

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

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—I	4	3	0	1		

Learning Objectives

This course enables students to critically analyze the intersection of texts and visual representations in shaping social history. By examining classical literary works—drama, epics, folktales, and Sufi literature—students will explore themes of politics, power and tradition. They will also explore Indian architectural and artistic heritage assessing their cultural significance. Through comparative analysis and field research, students will apply theoretical concepts to real-world heritage studies, developing strong analytical and research skills for interpreting historical and cultural narratives.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Understanding the Interplay Between Texts and Visuals in Social History. Develop a conceptual framework for studying social history through literary and visual sources. Analyze how texts and visual forms shape and reflect historical and cultural narratives.
 - Examine the Relationship Between Political Acumen, Power, and Tradition in Classical Works. Critically engage with drama, epics, folktales, and *Malfūzāt* to explore themes of authority, morality, and social structures. Compare and contrast different literary traditions and their influence on societal norms.
 - Analyze Architectural and Artistic Expressions in Indian Cultural History. Study the symbolism, function, and evolution of architectural forms such as *stupas*, temples, minarets, and *baolis*. Explore how stone art and monuments convey religious, political, and social meanings across time.
 - Develop Analytical and Research Skills Through Field Study. Conduct a heritage or cultural site analysis, applying theoretical knowledge to real-world observations. Synthesize findings into a structured analytical report, demonstrating critical thinking and research skills.
- These Learning Objectives and Outcomes ensure that the course develops students' analytical, comparative, and research skills while deepening their understanding of social history through texts and visuals.

Unit I: Concepts and Ideas

Conceptualizing Social History in Texts

Ideating Social History through Visual Representations

Unit II: Wisdom, Power, and Tradition: A Study of Any Two Classical Works

Drama: *Mricchakatikam*

Epics: *Sabha Parva*

Folktales: *Jatakas*

Malfūzāt: *Fawaid al Fawad*

Unit III: Stone, Symbolism, and Structure: Focus on Two Visual Forms

Stupa: Bharhut/ Sanchi

Art on stone: Elephanta Caves/ Mahabalipuram

Temple: Konark Temple / Virupaksha Temple

Minarets and *Baolis*: Qutub Minar/ Agrsen Ki Baoli/ Rani ki Vav

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:

In Reference to the Text Section

1. Thapar, Romila, *Ancient Indian social history: Some interpretations*, New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1978, pp. 211-239.
2. Olivelle, Patrick: *Collected Essays III: Reading Texts and Narrating History*, Delhi: Primus Books, 2022. (Introduction).

In Reference to the Visual Section:

1. Hauser, Arnold, *The Social History of Art, vol.1*, United Kingdom: Routledge, 3rd edition, 1999. (Introduction).
2. Bawa, Seema, "Seeing Hierarchies and Difference in Early Indian Art", *Proceedings Indian History Congress Warangal*, 2023. pp 983-1012.
3. Devangana Desai, 'Social Dimensions of Art in Early India', *Social Scientist*, Vol. 18, No. 3, 1990), pp. 3-32.
4. Miller, Barbara Stoller (ed). *The Powers of Art: Patronage in Indian Culture*, Delhi: OUP, 1992, pp.1-18.

Readings for Unit II

1. Kale, M. R., (tr) *Sudraka: The Mrichchhakatika: A Study*, Prakash Book Depot, 2020. (Introduction). [Available in Hindi]
2. Shah, Shalini, 'The Socio- Sexual World of Vesavasa and Antahpura: A Study in Contrast ' in D.N Jha (ed) *The Complex Heritage of Early India: Essays in Honour of R.S Sharma*, Delhi: Manohar, 2014, pp. 429-445.
3. Buitenen, J.A.B.van (ed). *Mahabharata Book 2. The Book of the Assembly Hall, (Sabha Parvan)* London: The University of Chicago, 1975.
4. Kisari Mohan Ganguli, tr., *The Mahabharata, Book 2: Sabha Parva*, 1883-1896.
5. Chakravarti, Uma, 'Who Speaks for Whom? The Queen, the Dāsī and Sexual Politics in the *Sabhāparvan* ', *Mahabharata Now, Narration, Aesthetics, Ethics*, (ed) Arindam Chakrabarti, Sibaji Bandyopadhyay, London: Routledge India, 2014, pp.132-152.
6. Sahgal, Smita, 'The Mahabharta Conundrum: Querying Draupadi's Rights and Responsibilities', in *NIU*, vol.8, 2021, pp.18-31.
7. Fausboll, V. (ed.), *The Jatakas together with its Commentary*. London: Trubner & Co., 6 vols., 1877-96, (nos. 240, 420, 520, 546).
8. Gopesh Kumar Ojha, *Jatakparijata* (2 volumes), Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishing House.
9. Wagle, N.K., 'Kinship Groups in the Jātakas', in (ed.) Thomas R. Trautmann, *Kinship and History in South Asia: Four Lectures*, The University of Michigan: Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, 1974, pp.105-157.
10. Roy, Kumkum, 'Justice in the Jatakas 'in *The Gender of Power and the Power of Gender: Explorations in Early Indian History*, Delhi: OUP, 2010, pp.290-310.

11. Chakravarti, Uma, 'Women, Men and Beasts: The Jatakas as Popular Tradition 'in *Everyday Lives, Everyday Histories: Beyond Kings and Brahmans of Ancient India*, New Delhi: Tulika Books, 2006, pp.198-221.
12. Bruce, Lawrence, tr., *Nizam ad Din Awliya, Morals for the Heart*, Paulist Press, New York, 1992.
13. Ernst, Carl W., *Eternal Garden: Mysticism, History, and Politics at a South Asian Sufi Center*, New York: State Univ of New York Press, 1992.
14. Kugle, Scott, 'Sufi Attitudes Towards Homosexuality: Chishti Perspectives from South Asia', Raziuddin Aquil and David L. Curley (ed.), *Literary and Religious Practices in Medieval and Early Modern India*. New Delhi: Manohar, 2016, pp. 31-59.

Readings for Unit III

1. Bhatt, Purnima Mehta, *Her Space, Her Story: Exploring the Stepwells of Gujarat*, New Delhi: Zubaan, 2014.
2. Carmel Berkson, *Elephanta: The Cave of Shiva*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishing House, 1999.
3. Dehejia, Vidya, *Discourse in Early Buddhist Art: Visual Narrative in India*, Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 2002, pp.75-134.
4. Jain-Neubauer Jutta, *The Stepwells of Delhi*, INTACH Delhi Chapter lecture, October 2011.
5. Kumar, Sunil, Qutb and Modern Memory, *The Present in Delhi 's Pasts*, New Delhi: Three Essays, 2002, pp.1-61.
6. Nagaswamy, R., *Mahabalipuram (Monumental Legacy Series)*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2008.
7. Singh, Snigdha, *Inscribing Identities: Proclaiming Piety: Exploring Recording Practices in Early Historic India*, Delhi: Primus Books, 2022, pp.88-191.

Recommended Readings:

1. Olivelle, Patrick: *Collected Essays III: Reading Texts and Narrating History*, Delhi: Primus Books, 2022. (Chapter 4).
2. Desai, Devangana, *Art and Icon: Essays on Early Indian Art*, Delhi, 2013. (Chapter 1& 3).
3. Dehejia, Vidya, 'Collective and Popular Bases of Early Buddhist Patronage: Sacred Monuments, 100 BC-AD 250 'in (ed). Miller, Barbara Stoller, *The Powers of Art: Patronage in Indian Culture*, Delhi: OUP, 1992, pp.35-45.

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