

Agni touching the sky (from his place on earth), entered the upper region (with his flames), and closed the gate of the celestial world; for Agni is its master. The Vasus first approached him and said: "Mayest thou allow us to pass over (thy flames) to enter (heaven); give us an opportunity (*âkâś'a.*)" Agni said, "Being not praised (by you), I shall not allow you to pass (through the gate). Praise me now." So they did. They praised him with nine verses (the Trivṛit Stoma).<sup>18</sup> After they had done, he allowed

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<sup>18</sup> The Trivṛit Stoma consists of the nine verses of the *Bahish-pavamâna* Stotra (see *Sâmaveda Saṁh.* 2, 1-9), which are sung in three turns, each accompanied by the *Himkâra*. In this Stoma the same verses are not sung repeatedly as is the case with all other Stomas. There are three kinds (*vishtuti*) of this Stoma mentioned in the *Tândya Brâhmaṇam* 2, 1-2, called the *udyatî trivṛito vishtuti*, *parivarttinî*, and *kulâyinî*. The difference of these three kinds lies in the order which is assigned to each of the three verses which form one turn (*paryâya*), and in the application of the *Himkâra* (the sound *hum* pronounced very loudly) which always belongs to one turn. The arrangement of all the verses which form part of the Stoma (the whole musical piece), in three turns, each with a particular order for its several verses, and their repetition, is called in the technical language of the *Sâma* singers a *vishtuti*. Each Stoma has several variations. The first variations of the Trivṛit Stoma is the *udyatî*, i. e. the rising. This kind is very simple. The *Himkâra* is pronounced in the first *paryâya* at the first verse (*tisribhyo himkaroti sa prathamayâ*), in the second at the middle verse of the triplet (*tisribhyo himkaroti sa madhyamayâ*), and in the third, at the last verse (*tisribhyo himkaroti sa uttamayâ*). The *parivarttinî vishtuti* consists in singing the several verses of the triplet in all three turns in the inverted order, that is to say, the first is always made the last, and the last the first (*tisribhyo himkaroti sa parâchibhiḥ*). The *kulâyinî vishtuti* is more complicated than the two others. In the first turn the order of the verses is inverted (*tisribhyo himkaroti sa parâchibhiḥ*), in the second turn the middle verse is made the first, the last becomes the middle verse, and the first becomes the last (*tisribhyo himkaroti yâ madhyamâ sâ prathamâ, yâ uttamâ sâ madhyamâ, yâ prathamâ sâ uttamâ*); in the third turn, the last becomes the first, the first the second, and the second the last. The *Sâma* singers mark the several turns, and the order of each verse in it as well as the number of repetitions by small sticks cut from the wood of the *Udumbara* tree, the trunk of which must always be placed behind the seat of the *Udgâtar*. They are called *kuśâs*. Each of the three divisions of each set in which