidianus* or normal conversation, not to be confused with the popular conference, or *sermo plebeius*, who was speaking at the uneducated people and is characterized by a certain contempt for syntactic rules, which results in the search for simplicity in the order of words in prayer, at both levels of spoken language, are called Vulgar Latin. The languages from which Romance, at the time that had already developed the *lingua Rome*, which is late Latin. This explains why many Romance words do not come from a cult or classic term but for the level of popular slang. For example, the Latin word *equus* meaning 'horse' fell into disuse and was replaced by *caballus* which meant 'hack' and they come from the Spanish and French *cheval* horse, another thing happened with the word meaning 'head', a classical Latin *caput*, which was replaced by the head vulgar, meaning 'pot', from which the Catalan and French *tête* head, while the Spanish head of a strain derived from the classic *caput*. (Thomas Weber, 2004, 28)

### Medieval Latin

During the Middle Ages in Western Europe Latin was used for letter writing. Called Medieval Latin or Low Latin of the Latin language used in this period. It was a living language, even for people with no education and did not speak, because it was the language used by the Church both in the daily worship and in the writings. However it underwent many changes: the syntax is simplified, many neologisms were taken from various sources and many

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words changed their meaning. Despite this, Latin changed less than the French and Castilian in this period.

### Modern Latin or New Latin

Appears in the 15th and 16th centuries to what has been called modern Latin. Renaissance authors give rise to a new literature in Latin that imitated the style of classical authors, especially that of Cicero. At that time, almost every book of scientific, philosophical and religious importance was written in Latin. In the late seventeenth century it loses its status as an international language. However, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it is still preserved as a language for classical studies, and some treaties during the twentieth century were written in Latin. The Catholic Church still uses it as an official language in their documents.

In the teaching of this language have accepted various forms of pronunciation that are usually positioned to the pronunciation of each of the European languages derived from Latin, the most common is using the Catholic Church, much like the Italian. What is taught today is a reconstruction from the Latin of Cicero's time. Until recently the teaching of Latin in Spain was considered important to know the cultural heritage and gave meaning to the teaching of the vernacular. The names are pronounced the same way as is done in this language the same as had happened in other countries, so the name of Cicero has ruled Chichero in Italian, and KIKER zizéro Spanish, German and Sisera tsítsero English.

In antiquity, Latin had less flexibility and wealth than the Greek vocabulary was more limited and less suitable for the expression of abstract ideas. The

Romans, who knew the limitations of their language adopted many Greek loans. It is a rigid syntax language and diction, precision and force has also been shown throughout the centuries as a wonderful vehicle for transmitting rigorous thinking. Their survival has followed two paths: not only Latin itself has remained to this day as a literary language, but also is alive in the Romance languages that represent the contemporary evolution of Vulgar Latin, some people consider Italian as the Latin today. Other languages are not derived from the Latin as English or German lexicon have been incorporated into loans that come from that language, either directly, or indirectly through French or Italian or any other Romance language. It is an important language not only for literature but also because by studying its evolution you can acquire information about the history of the language and about the origin and evolution of contemporary European languages (Ell eke, 2008, 157).

### The Latin tradition

The first manifestations of Latin literature are from the third century BC and was evolving and transforming, through different genres and forms, until now. Latin literature, In the Christian form, continued to develop in the Middle Ages, Latin was the Catholic Church's official language. With the fourteenth century, humanism emerged, and the restoration of the ancient world of classical forms of stress paved way for a new creative Latin, which until the seventeenth century still existed. Until recently, the knowledge of classical Latin literature was central to Western culture in general.

### Features of Latin literature

Roman literature is modeled on the Greek literature, and has served its time as a basic reference, especially in the post-Renaissance European literature. Latin literature's unique quality is that almost all the Roman writers have contributed their works of Roman civilization in the world mission. Epic and lyric poetry, history, rhetoric, drama and literary style of ironic comedy are the most important achievements in invention by the Romans.

### Works and authors

Roman authors such as Livius Andronicus. His comedy is successful, also wrote a *fabulae Poenicae*, a pair of the first Punic War between Rome and Carthage. However, the first Roman writer is famous for the soft, hexameter poem about poetry in Rome, adapted into a successful conquest of Latin, the Greek story. Ennius' initiative as a model of the Roman epic, and who is refined by later poets imitated his style. Only scattered fragments remain of these early writers, but we have 21 plays of the first true genius of Roman literature, Plautus. Roman comedies were the largest involvement to the development of drama. Plautus served as a replica for humor and in European comedy it has been imitated today. His world master's ignorant, cunning slave girls, hopelessly in love with the young and innocent absurdity is the second Roman comic genius, Terence. His work is very quiet compared to its predecessor, but less elegant, but perhaps even more acute. The precursor of the greatest era of Roman poems was Lucretius, whose rhyme *De rerum natura* Didactic poetry argues eloquently that the gods do not intervene in human affairs. Its purpose was to free people from superstition and fear of death. His long poems are complex and erudite, but he characterized further the shorter lyric poems, some of which are mere

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declarations of love to a woman called Lesbia or are devoted to his dead brother, and others that bring out his biting wit and inventiveness of wounding against his following enemies. His thorough and strong word has been a pouring strength in the narration of European poems from the rediscovery of his work at the commencement of the Renaissance.

Recognized as the greatest of Latin poets, both in life and in later times, Virgil wrote at the beginning of his career the Eclogues, ten pastoral poems that are stylish and alive perpetual became models of their kind. After these followed the Georgics, graceful poems about the life of farmers. Then he created his masterpiece 'The Aeneid'.

The lyric tradition continued with a galaxy of poets who are still read today. The friend of Virgil, Horace, became master of cleverly adapting ode Greek meters to Latin with the help of his own voice, full of grace. In his best poetry he also follows a humorous mood. The tradition of the elegy of love, which began with Catullus, was continued in a sweet and melancholy for Alibi Tibullus (c. 48-19 BC). The previous of the three books accredited to him comprise direct love poems and poignant, however, are poems written by his modern Sulpicia, the only verse that remain of a Roman woman.

The more complex is energetic and love elegies in black and white by Sextus Propertius, confused and annoyed records of his tricky affairs. Elegiac tradition ended with the work of Ovid, who took the genre in a festive manner. A prolific poet he is best known for his 'Ars Amoria', an ironic manual for love. His most important work, The Metamorphosis, a long poem about the ancient myths.

The golden age of Roman poetry was consistent with that of prose. The most prominent author, Cicero was a politician and orator whose rhetoric was intense and became a model for later European speech. The best recognized of Cicero's speeches are the ones spoken against political conspirator Catiline, but many are just as timely and accurate, as the consummate use they made with the rhythms and cadence of the Latin words to achieve influential and decisive effects. Cicero also wrote prose of more relaxed discourses on public speaking and works of philosophy such as the renowned pieces on acquaintance and the past which also retains much of its illuminating and extensive communication (Beebe, 1972, 221).

Equally famous as a writer of prose was the contemporary of Cicero, Julius Caesar. His clear and forceful comments on civil war and wars in Gaul (*De Bello Gallico* and *De Bello civili*) also became important models in its genre. Livy was the main Roman historian, who wrote the long history of Rome, with only about a quarter of which remains a primary source of this period.

Following on from the golden age was what is often referred to as the silver age of Latin literature, in the first century AD. Though overwhelmed by the brightness of the previous century, during this period there was a valuable set of important works. Virgil's *Aeneid* seemed to achieve perfection in the epic genre that later poets found difficult to copy from his example.

However, Lucan, who's epic *Pharsalia*, narrates incidents of the Roman civil war with an animated style, and Publius Statius Papini, an author much admired in the Middle Ages knew how to effectively tackle the epic tradition.



Seneca, the famous Emperor Nero's tutor during this period produced works of interest in several satirical styles. The slave, Phaedrus who became a free man with the Emperor Augustus, wrote in Latin verse versions of Aesop's fables. The shortest poetic forms, the epigram, were perfected by Martial, whose verses were sly and witty. The prose of the first century includes the work of several notable writers teaching. Pliny the Elder was a prolific writer whose Natural History served for generations as a textbook on natural history.

The first period of Christian writing coincides with the last Pagan writing. The first great Christian author Tertullian was a master of prose. In his time the most influential Christian writers, he is also the father of hymns. Clement O'Reilly and Lading West opened a new tradition of poetry where Christian resources employed pagan literature to Christian purposes, introduced the use of allegory in Christian poetry. Christian prose was dominated by two fathers of the Church: St. Jerome and St. Augustine. The most important work of St. Jerome was the translation of the Bible. Known as the Vulgate, the standard version has been in Latin since then and has greatly influenced European and Latin prose.

The influence of St. Augustine was one of the most momentous in medieval and Renaissance European thought. His major works, other works from this period, especially non Christian in their orientation had a great impact on subsequent Christian thought. The title of a work popularized Minneo Félix Marciano Capella, which provided the European Christian culture a means to organize secular knowledge was considered valuable.

Medieval Latin text continues the custom of Christian literature. San Isidoro de Sevilla put together a compilation of the culture of his time in his twenty books of Etymologies (623), which served as a reference work during the late middle Ages. The historical genre was also an important literature during this period, with some interesting works from the literary point of view. In 731, Bede the Venerable wrote poetry in Latin, in addition to completing an invaluable history of the Church at home. The most admired prose of his day was Charlemagne's biography written by Einhard French scholar. Now we come to Modern Day literature. We find that most books in bookshops mainly sell literature. Old works are a masterpiece, but are not very popular among the youth of a country. To be fair literature in novels these days is nice too, but does not have the same charm that literature in old novels has. A positive point in modern novels is that the expression of objects and people and ideas has become much deeper and much improved.

The court of Charlemagne assembled a remarkable group of poets. Prominent among them the scholar Alcuin of York and Archbishop of Mainz Rabanus wise Maurus, who might be the author of the wonderful hymn "Veni Creator Spiritus."

It retains a considerable number of medieval religious plays that are direct ancestors of modern drama. The nun Germanic Hrosvitha dramatic techniques adapted to Christian themes with curious results. However, apart from his work, most of these dramas are anonymous.

Prose fiction was a form of popular literature in Latin, usually in the form of short stories that became widely read collections of the thirteenth century by

Gesta Romanorum. The Legenda Aurea, a collection of lives of the saints by the Archbishop of Genoa Jacques de Voragine, was also very popular. It is difficult to say what literature is best when we have some wonderful writers in our midst who have contributed to literature for a very long time. So other than just bowing our heads to these writers and respecting their work there is not much else we can do.

However, some philosophers, such as the French scholar Abelard, wrote works of literary merit. Two important works of the poet scholar Alain de Lille, and *De Planctu Anticlaudianus Naturae*, are metaphorical and philosophical attempts to determine the place of humans in the natural universe, in divine terms which are not without literary interest.

The last great period of creativity in America- the work of the Italian humanist Petrarch in the fourteenth century was the main period. Humanism was a movement to recreate the classic experiment of reviving the language, style and genres of Latin literature. The most successful work in Latin *Secretum Petrarca* (1343), as well as his widespread correspondence, in writing style and verse of fluid. The humanistic tradition of prose in Italy has been continued by writers such as Poggio, famous for a brilliant chronicle of Florence of the time and (1438-1452) a collection of amusing stories. During the Renaissance, Latin language continued technically and intellectually in Europe. Linguistic study of Italian humanist Lorenzo Valla cemented the way for prospect scholars and had a great importance in the thought and literary style of the time. The highlights of the theoretical writings of Marsilio Ficino, who attempted to reconcile Platonism with

Christianity, and Giovanni Pico Della Mirandola, famous for its dignitates Oratio De Hominis (1486).

At the same time developing in Latin prose in the Italian Renaissance, there was a big production line, noted for its brilliance and articulateness. The most excellent poet was Giovanni Pontano, who combines stylish and emotional erotic emotion to create a deep intelligent portrayal of family life. A Greek banish, Michael Marullus writes Latin hymns in complete strength to pagan gods, and the Florentine humanist Poliziano writes Latin poetry as elegantly as in Italian. And the works of Marco Girolamo Vida include a significant study in verse on the art of poems *Ars Poetica*, and Christian (1535) is perhaps the neighboring thing to a Renaissance epic in Latin. The discourse *De arte dicendi* (1556), the Spanish *El Brocense*, is an example of practical grammar of which was made at that time.

Other parts of Europe were also the scene of an excellent work in Latin, which continued the tradition started in Italy. Among the most significant highlights of the Dutch humanist scholar Erasmus, whose extensive production includes all the fun *I commend the madness* (1511). The English statesman Sir Thomas More's friend Erasmus wrote a visionary work in Latin, *Utopia* (1516), which is still prominent in western political thinking. More widespread in Europe is the passionate *Basia* of Johannes Secundus. The Welsh writer John Owen was known for his expressive epigrams in Latin. The tradition of Latin poetry in northern Europe continued into the seventeenth century. Two poets Jesuits Sarbiewski Casimir of Poland and Alsace Jacob Balde, wrote poetry with admirable Christian themes.

## Comparison

All these novels were awarded the title of classics, with wonderful plots and how to write, but is this the best literature of modern times?

The answer to this question can be given immediately. There are many things that must be considered to answer this question.

Novels such as those mentioned above have been considered some of the best novels ever written and have gained much respect in the world, but the literature used in these novels can contain older words that requires the reader to keep a dictionary to understand and relish the novel as they read. But we cannot deny the fact that the literature in the novels of this kind is a masterpiece. But another question arises here, is it more popular and widely loved as literature today? The literature of the past is certainly beautiful, but it's a bit difficult to understand as well.

Come to Modern Day literature, we find that most books in bookstores include literature. Old is a masterpiece, but it is not very popular among the youth of a country. To be fair literature in novels these days is nice too, but he did not have the same charm that literature in old novels. A positive point in modern novels is that the expression of objects and people and ideas has become much deeper and much improved. In short, the expression of various objects in modern novels is superb. Novels like the Twilight series, The Last Song, The Harry Potter series; Dear John, etc. are fantastic and have greatly contributed to the literature.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, ancient literature and modern literature are equally splendid. The means of expression and writing in modern novels is as fabulous as the story and vocabulary in the ancient literature is simply superb. It is difficult to say that literature is best when we have some wonderful writers in our midst who have contributed to literature for a very long time. So other than just bowing our heads to these writers and respect their work and not something else we can do.