

DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC ELECTIVE (DSE): Reading Social Relations through Texts and Visuals II

Credit distribution, Eligibility and Pre-requisites of the Course

Course title & Code	Credits	Credit distribution of the course			Eligibility criteria	Pre-requisite of the course (if any)
		Lecture	Tutorial	Practical/ Practice		
Reading Social Relations through Texts and Visuals II	4	3	0	1		

Learning Objectives

This course explores the interplay between texts and visual arts in shaping social history and cultural memory. Students will critically examine autobiographies, historical chronicles, and calligraphy to understand how narratives of power, identity, and resistance are constructed. Simultaneously, they will analyze paintings, architecture, theatre, early cinema, and music as visual mediums that document and challenge historical discourse. The course examines the intersections of social hierarchies, cultural identities, and political structures, encouraging students to critically engage with dominant narratives. Through experiential research and site documentation, students will develop methodological tools for critical analysis, enhancing their ability to interpret and reframe historical and cultural representations.

Learning Outcomes:

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- Critically Analyze Textual and Visual Narratives
- Understand the social, cultural, and historical significance of texts and visual arts.
- Engage in Interdisciplinary Approaches to History and Culture
- Explore the role of calligraphy, autobiography, and historical texts in shaping perspectives on power and identity.
- Examine theatre, cinema, and music as tools for capturing and expressing social change.
- Evaluate the Representation of Social Relations in Different Mediums
- Study how paintings, architecture, and performing arts depict and influence societal structures.
- The course explores the intersections of historical structures, cultural frameworks, and political authority, encouraging students to critically analyze dominant narratives.
- Apply Research Skills Through Experiential Learning
- Conduct field-based research and document findings in an academic report.
- Develop methodological skills to assess historical and cultural sites critically.

These objectives and outcomes ensure that students develop a multidisciplinary understanding of historical and cultural narratives while strengthening their analytical and research capabilities.

Unit I: Concepts in Text and Visual Arts

- (a) Exploring Social Narratives in Textual Sources
- (b) Capturing Social History Through Visual Expression

Unit II: Voices and Scripts of History: An Analytical Exploration of Two Chosen Texts

- (a) Gulbadan Begum, *Ahval-i Humayun Badshah*
- (b) Calligraphy: In Early Modern India
- (c) Autobiography: *Amar Jiban*
- (d) Jainendra Kumar, *Sunita* (1935, Hindi)

Unit III: Visual Narratives: A Critical Examination of Two Artistic Works

- (a) Paintings: Rajput /Pahari
- (b) Architecture: Taj Mahal/ Red Fort /Jantar Mantar
- (c) Theatre: *Binodini Dasi* (1863-1941)
- (d) Early Cinema: Fearless Nadia's Films
- (e) Music: *Gauhar Jaan* (1873-1930)

Unit IV: Practical Component:

This component involves a field-based analytical **study**, requiring students to engage directly with a designated heritage or cultural site. Students must produce a critically reflective report that documents their observations, interpretations, and contextual insights. All submissions must be substantiated with geo-tagged photographs to verify on-site engagement and experiential learning.

The student may choose to study and write a report on any of the centrally protected monuments listed by the government of India given in the link below.

https://www.nma.gov.in/showfile.php?lang=1&level=1&ls_id=965&lid=1276&nma_type=0

Readings for Unit I:

Text-Based Reading Material:

- (1) D. Fairchild Ruggles, ed., *Women, Patronage and Self-Representation in Islamic Societies*, New York: State University of New York Press, 2000, Introduction, pp.1-15.
- (2) Anshu Malhotra & Siobhan Lambert-Hurley, eds., *Speaking of the Self: Gender, Performance and Autobiography in South Asia*, New Delhi: Zubaan, 2017, Introduction, pp. 1-30.
- (3) Sarkar, Sumit, *Writing Social History*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Readings for Visual and Performative Arts:

- (1) Blair, Sheila S., 'Islamic Art as a Source for the Study of Women in Premodern Societies', Amira El-Azhary Sonbol, *Beyond the Exotic; Women's Histories in Islamic Societies*, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2005, pp. 336-46.
- (2) Davis, Richard (ed) *Picturing the Nation: Iconographies of Modern India* Delhi: Orient Longman, 2007, Introduction: 1-31.

- (3) Pinny, Christopher, *Camera Indica: The Social Life of Indian Photographs Envisioning Asia*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997.

Readings for Unit II

- (1) Calabria, Michael D., *The Language of the Taj Mahal*, New Delhi: Bloomsbury, 2022, Chapters 1-2, pp. 1-54.
- (2) Govind, Nikhil, 'Jainendra Kumar and the Hindi Novelistic Tradition', in Govind, *Between Love and Freedom*, London: Routledge, 2014, pp.82-108.
- (3) Lal, Ruby, *Vagabond Princess: The Great Adventures of Gulbadan*, New Delhi: Juggernaut, 2024.
- (4) Dass, Bruj Ratan, *Gulbadan Begum Ka Humayunaama* (Hindi tr.), Delhi: National Book Trust 2020.
- (5) O' Hanlon, Rosalind, *A Comparison Between Women and Men*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- (6) Roxburgh, David J., "The Eye is Favoured for Seeing the Writing's Form": On the Sensual and the Sensuous in Islamic Calligraphy', *Muqarnas*, Vol. 25, 2008, pp. 275-98.

Readings for Unit III

- (1) Aitken, Molly, Purdah and Portrayal: Rajput Women as Subjects, Patrons and Collectors, *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. 62, No. 2, 2002, pp. 247-80.
- (2) Dasi, Binodini, *My Story and My Life as an Actress*, Delhi: Kali for Women, 1998.
- (3) Giles Tillotson, *Taj Mahal*, Gurgaon: Penguin Random house, 2008.
- (4) Goswamy, B.N., 'A Complex Web: Approaches to Time in Rajput and Mughal Painting', in *Indian Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art*, (ed.) Arindam Chakrabarti, New York: Bloomsbury, 2016, pp. 215-220.
- (5) Koch, Ebba, *The Complete Taj Mahal*, London: Thames & Hudson, 2012.
- (6) Mukherji, Anisha Shekhar, *The Red Fort of Shahjahanabad: An Architectural History*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2003.
- (7) Sampat, Vikram, *Gauhar Jaan: The Life and Times of a Musician*, Delhi: Rupa, 2010.
- (8) Pandey, Anshuman (translated by), *Mera Naam Hai Gauhar Jaan*, New Delhi: Jnanpith Vani Prakashan, 2021.
- (9) Sharma, Virendra Nath, *Sawai Jai Singh and His Astronomy*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publication, 1995.
- (10) Wenner, Dorothee, *Fearless Nadia: The True Story of Bollywood's Original Stunt Queen*, Penguin India, 2005.

Recommended Readings:

- (1) Khanna, Meenakshi, *Madhyakaleen Bharat ka Sanskritik Itihas*, Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2012. (Hindi)
- (2) Necipoglu, Gulru, Framing the Gaze in Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal Palaces, *Ars Orientalis*, Vol. 23, 1993, pp. 303-42.
- (3) Roxburgh, David, 'The Eye is Favoured for Seeing the Writing's Form: On the Sensual and the Sensuous in Islamic Calligraphy', *Muqarnas*, Vol. 25, 2008, pp. 275-98.
- (4) Singh, Kavita, Visibility, Veiling and Voyeurism: The Depiction of Women in Mughal Art, *YouTube* 2020.

Note: Examination scheme and mode shall be as prescribed by the Examination Branch, from time to time.