

By far the most important chapters in the Purāṇas are the Vamśānucarita portions. The historians of ancient India have tested this material in the light of archaeological and epigraphical evidences and found them almost accurate. The Purāṇas which speak of the royal dynasties are twelve in number. The version of the Viṣṇu Purāṇa with regard to Mauryan dynasty and of the Vāyu Purāṇa with regard to the early Guptas has found general acceptance among scholars. We are not concerned with the lunar and solar race of kings ; but after the war of the Mahābhārata, which Pargiter is inclined to place about 1100 B.C., three lines of kings are mentioned. These are Purus, Ikshvākus and the kings of Magadha. The history of these three dynasties formed largely the history of ancient India. There is a continuity in the dynastic list up to the epoch of the Āndhras. The Purāṇas place the Āndhras after the Kaṇva kings and calculate the intervening period between these two dynasties to be 157 years. This has to be discredited, for the first of the Āndhra kings is said to be much earlier in date than the first of the Śunga kings.

Several Purāṇas contain accounts of genealogies of kings. It is not possible to say which accounts are the oldest and which are reliable. With regard to names of kings and their rule there seems to be some difference of opinion among the Purāṇa writers, though there is general agreement in the majority of cases. An examination of the lists in individual Purāṇas would be of no value to the historian on account of corruptions and omissions and even interpolations. The extant Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa, for instance, does not contain the latter half of the Āṇava genealogy, the Paurava genealogy and a portion of the dynasties of the Kali age ; but these are found in the Vāyu Purāṇa.

There is again an incomplete version of the North Pāñchāla genealogy in the Brahma Purāṇa. Further the Brahma account furnishes two different origins for the