

given are : Kṛttikās, Rohiṇī, Mṛgaśīras, Ārdrā, Punarvasū, Puṣya, Āśleṣās, Maghās, Pūrvā Phalgunyau (*sic*),⁶² Hasta, Citrā, Svāti (masc.),⁶³ Viśākhē, Anurādhā,⁶⁴ Jyēsthā, Mūla, Pūrvā Aṣādhās,⁶⁵ Uttarā Aṣādhās, Abhijit, Śravaṇa, Śraviṣṭhās, Śatabhiṣaj, Dvayā Proṣṭhapadā, Revatī, Aśvayujau, Bharanyas.

The Position of the Nakṣatras.—There is nothing definite in Vedic literature regarding the position of most of the Nakṣatras, but the later astronomy precisely locates all of them, and its statements agree on the whole satisfactorily with what is said in the earlier texts, though Weber⁶⁶ was inclined to doubt this. The determinations adopted below are due to Whitney⁶⁷ in his notes on the Sūrya Siddhānta.

1. Kṛttikās are unquestionably η Tauri, etc., the Pleiades. The names of the seven stars forming this constellation, and given above from Yajurveda texts,⁶⁸ include three—*abhṛayanti*, ‘forming clouds’; *meghayanti*, ‘making cloudy’; *varṣayanti*, ‘causing rain’—which clearly refer to the rainy Pleiades. The word *kṛttikā* possibly means ‘web,’ from the root *kṛt*, ‘spin.’

2. Rohiṇī, ‘ruddy,’ is the name of the conspicuously reddish star, α Tauri or Aldebaran, and denotes the group of the Hyades, $\alpha \theta \gamma \delta \epsilon$ Tauri. Its identification seems absolutely assured by the legend of Prajāpati in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.⁶⁹ He is there represented as pursuing his daughter with incestuous intention, and as having been shot with an arrow (Iṣu Trikāṇḍā, ‘the belt of Orion’) by the ‘hunter’ (Mṛgavyādha, ‘Sirius’). Prajāpati is clearly Orion (Mṛgaśīras being the name of the little group of stars in Orion’s head).

3. Mṛgaśīra or Mṛgaśīras, also called Invakā or Invagā,

⁶² The reading Pūrvā Phalgunyau must be wrong; perhaps Dvaye (*cf.* verse 5) or Pūrvē should be read. See Lanman in Whitney, Translation of the Atharvaveda, 908. The Uttare Phalgunyau are omitted.

⁶³ Svāti should, no doubt, be read; but for the Svāti (*sic*) of all the manuscripts (Samhitā and Pada), *cf.* the *navasrahti* of the Aitareya Āraṇyaka, ii. 3, 6, with Keith’s note.

⁶⁴ See Lanman in Whitney, 908.

⁶⁵ Lanman, *ibid.*, 909, reads Pūrvā

Aṣādhā and Uttarā Aṣādhā; Whitney reads Pūrvā and Uttarā Aṣādhās. The manuscripts have Pūrvā and Uttare, which cannot stand.

⁶⁶ *Op. cit.*, 2, 367 *et seq.*

⁶⁷ *Oriental and Linguistic Essays*, 2, 350 *et seq.*

⁶⁸ Taittirīya Samhitā, iv. 4, 5, 1; Kāthaka Samhitā, xl. 4; Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa, iii. 1, 4, 1.

⁶⁹ iii. 33. *Cf.* Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, ii. 1, 2, 8; Tilak, *Orion*, 98 *et seq.*