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UGC NET Paper 2

Indian Culture (050)
Complete revision notes — all 10 units

10 units | Tables & formulas | Key revision points

01 Concept and Sources of Indian Culture
02 Harappan and Vedic Culture
03 Religious Traditions
04 Architecture
05 Sculpture and Painting
06 Performing Arts
07 Language and Literature
08 Fairs, Festivals and Traditions
09 Cultural Institutions
10 Cultural Contacts and Renaissance

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How to use these notes

- Read one unit at a time, then test yourself with its key revision points.
- Make your own short notes on topics you find difficult.
- Units follow the main areas of the official syllabus — the exact unit list can change between sessions.
- Always check the latest syllabus and notices on the official UGC NET portal: **ugcnet.nta.ac.in**.

UNIT 01

Concept and Sources of Indian Culture

Meaning of culture and civilisation; literary and archaeological sources.

- Culture (values, arts, beliefs) vs civilisation (material achievement).
- Sources: literary (Vedic, epic, Buddhist, Jain, Sangam), archaeological (inscriptions, coins, monuments), foreign accounts (Megasthenes, Fa-Hien, Hiuen Tsang, Al-Biruni).

★ Key revision points

- Culture ≠ civilisation.
- Inscriptions and coins are archaeological sources.
- Foreign accounts add outside views.
- Sangam texts = early Tamil sources.

UNIT 02

Harappan and Vedic Culture

Culture of the Indus civilisation and the Vedic age.

- Harappan: planned cities, seals (Pashupati seal), bronze 'dancing girl'.
- Vedic literature: four Vedas; Brahmanas, Aranyakas, Upanishads.
- Varna and ashrama systems; Vedic gods — Indra, Agni, Varuna.

★ Key revision points

- Dancing girl = bronze from Mohenjo-daro.
- Four Vedas.
- Upanishads = philosophical texts.
- Indra = chief Rigvedic god.

UNIT 03

Religious Traditions

Buddhism, Jainism, Bhakti, Sufism and Sikhism.

- Buddhism and Jainism (6th century BCE).
- Bhakti: Alvars and Nayanars (Tamil), Kabir, Mirabai, Tulsidas, Chaitanya.
- Sikhism: Guru Nanak; *Guru Granth Sahib* compiled by Guru Arjan (1604); Khalsa (1699).

★ Key revision points

- Alvars = Vaishnava; Nayanars = Shaiva.
- Adi Granth compiled 1604.
- Khalsa founded 1699.
- Bhakti began in Tamil country.

UNIT 04

Architecture

Stupas, cave and temple architecture, and Indo-Islamic styles.

Style / monument	Note
Sanchi stupa	Mauryan origin; gateways (toranas)
Ajanta, Ellora	Rock-cut caves; Ellora has Buddhist, Hindu and Jain caves
Nagara temple style	North India — curvilinear shikhara
Dravida style	South India — vimana and gopuram
Vesara style	Mix; Chalukya and Hoysala
Indo-Islamic	Qutb Minar, Taj Mahal, Fatehpur Sikri

★ Key revision points

- Nagara = northern; Dravida = southern.
- Gopuram = gateway tower (Dravida).
- Ellora has three religions' caves.
- Vesara = hybrid style.

UNIT 05

Sculpture and Painting

Sculptural schools and painting traditions.

- Sculpture: Mauryan polish (Sarnath lion capital — national emblem), Gandhara, Mathura, Amaravati, Gupta, Chola bronzes (Nataraja).
- Painting: Ajanta murals, Mughal miniatures, Rajput (Rajasthani and Pahari), Tanjore, Madhubani, Warli.

★ Key revision points

- National emblem from Sarnath lion capital.
- Chola bronzes use lost-wax casting.
- Ajanta = murals.
- Madhubani = Mithila region.

UNIT 06

Performing Arts

Classical dance, music and theatre traditions.

Classical dance	State
Bharatanatyam	Tamil Nadu
Kathak	North India
Kathakali	Kerala
Mohiniyattam	Kerala
Kuchipudi	Andhra Pradesh
Odissi	Odisha
Manipuri	Manipur
Sattriya	Assam

★ Key revision points

- Eight classical dances (Sangeet Natak Akademi).
- Sattriya: Assam.
- Kathakali and Mohiniyattam: Kerala.
- Kuchipudi: Andhra Pradesh.

UNIT 07

Language and Literature

Sanskrit, Prakrit, Tamil and regional literatures.

- Sanskrit classics: Kalidasa (*Abhijnanashakuntalam*, *Meghaduta*).
- Tamil: Sangam literature; *Tirukkural* (Thiruvalluvar); *Silappadikaram*.
- Classical languages of India include Tamil (first, 2004), Sanskrit, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia and others.

★ Key revision points

- *Tirukkural* = Thiruvalluvar.
- Tamil: first classical language (2004).
- *Meghaduta* = Kalidasa.
- *Silappadikaram* = Tamil epic.

UNIT 08

Fairs, Festivals and Traditions

Festivals, pilgrimages and intangible heritage.

- Kumbh Mela — UNESCO intangible cultural heritage (2017).
- Other UNESCO-listed intangible heritage: Ramlila, Vedic chanting, Yoga, Durga Puja in Kolkata, Garba.
- Regional festivals tied to harvest and seasons (Pongal, Bihu, Onam, Baisakhi).

★ Key revision points

- Kumbh Mela: UNESCO list 2017.
- Durga Puja in Kolkata is UNESCO-listed.
- Bihu = Assam harvest festival.
- Onam = Kerala harvest festival.

UNIT 09

Cultural Institutions

National academies and heritage bodies.

Institution	Year
Archaeological Survey of India (Cunningham)	1861
Sangeet Natak Akademi	1953
Sahitya Akademi	1954
Lalit Kala Akademi	1954
National School of Drama	1959
INTACH	1984

★ Key revision points

- ASI: 1861, Cunningham.
- Sahitya and Lalit Kala Akademis: 1954.
- NSD: 1959.
- INTACH: 1984.

UNIT 10

Cultural Contacts and Renaissance

India's cultural links abroad and the 19th-century renaissance.

- Spread of Indian culture to Central and South-East Asia (Angkor Wat, Borobudur).
- Indian renaissance: Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Brahmo Samaj (1828), Arya Samaj (1875), Ramakrishna Mission (1897).

★ Key revision points

- Angkor Wat = Cambodia.
- Brahmo Samaj: 1828.
- Arya Samaj: 1875.
- Ramakrishna Mission: 1897.

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