

the six seers Aṅgiras and others 3. 214. 1-16; 3. 218. 30; 3. 207. 4; 3. 218. 27; 9. 43. 10-13; 9. 45. 86; 13. 84. 76; 13. 86. 5, 8, 10, 13; hence Skanda known as Kārttikeya (*kṛttikābhyupapattē ca kārttikeya iti smṛtaḥ*) 1. 60. 23; 9. 43. 16; 13. 84. 77; 13. 86. 14, 32).

A. Formation of the constellation : When the constellation Abhijit left her place in the sky and went to the forest to practise austerities there was confusion in the calculation of time; Kṛttikās then went up to the heaven to fill in the gap; there they shine as a constellation, having the form of a cart, with god Fire as their regent (*evam ukte tu śakreṇa tridivam kṛttikā gatāḥ | nakṣatram śakataḥkāram bhāti tad vahnidaivatam ||*) 3. 219. 11. B. Number : Their number is six 3. 134. 12. C. Rites performed under the Kṛttikās : (1) Nārada told Devakī (13. 63. 2-4) that if one satisfied the Brāhmaṇas under the Kṛttikās by feeding them with rice boiled with milk and sprinkled with clarified butter (*pāyasena sasarpīṣā*) one obtained the highest worlds 13. 63. 5; (2) Yama told Śaśabindu (13. 89. 1) that if one offered a *kāmya śrāddha* regularly under the Kṛttikās that was as good as performing a sacrifice after establishing the fires; such a person was blessed with progeny and was free from affliction (*vigatajvaraḥ*) 13. 89. 2; (3) By bathing in Mahāgaṅgā at the conjunction of Mars with the Kṛttikās (*mahāgaṅgām upasprśya kṛttikāṅgārake tathā*) and by fasting for a fortnight one was purified and obtained heaven 13. 26. 20; (4) Aṅgiras told Gautama that if one who was well composed went on the Urvaśī-kṛttikāyoga(?) to the Laubhitya tīrtha and bathed there according to the rites one

obtained the fruit of performing the Puṇḍarīka sacrifice (*urvaśīkṛttikāyoge galvā yaḥ susamāhitaḥ | lauhitye vidhivat snātvā puṇḍarikaphalam labhet ||*) 13. 26. 43 (Nī. reads *urvaśīm kṛttikāyoge* (Bom. Ed. 13. 25. 46) and explains : *urvaśīm urvaśī-tīrtham kṛttikāyoge kṛttikyām paurṇamāsyām*); D. Places named after the Kṛttikās : (1) An āśrama (*āśrame kṛttikānām tu*); if one, after bathing at this āśrama and delighting Mahādeva, satisfied the *pitṛs* he obtained heaven 13. 26. 23; (2) A tīrtha named jointly after the Kṛttikās and the Maghā (*kṛttikāmaghayoṣṭ caiva tīrtham*); by visiting this tīrtha one obtained the fruits of Agniṣṭoma and Atirātra sacrifices 3. 82. 46. E. The Kṛttikās and the sword : When Brahmā created the sword as a weapon the day was presided over by the Kṛttikās (*kṛttikāś cāsya nakṣatram aśeḥ*) 12. 160. 80. F. Relationship with omens : Among the bad omens reported by Vyāsa to Dhṛtarāṣṭra before the war, there was one according to which the fierce *graha* (i. e. Rāhu) blazed in the Kṛttikās, wiped out their appearance by its lustre and stood like a comet (*kṛttikāsu grahas tīvro nakṣatre prathamē jvalan | vapūṁśy apaharan bhāsā dhūmaketur iva sthitaḥ ||*) 6. 3. 26 (Nī. who reads *kṛttikām pīḍayāms tīkṣṇaiḥ* (Bom. Ed. 6. 3. 30) explains : *tīkṣṇaiḥ krūrāiḥ karmabhir upalakṣito rāhur ity arthaḥ*). G. Simile : The king of the Prāggyotiṣa (Bhagadatta), riding on an elephant, was covered with a parasol decorated with garlands of flowers and hence looking like a moon on the full moon night in conjunction with the Kṛttikās (*kṛttikāyogayuktēna paurṇamāsyām ivendunā*) 7. 19. 18. [See Āgneya ]