



drishti



CUET 2025-26

COMMON UNIVERSITY
ENTRANCE TEST

HISTORY SYLLABUS

For DU, BHU, JNU, VBU and other Central Universities

Note:

There will be one Question Paper which will have 50 questions out of which 40 questions need to be attempted.

HISTORY

Unit I: The Story of the First Cities Harappan Archaeology

Broad overview: Early urban centres.

Story of discovery: Harappan civilization.

Excerpt: Archaeological report on a major site. *Discussion:* how it has been utilized by archaeologists/historians.

Unit II: Political and Economic History: How Inscriptions tell a story

Broad overview: Political and economic history from the Mauryan to the Gupta period.

Story of discovery: Inscriptions and the decipherment of the script. Shifts in the understanding of political and economic history.

Excerpt: Asokan inscription and Gupta period land grant.

Discussion: Interpretation of inscriptions by historians.

Unit III: Social Histories using the Mahabharata

Broad overview: Issues in social history, including caste, class, kinship and gender.

Story of discovery: Transmission and publications of the Mahabharata.

Excerpt: From the Mahabharata, illustrating how it has been used by historians.

Unit IV: A History of Buddhism: Sanchi Stupa

Broad overview:

- (a) A brief review of religious histories of Vedic religion, Jainism, Vaisnavism, Saivism.
- (b) Focus on Buddhism.

Story of discovery: Sanchi stupa.

Excerpt: Reproduction of sculptures from Sanchi. *Discussion:* Ways in which sculpture has been interpreted by historians, other sources for reconstructing the history of Buddhism.

Unit V: Medieval society through Travellers' Accounts

Broad Overview: Outline of social and cultural life as they appear in travellers' accounts.

Story of their writings: A discussion of where they travelled, why they travelled, what they wrote, and For whom they wrote.

Excerpts: from Alberuni, Ibn Batuta, Bernier.

Discussion: What these travel accounts can tell us and how they have been interpreted by historians.

Unit VI: Religious Histories: The Bhakti-Sufi Tradition

Broad Overview:

- (a) Outline of religious developments during this period.
- (b) Ideas and practices of the Bhakti-Sufi saints.

Story of Transmission: How Bhakti-Sufi compositions have been preserved.

Excerpt: Extracts from selected Bhakti Sufi works.

Discussion: Ways in which these have been interpreted by historians.

HISTORY-314

Unit VII: New Architecture: Hampi

Broad Overview:

- (a) Outline of new buildings during Vijayanagar period — temples, forts, irrigation facilities.
- (b) Relationship between architecture and the political system.

Story of Discovery: Account of how Hampi was found.

Excerpt: Visuals of buildings at Hampi.

Discussion: Ways in which historians have analysed and interpreted these structures.

Unit VIII: Agrarian Relations :The Ain-i- Akbari

Broad overview:

- (a) Structure of agrarian relations in the 16th and 17th centuries.
- (b) Patterns of change over the period.

Story of Discovery: Account of the compilation and translation of Ain-i-Akbari.

Excerpt: From the Ain-i-Akbari

Discussion: Ways in which historians have used the text to reconstruct history.

Unit IX: The Mughal Court: Reconstructing Histories through Chronicles

Broad Overview:

- (a) Outline of political history c. 15th-17th centuries.
- (b) Discussion of the Mughal court and politics.

Story of Discovery: Account of the production of court chronicles, and their subsequent translation and transmission.

Excerpts: from the *Akbarnama* and *Padshahnama*.

Discussion: Ways in which historians have used the texts to reconstruct political histories.

Unit X: Colonialism and Rural Society: Evidence from Official Reports

Broad overview:

- (a) Life of zamindars, peasants and artisans in the late 18th century.
- (b) East India Company, revenue settlements and surveys.
- (c) Changes over the nineteenth century.

Story of official records: An account of why official investigations into rural societies were undertaken and the types of records and reports produced.

Excerpts: From Firminger's *Fifth Report*, Accounts of Francis Buchanan-Hamilton, and Deccan Riots Report.

Discussion: What the official records tell and do not tell, and how they have been used by historians.

Unit XI: Representations of 1857

Broad Overview:

- (a) The events of 1857-58.
- (b) How these events were recorded and narrated.

Focus: Lucknow.

Excerpts: Pictures of 1857. Extracts from contemporary accounts.

Discussion: How the pictures of 1857 shaped British opinion of what had happened.

Unit XII: Colonialism and Indian Towns: Town Plans and Municipal Reports

Broad Overview: The growth of Mumbai, Chennai, hill stations and cantonments in the 18th and 19th century.

Excerpts: Photographs and paintings. Plans of cities. Extract form town plan reports. Focus on Kolkata town planning.

Discussion: How the above sources can be used to reconstruct the history of towns. What these sources do not reveal.

Unit XIII: Mahatma Gandhi through Contemporary Eyes

Broad Overview:

- (a) The nationalist movement 1918-48,
- (b) The nature of Gandhian politics and leadership.

Focus: Mahatma Gandhi in 1931.

Excerpts: Reports from English and Indian language newspapers and other contemporary writings.

Discussion: How newspapers can be a source of history.

Unit XIV: Partition through Oral Sources

Broad Overview:

- (a) The history of the 1940s;
- (b) Nationalism, Communalism and Partition.

Focus: Punjab and Bengal.

Excerpts: Oral testimonies of those who experienced partition.

Discussion: Ways in which these have been analysed to reconstruct the history of the event.

Unit XV: The Making of the Constitution

Broad Overview:

- (a) Independence and the new nation state.
- (b) The making of the Constitution.

Focus: The Constitutional Assembly debates.

Excerpts: From the debates.

Discussion: What such debates reveal and how they can be analyzed.



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