

FREE SAMPLE SET | IGNOU GUESS PAPER | DECEMBER 2026 TEE

BEGC-132 Selections from Indian Writing: Cultural Diversity

A compulsory reference-to-context question on Bhakti and Sufi poets, three repeat themes solved in full, and plans for the rest

Course: BEGC-132 Selections from Indian Writing: Cultural Diversity, 6 credits (Common Prospectus July 2026)

December 2026 paper: Wednesday 16 December 2026, 2 PM to 5 PM (IGNOU tentative date sheet dated 21 September 2026)

Programme: BA General (BAG) English and other programmes that prescribe it

Built from: IGNOU BEGC-132 papers of June 2023, June 2025 and December 2025, read on IGNOU's servers, a copy of December 2023 on another website, and IGNOU's 2024-25 and 2025-26 assignments, read on 29 September 2026

STUDY REFERENCE

WRITE IN YOUR OWN WORDS

NOT AN IGNOU PUBLICATION

How IGNOU sets the BEGC-132 paper

- **Time and marks.** 3 hours for 100 marks. Attempt five questions in all; every question carries 20 marks.
- **Question 1 is compulsory.** It asks you to explain any four passages with reference to the context ($4 \times 5 = 20$).
- **Where the passages come from.** In the papers read for this set, most passages were from Bhakti and Sufi poets in translation: Mirabai, Akka Mahadevi, Bulleh Shah, Amir Khusrau, Chokhamela and Lal Ded (Lalla). A few were modern poems.
- **The other four answers** are essays on the course's themes.

Repeat map: what came back

The December 2023 column is from a copy on another website, not IGNOU's own file.

Theme	Jun 2023	Dec 2023 (copy)	Jun 2025	Dec 2025	Assignments
Reference to context: Bhakti and Sufi poets	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	yes
Dalit literature: tone, language, rejecting tradition, Dalit voices	none seen	yes	Q4	Q6	2025-26
"Unity of heritage and diversity of literature"	none seen	none seen	yes	Q2	2024-25
Language and power: Hindi, Hindavi, Amrit Rai	none seen	none seen	yes	Q4	2025-26
Bhakti and Sufi as socio-religious movements; the "mad lover"	none seen	none seen	none seen	Q3	2024-25

Theme	Jun 2023	Dec 2023 (copy)	Jun 2025	Dec 2025	Assignments
Indian writing in English: relevance	yes	none seen	yes	none seen	none
The Chandrabati Ramayana	none seen	a note	none seen	Q8	both years
Women's writing; the "silenced text"	yes	none seen	none seen	none seen	both years
Literature of the North-East	none seen	a note	none seen	Q7	2024-25
The ghazal in the early medieval period	none seen	none seen	none seen	Q5	none

Reference to context: the method for the compulsory 20 marks

Each passage is worth 5 marks, so aim for about 120 words. Use four moves:

1. **Identify** the poet and, if you can, the poem.
2. **Place** it in the poet's tradition (Bhakti, Sufi, Dalit or modern).
3. **Explain** the meaning in plain words.
4. **Comment** on one image or device, and on what it shows about devotion, identity or protest.

Practice passage (from Tagore's 1915 translation of Kabir, in the public domain; your paper's passages are drawn from the poems in your course): "O servant, where dost thou seek Me? Lo! I am beside thee. I am neither in temple nor in mosque."

These lines are from Rabindranath Tagore's English translation of the songs of Kabir, the fifteenth-century Bhakti poet. God speaks to the seeker and says he need not search in temples or mosques, because God is already beside him. Kabir rejects the ritual religion of both Hindus and Muslims and places the divine within human experience. The direct address and the simple negations are typical of Bhakti poetry, which turned devotion into a personal relationship open to all, regardless of caste or creed.

Three repeat themes, solved

1. "Indian literary history has the distinction of 'unity of heritage' and 'diversity of literature'." Discuss.

December 2025 Q2, the June 2025 question on "diversity of literature", and IGNOU's 2024-25 assignment.

Introduction. Indian literature is written in many languages, yet it shares sources, themes and forms. Its history can be read as a single heritage expressed through many literatures.

Unity of heritage.

- *Shared stories:* the Ramayana and the Mahabharata have been retold in almost every Indian language. Examples include Kamban in Tamil, Krittibas and the woman poet Chandrabati in Bengali, and Tulsidas in Awadhi.
- *Shared movements:* Bhakti and Sufi poetry crossed regions and languages between roughly the sixth and seventeenth centuries. They created a common idiom of devotion and love.

- *Shared forms and influences:* Sanskrit poetics, Persian forms such as the ghazal, and, in modern times, the novel and the influence of English.

Diversity of literature.

- *Many languages:* the Sahitya Akademi, set up in 1954, recognises literature in 24 languages, and many more live orally.
- *Many traditions:* classical and folk, written and oral, courtly and devotional.
- *Many voices:* women's writing, Dalit literature and the literatures of the North-East and of tribal communities speak from experiences that the dominant tradition often left out.

How the two meet. A single story such as the Ramayana carries different meanings in different languages and hands. Chandrabati's version, for example, centres on Sita's suffering. Unity does not erase difference; it provides a shared ground on which differences become visible.

Conclusion. Indian literature is best understood as one heritage with many literatures. Its variety of languages and voices is not a weakness but the form its unity takes.

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2. Why are the Bhakti and Sufi movements known as socio-religious movements?

December 2025 Q3 and IGNOU's 2024-25 assignment, and the background to most of Question 1's passages.

Introduction. Bhakti (devotion) and Sufism (Islamic mysticism) were religious movements. Because they changed who could approach God, and in what language, they also changed society.

The Bhakti movement. Bhakti began with the Tamil Alvars and Nayanars and spread across India:

- in Karnataka, the Virashaiva movement of Basava and Akka Mahadevi;
- in Maharashtra, Namdev, Chokhamela and Tukaram;
- in the north, Kabir, Ravidas, Mirabai, Surdas and Tulsidas.

Its social side was strong:

- It placed personal devotion above ritual and priestly mediation.
- It used the languages of ordinary people instead of Sanskrit.
- It questioned caste hierarchy; Chokhamela, for example, was a Dalit saint.
- It gave women such as Akka Mahadevi and Mirabai a voice that defied social norms.

The Sufi movement. Sufi orders such as the Chishti, with centres at Ajmer and Delhi (Moinuddin Chishti, Nizamuddin Auliya), taught love of God, humility and service. Their hospices (khanqahs) were open to all. Music (sama) and poetry in local languages drew people of every background. Amir Khusrau's verse in Hindavi became part of popular culture.

Why "socio-religious".

- Both movements challenged religious orthodoxy and social hierarchy.
- Both spoke to ordinary people in their own languages.

- Both shared an idiom of love, even of the devotee as a "mad lover" of God.

Together they helped create a composite culture that crossed the lines of caste and community.

Conclusion. Bhakti and Sufism changed not only how people worshipped but whom society allowed to speak, to worship and to be heard. That is why they are called socio-religious movements.

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3. Why does Dalit literature reject tradition? Comment on the tone and language of Dalit writing.

December 2025 Q6, June 2025 Q4, the December 2023 copy, and IGNOU's 2025-26 assignment on Dalit narratives.

Introduction. Dalit literature is writing by Dalits about the experience of caste oppression, humiliation and resistance. Its modern form grew from the thought of Jyotirao Phule and B. R. Ambedkar and the Marathi Dalit literary movement of the 1960s and 1970s, the time of the Dalit Panthers (1972). It later spread across Indian languages.

Why it rejects tradition.

1. *The tradition sanctified caste.* The scriptures and social codes that upheld the dominant literary tradition justified hierarchy and untouchability.
2. *Exclusion from learning.* Dalits were denied education and a place in literary culture, so the "tradition" was not theirs.
3. *Aesthetics of the elite.* Ideas of beauty, decorum and pleasure (rasa) served the upper castes. Dalit writers answered with an aesthetics of truth, pain and protest.
4. *Self-representation.* Dalits had been written about by others; Dalit literature insists on speaking for itself.

Tone and language.

- **Tone:** anger, testimony, irony and hope; the shock of lived experience rather than ornament.
- **Language:** everyday speech and dialect, harsh and concrete images, and autobiography. Examples are Daya Pawar's *Baluta* (Marathi, 1978) and Omprakash Valmiki's *Joothan* (Hindi, 1997), where one person's life tells the story of a community.

A longer lineage. Dalit voices were present earlier too. The fourteenth-century Bhakti saint Chokhamela, a Mahar, wrote that the sugarcane may be crooked but its juice is not. His line was a June 2025 passage, and it questions judgement by outward form.

Conclusion. Dalit literature rejects the tradition that excluded it and builds a new tradition of its own. Its raw tone and plain language are deliberate; they are part of its argument for dignity and equality.

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Answer plans for the other repeat themes

Language and power: Hindi and Hindavi (Amrit Rai) – Amrit Rai's *A House Divided* (1984) traces Hindi and Urdu to a shared Hindavi. – It argues that their separation grew from script politics and communal and colonial divisions in the nineteenth century. – Link it to the June 2025 statement that the question of Hindi is not simply a question of language.

The Chandrabati Ramayana – A sixteenth-century Bengali Ramayana by a woman poet. – It centres on Sita's suffering and offers a woman's perspective, an alternative to the heroic epic told from Rama's side.

Literature of the North-East – Many languages and oral traditions, distinct tribal identities, and histories of conflict and migration. – That variety is why no single label fits the whole region.

Indian writing in English – A shared language across regions. – Its colonial origins and later reclaiming. – Its role in carrying Indian experience to the world, and the debate about whom it represents.

The ghazal – Couplets (sher) bound by rhyme (qafia) and refrain (radif), with the poet's name (takhallus) in the last couplet. – Themes of love and mysticism. – Amir Khusrau's role in bringing Persian forms into Hindavi.

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Use this set in the last three weeks

- **Week 3:** practise two reference-to-context passages a day from the poems in your course, about 120 words each.
- **Week 2:** write the three solved answers from memory.
- **Final week:** turn the answer plans into full answers.
- **Last two days:** read IGNOU's June 2026 BEGC-132 paper on ignou.ac.in and time one full paper.

What this free set is, and is not

This set covers the BEGC-132 themes that recurred across the papers and assignments above. The complete BEGC-132 set, with every repeat theme and passage-based practice solved, costs ₹49 as a PDF or ₹100 as a printed copy, plus a one-time ₹100 courier charge per printed order. Order on WhatsApp +91 93546 37830.

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