

interpretation; and the division of the Nakṣatras is not at all satisfactorily explained by a supposed connexion with the sun. It may further be mentioned that even if the Nakṣatra of Kṛttikās be deemed to have been chosen because of its coincidence with the vernal equinox, both Whitney¹²⁴ and Thibaut¹²⁵ are prepared to regard it as no more than a careless variant of the date given by the Jyotiṣa, which puts the winter solstice in Māgha.

(3) The winter solstice in Māgha is assured by a Brāhmaṇa text, for the Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa¹²⁶ expressly places it in the new moon of Māgha (*māghasyāmāvāsyaṅyām*). It is not very important whether we take this with the commentators¹²⁷ as the new moon in the middle of a month commencing with the day after full moon in Taiṣa, or, which is much more likely, as the new moon beginning the month and preceding full moon in Māgha. The datum gives a certain possibility of fixing an epoch in the following way. If the end of Revatī marked the vernal equinox at one period, then the precession of the equinoxes would enable us to calculate at what point of time the vernal equinox was in a position corresponding to the winter solstice in Māgha, when the solstitial colure cut the ecliptic at the beginning of Śraviṣṭhās. This would be, on the strict theory, in the third quarter of Bharanī, 6½ asterisms removed from Śraviṣṭhās, and the difference between that and the beginning of Aśvinī=

¹²⁴ *Oriental and Linguistic Essays*, 2, 383.

¹²⁵ *Indian Antiquary*, 24, 97. Cf. Keith, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1910, 464, n. 4.

¹²⁶ xix. 3. This was first noticed by Weber, *Nakṣatra*, 2, 345 *et seq.*, who pointed out its relation to the datum of the Jyotiṣa. The same date as that of the Jyotiṣa is found in a passage of the Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra cited by Shamasastri, *Gavām Ayana*, 137 (*māghe māse dhanīṣṭhābhīr uttareṅgaiti bhānumān, ardhāśleṣasya śrāvāṇasya dahṣiṇenopani-vartate*, 'in the month of Māgha the sun goes north with the asterism Dhanīṣṭhās, in the month of Śrāvāṇa he returns south in the middle of the asterism Aśleṣa'; the sense is clear,

though the text is corrupt). The passage is apparently not in Caland's manuscripts, or he would have mentioned it in his paper, *Über das rituelle Sūtra: des Baudhāyana*, 36, 37. Its date and value are therefore not quite certain.

¹²⁷ Vināyaka on Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa, *loc. cit.*; Ānartīya on Śāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra, xiii. 19, 1; Weber, *Nakṣatra*, 2, 345. The assumption of the scholiasts seems to be due to the fact that to their minds a month must end with a new moon (*amānta*) or with full moon (*pūrṇimānta*). But there is no reason to say that in Vedic times the month may not have commenced with the new moon; the Kauṣītaki passage would thus be quite satisfactorily explained.