

Core X

Historical Theories & Methods

Course Objectives

- It explains the major interpretive frameworks that guide modern historical writings and identify the key elements of major contemporary theories of History.
- Students will learn to evaluate the similarities and differences between historical theories and identify the central issues and problems that a particular historical theory addresses.
- Students will also learn the use of appropriate analytical language in discussing historical interpretations and can formulate interpretation in historical narratives.

Course Outcomes

- Cognitive competence by understanding the theoretical underpinning of historical construction
- Analyse the changing discourse of history
- Critical aptitude about the nature and authenticity of sources
- Understand how historical theories shaped historical narrative in different periods
- Appreciate the evolution of the discipline of history as Humanities Subject to that of a Social science discipline to integration of archaeo-metric and other natural sciences in the construction of past

Unit-I: Meaning and Scope of History

1. Definition, Nature and Scope of History.
2. Object and Value of History.
3. History, Science and Morality.

Unit-II: Traditions of Historical Writing

1. Ancient Greek Traditions – Herodotus, Thucydides
2. Ancient Roman Traditions - Polybius, Livy and Tacitus
3. Medieval Understanding: Western – St. Augustine, Arabic – Ibn Khaldun.

Unit-III: History as Interdisciplinary Practice

1. History and Archaeology, History and Anthropology.
2. History and Psychology, History and Literature.
3. History and Political Science, History and Sociology

Unit-IV: Historical Methods

1. Sources of History: Written, Oral. Visual & Archaeological.
2. Historical facts.
3. Historical Causation.
4. Historical Objectivity

Unit I:

This unit deals with the nature of history as a knowledge discipline and its expanding scope in 20th century. Question such as whether it is a science or art, finality in history, difference between historical methods and scientific methods, nature of sources will be discussed.

Unit II:

This unit deals with the ancient Greco-Roman conception of history. It seeks to bring out difference between modern historiography and ancient and medieval notion of history.

Unit III:

The third unit deals with history's relation with other social sciences and how the development of sociology has changed the historical writing. Further it deals with the way methods of physical sciences are used in historical research

Unit IV:

It seeks to engage with students on historical causation and how historical causation is different from causation in natural sciences. It deals with the difference between evidence and historical facts and issues of objectivity in historical writing

Suggested Text Books:

1. B. Sheik Ali, *History: Its Theory and Method*, Macmillan, Reprinted, 1996.
2. E. H. Carr, *What is History?* , Penguin Books, Reprinted, 1983.
3. R.G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History*, OUP, Delhi,
4. E. Sreedharan, *A Text Book of Historiography*, Orient Longman, Reprinted, 2004.
5. Goldstein: historical Knowing

Reference Reading: Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft*.

1. G.T.Reiner, *History: Its Purpose and Method*.
2. K.Rajan, *History: it's Theory & Method*

Internet resources

1. Historical Causation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mOrWbLvbmGU>
2. Historical Objectivity: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FVm3eNMmCMY>
3. Historiography (history of Historical writing):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XKRgibRw-Bw>

Activities

1. Construct history of your class room
2. Construct the history of your local area
3. Group discussion on the nature of historical evidence