

**Answer:**

India's middle ages brought about a very rich tradition of devotional literature of remarkable merit. Bhakti literature, the most important development of the medieval period, is love poetry which is depicted as love between husband and wife, or between lovers, or between servant and master, or between parents and child. Bhakti was a poetic approach to religion and an ascetic approach to poetry.

The rise of Bhakti poetry gave rise to regional languages i.e. Bhasa. The conception of Bhakti did away with the elite tradition of Sanskrit and adopted the most acceptable language of the common man. Bhakti poetry was first written in the 6th to 7th centuries AD in Tamil and **gradually it spread to other parts dominating almost all the major languages of the country** during the medieval period such as:

- **Pampa's court epics in Kannada** in 10<sup>th</sup> century. Devotional literature in Kannada known as the *Vachanas* of various saints are also well known.
- **Devotional abhangas** (a literary form) of **Gyaneshwar, Eknath and Tukaram in Marathi** had cast a spell all over Maharashtra.
- **Gujarati poets in the 12<sup>th</sup> century** like **Narsi Mehta and Premananda** occupy a prominent place in the galaxy of Vaishnava poets.
- **Chandidas, a Bengali poet**, is acclaimed as a great genius for the lucidity and sweetness of his poems. **Sri Chaitanya**, a great Bengali saint, helped Vaishnavism to turn into a religious and literary movement and was a source of never-ending inspiration to a host of Bengali poets.
- **Vidyapati in Maithili** created a new poetic language.
- **Lal Ded**, a Kashmiri Muslim poetess, gave a new dimension to mystical bhakti in the form of *Vakhs* in **Kashmiri language**.
- **Jagannath Das, a legendary devotional poet in Oriya**, wrote Bhagavat (the story of Krishna), which has spiritually united all the people of Orissa and created a living consciousness.
- **Sankardev, an Assamese devotional poet** used Ankiya Nat and Kirtan to propagate Vaishnavism.
- **Kabir, Surdas, Tulsidas and Meera Bai used Hindi**. Hindi literature attracted Namdev (Marathi) and Guru Nanak (Punjabi) as well to write in Hindi due its vast geographical area.
- **Urdu** also came into being as a language during this period. **Amir Khusro** a great Sufi saint gave genesis to Urdu.

Apart from devotional poetry, there were other trends in the medieval literature as well such as love ballads (e.g. Heer-Ranjha by Warris Shah) and heroic poetry in Punjabi (known as *kissa*). In Hindi, between 1700 and 1800 A.D., many poets like Bihari Lal and Keshav Das created secular poetry of Sringara (erotic sentiment), and a large number of other poets, wrote academic accounts of the entire range of poetry, in verse form. However, the most powerful trend of medieval Indian literature between 1000 and 1800 A.D. is devotional (bhakti) poetry.

- 12. Discuss the major changes introduced by the Government of India Act, 1919 and its significance as a historical landmark in the Indian freedom struggle. (250 words) 15**

**Approach:**

- Briefly discuss the circumstances and situation under which the Government of India Act, 1919 was enacted in India.
- Discuss the key features and the major changes introduced by the Government of India Act, 1919.
- With examples show how it was a historical landmark in the freedom struggle of India.
- Conclude on the basis of the above points.

**Answer:**

The Government of India Act, 1919 based on Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, was enacted in the aftermath of World War I. There was pressure on the British government for further constitutional reforms due to Indian participation in the war as well Home rule movement and Revolutionary movements during the war.