

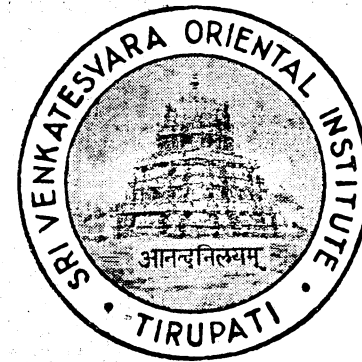
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PURANA SAMHITA.

BY

S. P. L. NARASIMHASWAMI, P.O.L.

[The present articles is a summary of the important sections of the author's Introduction to the PURANA-SAMHITA restored by him, in which every point is discussed in all its details. The object of the present article is to acquaint the Oriental scholars with the results of the labours of the author in the field of Puranic research extending over 30 years and to announce the restoration of the PURANA-SAMHITA which is entitled to be regarded as the first historical record of India, being compiled about 2000 B.C., recounting the history of Bharatavarsa from the 4th Millennium B.C.—Ed.]

CONTENTS.—I. Introductory. II. The Purāṇas. III. The Purāṇa-saṁhita. V. Search for the Purāṇa-saṁhita. VI. Attempts to restore the Purāṇa-saṁhita. VII. Purāṇa-saṁhita restored. VIII. The contents of the Purāṇa-saṁhita. IX. Conclusion.

I: INTRODUCTORY.

The field of Sanskrit literature is so vast that it would be no exaggeration to say that every branch of it is fit to be treated as an independent literature itself. The Vedic literature has its own students who devoted all their lives to its study. Similarly the Vyākaraṇa literature with its own scholars, the Nyāya with its tārīka-scholars and the Vedāntic with its Vedāntists—all deserve to be classed as independent literatures. Some branches of Sanskrit literature, however, were not so fortunate as to have their special following. The Purāṇic and the Ayurvedic literatures are two of such ill-fated ones. But from the beginning of the present century some scholars have eagerly turned their attention to the study of the Purāṇic literature, both in our country and in the west. Among the most prominent of such workers in Europe may be mentioned as Mr. Y. E. Pargiter of Oxford (England) and Prof. Willibald Kirfel of Bonn (Germany). That the results of their labours are unsatisfactory is a natural corollary from the fact that sampradāya or tradition is beyond their reach. The Purāṇic literature is specially dependent on a thorough knowledge of its tradition rather than on independent investigation. Hence the investigations of both the foreign scholars, unaided by tradition, strayed from the right path and became unserviceable for the purpose for which they were intended.

In our country also, the critical study of Purāṇic literature is attempted from the beginning of the present century only. At first the attention of scholars was directed towards small portions of the Purāṇas, mostly connected with early chronology called the Bhariṣyadrājanukīrtanam. So far as it is known, the attempt at a complete study of the Purāṇic literature was not previously undertaken by any scholar. The present author started his enthusiastic study of Purāṇic literature as early as 1910 and steadily and patiently pursued it for a long period of more than thirty years. In the sections that follow he shows how he has attempted to estimate the historical value of the different Purāṇas, their relation to an authenticated ancient historical record, their evolution for religious purposes and their gradual deviation from the original historical function to a complete religious one.

II. THE PURANAS.

The Purāṇas, or more strictly the Mahā-purāṇas, are eighteen in number. These are the recognized works of Purāṇic literature. Besides these there are some other works going by the name of Purāṇa, but their genuineness as such is open to doubt. *Siva-purāṇa Nīlamata-purāṇa, Devībhāgavata, Garga-saṁhita* etc. belong to this class. But on this account, the historical value of these works should not be under-estimated, as they are the only sources throwing light on some points not explained in the recognized Purāṇas. Even in the recognized Purāṇas there are works which are of no value from the historical point of view. The eighteen Purāṇas¹ are:—

१. मत्स्य ।	७. ब्रह्मवैवर्त ।	१३. पद्म ।
२. मार्कण्डेय ।	८. वायु ।	१४. नारद ।
३. भविष्य ।	९. वामन ।	१५. लिङ्ग ।
४. भागवत ।	१०. विष्णु ।	१६. कूर्म ।
५. ब्रह्म ।	११. वराह ।	१७. स्कन्द ।
६. ब्रह्माण्ड ।	१२. अग्नि ।	१८. गरुड ।

The *grantha-saṅkya* (total number of verses) of these Purāṇas is noted in some of them. As a matter of fact, the correctness of these numbers is questionable. No existing Purāṇa (either in print or manuscript) possesses the mentioned extent. Perhaps the numbers include a wide margin for future additions. They therefore deserve no serious consideration.

The nature of these Purāṇas is such that from the time of their birth they served as religious manuals, though the word 'Purāṇa' originally meant 'an authenticated history (including geography)'. The chief function of the Purāṇas has come to be to explain elaborately the benefits of religious ceremonies, such as *dānams*,² *vrātams*,³ *tīrtha-yātras*,⁴ *pitṛ-śrāddhas*, etc. *Nadī-māhātmyams* and *kshetra-māhātmyams* also formed part of them. Indeed they are the manuals of the purohit-class who have to instruct the people in religious ceremonies.

In spite of this, portions of the Purāṇas, or strictly the early Purāṇas, are still 'Purāṇa' in the original sense of the word. The priestly class was thus sensible in producing the present Purāṇas. It is the great fortune of India that the original function of the 'Purāṇa' is still preserved in these Purāṇas or at least in some of them. Indians thereby possess the recorded history of their

1. There is a mnemonic verse which helps us in remembering the names of the 18 Purāṇas.

मद्रथं भद्रथं चैव ब्रत्रथं वचतुष्टयम् ।

आपनालिं पुराणानि कूस्कंगारुडमेव च ॥

Here the initial letters of the names of the work are enumerated.

2. They are gifts to Brahmans.

3. Feeding Brahmans with a number of dishes.

4. In these and in the *pitṛ-śrāddhas* also, worship of Brahmans with gifts in cash and kind and feeding them form the principal theme.

country extending as far back as 4000 B. C. Thus the subject matter of the early Purāṇas divide itself into two parts, viz (1) the religious or the main part and (2) the historical or the secondary part. The historical material, though it occupies a subordinate position in the book, is more important to the scholar and the historian as it supplies him with matter for the construction of his country's past. From the stand point of this historical material, the Purāṇas fall into three groups. The first group, consisting of *Vāyu*, *Brahmāṇḍa*- and *Matsya-Purāṇas* contain nearly all the historical material — almost in verbatim terms — handed down through tradition from times immemorial. The second group comprising *Vishṇu*-, *Bhāgavata*- and *Vāmana*-*Purāṇas*, contain the material in a condensed form, without agreement among themselves or with those of the first group. *Vishṇu* reproduces it mostly in prose and *Bhāgavata* in poetry. The peculiarity of *Vāmana* is that it supplies material different from the others. The third group embracing most of the remaining Purāṇas contains very little matter of historical value. The *Agneya* and the *Gāruḍa* form a separate and inferior group by themselves. The *Agneya* is a conglomerate of separate works on Grammar, Phonetics, Rhetoric, Medicine etc. *Gāruḍa* mostly treats of *mantra-śāstra* and its *Uttarakāṇḍa* is filled with the description of the imaginary *Preta* and *Naraka* worlds.

The authorship of the eighteen Purāṇas is traditionally attributed to Vyāsa, Krishna Pārāsara. The language, the style and the contents of the different Purāṇas are so dissimilar that they belie the tradition. It will be explained in the following section why such a tradition established itself.

III. THE PURANA-SAMHITA.

The *Vāyu-purāṇa* (as well as the *Brahmāṇḍa-purāṇa*) furnishes us with the information that Vyāsa, Krishna Pārāsara wrote the Purāṇa-samhita. The school of Aitihāsikas and the Purāṇa-samhita are described in a few stanzas which are found verbatim in the *Brahmāṇḍa-purāṇa* also. As they are only eleven in number. I reproduce them here for the information of the readers.

LX

सूत उवाच—अस्मिन् युगे तदा व्यासः पराशर्यः परन्तपाः ।
 द्वैपायेन इति ख्यातो विष्णोरंशः सनातनः ॥ ११ ॥
 ब्रह्मणा चोदितः सोऽस्मिन् वेदं व्यस्तुं प्रचक्रमे ।
 भयं शिष्यान् स जग्राह चतुरो वेदकारणात् ॥ १२ ॥
 * * * * *
 इतिहासपुराणस्य कल्पवाक्यस्य चैव हि ।
 मां चैव प्रतिजग्राह भगवानाश्वरः प्रभुः ॥ १६ ॥
 * * * * *
 भाव्यानेधाप्युपाख्यानेर्गाथामिः कल्पजोकिमिः ।
 पुराणसंहितां चक्रे पुराणार्थविचारदः ॥ २१ ॥

LXI.

सूत उवाच—षट्शः कृत्वा मयाप्युक्तं पुराणमृषिसत्तमाः ।
 आत्रेयः सुमति र्धीमान् कश्यपो ह्यकृतव्रणः ॥ ५५ ॥
 भारद्वाजोऽग्निवर्चाश्च वासिष्ठो मित्रयुश्च यः ।
 सार्वर्णिः सोमदत्तश्च सुशर्मा शांशपायनः ॥ ५६ ॥
 एते शिष्या मम प्रोक्ताः पुराणेषु दृढव्रताः ।
 त्रिमिस्तत्र कृतास्त्रिस्तः संहिताः पुनरेव हि ॥ ५७ ॥
 कश्यपः संहिताकर्ता सार्वर्णिः शांशपायनः ।
 मामिला च चतुर्थी स्याच्चतस्रो मूल(पूर्व)संहिताः ॥ ५८ ॥
 सर्वास्ता हि चतुष्पादाः सर्वार्थैकार्थवाचिकाः ।
 पाठान्तरे पृथग्भूता वेदशाखा यथा तथा ॥ ५९ ॥
 तच्चुः सहस्रिकाः सर्वा शांशपायनिकामृते ।
 लौमहर्षणिका मूला ततः कश्यपिकापरा ॥ ६० ॥
 सार्वर्णिका तृतीया सा ऋजुवाक्यार्थमण्डिताः ।
 शांशपायनिका चान्या नोदनार्थविभूषिता ॥ ६१ ॥

(*Vāyu-purāṇa*. I.)

The teachers of the Purāṇic school are called the *Aitihāsikas*. The line of *Aitihāsikas* is thus described:— Vyāsa Krishna Pārāsara initiated Sūta Lomaharṣaṇa in the *Jaya-samhita* (the original of the *Mahābhārata* and in the *Purāṇa-samhita*. Sūta Lomaharṣaṇa, in his turn, initiated his own son, Ugraśravas in the *Itihāsa* (i. e. *Jaya-samhita*) and six other disciples in the Purāṇa (*Purāṇa-samhita*). The six disciples are (i) Sumati Atreya (ii) Akṣata-vraṇa Kāśyapa (iii) Agnivarcaś Bhāradvāja (iv) Mitraya Vāsista (v) Somadatta Sāvārṇi and (vi) Suśarman Sāmsāpāyana.

Vyāsa Krishna Pārāsara wrote the *Purāṇa-samhita* with information derived from Akhyānas, Upākhyānas, Gāthas and Kalpa-vākyaś which were handed down from generation to generation by means of oral tradition. Some of these were in verse form. His study and proficiency in them enabled him to write the *Purāṇa-samhita* which he taught to Sūta Lomaharṣaṇa. On this account, the *Samhita* came to be known as Sūta's recension. Of the six disciples of Sūta, only three became promulgators of their own *Samhitas*. Kāśyapa and Sāvārṇi had their own different *Samhitas* while Sāmsāpāyana had his own peculiar one. The original *Purāṇa-samhita* of Vyāsa Krishna Pārāsara, thus developed into four recensions. Of these that of Sāmsāpāyana was peculiar being in the form of a dialogue and differed in this respect from the other three which were in the form of a continuous narrative. These four recensions, however, differed very little from each other in subject matter. They are said to be in the form of mere variations of the same text like the *śākās* of the Vedas and almost possess verbatim agreement with one another. Each *Samhita* consisted of four sections called *pādas* and each *Samhita*, excepting Sāmsāpāyana's comprised 4000 ślokas or stanzas.

Elsewhere the *Vāyu-purāṇa* (also *Brahmāṇḍa*) records the names of the four *pādas* thus —

प्रक्रिया प्रथमः पादः कथावस्तु परिग्रहः ।

अनुसङ्ग उपोद्घात उपसंहार एव च ॥ १२ ॥

एवं हि पादाश्चत्वारः * * * ।

(Vāyu-P. I. iv.)

They are (i) Prakriya-pāda (ii) Anuṣaṅga-pada (iii) Upōdghāta-pāda and (iv) Upasamhāra-pāda.

IV. SEARCH FOR THE PURANA-SAMHITA.

The facts presented above regarding the *Purāṇa-samhita* clearly show that the work relates genuine history constructed from pure historical tradition unadulterated with any sort of religious beliefs. Being the work of Vyāsa-Krishṇa Pārāśara, it must have been composed about 1940 B. C., the date of the Great Bhārata Battle being 1945 B. C. It will be shown below that this date is arrived at from a computation of the data supplied by the Appendix-chapter to the *Purāṇa-samhita*. This *Samhita* is thus older than the *Atharva-veda*, the *Brahmaṇas* and the *Upaniṣads*. Only the *Riḡ-veda Samhita* is older than the *Purāṇa-samhita*. The latter is necessary for understanding the allusions found in the *Riḡ-veda Samhita*, which abounds with them. Hence it is said —

इतिहासपुराणाभ्यां वेदं समुपबृंहयेत् ।

The *Purāṇa-samhita* is thus the oldest historical record of the world.

It is a pity that such a precious work should be lost to the world. The first and foremost business of every educationist of India must be to search for it and recover it. That monumental work of reference, the *Catalogus Catalogorum* of Ih Aufrecht, fails to record it. The various reports on the search for Sanskrit manuscripts by eminent scholars instituted by the Government fare no better. No list of public or private libraries contains the name of the work. It is needless to detail here the fruitless attempts made for its recovery not only in our country but also abroad. It may firmly be affirmed that no manuscript of the *Purāṇa-samhita* exists in any country.

V. MY ATTEMPTS TO RESTORE THE PURANA-SAMHITA.

An attempt to recover and restore the *Purāṇa-samhita* was suggested to me — though vaguely — by two things, and I entertained hopes of recovering it as early as 1915, the fifth year of my Purāṇic studies.

First, from my memory of the contents of the Purāṇas, in the study of which I spared no pains, I found that some stanzas are repeated verbatim from some other Purāṇas. This repetition, I thought, must have some significance.

Secondly, Mallinātha, in his *Saṅjivini* on the first stanza in the *Raghuvamśa*, remarks —

इति वायुपुराणसंहिताबलेन पार्वतीपरमेश्वरायत्तत्त्वदर्शनात् ।

Here Mallinātha styles *Vāyu-purāṇa* as *Samhita* and it struck me that this statement must have some significance. The *Vāyu-purāṇa*, perhaps, has some close relation to the *Samhita*,

Keeping these facts in my mind, I began to examine the śloka which were repeated in different Purāṇas. Staunch sectarian Purāṇas, like *Padma*, *Kūrma*, *Liṅga*, etc. do not contain these stanzas. Those like *Vishṇu*, *Mārkaṇḍeya*, etc. contain very few of them. *Matsya* and *Harivamśa* (although the latter is not a Purāṇa) contain hundreds of stanzas in common with *Vāyu* and *Brahmāṇḍa*, while these last Purāṇas have thousands of stanzas in common though they are not in a continuous line. A careful study of these scattered common passages reveals a continuity and sequence in the subject matter. This induced me to copy the common passages in the different Purāṇas in parallel columns on big sheets. I first treated in this manner the account of the Yādava dynasty in the *Brahmāṇḍa*, *Vāyu*, *Matsya* and the *Harivamśa*. In the common text I observed a closer resemblance between *Brahmāṇḍa* and *Vāyu* on the one hand and between *Matsya* and *Harivamśa* on the other. This arrangement in parallel columns revealed certain omissions here and there — which occasionally appeared to have been intentional. When I made sufficient progress in the formation of the parallel text, I was convinced that the common portion was the *Purāṇa-samhita*.

But there were some difficulties which had to be got over before the thesis could be established.

(A.) The first difficulty was that the common portion to *Vāyu* and *Brahmāṇḍa purāṇas* numbered 7557 stanzas. The two lacunae in the *Brahmāṇḍa purāṇa* extended to 826 stanzas. So the total of the common stanzas come to 8383 — a number slightly more than twice the expressly stated extent (4000 stanzas) of the *Purāṇa Samhita*. This has come about in the following manner. The priestly caste deliberately incorporated in the *Purāṇa Samhita*, portions relating to subjects not coming strictly within the purview of the *Samhita* but to which they wanted the lay people to attach equal importance with it, such as the worship of the Gods like Vishṇu, Nilakaṇṭha etc. (like stotras, stavas etc.) the offerings to the dead (*śrāddha*), Astrology and so forth. The *Samhita* must be wholly Purāṇic or historical in content and anything not Purāṇic in nature must be considered as extraneous to it and scrupulously eschewed. Such portions have been carefully removed by me and the genuine *Samhita* restored. This work of separating Purāṇic (historical) matter from the non-Purāṇic is a very difficult one requiring minute study, vast experience, great discrimination and immense precaution in the worker. Dexterity in this work may be likened to the gift of the swan in separating milk and water.

(B.) The next difficulty was with regard to the conflicting synchronisms. Though alarming at first, this reduced itself to be only apparent on a thorough understanding of the correct order of the contents. The neglected condition of the Purāṇas led to veritable misunderstandings which in their turn led to wrong readings. As a result, for instance, the Pāñchāla chronology,

which consisted of five contemporary dynasties is misrepresented as a single dynasty, tagging on one to the other.¹ Similarly the Aikṣvāka dynasties, which are really five different contemporary branches, are joined together into a single whole.² How can synchronisms be established with such genealogies? The corrected chronologies wonderfully corroborate the synchronisms. The task of discovering the knots or joints and rearranging the parallel genealogies is no easy one. A thorough acquaintance with the deeds of the royal and ṛshi personages with their inter-relations is the only key to it; but this demands a wide study of the vast literature. In truth, the study of the *Ṛg-veda* for this purpose occupied eight years of my time. I find from experience that the critical student of the *Ṛg-Veda* is at present helpless as the commentaries and translations rather mislead than lead him along the right path, as the authors of these had themselves no historical knowledge of the times and of the personages whose stories they were interpreting. The same ṛk about the same person means one thing for them in one place and quite another thing in another place. They interpret proper nouns as common nouns. I could note down many names of towns, rivers, mountains and tribes in the *Ṛg-veda* which were not explained by Vedic scholars, Indian or foreign.

Next in importance to the *Ṛg-veda* in the *Mahābhārata*, that treasure-house of innumerable episodes, a knowledge of which is of great help in deciding historical matters. But the difficulty with these stories is that they are not all reliable. Some of them are later additions, but on that account the value of the *Mahābhārata* for the purpose cannot be deprecated.

The *Taittirīya* and the *Maitrāyaṇeya saṁhitas*, the *Tāṇḍya*, the *Aitareyā* and the *Śatapatha brāhmaṇas*, the *Chāndogya*, the *Prasna* and the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka upaniṣads* and some of the important *Anukramaṇis* and *Parīśiṣṭas* come next into consideration after the *Mahābhārata*. One point with regard to the *Taittirīya* and the *Maitrāyaṇeya saṁhitas* is worthy of note. The first three *Prasnas* (or *prapaṅkas*) of the *Maitrāyaṇeya saṁhita* corresponding to the first four *prasnas* of the *Taittirīya saṁhita* form the real *Samhita* portion for the Charakādhvaryus usually known as the *Black Yajur-veda*. This portion, I hold, is older than the *Ṛg-veda*.

(C.) The corroboration of allusions was another difficulty. It lay in distinguishing and discriminating names of personages with similar or identical spelling. The neglected Purānic texts mixed up such names and a world of confusion arose in consequence. For instance, Bharadvāja (G. 21), disciple of King Dhanvantari (G. 20) of Kāsi, Bharadvāja (G. 33), the adopted son of the famous King Bharatā (G. 32), and again Bharadvāja (G. 52), the contemporary of King Hiranyanābha (G. 52) of Kosala are identified and treated as one and the same person. A deep, detailed and critical knowledge of the vast literature is essential in dealing with such complex matters.

1. See my "History of the Pāñchāla (Vedic period)."

2. See my paper "Aikṣvāka dynasty" in the *Bharatiya Vidya* Vol. IV, Pt. II for May 1948, P. 217 ff.

(D.) Questions of metre and language also demanded attention. Irregularities in metre and language occur which help in the work of restoration of the *Purāna-saṁhita*. With their help, the older material can be distinguished from the later. They also suggest the process of *pratisamskāra*. In ancient days, all popular literature was written in the dialect of the educated class. The two great medical treatises the *Caraka-saṁhita* and the *Suśruta-saṁhita* lead to this conclusion. They are both *pratisamskṛta*-works.¹ In the same manner the *Purāna-saṁhita* also appears to have undergone the process of *pratisamskāra*. This explains the differences in the spelling of proper names in different texts, as e. g. शक्तिवर्मन् and सत्यवर्मन्.

I have described above some of the main difficulties encountered in restoring the *Purāna-saṁhita* and the methods adopted by me to overcome them. I am glad to announce that I was able to restore the *Purāna-saṁhita* after thirty years of patient labour with an unbiased mind in acquiring an intimate knowledge of the vast literature. I started the work in 1915 which bore fruit in 1942.

VI. THE RESTORED PURANA-SAMHITA.

There can be no doubt that the *Purāna-saṁhita* is worth the time and labour spent upon it when we see that its contents are genuine history. The study of the *Purāna-saṁhita* opens up a new vista of knowledge and drives away superstition, credulity and belief in superhuman powers. Its contents are logical. I shall adduce some instances but refrain from giving reasons for want of space.

(i) The *Purāna-saṁhita* omits fictitious episodes and relates only historical ones. The birth and parentage of Sakuntala or *Sakuntalopākyaṇa*, *Viśvamitrāyāgarakṣaṇa* of the *Rāmāyana*, *Kārtaviryakatha* of the *Brahmāṇḍa* are fictitious episodes and are consequently omitted in the *Samhita*. They were invented to attribute superhuman powers to the Brāhmins.

(ii) The *Purāna-saṁhita* exhibits the basic facts upon which the superstitious stories of religious bigotry have been based attributing superhuman powers to some personage or deity. The metaphor of the lotus for instance, in the geography portion of the *Samhita* is developed into the story of Padmānābha, wherein a lotus creeper is conceived as issuing forth from the navel of God Vishnu with God Brahman seated in a lotus at the end of the creeper. The three worlds, *Svarga*, *Martya* and *Pātālā* located by the *Purāna-saṁhita* on this earth — one beyond the other from North to South — are transferred outside the world and placed one below the other in a vertical manner, *Svarga* above and *Pātālā* below the *Martya*, both beyond the scope of human vision.

(iii) The *Purāna-saṁhita* records the families, the lives and deeds of ancient heroes who are transformed into immortals in the *Ṛg-Veda*. About 25 to 30 generations (G.), i. e. 9 to 10 centuries intervene between the actual

1. Compare the statement of the *Caraka-saṁhita* अग्निवेशकृते तन्त्रे चरकप्रतिसंस्कृते ।
Sutraśath. xxx 84; Cikitsāśath. xxx 324.)

performances of the ancient heroes and their incorporation in the *R̥g-Veda*. It is worthy of note that the earlier the *mantra*, the more heroic and less divine will be the deeds depicted. The human nature of the heroes gradually melted away and was replaced by the divine nature. Compare, for instance, the hymns of Gṛtsamada (G. 18) with those of Bharadvāja (G. 33) and the latter with those of Vāmadeva (G. 46).

(iv) In the *Purāṇa-saṁhita*, the Ṛṣis are depicted as normal human beings of mortal nature, and their lives and doings, as purely human. They are styled as the authors of their poetical and prose compositions. The Vedas are not revealed texts and superhuman powers are not attributed to the ṛṣis.

(v) The ten incarnations of God Vishṇu are unknown to the *Purāṇa-saṁhita*. The idea of incarnation itself is foreign to it. Varāha, Narasimha and Vāmana are three of the twelve Devāsura battles. The *Saṁhita* mentions Rāma Dāsarathi and Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva as mere heroic kings without any special divine nature in them. The names Matsya and Kūrma are not found in the *Saṁhita*.

(vi) The *Yuga* division of time, so common in works on Astronomy, is not known to the *Purāṇa-saṁhita*. The *Saṁhita* explains the *Yuga* as a period of five years, each year in it having a separate name for it. Lagadha also explains *Yuga* in a similar way. The *Purāṇa-saṁhita* uses the words *kr̥ta*, *treta* and *dvāpara* in its own peculiar way. The stages in the development of the civilization of the human race are termed *siddhis*. The different *siddhis* are distinguished by different names. The first stage is called the *kr̥ta-siddhi*. Next came *tretamukha-siddhi*, *treta-madhya-siddhi* and *treta-anthya-siddhi* in order. The last is *dvāpara*. The term *kali* is not mentioned in the *Purāṇa-saṁhita*. Thus for the Aitihāsika, there is only one series of *kr̥ta*, *treta* and *dvāpara* from the creation to the destruction of the world. The terms *kalpa*, *manvantara* and *mahāyuga* are unknown to the Aitihāsikas and the *Purāṇa-saṁhita*. These terms are invented by Astronomers who have to deal with large periods of Years in their calculations from the beginning of the Universe,

These are a few of the notable points about the *Purāṇa-saṁhita*. There are several others of equal interest but space forbids me from mentioning them here.

VII. THE CONTENTS OF THE PURANA-SAMHITA.

The *Purāṇa-saṁhita*, as restored by me, consists of all the four pādas, viz. (i) Prakriya-pāda, (ii) Anuṣaṅga-pāda, (iii) Upodghāta-pāda and (iv) Upasaṁhāra-pāda.

Prakriya-pada is mere cosmogony as conceived by the Aitihāsikas. Though this is not real history in the modern sense, to the ancient Aitihāsika, Purāṇa is not complete without a description of the creation and the destruction of the Universe. For them, history must begin with creation and end with the destruction of the Universe. The last or Upasaṁhāra-pāda describes the end

of the Universe and history. These two pādas are small ones, consisting of five and three adhyayas respectively and comprise 300 and 125 stanzas in order.

Actual history begins with the second pāda. Here again, the childhood of the human race forms the preface. The first stage of the human race is that without shelter to live in and without prepared food to live on. Then comes the second stage in which the human beings learned to collect honey and wild grains to feed on and to build huts to live in. The evolution of the tribes takes place in the third stage. All this belongs to the prehistoric period. Then follows the history of the various dynasties. This is followed by the geography of the world as known to the Aitihāsikas. The three *lohas*, *Svarga* (the heaven) *Martya* (land of mortals) and *Pātāla* (the nether world) are located only on the surface of this earth. The geography covers nearly two-thirds of the pāda. The pāda closes with the dynasties of Uttānapāda and Havirdhāna.

The third or Upodghāta-pāda begins with description of the Ancient Indian tribes which are nearly sixty in number. The tribes are grouped into four *Prajā-sargas*, viz. (i) *Īśvara-prajā-sarga* (ii) *Dharma-prajā-sarga* (iii) *Kasyapa-prajā-sarga* and (iv) *Pulaha-prajā-sarga*. Then follows the description of the royal dynasties which fall into two great groups, (i) The Aikṣvākas and (ii) the Ailas. The latter is subdivided into (a) the Yādavas (b) the Turvasus (c) the Druhyus (d) the Anavas and (e) the Pauravas. These include the *Kṣatropeta-dviya* dynasties which *Kṣatriya* dynasties admitted into Brahmanism, such as the Hāritas, Vṛṣnuvṛthas, Mudgalas, Maitreyas, Kāṇvas etc. The total number of dynasties recorded in the *Purāṇa-saṁhita* come to nearly one hundred. The *Purāṇa-saṁhita* records the history of 50 generations from the beginning to the time of the Great Bharata Battle (c. 3600 to 1900 B.C.) Subsequently an Appendix-chapter, called the *Bhaviṣyad-rajānukīrtana*, was added at the end of this pāda bringing the chronology down to 300 A. D. This Appendix, though it is a later addition, is very important as it immensely helps us in fixing the dates in the early period of our country's history. The Appendix records the duration of the reign of each king and the duration of each dynasty, as well as the dynastic totals.

The following is a concise synoptic exhibition of the contents of the *Purāṇa-saṁhita*, chapter by chapter.

I. PRAKRIYA-PADA.

Ch.	St.	Subject-matter.	Generations. Period.
I	38	The 12-Year sattra-yāga of Ṛṣis in Kurukṣetra, when King Adhisimākṛṣṇa was reigning at Hastināpura. Sūta comes to them.	
II	103	Brief narration of the contents of the <i>Purāṇa-saṁhita</i> .	
III	48	The <i>dirgha-sathra</i> of the Naimiṣiya Ṛṣis in the reign of King Purūravas.	

Ch.	St.	Subject-matter.	Generations.	Period.
IV	61	The formation of Hiraṇya-garbha (egg of the Universe).		
V	50	The floating of the Earth and the nine creations.		
	300			
II. ANUSANGA-PADA,				
I	32	<i>Kṛta-praja-siddhi</i> or the first stage of the human race (Homeo Sapins).		
II	75	<i>Treta-mukha-siddhi</i> or the second stage of the human race (Beginning of social life).		
III	43	<i>Treta-madhya-siddhi</i> or division into tribes.		
IV	49	The beginning of actual record history.		
				B. C.
		i. Akūṭi dynasty	... 2 — 4	c. 3566 — 3466
		ii. Presūti dynasty	... 2 — 3	c. 3566 — 3500
		iii. Dharma dynasty	... 3 — 5	c. 3533 — 3433
		iv. Rudra's progeny		
V	44	v. Bhṛgu dynasty	... 3 — 7	c. 3533 — 3366
		vi. Marica dynasty	... 3 — 6	c. 3533 — 3400
		vii. Aṅgīrasa dynasty	... 3 — 6	c. 3533 — 3400
		viii. Atri dynasty	... 3 — 4	c. 3533 — 3466
		ix. Pulastya dynasty	... 3 — 4	c. 3533 — 3466
		x. Pulaha dynasty	... 3 — 5	c. 3533 — 3433
		xi. Kratu dynasty	... 3 — 4	c. 3533 — 3466
		xii. Vaśiṣṭha dynasty	... 3 — 5	c. 3533 — 3433
VI	46	xiii. Dynasty of Agni	... 3 — 9	c. 3533 — 3300
VII	43	xiv. Dhārīṇi dynasty (Pitṛs) and the episode of <i>Dakṣa-Yajña</i> 3 — 4	c. 3533 — 3466
VIII	29	The <i>Yuga</i> of five years		
IX	66	<i>Prajā-sanniveśa</i> or the lords of the seven <i>dvīpas</i> .		
				B. C.
		xv. Nābhi dynasty	... 2 — 9	c. 3566 — 3300
		xvi. Pratīhāra dynasty		
	427			

GEOGRAPHY.				
Ch.	St.	Subject-matter.	Generations.	Period.
X	42	Situation of the <i>Jambū-dvīpa</i> .		
XI-XIII	439	<i>Loka-padma</i> or the Metaphor of the 'World-lotus.'		
XIV	79	The four great rivers of Heaven [Note:— According to the <i>Purāṇa-samhita</i> , Heaven is Central Asia.]		
XV-XVIII	239	The nine Varṣas.		
XIX	62	Kailāsa-mountain and the <i>Sapta-sindhu</i> .		
XX	23	The <i>Varṣa-parvatas</i> and the <i>Udadhi-praviṣṭas</i> (Ocean heights).		
XXI	44	The <i>Anu-dvīpas</i> (or the East Indies) and other islands. End of the description of <i>Jambū-dvīpa</i> , [Note.— <i>Jambū-dvīpa</i> is the Continent of Asia.]		
XXII	133	The other six <i>Dvīpas</i> .		
	1061			
XXIII	145	The episodes of Dhruva, Vena and Pṛthu. Clearing of forests and the introduction of Agriculture.		
				B. C.
		xvii. Dhruva dynasty	... 2—15	c. 3566 — 3100
		xviii. Havirthana dynasty and the episode of Dakṣa Prācetasā.	... 7—12	c. 3400 — 3200
	1673			
III. UPODGHATA-PADA.				
ANCIENT INDIAN TRIBES.				
I. <i>Īśvara-prajā-sarga</i> .				
I	133	The birth of <i>Īśvaras</i> and <i>Prajāpatīs</i>		B. C.
		i. The Bhārgavas	... 14 — 17	c. 3166 — 3033
		ii. The Aṅgīraras	... 13 — 16	c. 3200 — 3066
		iii. The Marichis	... 13 — 16	c. 3200 — 3066
II	44	The Progeny of Dakṣa, Prācetas. The migration of the Haryasvas (first wave) and of the Sabalāśvas (second wave) the west.		

		II. <i>Dharma-praja-sarga.</i>	
III	37	i. The Sādhyas ii. The Vasus iii. Viśvedevas. iv-x. Other tribes.	
		III. <i>Kāśyapa-prajā-sarga.</i>	
Ch.	St.	Subject - matter.	Generations Duration.
IV	31	i. The Adityas, ii. The Rudras,	
V	138	iii. The Daityas iv. The Maruts v. The Dānavas. vi. The Danā- yuṣas and vii. Deva-gandharvas.	
VI	171	The twelve Devāsura battles. 1. Nārasimha, 2. Vāmana, 3. Vārā- ha, 4. Amṛta-mathana, 5. Tārakā- maya, 6. Aḍibaka, 7. Traipura, 8. Andhakāra, 9. Vārtraghna. 10. Dhvaja, 11. Hālahala, 12. Kolāhala, Asura migration to Rasātala.	
VII	66	The description of Rasātala. 1. Kṛṣṇa - bhauma (Atala) 2. Pāṇḍu - bhauma (Sutala) 3. Rakta - bhauma (Vitala) 4. Pīta - bhauma (Gabhastala) 5. Sarkarā - bhauma (Mahātala) 6. Sita - bhauma (Sritala) 7. Svarṇa - bhauma (Pātāla). Seṣāvāsa.	
VIII	224	viii. The Mauneyās (gandharvas) ix. Ariṣṭas (Apsarases) x. Vainateyas (Pakṣis) xi. Kārdraveyas (Nāgas) xii. Khaśas (Yakṣas and Rakṣasas)	
		IV. <i>Pulaha-praja-sarga.</i>	
IX	291	i. Mṛgas, ii. Mṛgamadas, iii. Hara- yas, iv. Vānaras, v. Sārameyas, vi. Airāvatas, (Gajas) vii. Bhūtas viii. Piśācas, ix. Daṁṣṭras, x. Ṛṣhyas, xi. Tairyas, xii. Sau- rasas (Sarpas).	
		III. <i>Kāśyapa-praja-sarga.</i> (concl'd) xiii. Tāmras, xiv. Iras.	

		I. <i>Īśvara-praja-sarga</i> (contd.)	
Ch.	St.	Subject-matter.	Generations, Duration.
X	78	iv. Kāśyapas, v. Paulastyas, vi. Atreyas, vii. Later Kāśyapas, viii. Vāsiṣṭhas.	
XI	179	Mantra-kṛtas (Vedic authors). Vedic schools (Veda-śākhās). Pura- nic schools, Numerical extent of Veda-mantras.	
XII	72	The seven Pitṛ-tribes. ix. Vairājas, x. Barhiṣādas, xi. Agniṣvattas, xii. K ā v y a s, xiii. Upahūtas, xiv. Ājyapas, xv. Sukālas.	
		ROYAL DYNASTIES.	
XIII	73	The Dynasty of Varuṇa, Birth of Vaivasvatas.	
XIV	175	1. The progeny of Idā, 2. Pṛṣadhra, 3. K a r ū s a, 4. Nābhāgodiṣṭa, 5. Pramśu dynasty, 6. Nariṣyanta dynasty, 7. Saryāti dynasty, 8. Dhṛṣ- ṭa, 9. Nābhāga.	
		I. <i>The Aikṣvākavas,</i> B. C	
		(i) The first dynasty. The episode of Sasāda. The episode of Dhun- dhumāra: The episode of Tri- śaṅku.	12-45 c. 3233-2100
XV	101	(ii) The Second dynasty. The epi- sode of Bāhu and of Sagara.	24-45 c. 2833-2100
		(iii) The Third dynasty. Rāma gāthas.	29-50 c, 2666-1933
		(iv) The Fourth dynasty	... 45-52 c. 2133-1866
		(v) The Fifth dynasty	... 37-50 c. 3400-1933
XVI	24	The Nimi dynasty (The Maithilas)	13-51 c. 3200-1900
		II. <i>The Ailas.</i>	
XVII	77	The Coronation of King Soma. The episode of King Purūravas and Urvaśi.	
XVIII	53	The Dynasty of Jahnu.	12-14 c. 3223-3133

Ch.	St.	Subject-matter	No. of kings	Dynastic total.
XIX	115	The Saunakas. The Kāśi dynasty. Prince Raji. The story of Marutta. The Anena dynasty. Nahuṣa's sons Yayāti gāthas.	16—38	c. 3100—2333
XX	311	(a) The Yādava dynasties. The Haihaya dynasty ... The Kroṣṭu dynasty ... The Bhajamāna dynasty ... The Devāvṛdha dynasty ... The Andhaka dynasty ... The Vārṣneya dynasty. ... The episode of the <i>śyamantaka-gem</i> . The progeny of Kriṣṇa Vasudeva.	B. C. 18—35 19—45 46—47 46—47 46—51 46—52	c. 3033—2433 c. 3000—2100 c. 2100—2033 c. 2100—2033 c. 2100—1900 c. 2100—1866
XXI	122	(b) The Turvasu dynasties (South) (c) The Dṛhyu dynasties (North) ... (d) The Anava dynasties (East and West.) The Aṅga dynasty. The epi- sode of Dīrghatamas. ... (e) The Paurava dynasties.	18—27 18—25 18—31 31—51	c. 3033—2700 c. 3033—2766 c. 3033—2566 c. 2600—1900
XXII	152	The Paurava dynasty The five Pāncāla dynasties. 1. The first dynasty of Mudgala ... 2. The second dynasty of Sṛñjaya 3. The third dynasty of Bṛhadīṣu 4. The fourth dynasty of Yavinara. 5. The fifth dynasty of Kampila The early Bārhadradha dynasty.	18—56 43—47 43—57 43—53 43—56 43—53	c. 3033—1733 c. 2200—2033 c. 2200—1900 c. 2200—1833 c. 2200—1733 c. 2200—1833

2667

Ch.	St.	Subject-matter	No. of kings	Dynastic total.
XXIII	222	APPENDIX-CHAPTER The later Paurava dynasty The later Aikṣvakava dynasty The later Bārhadradha dynasty The Pradyota dynasty The Saiśunāga dynasty The contemporary dynasties The Nine Nandas The Maurya dynasty	22 5 10 9 10	Yrs. 1000 138 263 100 137

Ch.	St.	Subject-matter	No. of kings	Dynastic total.
		The Suṅga dynasty	10	112
		The Kaṇva dynasty	4	45
		The Andhra dynasty	30	456
		The Andhra-bhṛtyas The Kings of other dynasties Degeneration in society.		

IV UPASAMHARA-PADA

I	48	The burning of the world. The flood.
II	29	The dissolution of the world into elements.
III	43	The re-creation of the world, The school of puranic teachers.

VIII THE DATE OF THE PURANA-SAMHITA

The *Purāṇa-samhita* was written by Vyāsa 'Kriṣṇa Pārāśara who wrote also the *Jaya-samhita*, the kernel of the *Mahābhārata*. He was a contemporary of the Mahābhārata Battle. So the date of Vyāsa Kṛṣṇa Pārāśara and his two Samhitas. The Appendix or *Bhaviṣyadrājānukīrtana*, though it is not the work of Vyāsa, greatly helps us in fixing the exact date of the Great Bhārata Battle. The importance of the Appendix lies in this and in fixing the events that followed it. The Appendix furnishes the duration of each king's reign with the dynastic totals. There is no real discrepancy in the facts noted in it and the so-called discrepancy is only apparent due to scribal errors.]

King Somadhi succeeded his father Sahadeva, (son of Emperor Jarāsandha of Magadha when the father was killed in the Great Bhārata Battle. This Magadha dynasty goes by the name of the Later Bārhadradha dynasty which comprises 22 kings who reigned for a period of 1000 years.

Who are the successors of the Later Bārhadradhas of Girivraja? Some scholars (and I too for some time) believed that the pradyotas were their successors. This is a mistake. The pradyotas ruled at Avanti in Malwa and they were the successors of the Vitihoṭra dynasty of Avanti. Munika (or Punika) killed his master, the last Vitihoṭra king and placed his son, Pradyota, on the throne of Avanti. The Pradyota dynasty was exterminated by the Magadha Emperor Mahapadmananda. So the Pradyotas did not come between the later Bārhadradhas and the Saiśunāgas who were originally kings of Vārāṇasi or Benares. The Saiśunāgas overthrew the power of the later Bārhadradhas at Girivraja and occupied the throne of Magadha,

That the Pradyotas never preceded the Saiśunāgas is clearly proved by the following synchronisms.

1. Buddha was the contemporary of King Vivisāra and his two sons, Darśaka and Ajātaśatru. 2. King Udayana of Kauśāmbi was born on the same day on which Buddha is said to have been born. 3. King Pradyota was the father-in-law of King Udayana of Kauśāmbi who also married the daughter of King Vivisāra of Magadha and sister of King Darśaka. 4. Buddha died in the

eighth year of King Ajātaśatru's reign, who, out of fear of invasion by King Pradyota of Avanti, had the walls of his fort repaired.

The above facts prove beyond all doubt that Buddha, King Pradyota of Avanti, King Udayana of Kauśāmbi and King Viśvāsāra and his two sons, Darśaka and Ajātaśatru of Girivraja were contemporaries. Thus the Pradyotas of Avanti were the contemporaries of the later Saiśunāgas. The Saiśunāgas were succeeded by, the Mauryas; the latter by the Saṅgas and these by the Kānvas who were overthrown by the Andhras of Pratiṣṭhāna. The Andhras extended their empire to the east coast of India as far north as the Mahānadi-delta where they came in contact with Magadha.

The Saka-Satrapas extended their conquests towards the south as far as Malwa where they came in contact with the kings of Ujjayini, who they defeated and made Ujjayini their capital. This brought the Saka-satrapas in direct conflict with the powerful Andhras of Pratiṣṭhāna. The most noteworthy feat of the Saka-satrapas is the defeat of the Audhra King, Hāla or Sālivāhana, at the very beginning of his reign which thus terminated in one year. The Śaka kings commemorated their success by establishing an era, called the *Śaka-ṛṣa-kāla* or briefly the Saka era. This Saka-Andhra rivalry continued for some generations more. The point worthy of note is that the reign of King Hāla marks the beginning of the Saka era.

The following computation results from the above facts :

The late Bārhadrathas	1000 Years.
The Saiśunāgas	363 „
The Nandas	100 „
The Mauryas	137 „
The Suṅgas	112 „
The Kānvas	45 „
The Andhras upto King Hāla	261 „

Total 2018 Years.

Śaka Era begins in 78 A.D. So the date of the Great Bhārata Battle is 2018—78+1=1941 B.C.¹

The two *Samhitas* (Purāṇa and Jaya) were written after the Great Bhārata Battle. Allowing five years for their composition, the date of the *Samhitas* would be 1936 B.C.

THE DATE OF THE APPENDIX CHAPTER

One chronological portion of the Appendix, records at the close that while the Gupta Kings were reigning over Magadha, Sāketa and Prayāga along the Ganges, Maṇḍhānyajas were ruling over Kosala, Andhra, L'uṇḍra and

1. The dynastic period of the later Bārhadrathas is given above as 1000; but the total of the regnal years of the kings comes to 1004. So the date may be pushed back to 1945.

Tāmralipta, and Guha was ruling over Kāliṅga, Mahiṣa and Mahendra. The Gupta dyuasty came to a close in 520 A.D. So the Appendix could not have been written before 500 A.D. As the successive dynasties of the Guptas are not mentioned in it, it would not have been written much later than 500 A.D. Bāṇa-bhaṭṭa who flourished about 625 A.D. says that he read out *Vāyu-purāṇa* to his relatives.

मुखसंनिहितसरस्वतीनूपुररवैरिव गमकैर्मेधुरैराक्षिपन्मनां सि श्रोतृणां गीत्या पवमानप्रोक्तं पुराणं पपाठ ॥
(Harṣacarita ch. III, p. 95.)

The Appendix chapter forms the last 200 slokas of Adhyāya xxxvii of the Uttara-khaṇḍa of the *Vāyu-purāṇa*. So 550 A.D. is the most reasonable date that can be assigned to the Appendix-chapter.

IX CONCLUSION.

Such is the story of the *Purāṇa-samhita*, the earliest historical record in the world. How it originated from the hand of Vyāsa, Kriṣṇa Pārāśara, how its first recension was published by Sūta Lomahaṛṣaṇa, how three more recensions came into existence, how it was embedded in the early Purāṇas and disappeared as a separate work, how after so many centuries it is now restored in its original form by patient labours extending to more than a quarter century how it is a historical treasure of great value—all these have been described in the foregoing pages. The *Samhita* supplies us with the systematic history of our country beginning with the childhood of the human race. The recorded history begins with c. 3600 B.C. and ends with 1940 B.C. The Appendix brings the chronology down to 300 A.D. where Epigraphy begins to offer its help for the reconstruction of the history of our country. But for the *Purāṇa-samhita*, the history of our country from 4000 B.C. to 700 B.C. would have been a complete blank as the Pāli and Māgadhi literatures begin to appear after the last mentioned date. The historical facts in the Vedas and the Brāhmaṇas are so meagre that they do not help much in the reconstruction of our history. Thus the value and importance of the *Purāṇa-samhita* cannot be exaggerated.

It must therefore, be the sacred duty of every educational institution of India to preserve carefully such a valuable historical record from again falling into oblivion. It should be the primary duty of our magnates to resuscitate and popularise it.