

Rainbow Book

Ancient History **One Shot**

UPSC 2026 | CSE PRELIMS

CHAPTERS

- 01 Sources of Ancient Indian History
- 02 Pre-Historic India
- 03 Indus Valley Civilization
- 04 Vedic Period
- 05 Mahajanapadas & Rise of Magadha
- 06 Buddhism
- 07 Jainism
- 08 Mauryan Empire
- 09 Post-Mauryan Period
- 10 Gupta Empire
- 11 Post-Gupta & Harsha's Era
- 12 Early Medieval India

247
PYQS TAGGED

115
MINDMAP TREES

7
COMPARISON TABLES

12
CHAPTERS

• PYQs 1991-2025

• Upinder Singh Based

• Visual Mindmaps

• Comparison Tables

• Keywords Highlighted

BY

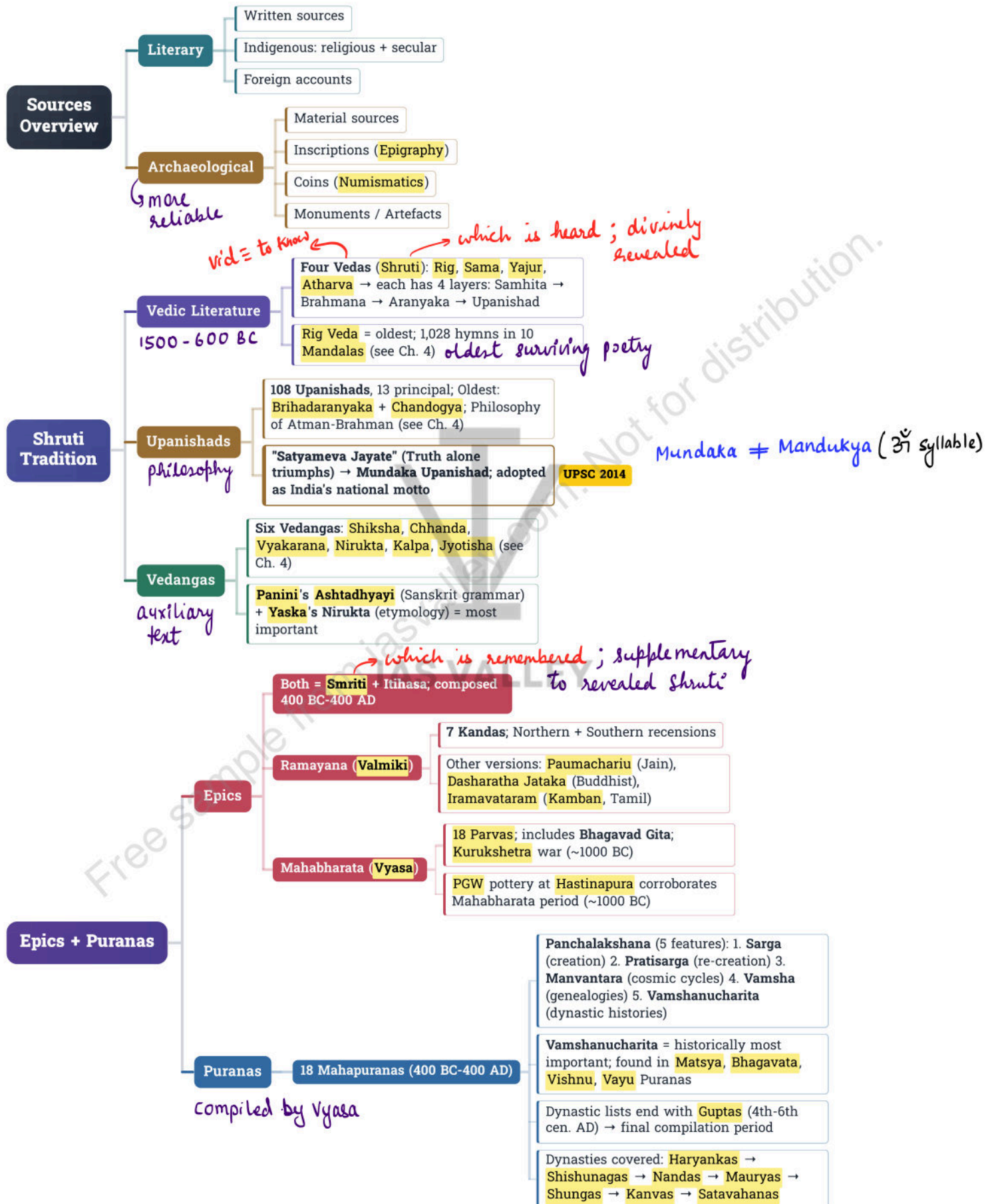
IAS Valley

Complete Visual Revision in One Shot

Chapter 1. Sources of Ancient Indian History

PYQ THEMES

Text-authors, scripts, coins, foreign travellers, sangam literature etc.



Other Religious Literature

Dharmashastra

3 subdivisions (chronological)

Dharmasutras (600-300 BC) → earliest, in prose, based on Vedas

Smritis (200 BC-900 AD) → verse form; **Manu Smriti** most influential

Commentaries (9th-19th cen. AD) → **Mitakshara**, **Dayabhaga** etc.

Key facts

3 sources of Dharma: **Shruti** (Vedas) + **Smriti** + **Sadachara** (good custom)

Manu Smriti (200 BC-200 AD) → most influential; **Varnashrama** system; **dvija** = twice-born (first 3 varnas)

Smritis cover social organisation, customs, king's rights + duties

Buddhist Literature

Tripitaka (3 Baskets) → in Pali (see Ch. 6)

Sutta Pitaka → discourses of Buddha

Vinaya Pitaka → monastic rules

Abhidhamma Pitaka → philosophy + metaphysics

Other important texts

Key texts: **Jatakas** (549 birth stories), **Milindapanha**, **Dipavamsa** + **Mahavamsa** (Sri Lanka chronicles)

Therigatha - songs of Buddhist nuns; rare ancient text by women. **Buddhist, NOT Jain**

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Jain Literature

Jain Agamas (**Shvetambara** canon): 12 Angas, 12 Upangas → compiled at Council of Valabhi by Devarddhi Kshamashramana (see Ch. 7)

+ **Bhagrati Sutra** (Jain)
names 16 Mahajanapadas

Sangam Literature

Sangam (3rd cen. BC - 3rd cen. AD): 2,381 poems by 473 poets (see Ch. 9)

→ 30 women

Akam (Love)
Puram (War)

Post-Sangam Key Works

Tirukkural → **Tiruvalluvar**; ethics + statecraft

Silappadikaram → **Ilango Adigal**; Tamil epic

Manimekalai → **Seethalai Saathanar**; Buddhist themes

earliest S. Indian lit in Tamil

Greek + Roman Writers

Herodotus

"Father of History"

India = 20th satrapy of Darius; never visited India

Megasthenes

Seleucus Nicator's ambassador to Chandragupta Maurya

Wrote **Indica** (see Ch. 8)

1st book through which Europe knew India

Arrian

Most reliable Greek account of India

Pliny

Rome-India trade; **Naturalis Historia**

Periplus

Periplus of the Erythraean Sea - sea trade guide (1st cen. AD)

Foreign Accounts

Chinese Travellers

Fa-Hien

399-414 AD; visited during **Chandragupta II**

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Wrote **Fo-Kuo-Ki** (see Ch. 10)

Hiuen Tsang

629-645 AD; visited during **Harshavardhana**

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Wrote **Si-Yu-Ki**; "Prince of Pilgrims"

Chapter 6. Buddhism

PYQ THEMES

Buddhist councils, Sects, Bodhisattva, Scholars, texts etc...

