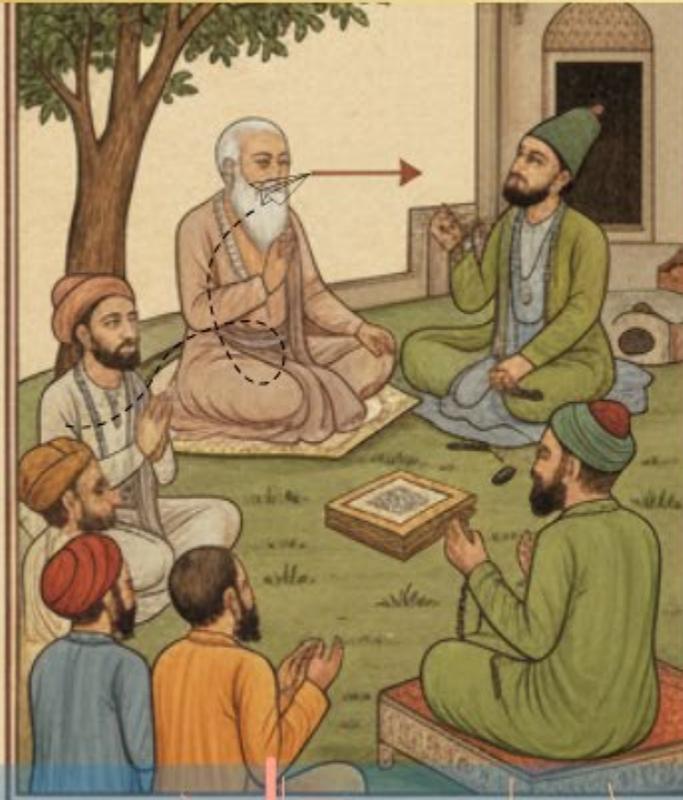


# Part-9

# TOP 60

## HISTORY QUESTIONS FOR THE CBSE EXAM 2025-26



# BHAKTI AND SUFI TRADITIONS

Prepared by: Mr. Bikrant  
PGT-Hist.

PM SHRI KV DIPHU

## Saints, Mystics & A Shared Path

<https://www.youtube.com/@TheSocietalSense>

## chapter wise previous year paper

**Q. 33 "One of the most striking features of Bhakti tradition was the presence of women." Explain the statement with examples from Alvar and Nayanar traditions. (3 Marks, 2023 Supp) OR**

**Q. Explain the role of women devotees in the traditions of Alvars and Nayanars. (3 Marks, 2023 Main)**

**Ans.**

1. A striking feature of the Bhakti tradition was the presence of women devotees. For instance, the compositions of **Andal**, a woman Alvar, were widely sung and are still sung today.
2. Andal saw herself as the beloved of Lord Vishnu and expressed this love in her verses.
3. Another devotee, **Karaikkal Ammaiyar** (a Nayanar), adopted the path of extreme asceticism.
4. Her compositions were preserved in the Nayanar tradition, and her lifestyle challenged patriarchal social norms.





Simple version

## **Role of Women in Bhakti. (3 Marks)**

**Andal:** Loved Vishnu, her songs are still sung.

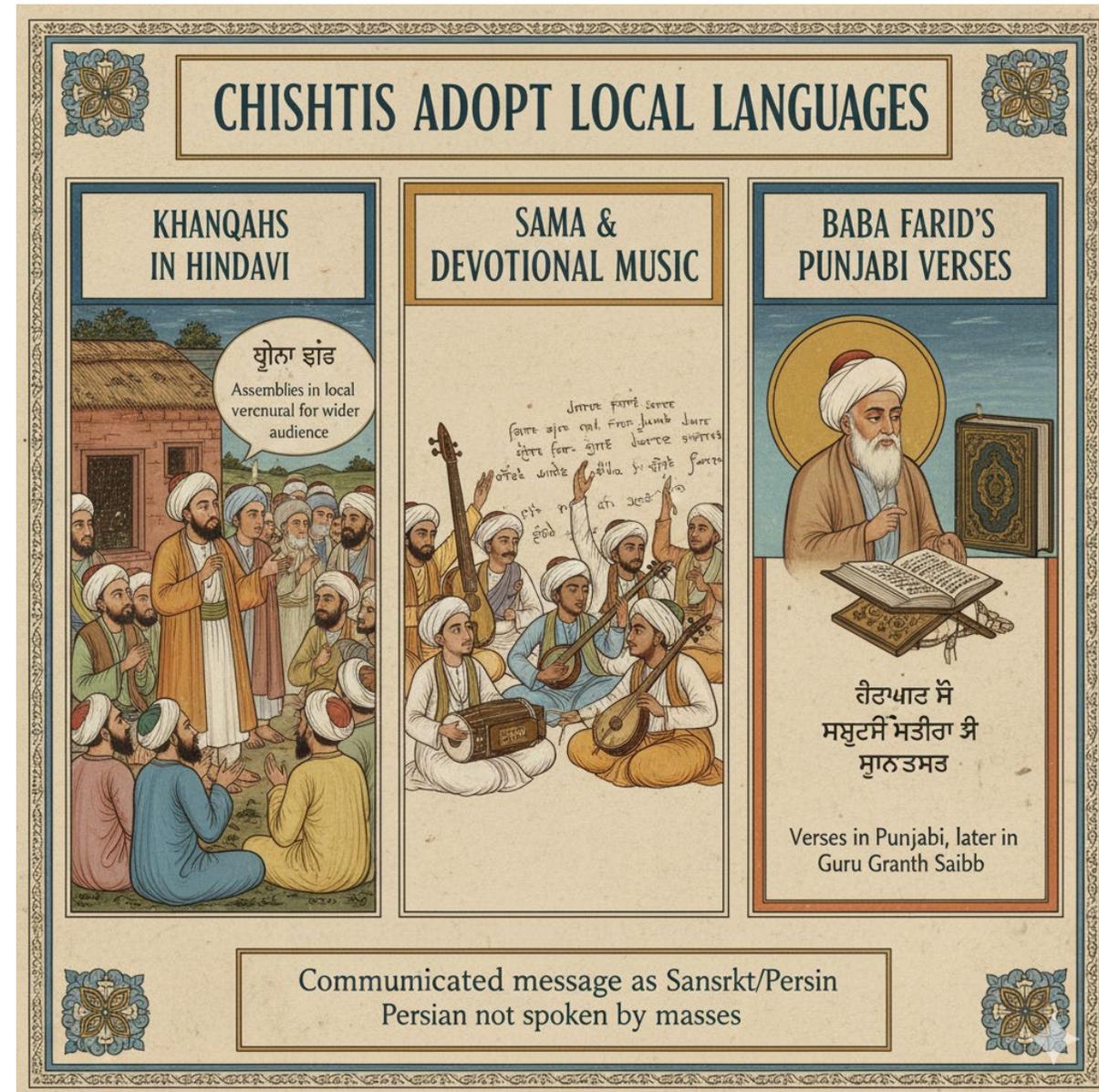
**Karaikkal Ammaiyar:** Became an ascetic (Shiva devotee).

They challenged **patriarchal norms** and duties.

**34. How did the Chishtis adopt the local languages of India during the Medieval period? Explain. (3 Marks, 2023 Main)**

**Ans.**

1. The Chishtis adopted local languages to communicate their message to a wider audience.
2. They held their assemblies (*khanqahs*) in **Hindavi**, the local vernacular.
3. They also composed and performed **Sama** (devotional music) using lyrics in local dialects.
4. For example, the verses of Baba Farid were composed in Punjabi and later quoted in the Guru Granth Sahib.



**Q.35 Describe the contribution of Kabir to the Bhakti Movement and his impact on religious and social harmony. (8 Marks, 2024 Main)**

**Ans.** Kabir's contribution to the Bhakti movement was significant, and his teachings had a profound impact on social and religious harmony.

**Contribution and Teachings:**

- 1. Oneness of God:** Kabir was a key proponent of *nirguna bhakti* (devotion to a formless God). He described God as *nirankar* (having no shape).
- 2. Challenging Religious Divisions:** He rejected idol worship, polytheism, and rigid rituals in both Hinduism and Islam.
- 3. Language:** He used a simple, local language that was easily understood. He drew terms from both Islamic traditions (like Allah, Khuda, Peer) and Vedantic traditions (like Alakh, nirakar).



4. **Criticism of Social Hierarchy:** He strongly preached against caste discrimination and the authority of priestly classes (Brahmans and ulama).
5. **Path to Salvation:** He emphasized *bhakti* through love and *nam-simran* (remembrance of God's name) as the path to salvation, open to all.
6. **Impact on Harmony:** Kabir's teachings provided a powerful message of human equality and universal brotherhood.



**Q. 35 Describe the contribution of Kabir to the Bhakti Movement and his impact on religious and social harmony. (8 Marks, 2024 Main)**

**Ans.** Kabir's contribution to the Bhakti movement was significant, and his teachings had a profound impact on social and religious harmony.

**Contribution and Teachings:**

- 1. Oneness of God:** Kabir was a key proponent of *nirguna bhakti* (devotion to a formless God). He described God as *nirankar* (having no shape).
- 2. Challenging Religious Divisions:** He rejected idol worship, polytheism, and rigid rituals in both Hinduism and Islam.
- 3. Syncretic Language:** He used a simple, local language that was easily understood. He drew terms from both Islamic traditions (like Allah, Khuda, Peer) and Vedantic traditions (like Alakh, nirakar).
- 4. Criticism of Social Hierarchy:** He strongly preached against caste discrimination and the authority of priestly classes (Brahmans and ulama).
- 5. Path to Salvation:** He emphasized *bhakti* through love and *nam-simran* (remembrance of God's name) as the path to salvation, open to all.
- 6. Impact on Harmony:** Kabir's teachings provided a powerful message of human equality and universal brotherhood, which directly promoted social and religious harmony.



Simple version

## Teachings of Kabir. (8 Marks)

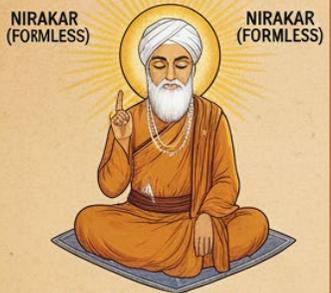
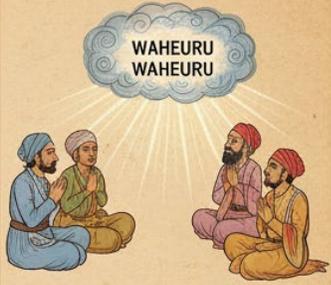
- Believed in **One Formless God** (Nirguna).
- Rejected **Idol worship** and rituals.
- Criticized **Caste discrimination**.
- Used **local language** for his verses.
- Attacked both **Hindu and Muslim** priests.
- Preached **Bhakti** (Love) as the only path.
- Called God by many names like **Ram and Allah**.
- Promoted **Universal Brotherhood**.

**Q. 36 Explain the main beliefs and teachings of Guru Nanak Dev. (8 Marks, 2025 Main) OR Q. Describe the teachings of Guru Nanak Dev ji emphasizing his philosophy of oneness. (8 Marks, 2024 Main - OR)**

**Ans.** The main beliefs and teachings of Guru Nanak, which form the basis of Sikhism, are:

- 1. Belief in One God:** Guru Nanak was a *nirguna* bhakti saint. He rejected religious texts of both Hindus and Muslims and preached that God is *Nirakar* (formless), eternal, and one.
- 2. Rejection of Rituals:** He strongly criticized empty rituals in all religions, such as ceremonial bathing, sacrifices, and idol worship, emphasizing simplicity and sincerity.

**GURU NANAK DEV JI:  
ONENESS & TEACHINGS**

<p><b>BELIEF IN ONE GOD (NIRGUNA BHAKTI)</b></p>  <p>NIRAKAR (FORMLESS)      NIRAKAR (FORMLESS)</p> <p>Rejected religious texts &amp; idol worship</p>  <p>Rejected religious text idol worship</p> <p>ੴ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ...</p> <p>God is One, Eternal, and Formless</p>	<p><b>REJECTION OF RITUALS &amp; CASTE</b></p>  <p>Criticized empty rituals (bathing, sacrifices, idol worship)</p>  <p>Firmly rejected the caste system. Equality for all.</p>	<p><b>PATH TO SALVATION &amp; COMMUNITY</b></p>  <p>WAHEURU WAHEURU</p> <p>Nam-Simran (Remembling Divine Name) with Love.</p>  <p>Organized followers: Sangat (Congregation) &amp; Common Kitchen</p>
<p><b>TEACHINGS IN SIMPLE PUNJABI: SHABAD (HYMS)</b></p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em; font-weight: bold;">ੴ ਕ੍ਰੀ ਗੀ ਨਿਰਨੰਕਾਰ</p>		

3. **Path to Salvation:** He taught that the path to salvation was not through rituals but through *nam-simran* (remembering and repeating the divine name) with love and devotion.
4. **Rejection of Caste:** He firmly rejected the caste system and preached the equality of all human beings.
5. **Use of Local Language:** He expressed his teachings in simple Punjabi, the language of the common people, in the form of lyrical hymns called *shabad*.
6. **Organizing Followers:** He organized his followers into a community. For collective worship, he set rules for congregational singing (*sangat*) and established the practice of common kitchen (*langar*).

## GURU NANAK DEV JI: ONENESS & TEACHINGS

<p><b>BELIEF IN ONE GOD (NIRGUNA BHAKTI)</b></p>  <p>NIRAKAR (FORMLESS)      NIRAKAR (FORMLESS)</p> <p>Rejected religious texts &amp; idol worship</p>  <p>Rejected religious texts &amp; idol worship</p> <p>ੴ ਨਤੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਤਾ ਪੁਰਛੁ....</p> <p>God is One, Eternal, and Formless</p>	<p><b>REJECTION OF RITUALS &amp; CASTE</b></p>  <p>Criticized empty rituals (bathing, sacrifices, idol worship)</p>  <p>Firmly rejected the caste system. Equality for all.</p>	<p><b>PATH TO SALVATION &amp; COMMUNITY</b></p>  <p>WAHEURU WAHEURU</p>  <p>Nam-Simiran (Remembering Divine Name) with Love.</p>  <p>Organized followers: Sangat (Congregation) &amp; Common Kitchen</p>
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<p><b>ੴ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਨਿਚਨੱਕਾਨ</b></p>		



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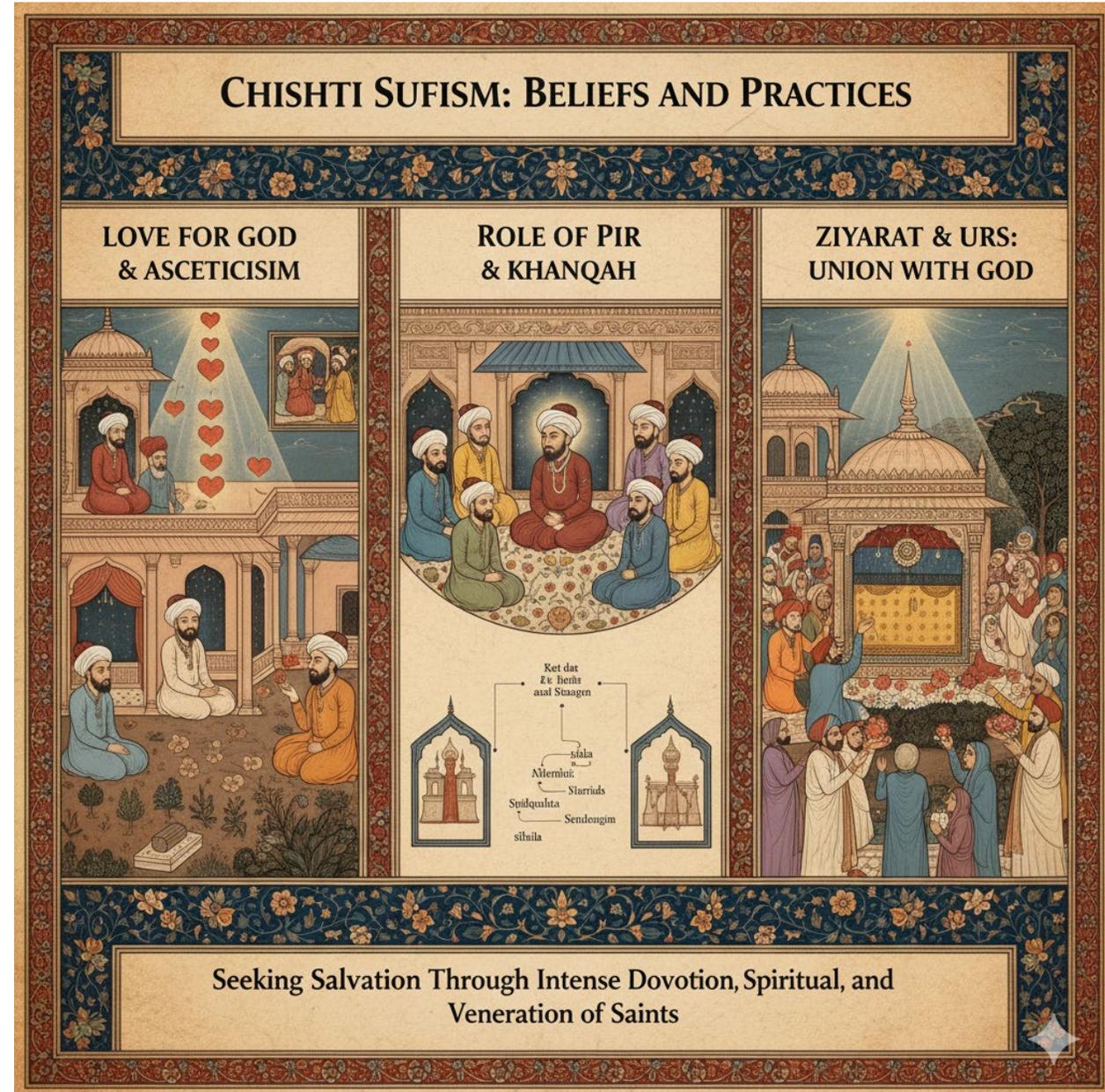
## Teachings of Guru Nanak. (8 Marks)

- Believed in **One God** (Nirankar).
- Rejected **sacrifices and idols**.
- Preached **Nam-Simran** (Chanting God's name).
- Rejected the **Caste system** completely.
- Used **Punjabi language** for his hymns (Shabad).
- Started **Sangat** (community singing).
- Started **Langar** (community kitchen) for equality.
- Focused on a **householder's life** with devotion.

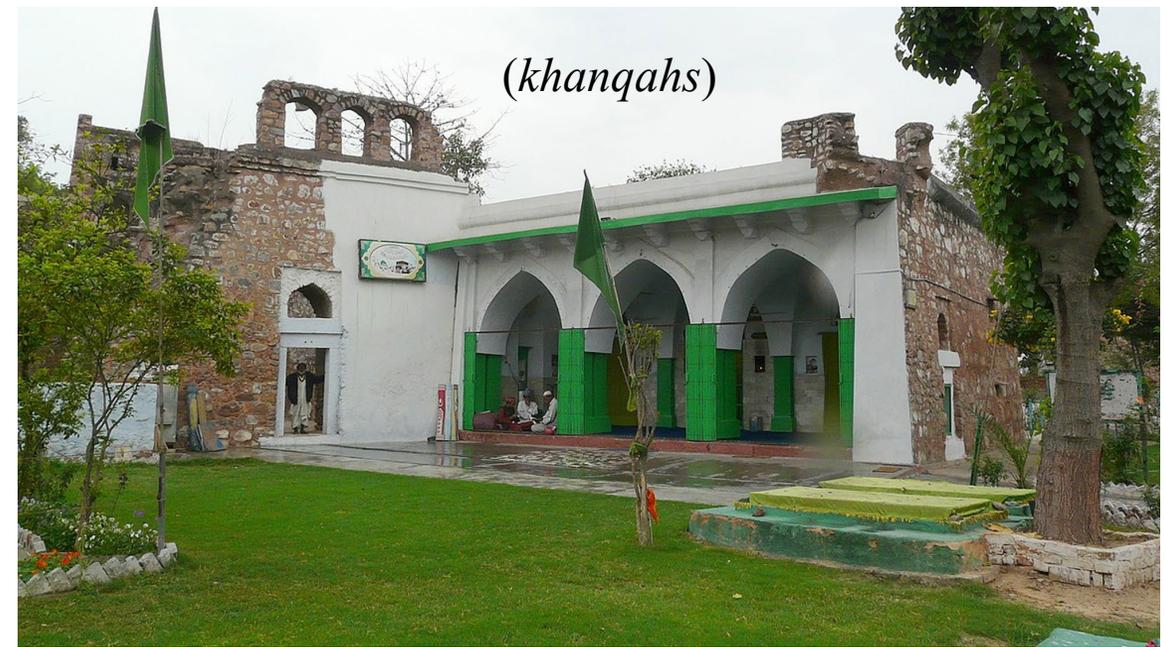
**Q.37 Explain the major beliefs and teachings of Chishtis during medieval India. (8 Marks, 2025 Main - OR)**

**Ans.** The Chishtis were the most influential Sufi silsila in India. Their major beliefs and practices were:

- 1. Emphasis on Love:** They sought salvation through intense devotion and love for God, similar to the Bhakti saints.
- 2. Role of the Pir:** They organized communities (*khanqahs*) around a master or *pir* (shaikh), who guided his disciples (*murids*).
- 3. Ziyarat and Urs:** After a *pir's* death, his tomb-shrine (*dargah*) became a center for devotion (*ziyarat*). The *urs* (death anniversary) was a major event, as the *pir* was believed to be united with God.



4. **Rejection of Materialism:** They rejected worldly power and courtly life and protested the "materialism" of the Caliphate.
5. **Adoption of Local Practices:** They were flexible and adopted many local customs. They used **Hindavi** (the local language) in their *khanqahs*.
6. **Sama (Devotional Music):** Organized *sama*, or musical assemblies to attain a state of spiritual ecstasy and bringing one closer to God.
7. **Following the Prophet:** They regarded Prophet Muhammad as a perfect human being (*insan-i-kamil*) and suggested following his example.





Simple version

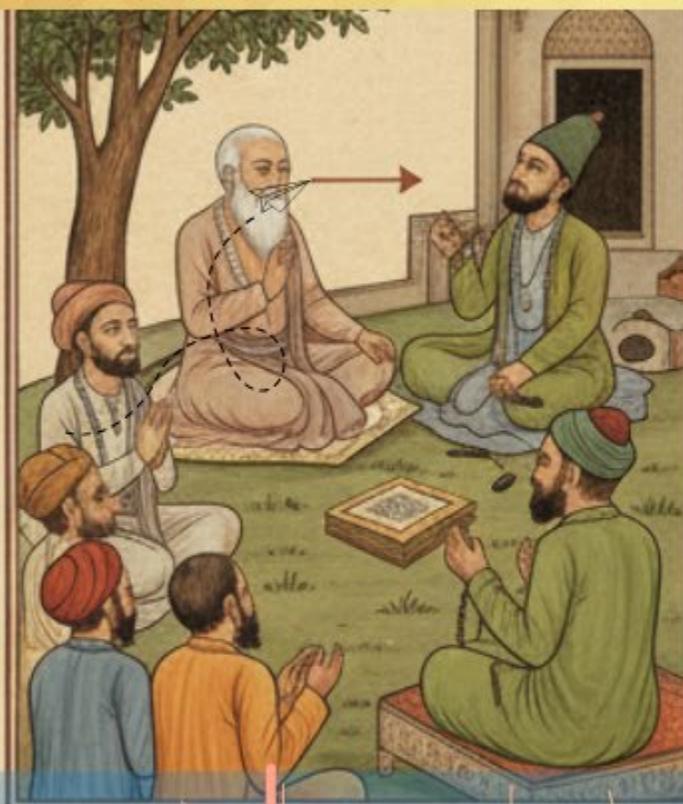
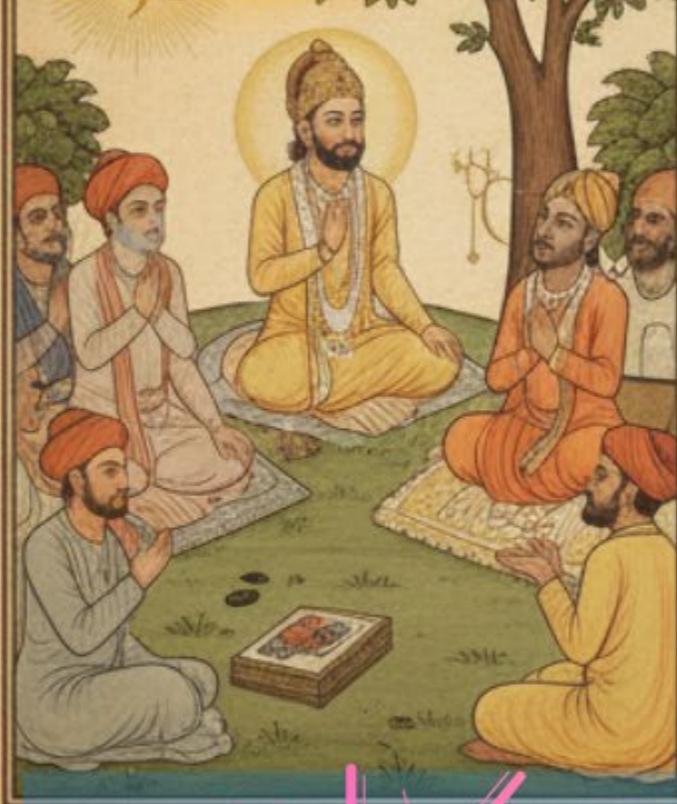
## Beliefs of Chishtis (Sufis). (8 Marks)

- Believed in intense **love for God**.
- Followed a spiritual teacher called **Pir**.
- Lived in community houses called **Khanqahs**.
- Performed **Ziyarat** (pilgrimage) to tombs.
- Used **Sama** (Music) to reach God.
- Spoke in **Hindavi** (local language).
- Lived a simple life of **poverty**.
- Served the poor through **Langars**.

# Part-10

# TOP 60

## HISTORY QUESTIONS FOR THE CBSE EXAM 2025-26



# BHAKTI AND SUFI TRADITIONS

Prepared by: Mr. Bikrant  
PGT-Hist.  
PM SHRI KV DIPHU

## Saints, Mystics & A Shared Path

<https://www.youtube.com/@TheSocietalSense>

## chapter wise previous year paper

**Q.38 "The Chola rulers extended their support to the Bhakti Movement and the Brahmanical traditions." Explain the statement. (3 Marks, 2025 Supp)**

**Ans.**

Chola rulers supported Brahmanical traditions by:

1. Giving land grants to Brahmanas and building magnificent stone temples for Vishnu and Shiva (e.g., at Thanjavur).
2. Collecting and compiling their hymns into a text called the *Tevaram*.
3. Installing images of the Nayanar saints in these temples, thus elevating the Bhakti saints to a near-divine status.





Simple version

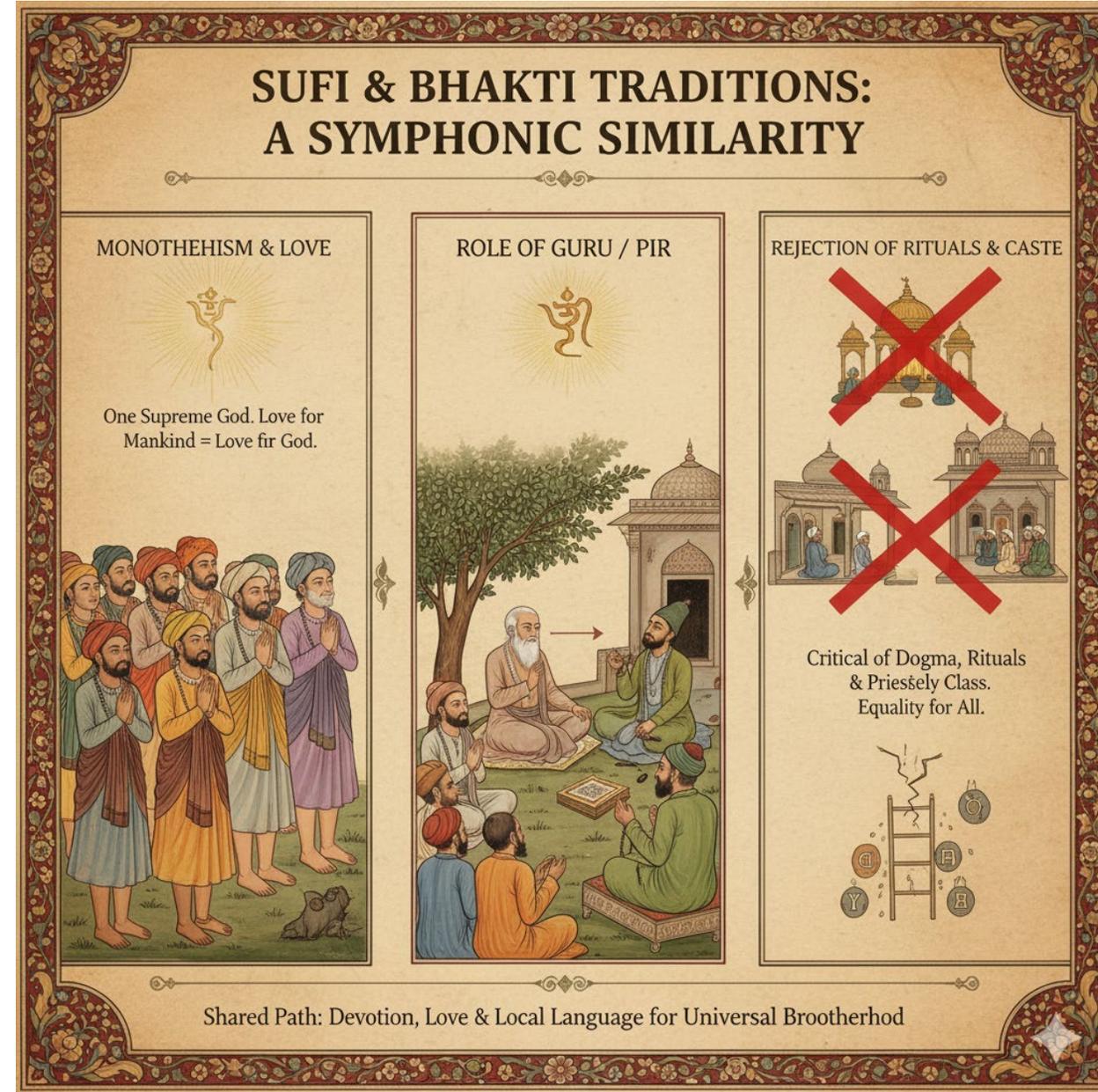
## Chola Rulers and Bhakti. (3 Marks)

- Built huge **temples** (Shiva/Vishnu).
- Compiled Nayanar hymns into **Tevaram**.
- Placed **statues of Saints** in temples.

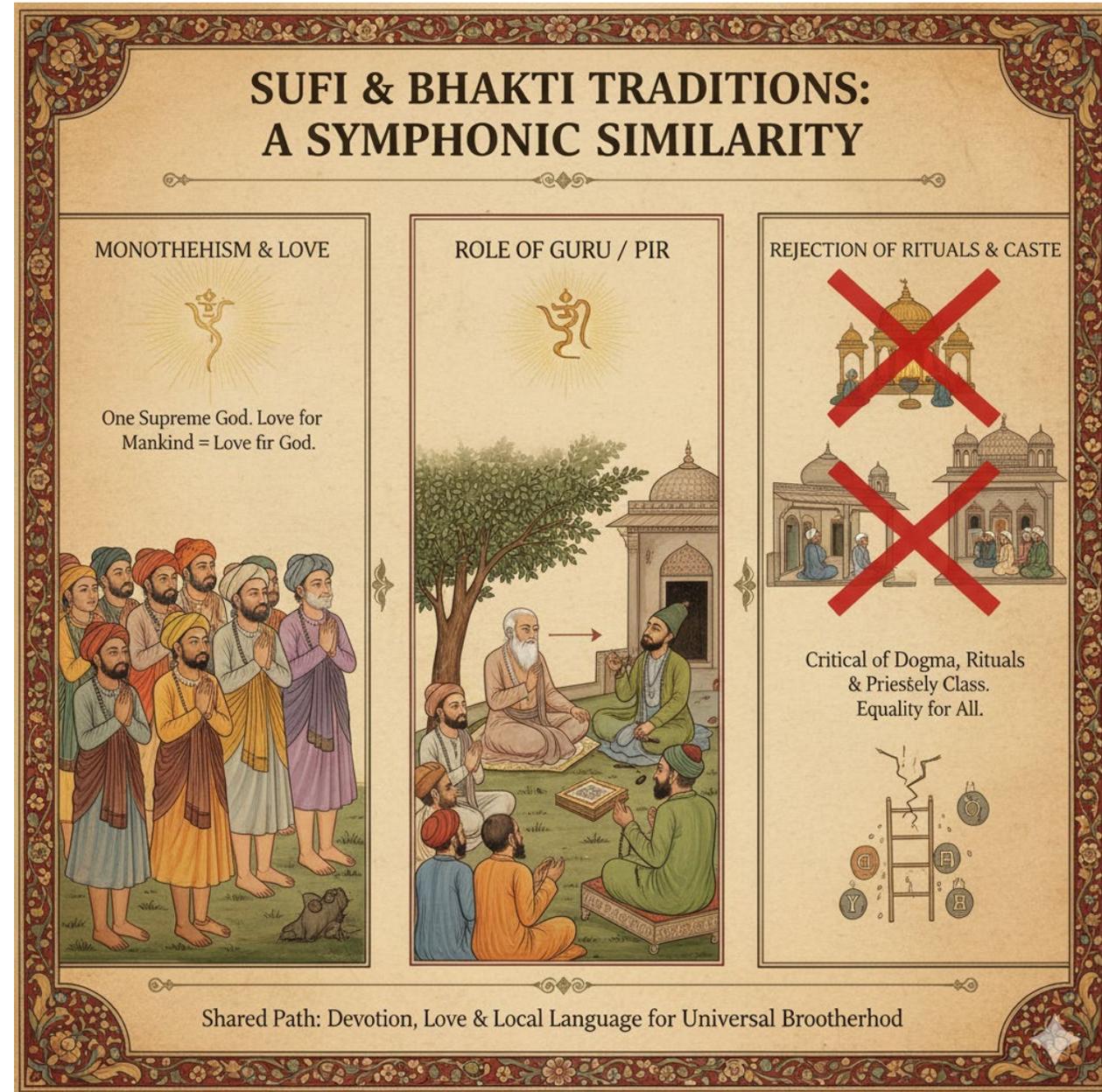
### Q.39 Discuss the similarities in Sufi and Bhakti traditions. (8 Marks)

**Ans.** The Sufi and Bhakti movements had different origins but shared many similarities:

- 1. Monotheism:** Both movements believed in one supreme God.
- 2. Humanism & Love:** Both emphasized love for mankind as a path to loving God. They advised all to live in peace and harmony.
- 3. Role of the Guru/Pir:** Both traditions placed immense importance on the role of a spiritual guide. The Bhakti tradition called him a *Guru*, while the Sufis called him a *Pir* or *Murshid*.



4. **Rejection of Rituals:** Both movements were critical of dogmatic definitions, rigid rituals, and the power of priestly classes (Brahmans and ulama).
5. **Use of Local Language:** Both movements used the language of the common people (like Tamil, Punjabi, or Hindavi) to spread their message, **Devotion as a Path:** Both emphasized intense, personal devotion and love for God as the true path to salvation.



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- 6. Devotion as a Path:** Both emphasized intense, personal devotion and love for God as the true path to salvation.



Simple version

## Similarities between Bhakti and Sufi. (8 Marks)

- Both believed in **One God** (Monotheism).
- Both emphasized **Love** as the path to God.
- Both had a **Teacher** (Guru or Pir).
- Both rejected **rigid rituals** and caste.
- Both used the **local language** of people.
- Both criticized **priestly classes** (Brahmans/Ulama).
- Both believed in **humanism** (love for all).
- Both encouraged **community living**.

## Q.40 Explain with examples what historians mean by the integration of cults. (3 Marks)

**Ans.**

1. "Integration of cults" refers to a process where diverse local beliefs and practices were absorbed into the larger, mainstream Brahmanical framework.
2. This involved the dissemination of Puranic ideas in simple Sanskrit, making them accessible to women and Shudras.
3. A key example is the Jagannatha cult at Puri, Orissa. The main deity, Jagannatha (a form of Vishnu), was originally a local, perhaps tribal, god who was later identified with Vishnu, thus integrating the local cult into mainstream Vaishnavism.





Simple version

### Integration of Cults. (3 Marks)

- Local gods were identified as **Vishnu or Shiva**.
- **Jagannatha** (tribal god) became a form of Vishnu.
- Puranic ideas spread to **common people**.

**Q.41 Analyses, illustrations, why bhakti and sufi thinkers adopted a variety of languages in which to express their opinions. (3 Marks)**

**Ans.**

1. Bhakti and Sufi thinkers aimed to **make their message accessible to the *common people***, who did not speak elite languages like Sanskrit or Persian.
2. The **Alvars and Nayanars** in the south composed their hymns in **Tamil, the local language.**
3. In the north,
  - **Guru Nanak composed his *shabads* in Punjabi,**
  - Kabir wrote in a simple local dialect, and
  - the Chishtis used Hindavi, ensuring their ideas of love and devotion could reach the widest possible audience.

**Q.42 Explain the major beliefs and practices of the Virashaiva (Lingayat) tradition. (3 Marks)**

**Ans.**

1. This movement emerged in Karnataka in the 12th century, led by **Basavanna**. Its followers are known as **Virashaivas (heroes of Shiva)** or Lingayats (wearers of the *linga*).
2. They **challenged the caste system**, opposed the notion of pollution, and questioned the theory of rebirth.
3. They also rejected practices like cremation, prescribed in the Dharmashastras. Instead, they ceremonially bury their dead, believing the devotee unites with Shiva and does not return to this world.
4. They **encouraged social reforms** like post-puberty marriage and the remarriage of widows.

# Understanding The Lingayats

As Karnataka goes to polls on May 10, here's a look into one of the most prominent communities

**ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS 2023**

- Lingayat means one who accepts Linga. They wear a miniature Linga around their necks
- Founded in 12th century in the capital city of Western Chalukyas called Basavakalyan
- They do not believe in Vedas, Agamas and Shastras
- They oppose the caste system
- They treat men and women equal in all respects. Women have the right to adopt a child even after the death of their husband or without being married
- Widow remarriage is common, and child marriage forbidden
- Lingayats bury their dead in sitting pose with a Linga in left palm and naked; do not believe in rebirth
- Lingayats were active in freedom movement
- Lingayat holy scriptures are **23,000** vachanas in Kannada
- Lingayats don't visit temples, reject polytheism

INDIA TODAY GROUP



Simple version

## Virashaiva (Lingayat) Tradition. (3 Marks)

- Led by **Basavanna** in Karnataka.
- Worshipped Shiva in the form of **Linga**.
- Bury their dead (no cremation) and allow **widow remarriage**.