

names of Jyesthaghni³⁵ (the later Jyesthā) and Vicṛtau,³⁶ which are mentioned as in close connexion, and of Revatīs (plural) and Kṛttikās.³⁷ With reference to possible times for the ceremony of the Agnyādhāna, or 'laying of the sacred fires,' the Kāthaka Saṃhitā,³⁸ the Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā,³⁹ and the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa⁴⁰ mention the Nakṣatras called Kṛttikās, Rohiṇī, Phalgunyas, Hasta; the latter Brāhmaṇa adds Punarvasū, and in an additional remark⁴¹ excludes Pūrve Phalgunī in favour of Uttare Phalgunī. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa⁴² adds Mrgaśīrṣa and Citrā as possibilities. On the other hand, Punarvasū is recommended by all authorities⁴³ as suitable for the Punarādheya, 'relaying of the sacred fires,' which takes place if the first fire has failed to effect the aim of its existence, the prosperity of the sacrificer.⁴⁴ The Kāthaka Saṃhitā,⁴⁵ however, allows Anurādhās also.

In the ceremony of the Agnicayana, or 'piling of the fire-altar,' the bricks are assumed to be equal in number to the Nakṣatras. The bricks number 756, and they are equated to 27 Nakṣatras multiplied by 27 secondary Nakṣatras, reckoned as 720 (instead of 729), with the addition of 36 days, the length of an intercalary month. Nothing can be usefully derived from this piece of priestly nonsense.⁴⁶ But in connexion with this ceremony the Yajurveda Saṃhitās⁴⁷ enumerate the 27

³⁵ vi. 110, 2. This constellation, 'the slayer of the oldest,' was apparently of evil omen. Cf. Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa, i. 5, 2, 8. Whitney, Translation of the Atharvaveda, 361, equates it with Antares or Cor Scorpionis, with or without σ , τ Scorpionis (Jyāisthaghni is a misreading in the edition of Whitney and Roth).

³⁶ vi. 110, 2. It is also mentioned in ii. 8, 1; iii. 7, 4; vi. 121, 3. It is identified by the commentators with Mūla, 'the root,' the two stars, λ and ν Scorpionis, which form the sting of the Scorpion's tail; Whitney, *op. cit.*, 48.

³⁷ ix. 7, 3.

³⁸ viii. 1.

³⁹ i. 6, 9.

⁴⁰ i. 1, 2, 1-6.

⁴¹ i. 1, 2, 8.

⁴² ii. 1, 2, 1.

⁴³ Taittirīya Saṃhitā, i. 5, 1, 4; Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā, i. 7, 2; Kāthaka Saṃhitā, viii. 15; Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, ii. 1, 2, 10; Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa, i. 3.

⁴⁴ Hillebrandt, *Ritualliteratur*, 109.

⁴⁵ viii. 15; Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā, i. 7, 2.

⁴⁶ Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, x. 5, 4, 5. See Weber, 2, 298, with whom Egge-ling, *Sacred Books of the East*, 42, 383, n. 1, concurs. For a wild speculation, see Shamasastri, *Gavam ayana*, 122 *et seq.*

⁴⁷ Taittirīya Saṃhitā, iv. 4, 10, 1-3; Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā, i. 13, 20; Kāthaka Saṃhitā, xxix. 13.