

Ancient & Medieval Indian Literature

PART A: ANCIENT INDIA

1. Scientific & Technical Literature

Book	Author	Time Period	Subject / Key Notes
Aryabhatiya	Aryabhata	Gupta (5th CE)	Math/Astronomy. Covers algebra, trigonometry, zero, and earth's rotation.
Surya Siddhanta	Aryabhata (attr.)	Gupta (5th CE)	Astronomy. Rules for planetary motion and eclipses.
Brihat Samhita	Varahamihira	Gupta (6th CE)	Encyclopedia. Astronomy, rainfall, clouds, architecture, and gemology.
Pancha-siddhantika	Varahamihira	Gupta (6th CE)	Astronomy. Summary of 5 earlier systems (Romaka, Paulisa, Surya, etc.).
Brahmasphuta-siddhanta	Brahmagupta	Post-Gupta (7th CE)	Math. Rules for zero and negative numbers.
Lilavati	Bhaskara II	Medieval (12th CE)	Arithmetic. Part of <i>Siddhanta Shiromani</i> . Written as a dialogue to his daughter.
Charaka Samhita	Charaka	Kushana (1st-2nd CE)	Ayurveda (Medicine). Focus on diagnosis. Charaka was Kanishka's physician.
Sushruta Samhita	Sushruta	c. 6th BCE	Surgery. Describes plastic surgery (rhinoplasty) and surgical tools.
Mahabhasya	Patanjali	Shunga (2nd BCE)	Grammar. Commentary on Panini. Mentions Greek (Yavana) invasion.
Ashtadhyayi	Panini	c. 5th-4th BCE	Grammar. The foundational text of Sanskrit grammar.
Rasaratnakara	Nagarjuna (Alchemist)	c. 7th-8th CE	Chemistry. Extraction of metals (mercury, gold).

SMART PRELIMS PYQ NOTES

2. Polity, Philosophy & Statecraft

Book	Author	Time Period	Subject / Key Notes
Arthashastra	Kautilya	Mauryan (4th BCE)	Statecraft, espionage, war strategy, Saptanga theory.
Nitisara	Kamandaka	Gupta (4th-5th CE)	Polity. Known as the "Arthashastra of the Gupta period."
Kamasutra	Vatsyayana	Gupta (3rd CE)	Urban life (<i>Nagaraka</i>), sociology, and psychology of desire.
Nyaya Sutra	Gautama	Ancient	Foundational text of Nyaya (Logic) school.
Yoga Sutra	Patanjali	c. 2nd BCE	Foundational text of Yoga philosophy.

3. Drama, Poetry & Biographies (Sanskrit)

Book	Author	Time Period	Subject / Key Notes
Abhijnana Shakuntalam	Kalidasa	Gupta (Chandragupta II)	Drama. Masterpiece love story of Dushyanta & Shakuntala.
Malavikagnimitram	Kalidasa	Gupta	Drama. Love story of Shunga King Agnimitra .
Meghaduta	Kalidasa	Gupta	Poetry. "Cloud Messenger." Lyrical poem on separation.
Mudrarakshasa	Vishakhadatta	Gupta (5th-6th CE)	Political Drama. How Chanakya overthrew Nandas. No female characters.
Devichandraguptam	Vishakhadatta	Gupta	Drama. Chandragupta II rescuing Dhruvadevi from Shakas.
Mrichchhakatika	Shudraka	Gupta (c. 5th CE)	Social Drama. "Little Clay Cart." Characters are commoners, not just royalty.

SMART PRELIMS PYQ NOTES

Harshacharita	Banabhatta	Post-Gupta (Harsha)	Biography of King Harshavardhana.
Kadambari	Banabhatta	Post-Gupta	Romantic novel.
Ratnavali / Nagananda	King Harsha	Post-Gupta	Dramas written by King Harsha. Nagananda has Buddhist themes.
Kiratarjuniya	Bharavi	c. 6th CE	Epic. Battle between Arjuna and Shiva.
Svapnavasavadattam	Bhasa	Early CE	Drama. "Dream of Vasavadatta." Oldest Sanskrit dramatist.
Buddhacharita	Ashvaghosha	Kushana (Kanishka)	Biography of Buddha (Sanskrit).
Rajatarangini	Kalhana	12th CE (Kashmir)	History of Kashmir. First genuine historical writing in India.

4. Sangam & South Indian Literature

Book	Author	Nature	Subject / Key Notes
Tolkappiyam	Tolkappiyar	Grammar	Oldest Tamil work. Grammar + Social geography (<i>Thinai</i>).
Silappadikaram	Ilango Adigal	Epic	Tragedy of Kovalan & Kannagi. Mentions Chera King Senguttuvan.
Manimekalai	Sittalai Sattanar	Epic	Buddhist sequel to Silappadikaram.
Civaka Cintamani	Tiruttakkattevar	Epic	Jain text. "Book of Marriages."
Tirukkural	Thiruvalluvar	Ethics	"Veda of Tamils." Covers Virtue, Wealth, and Love.
Mattavilasa Prahasana	Mahendravarman I	Pallava (7th CE)	Sanskrit Satire. Mocks drunkards and Kapalika ascetics.

SMART PRELIMS PYQ NOTES

PART B: FOREIGN TRAVELERS (ANCIENT & MEDIEVAL)

Book	Author	Origin	Visit Period	Key Observations
Indica	Megasthenes	Greek	Mauryan (Chandragupta)	7 castes (occupational), no slavery, Pataliputra admin.
Fo-Kwo-Ki	Fa-Hien	Chinese	Gupta (Chandragupta II)	"People don't lock houses." Buddhist focus. No mention of King's name.
Si-Yu-Ki	Hiuen Tsang	Chinese	Post-Gupta (Harsha)	Studied at Nalanda. Detailed Harsha's assemblies and Buddhism.
Kitab-ul-Hind	Al-Biruni	Central Asia	Ghaznavid (11th CE)	"First Indologist." Studied Indian math/science. Critical of caste rigidity.
Rehla	Ibn Battuta	Morocco	Tughlaq (Md. Bin Tughlaq)	Postal system, coconut/paan, Sultan's whimsical nature.

PART C: MEDIEVAL INDIA

1. Delhi Sultanate Era (Persian Chronicles)

Book	Author	Dynasty	Subject / Key Notes
Chachnama	Ali Kufi (Trans.)	--	History of Arab conquest of Sindh.
Tabqat-i-Nasiri	Minhaj-us-Siraj	Slave (Iltutmish)	History of Ghurid invasion and early Sultans.
Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi	Ziauddin Barani	Tughlaq	Economic history. Detailed Alauddin's market reforms .
Khazain-ul-Futuh	Amir Khusrau	Khilji	Conquests of Alauddin Khilji (inc. Malik Kafur).
Tughlaq Nama	Amir Khusrau	Tughlaq	Rise of Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq.

SMART PRELIMS PYQ NOTES

2. Mughal Era (Biographies & Admin)

Book	Author	Language	Subject / Key Notes
Tuzuk-i-Baburi	Babur	Turkish	Autobiography. Flora/fauna of India.
Humayun-nama	Gulbadan Begum	Persian	Biography. Domestic life of Mughal household.
Akbarnama / Ain-i-Akbari	Abul Fazl	Persian	History & Administration (Gazetteer) of Akbar's empire.
Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh	Badauni	Persian	Critical history of Akbar's religious policy.
Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri	Jahangir	Persian	Autobiography. Painting, nature, justice.
Sirr-i-Akbar	Dara Shikoh	Persian	Translation of Upanishads .

3. Regional & Bhakti Literature

Book	Author	Region/Lang	Subject / Key Notes
Prithviraj Raso	Chand Bardai	Braj/Hindi	Epic poem on Prithviraj Chauhan.
Padmavat	Malik Md. Jayasi	Awadhi	Sufi allegory (Rani Padmini). Written during Sher Shah Suri's time.
Ramcharitmanas	Tulsidas	Awadhi	Bhakti (Ramayana). Contemporary of Akbar (not a courtier).
Amuktamalyada	Krishnadevaraya	Telugu	Vijayanagara polity and Bhakti (Andal).
Kavirajamarga	Amoghavarsha I	Kannada	Earliest Kannada work on poetics (Rashtrakuta King).

SMART PRELIMS PYQ NOTES

PART D: QUICK CHEAT SHEET

1. **Zero/Decimals:** Aryabhatiya & Brahmasphuta-siddhanta.
2. **Plastic Surgery:** Sushruta Samhita.
3. **Political Thriller:** Mudrarakshasa (Vishakhadatta).
4. **Love story of Shunga King:** Malavikagnimitram (Kalidasa).
5. **Turkish Language Text:** Baburnama (almost all others are Persian or Sanskrit).
6. **Translation of Mahabharata to Persian:** Razmnama (Akbar's court).
7. **Amir Khusrau:** "Parrot of India". Invented Sitar/Tabla. Served 7 Sultans.
8. **Tulsidas:** Lived during Akbar's time but was **not** in his court.