

CUET · HISTORY · CLASS XII · CODE 314

Kings, Farmers and Towns

CUET unit: Theme II — Political and Economic Systems in Early States: Inscriptional Evidences

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Snapshot

- The period c. 600 BCE – 600 CE runs from the sixteen mahajanapadas to the Gupta empire — early states, economies and the towns that linked them.
- The main evidence is inscripational (especially Asokan edicts), deciphered by James Prinsep, who read Brahmi and Kharosthi in the 1830s.
- Magadha rose to power; the Mauryan empire had five political centres and Asoka's dhamma; the post-Mauryan kingdoms (Indo-Greeks, Shakas, Kushanas, Satavahanas) and the Guptas followed.
- Agrarian change — iron ploughshare, transplantation, irrigation, land grants — went alongside coinage (punch-marked, Indo-Greek, Kushana gold, Gupta gold) and long-distance trade reaching Rome and Southeast Asia.
- Ends by stressing the limits of epigraphy: every fact in CUET MCQs must be source-grounded, so know the source of each claim.

Detailed Notes

2.1 Core concepts

- The period c. 600 BCE – 600 CE saw the emergence of early states, empires and kingdoms, new agrarian production, and fresh towns across the subcontinent (NCERT §Intro, p. 28).
- In the 1830s, James Prinsep, an officer in the mint of the East India Company, deciphered the Brahmi and Kharosthi scripts and found that most early inscriptions and coins mentioned a king titled Piyadassi ("pleasant to behold"), identified through other inscriptions as Asoka (NCERT §1, pp. 28–29).
- Inscriptions are writings engraved on hard surfaces (stone, metal, pottery); the earliest were in Prakrit, with later usage of Pali, Tamil and Sanskrit. Palaeography (style of writing) helps date undated inscriptions — e.g. the letter "a" of c. 250 BCE looked different from that of c. 500 CE (NCERT §1 sidebar, p. 29).
- The sixth century BCE was a turning point: early states, cities, iron, coinage, and the rise of Buddhism and Jainism. Early Buddhist and Jaina texts mention sixteen mahajanapadas — Vajji, Magadha, Koshala, Kuru, Panchala, Gandhara, Avanti are the most frequently named (NCERT §2.1, p. 29).
- Most mahajanapadas were monarchies, but some — known as ganas or sanghas — were oligarchies where a number of rajas shared power; the Buddha and Mahavira

belonged to such ganas, and the Vajji sangha is the best-known example (NCERT §2.1, pp. 29–30).

- Each mahajanapada had a fortified capital; from c. sixth century BCE Brahmanas began composing the Sanskrit Dharmasutras, which laid down norms for rulers (ideally Kshatriyas) and prescribed taxes from cultivators, traders and artisans (NCERT §2.1, p. 30).
- Magadha (present-day Bihar) became the most powerful mahajanapada between the 6th and 4th centuries BCE due to productive agriculture, accessible iron mines (in present-day Jharkhand), elephants in the forests, and Ganga-based communication. Early Buddhist/Jaina writers credited ambitious kings — Bimbisara, Ajatasattu, Mahapadma Nanda — and their ministers (NCERT §2.2, p. 31).
- The capital shifted from Rajagaha (modern Rajgir, a fortified settlement among hills) to Pataliputra (modern Patna) in the fourth century BCE, commanding routes along the Ganga (NCERT §2.2, p. 31).
- Chandragupta Maurya founded the Mauryan empire c. 321 BCE, extending control to Afghanistan and Baluchistan; his grandson Asoka (c. 272/268–231 BCE) conquered Kalinga (coastal Orissa) (NCERT §3, p. 32).
- Mauryan sources include archaeological finds (sculpture), Megasthenes' account (Greek ambassador to Chandragupta's court), the Arthashastra (parts attributed to Kautilya/Chanakya), later Buddhist/Jaina/Puranic literature, and most importantly Asoka's inscriptions on rocks and pillars (NCERT §3.1, p. 32).
- Asokan inscriptions were mostly in Prakrit; in the northwest they were in Aramaic and Greek. Most Prakrit inscriptions used the Brahmi script; some in the northwest used Kharosthi (NCERT §3.1 sidebar, p. 32).
- The empire had five political centres: the capital Pataliputra and the provincial centres of Taxila, Ujjayini, Tosali and Suvarnagiri — all mentioned in Asokan inscriptions. Taxila and Ujjayini lay on long-distance trade routes; Suvarnagiri ("golden mountain") tapped Karnataka's gold mines (NCERT §3.2, pp. 32–33).
- Asoka proclaimed dhamma — respect for elders, generosity to Brahmanas and renunciators, kindness to slaves and servants, respect for other religions — and appointed special officers called dhamma mahamatta to spread the message (NCERT §3.2, pp. 32, 34).
- The Mauryan empire lasted about 150 years and did not encompass the entire subcontinent; by the second century BCE new chiefdoms and kingdoms appeared (NCERT §3.3, pp. 34–35).
- In the south, the Chola, Chera and Pandya chiefdoms of Tamilakam emerged as stable polities; chiefs received gifts (not taxes) and redistributed them. Sangam texts in Tamil describe these chiefs (NCERT §4.1, p. 35).
- The Satavahanas (c. 2nd century BCE – 2nd century CE, western/central India) and Shakas (Central Asian origin, northwest and west India) derived revenue from long-distance trade (NCERT §4.1, p. 35).

- The Kushanas (c. 1st century BCE – 1st century CE) ruled from Central Asia to northwest India. Colossal statues at Mat near Mathura and a shrine in Afghanistan suggest they presented themselves as godlike; many took the title devaputra ("son of god"), perhaps borrowed from Chinese emperors (NCERT §4.2, p. 36).
- By the fourth century CE the Gupta empire emerged, depending on samantas — local lords who offered homage and military support; powerful samantas could become kings (NCERT §4.2, p. 36).
- Court poets composed prashastis in praise of kings; the Prayaga Prashasti (Allahabad Pillar Inscription), composed in Sanskrit by Harishena, praises Samudragupta (c. fourth century CE) — calling him "without an antagonist on earth" and equating him with the gods Kubera, Varuna, Indra and Yama (NCERT §4.2 + Source 4, pp. 36–37).
- Agricultural expansion involved (a) the iron-tipped ploughshare in alluvial valleys of the Ganga and Kaveri from c. sixth century BCE, (b) transplantation of paddy in high-rainfall zones, and (c) irrigation via wells, tanks and canals. The plough was NOT adopted in semi-arid Punjab/Rajasthan until the twentieth century, and hilly NE/central areas used hoe agriculture (NCERT §5.2, pp. 38–39).
- The Sudarshana lake in Gujarat (near Girnar) — an artificial reservoir built under the Mauryas, repaired by Shaka ruler Rudradaman (c. 2nd century CE without imposing tax) and again by a Gupta ruler (c. 5th century) — is documented through rock inscriptions (NCERT §Source 5, p. 38).
- Rural society was differentiated: landless labourers, small peasants, large landholders. Pali texts use gahapati for landowner-householders; Tamil Sangam texts distinguish vellalar (large landowners), uzhavar (ploughmen) and adimai (slaves) (NCERT §5.3, p. 39).
- From the early centuries CE, land grants — mostly to Brahmanas or religious institutions — were recorded on copper plates, often in Sanskrit (later partly in local languages like Tamil/Telugu). Prabhavati Gupta, daughter of Chandragupta II and married into the Vakatakas, granted the village of Danguna as an agrahara (NCERT §5.4 + Source 8, pp. 40–41).
- Historians debate land grants: a strategy to extend agriculture to new areas, or a sign that kings were losing control over samantas and had to win allies (NCERT §5.4, pp. 40–41).
- Urban centres emerged from c. 6th century BCE — Pataliputra (riverine), Ujjayini (land route), Puhar (coastal), Mathura (commercial, cultural, political hub). Excavated artefacts include Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW) and ornaments/tools in gold, silver, copper, bronze, ivory, glass, shell and terracotta (NCERT §6.1–6.2, pp. 42–43).
- Votive inscriptions of c. 2nd century BCE name donors and their occupations — washing folk, weavers, scribes, carpenters, potters, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, officials, religious teachers, merchants, kings. Guilds called shrenis procured raw materials, regulated production, and marketed goods (NCERT §6.2, p. 43).

- Trade routes spanned the subcontinent and reached Central Asia, East/North Africa, West Asia, Southeast Asia and China. Successful merchants were called masattuvan (Tamil) and setthis/satthavahas (Prakrit). Pepper, textiles and medicinal plants were exported to the Roman empire via the Arabian Sea (NCERT §6.3, p. 44).
- Punch-marked coins of silver and copper (c. 6th century BCE onwards) were the earliest. The Indo-Greeks (c. 2nd century BCE) issued the first coins bearing the names and images of rulers. The Kushanas issued the largest hoards of gold coins (first gold coins c. 1st century CE), virtually identical in weight to Roman and Parthian coins (NCERT §6.4, pp. 44–45).
- Tribal republics like the Yaudheyas of Punjab/Haryana (c. 1st century CE) minted thousands of copper coins. The Guptas issued spectacular, remarkably pure gold coins. From c. 6th century CE, gold-coin finds taper off — historians debate whether this reflects an economic crisis or simply a change in circulation patterns (NCERT §6.4, p. 45).
- Brahmi was deciphered by Prinsep in 1838 after decades of investigation; European scholars worked backwards from Bengali and Devanagari scripts. Most modern Indian scripts derive from Brahmi (NCERT §7.1, p. 46).
- Kharosthi was deciphered using bilingual Indo-Greek coins that bore king-names in both Greek and Kharosthi (e.g. Apollodotus); Prinsep identified the language as Prakrit (NCERT §7.2, pp. 46–47).
- Asokan inscriptions use the titles devanampiya ("beloved of the gods") and piyadassi rather than the name Asoka itself; matching content, style, language and palaeography across inscriptions confirms a single ruler (NCERT §7.3, p. 47).
- Inscriptional evidence has limits: faint engraving, damage, missing letters, ambiguous vocabulary, undeciphered inscriptions, lost inscriptions, and the bias of the commissioner's perspective. Routine agricultural life and ordinary joys/sorrows are rarely recorded (NCERT §8, pp. 48–49).

2.2 Definitions to memorise

Term	Definition	Page
Epigraphy	Study of inscriptions	28
Inscription	Writing engraved on hard surfaces (stone, metal, pottery), usually recording achievements, activities or ideas of those who commissioned them	29
Janapada	Land where a jana (people, clan or tribe) sets its foot or settles	29
Mahajanapada	One of the sixteen major states named in early Buddhist/Jaina texts (e.g. Vajji, Magadha, Koshala, Kuru, Panchala, Gandhara, Avanti)	29
Oligarchy		30

Term	Definition	Page
	Form of government where power is exercised by a group of men (e.g. the Roman Republic; the Vajji sangha)	
Dhamma	Asoka's principles — respect for elders, generosity to Brahmanas and renouncers, kindness to slaves/servants, respect for other religions	32
Dhamma mahamatta	Special officers appointed by Asoka to spread the message of dhamma	34
Chief	Powerful man (hereditary or not) who receives gifts (not taxes) and redistributes them; no regular army or officials	35
Devaputra	"Son of god" — title adopted by many Kushana rulers, possibly inspired by Chinese rulers	36
Samanta	Local lord maintaining himself through land control, offering homage and military support to a king	36
Prashasti	Composition in praise of kings (and patrons), composed by court poets (e.g. Harishena's Prayaga Prashasti)	36
Transplantation	Paddy cultivation method: seeds first broadcast, then saplings transplanted to waterlogged fields for higher yields	38
Gahapati	Owner/master/head of a household; controlled household members and resources; sometimes denoted urban elite (wealthy merchants)	39
Vellalar / Uzhavar / Adimai	Tamil Sangam terms for large landowners / ploughmen / slaves	39
Agrahara	Land granted to a Brahmana, usually exempted from land revenue and royal dues, with the right to collect dues from local people	41
Shreni / Guild	Organisation of craft producers and merchants that procured raw materials, regulated production and marketed products	43
Votive inscription	Inscription recording a gift made to a religious institution	43
Masattuvan / Setthis / Sattavahas	Tamil / Prakrit terms for successful merchants	44
Numismatics	Study of coins — their scripts, images, metallurgy and find-contexts	45
Periplus	Greek word meaning "sailing around" — used in the title Periplus of the Erythraean Sea (c. 1st century CE)	44
Devanampiya / Piyadassi	Asokan titles meaning "beloved of the gods" / "pleasant to behold"	47

2.3 Diagrams / processes to remember

- **Map 1 — Early states and their capitals (p. 30):** Locates the mahajanapadas: Gandhara/Pushkalavati & Taxila; Kuru/Indraprastha; Panchala/Ahichchhatra; Koshal/Shravasti; Malla/Kusinagara; Vajji/Vaishali; Magadha/Rajgir; Anga/Champa; Vatsa/Kaushambi; Avanti/Ujjayini; Shurasena/Mathura; Kashi/Varanasi; Matsya, Chedi, Ashmaka, Kamboja.
- **Map 2 — Distribution of Asokan inscriptions (p. 33):** Major Rock Edicts (e.g. Kandahar, Girnar, Sopara, Sannati, Jaugada, Kalsi), Minor Rock Edicts (Maski, Gavimath, Brahmagiri, Sahasram, Bhabru), Pillar Inscriptions (Topra, Meerut, Lauriya Nandangarh, Lauriya Araraj, Rampurwa, Sarnath, Nigalisagar, Rummindei, Allahabad/Prayaga).
- **Map 3 — Some important kingdoms and towns (p. 43):** Kushanas in the north, Shakas, Satavahanas, Vakatakas, Guptas, Cholas, Cheras, Pandyas; towns Taxila, Mathura, Kanauj, Shravasti, Pataliputra, Ujjayini, Bharukachchha, Sopara, Paithan, Puhar, Kodumanal, Dhanyakataka, Shishupalgarh, Chandraketugarh.
- **Fig. 2.3 The lion capital (p. 32):** Mauryan sculpture.
- **Fig. 2.4 A Kushana coin — Obverse: King Kanishka; Reverse: a deity (p. 36).**
- **Fig. 2.5 Sandstone sculpture of a Kushana king (p. 37).**
- **Fig. 2.7 Punch-marked coin (p. 45);** named because symbols were punched/stamped onto the metal surface.
- **Fig. 2.8 A Yaudheya coin; Fig. 2.9 A Gupta coin (p. 45).**
- **Fig. 2.11 Asokan Brahmi with Devanagari equivalents (p. 46).**
- **Fig. 2.12 Coin of the Indo-Greek king Menander (p. 47).**
- **Fig. 2.13 Copperplate inscription from Karnataka, c. 6th century CE (p. 49).**
- **Timeline 1 — Major Political and Economic Developments (p. 50):** Memorise dates — 321 BCE Chandragupta accession; 272/268–231 BCE Asoka's reign; 185 BCE end of Mauryan empire; 78 CE? Kanishka's accession; 320 CE beginning of Gupta rule; 335–375 CE Samudragupta; 375–415 CE Chandragupta II.
- **Timeline 2 — Major Advances in Epigraphy (p. 51):** 1784 Asiatic Society founded; 1838 Prinsep deciphers Brahmi; 1877 Cunningham publishes Asokan inscriptions; 1886 Epigraphia Carnatica; 1888 Epigraphia Indica.

2.5 Timeline / Key events

Year / Period	Event	Significance
c. 600 BCE	Sixteen mahajanapadas listed in early Buddhist & Jaina texts	Origin of state formation (NCERT §2.1, p. 30)
c. 6th c. BCE	Punch-marked silver coins begin to be minted	Earliest Indian coinage (NCERT §2.4, p. 45)

Year / Period	Event	Significance
5th c. BCE	Magadha's rise under Bimbisara and Ajatasattu	Rise of imperial state (NCERT p. 31)
321 BCE	Chandragupta Maurya founds the Mauryan empire	First pan-Indian empire (NCERT timeline, p. 50)
c. 305 BCE	Chandragupta defeats Seleucus Nicator; Megasthenes' embassy	Indo-Greek diplomacy (NCERT p. 32)
272/268–231 BCE	Reign of Asoka	Apex of Mauryan empire; dhamma inscriptions (NCERT p. 50)
185 BCE	End of Mauryan empire under Brihadratha	Political fragmentation (NCERT p. 50)
c. 2nd c. BCE	Indo-Greek coins — first to bear names and images of rulers	Numismatic milestone (NCERT §2.4, p. 47)
c. 1st c. BCE–3rd c. CE	Satavahanas in Deccan; Shakas in west; Sangam age in south	Multi-kingdom phase (NCERT p. 43)
78 CE (?)	Kanishka's accession; Kushana empire at peak	First major gold coinage in India (NCERT p. 50)
c. 150 CE	Sudarshana Lake repaired by Shaka ruler Rudradaman	Earliest long Sanskrit inscription (NCERT p. 45)
320 CE	Beginning of Gupta rule (Chandragupta I)	Founding of Gupta empire (NCERT p. 50)
335–375 CE	Reign of Samudragupta; Prayaga Prashasti composed by Harishena	Imperial expansion (NCERT p. 50)
375–415 CE	Reign of Chandragupta II	Conquest of western Shakas; Vakataka alliance via Prabhavati (NCERT p. 50)
5th c. CE	Sudarshana Lake repaired again by a Gupta ruler	(NCERT p. 45)
c. 6th c. CE	Indian gold-coin output tapers off	Possibly linked to trade contraction (NCERT §2.4, p. 47)
7th c. CE	Reign of Harshavardhana	Last great north-Indian state of the period (NCERT p. 51)
1784 CE	William Jones founds the Asiatic Society of Bengal	Beginning of Indian epigraphy (NCERT p. 51)
1838 CE	James Prinsep deciphers Brahmi (and Kharosthi)	Asokan inscriptions become readable (NCERT p. 51)
1877 CE	Cunningham publishes corpus of Asokan inscriptions	First systematic edition (NCERT p. 51)
		Institutional epigraphy (NCERT p. 51)

Year / Period	Event	Significance
1886 / 1888 CE	Epigraphia Carnatica and Epigraphia Indica begin	

2.4 Common confusions / NTA trap points

- **Asoka's name vs titles:** Asokan inscriptions usually do NOT use the name "Asoka" — they use devanampiya and piyadassi. NTA often plants "the inscriptions always name Asoka" as a distractor.
- **Brahmi vs Kharosthi:** Both deciphered by Prinsep, but Kharosthi was read using bilingual Indo-Greek coins. Brahmi (1838) was used for most Asokan inscriptions; Kharosthi for northwestern ones. Aramaic and Greek scripts were used only in Afghanistan.
- **Five Mauryan centres:** Pataliputra (capital) + Taxila, Ujjayini, Tosali, Suvarnagiri — not Kalinga, not Kandahar, not Rajgir.
- **Earliest coins vs earliest named-ruler coins vs earliest gold coins:** Punch-marked (c. 6th century BCE, earliest); Indo-Greek (c. 2nd century BCE, first to bear names AND images of rulers); Kushana (c. 1st century CE, first gold coins / largest gold hoards); Gupta (most spectacular, remarkable purity).
- **Prayaga Prashasti:** Composed by Harishena (court poet) in Sanskrit, in praise of Samudragupta — NOT Chandragupta II, NOT Harshavardhana. It is also called the Allahabad Pillar Inscription.
- **Sudarshana lake:** Built under the Mauryas, repaired by the Shaka ruler Rudradaman (c. 2nd century CE) without taxing his subjects, repaired again by a Gupta ruler (c. 5th century).
- **Prabhavati Gupta:** Daughter of Chandragupta II, married into the Vakatakas; granted Danguna village as an agrahara — exceptional because Sanskrit legal texts did not allow women independent access to land.
- **Plough adoption:** The iron-tipped ploughshare spread in alluvial Ganga/Kaveri valleys; semi-arid Punjab and Rajasthan did NOT adopt it until the 20th century — easy NTA trap.
- **Chronicles excluded:** This topic covers Indian early-historic political/economic systems, drawing on inscriptions, coins, Greek accounts (Megasthenes, Periplus), Sangam texts, Jatakas, Arthashastra, Manusmrti, Harshacharita and prashastis — NOT Mughal court chronicles.

Practice MCQs

PYQ Alignment

This topic is a perennial CUET-History favourite — Asoka's inscriptions, the five Mauryan centres, Prinsep's decipherment, punch-marked coins, the Prayaga Prashasti and the Sudarshana lake are recurrent direct-recall items, while map-based questions on mahajanapadas/Asokan edict sites and statement-based questions on agrarian change (plough, transplantation, irrigation) typically generate the analytical 30–40% of MCQs. Expect about 15 questions per cycle, dominated by inscription-and-coin testing in line with the unit "Political and Economic Systems in Early States: Inscriptional Evidences".

CUET 2023 — Actual PYQs from this chapter

Q.7 (CUET 2023) Which Shaka ruler ruled in the 2nd century CE?

- A) Rudradaman B) Ripudaman C) Gautamiputra Satakarni D) Harshavardhana **Tests:** Post-Mauryan polities — Shakas, Kushanas, Satavahanas **Answer:** Not in extracted key

Q.8 (CUET 2023) Arrange the following dynasties from West to East. A. Kosala B. Anga C. Magadha D. Matsya

- A) D, B, C, A B) D, A, C, B C) B, D, A, C D) C, B, A, D **Tests:** Sixteen mahajanapadas and their geography **Answer:** Not in extracted key

Q.68 (CUET 2023) The Mauryan Empire was founded by:

- A) Ashoka B) Chandragupta Maurya C) Bindusara D) Harsha **Tests:** Mauryan Empire — Chandragupta and Pataliputra **Answer:** Not in extracted key

Q.69 (CUET 2023) The capital of the Mauryan Empire was:

- A) Taxila B) Pataliputra C) Ujjain D) Vaishali **Tests:** Mauryan Empire — Chandragupta and Pataliputra **Answer:** Not in extracted key

Q.70 (CUET 2023) Ashoka's inscriptions were mainly written in:

- A) Sanskrit B) Pali C) Prakrit D) Persian **Tests:** Ashokan inscriptions — language and script **Answer:** Not in extracted key

Q.71 (CUET 2023) The script used in most Ashokan inscriptions was:

- A) Brahmi B) Kharosthi C) Devanagari D) Persian **Tests:** Ashokan inscriptions — language and script **Answer:** Not in extracted key

Q.72 (CUET 2023) The Kalinga War took place in:

- A) 261 BCE B) 321 BCE C) 185 BCE D) 100 BCE **Tests:** Ashoka and the Kalinga War **Answer:** Not in extracted key

CUET 2024 — Actual PYQs from this chapter

Q.40 (CUET 2024) Match List-I with List-II. List I A. Kushanas B. Ashoka C. Samudragupta D. Harisena List II I. Piyadassi II. Devputra III. Court poet IV. Prayaga Prashasti Options:

- A) A-II, B-I, C-IV, D-III B) A-I, B-II, C-III, D-IV C) A-IV, B-III, C-II, D-I D) A-III, B-IV, C-I, D-II
- Tests: Imperial titles and the Prayaga Prashasti **Answer:** Not in extracted key

Q.44 (CUET 2024) Match List-I with List-II. List-I List-II (A) Pataliputra (I) Prakrit name of Rajgir, Bihar (B) Rajagaha (II) Present day Coastal Odisha (C) Kalinga (III) Present day Patna (D) Arthashastra (IV) Kautilya Choose the correct answer:

- A) (A-III), (B-I), (C-II), (D-IV) B) (A-I), (B-III), (C-II), (D-IV) C) (A-I), (B-II), (C-IV), (D-III) D) (A-III), (B-IV), (C-I), (D-II)
- Tests: Pataliputra, Rajagaha, Kalinga and the Arthashastra **Answer:** Not in extracted key

CUET 2025 — Actual PYQs from this chapter

Q.3 (CUET 2025) Which of the following rulers adopted the title Devaputra (son of god)?

- A) Kushanas B) Sakas C) Mauryas D) Satavahanas
- Tests: Imperial titles — Devaputra (Kushanas) **Answer:** Not in extracted key

Q.4 (CUET 2025) The Gandatindu Jataka describes: (A) Cordial relationship between king and subjects (B) Plight of subjects under a wicked king (C) Strained relationship between king and rural population (D) Kings filling their coffers through oppressive taxes Options:

- A) (A), (B) and (D) B) (A), (B) and (C) C) (A), (C) and (D) D) (B), (C) and (D)
- Tests: Gandatindu Jataka and the king-subject relationship **Answer:** Not in extracted key

Q.7 (CUET 2025) Which ruler of the Satavahana dynasty claimed to be a unique Brahmana (eka-brahmana)?

- A) Gautami-putra Satakarni B) Gotami-putra Siri-Yajna Satakarni C) Vasisthiputra Pulumayi D) Madari-putra Svami Sakasena
- Tests: Satavahana rulers — Gotami-putra Siri-Yajna and "eka-brahmana" **Answer:** Not in extracted key

Q.28 (CUET 2025) Who deciphered Brahmi and Kharosthi scripts in 1838?

- A) James Prinsep B) Alexander Cunningham C) D.C. Sircar D) R.E.M. Wheeler
- Tests: James Prinsep and the decipherment of Brahmi and Kharosthi (1838) **Answer:** Not in extracted key

Q.29 (CUET 2025) Identify correct statements about inscriptions: (A) Record everyday practices (B) Record achievements of rulers (C) Engraved on hard surfaces (D) Earliest inscriptions in Prakrit Options:

- A) A, B, D B) A, B, C C) B, C, D D) A, C, D
- Tests: Inscriptions as a historical source **Answer:** Not in extracted key

Q.30 (CUET 2025) Ashokan inscriptions in Afghanistan were written in:

- A) Sanskrit B) Prakrit C) Aramaic and Greek D) Latin and Greek
- Tests:** Ashokan inscriptions in Afghanistan — Aramaic and Greek **Answer:** Not in extracted key

