

ṚGVEDA 7, 59

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It has often been observed that the last stanza of the ṛgvedic *sūkta* 7, 59 is an 'addition'.¹ Whereas the *sūkta* in its entirety is addressed to the Maruts, the last stanza (*tryambakam yajāmahe sugāndhim puṣṭivārdhanam urvārukām iva bāndhanān mṛtyór mukṣīya māmṛtāt*) is according to the Anukramaṇī a means of being delivered from death addressed to Rudra (*raudrī mṛtyuvimocanī*), according to the Bṛhaddevatā, 6, 3, a eulogy on Tryambaka, the divine father (*pitaram devam tryambakam*). However, stating that the deity of the stanza is not the same as that of the preceding part of the hymn or speaking of an "angehängte Strophe",² "a late and ungenue appendage",³ or "le caractère récent de cette fin d'hymne"⁴ does not explain its occurrence at the end of a Marut hymn, its raison d'être and the fact that it has been added just here. As to 'caractère récent', this expression might be ambiguous. Not every stanza that has been added at a later moment was necessarily a recent product of poetic imagination. It is true that the noun *mṛtyu* "death", as observed by Renou, is not found in other *sūktas* outside *maṇḍala* X – one could add that the name *tryambakam* and the noun *urvārukām* "a species of cucumber" are, like the optative *mukṣīya*, *hapax legomena* in the Ṛgveda – but this might point also to 'foreign' rather than recent origin of the stanza.⁵ That however the stanza, whatever its origin, was already at an early date regarded as a later addition, or rather was not recognized as genuine, appears from the fact that it is one of the six stanzas that were left without a *padapāṭha* by Śākalya, to whom modern scholarship ascribes the arrangement and the earliest rudimentary exegesis of that recension of the Ṛgveda which has survived.⁶

¹ On 'appendices' in general, see: Gonda, J. (1975): *Vedic Literature*, 28 f; 35 f., etc. Wiesbaden.

² Geldner, K. F. (1951): *Der Rig-Veda übersetzt*. Vol. 2. Cambridge, Massachusetts.

³ Whitney, W. D. and Lanman, Ch.R. (1905): *Atharvaveda Samhitā translated*, p. 743. Cambridge, Massachusetts.

⁴ Renou, L. (1962): *Études védiques et pāṇinéennes*. Vol. 10 p.104. Paris.

⁵ Though referring to Arbman, E. (1922): *Rudra*, p. 294. Uppsala, Renou *loc.cit.* does not mention that in the opinion of this author the name Tryambaka "einen sehr altertümlichen Eindruck macht."

⁶ Gonda, V. L., p. 16 ff.

There is no doubt that stanza 12 enjoyed considerable popularity also in secondary Vedic literature, later Upaniṣads, etc. It is, for instance, in Ṛgvidhāna, 2, 27, 3 f. recommended to a person who wishes to live happily for a hundred years. He should sacrifice a hundred offerings of rice with clarified butter to Mahādeva Tryambaka, i.e. Rudra-Śiva,⁷ with this stanza: “We worship Tryambaka, the sweet-scented, who increases prosperity. May I be released from death, like a gourd from its stem, (but) not from continuance of life (*amṛta*)”.⁸ There is no denying that this *mantra* is suitable for the purpose described. It may be noticed that it was not only valued because of the general meaning of its words but sometimes also for the numeral “three” in the proper noun Tryambaka: Kalāgnirudropaniṣad 1 (accompanying the drawing of three lines on one’s forehead etc.).

For my purpose, however, its occurrences in the *śrauta* ritual are of greater interest. In the section dealing with the royal consecration (*rājasūya*), i.e. *praṇpāṭhaka* VIII of book (*kāṇḍa*) I the compiler of the Taittirīya-Saṃhitā has collected, *inter alia*, the *mantras* for the offering of a cake to Rudra Tryambaka.⁹ After a fire has been made at a place where four ways meet with another stanza which contains the name Tryambaka and is foreign to the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā – viz. “We have, O lady (*amba*), appeased Rudra, ap(peased) the god Tryambaka, that he may make us well-to-do, that he may make us wealthier (more excellent), that he may make us rich in cattle, that he may embolden us” (TS. 1, 8, 6 h) – the fire is three times circumambulated to the accompaniment of the stanza under discussion (6 i). For the *brāhmaṇa* see TB. 1, 6, 10, 4 f. where *pāda* a of stanza h (“a prayer or blessing”) and *pādas* a d of stanza i are quoted. Now, these rites belong here because they obviously are intimately connected with what precedes, the *sākamedha*, the third of the four-monthly rituals (*cāturmāsyaṇi*) (TS. 1, 8, 4) and the worship of the Fathers (*pitryajña*, TS. 1, 8, 5) which likewise forms part of the *sākamedha*. Since the three *cāturmāsyaṇi*, filling the year preceding the unction festival (the main element of the *rājasūya*), had become an integral part of the *rājasūya* which, in the version of the Taittirīyas Āpastamba and Hiranyakeśin, added a year more to the ritual of the royal consecration, the offering of a cake to Tryambaka, the circumambulation etc. are in TS. and TB. dealt with here, although they no doubt had originally nothing to do with the royal consecration.

While in the other *saṃhitās* of the Black Yajurveda the *sākamedha* is not

⁷ See: Gonda, J. (1951): *The Rgvidhāna*. p. 58 f. Utrecht.

⁸ Cf. also Caland, W. in Z.D.M.G. 53, p. 701 f.

⁹ For a longer discussion see: Heesterman, J. C. (1957): *The ancient Indian royal consecration*. Doctor’s diss., p. 27 ff. Utrecht.

treated in the section dealing with the *rājasūya* it everywhere includes the Tryambaka episode. See MS. 1, 10, 4, where the Tryambaka stanza is quoted on p. 144, 12 and a stanza that corresponds with the Ambā stanza on p. 144, 6; for the *brāhmaṇa* see 1, 10, 20: 160, 11: “they circumambulate, there also (a girl) desirous of a husband circumambulates; it is for her a means of finding a husband”. Likewise KS. 9, 7: 110, 7 (cf. 36, 14: 81, 9), and an Ambā stanza 110, 3; KapS. 8, 10: 87, 21 and 17.

As to the White Yajurveda the stanza under discussion is in VS. 3, 60 – which is part of the section containing the *mantras* for the *sākamedha* offerings, the worship of the Fathers and the Rudra-Tryambaka episode – immediately, and uncommonly, followed by a variant reading in b *pa-tivédanam* instead of *puṣṭivārdhanam* and in d *itó mukṣīya māmútaḥ*. Notice also that the Ambā stanza is represented as VS. 3, 58 by a variant that omits the word *amba* and as far as its metre is concerned is more satisfactory: “We have appeased Rudra etc.” According to KŚ. 5, 10, 15 ff.; ŚB. 2, 6, 2, 12 ff. and the commentaries on VS. “they” (i.e. those concerned) walk first three times round the fire withershins, beating their left thighs, and later on with the same text, three times sunwise, beating their right thighs.¹⁰ Between these circumambulations the girls (unmarried daughters of the sacrificer) walk round also, when they are desirous of a husband or fortune. Remember the above passage MS. 1, 10, 20: 160, 11. ŚB. 13 f. adds in explanation “That sister of Rudra, named Ambikā, is the (a) dispenser of happiness”.¹¹ From VS. 3, 57 and ŚB. 9 it appears that Rudra is expected to accept his share “together with his sister Ambikā”. This sister is in TB. 1, 6, 10, 4 and KS. 36, 14: 81, 4 identified with the autumn¹² – the season in which the *sākamedha* takes place – “(and) through her (by means of the autumn) he (Rudra) is wont to injure (or kill people, by means of illness etc.)” (TB.) “... he comes down after her (cf. MS. 1, 10, 20: 160, 6; TS. 6, 4, 9, 5), that is why he kills mostly in the autumn” (KS.).¹³ Contrary to TB. which is silent on the circumambulations, these are, in essential agreement with the texts of the White Yajurveda, also mentioned in ĀpŚ. 8, 18, 2 f. (for Rudra and his sister Ambikā as well as the Ambā stanza *ibid.* 1). See also BŚ. 5, 16: 151, 16, BhŚ. 8, 22, 7; VaikhŚ. 9, 11: 99, 9, where the housemates of the sacrificer are said to perform the

¹⁰ Cf. Gonda, J. (1980): *Vedic Ritual*. Leiden.

¹¹ The last words (*pāda d*) of the second stanza in VS. 3,60 expresses the idea “may I be severed from my relatives, not from thence (the family of my husband).” For the variant “from death may I be loosened, not from a husband.” See MŚ. 1, 7, 7, 7.

¹² In MānGS. 2, 3, 5 Tryambaka, here distinct from Rudra and Paśupati, occurs before Śarad (Autumn) in an enumeration of deities.

¹³ See also: Caland, W. (1924): *Das Śrautasūtra des Āpastamba*. Vol. 2 p. 58, on ApŚ. 8, 18, 1. Amsterdam Academy.

circumambulation (the Ambā stanza at 99, 7); LŚS. 5, 3 ff. (also the Ambā stanza); VaitS. 9, 18 f. (without the other stanza).

There can be no doubt that this Tryambaka episode is probably an ancient and, in any case, 'popular' rite performed in order to appease the much feared god Rudra and his sister (Ambā or Ambikā): cf. KS. 36, 14: 81, 5 *tayaivainam saha niravadayate*.¹⁴ In support of this conclusion special attention may be drawn to the importance of the female element¹⁵ which is often characteristic of 'popular' rites and in all probability is also apparent from the god's name "he who has three *ambās* ('mother goddesses')" or "is three-fold connected with (an) *ambā(s)*".¹⁶

The Maruts, on the other hand, have intimate relations with Rudra.¹⁷ They are believed to be his sons (RV. 1, 114, 6; 9; 2, 33, 1; 2, 34, 10 etc.)¹⁸ and are often called Rudras (1, 64, 3; 1, 100, 5; 2, 34, 9 etc.). Rudra and the Maruts are sometimes mentioned (2, 33, 6; cf. 1, 64, 2; 2, 1, 6; 7, 56, 1), and even invoked, together: "Rudra accompanied by the Maruts must hear our invocation" (1, 114, 11 *śṛṇōtu no hāvaṃ rudrō marūtvaṇ*); 10, 126, 5. Although the Maruts are often described as helping Indra in his conflicts and exploits they occasionally participate in the maleficent nature of their father Rudra, threatening to destroy creatures (ŚB. 2, 5, 2, 10, in the section on the Varuṇapraghāsa, the second of the seasonal sacrifices). They are implored to avert their weapons (RV. 1, 172, 2; 7, 56, 17; 7, 57, 4) and their anger is deprecated (1, 171, 1; 7, 58, 5: notice that 7, 56–58 belong to the same group of hymns as 7, 59). They are also besought to bring, together with Rudra, remedies (2, 33, 12 f.). It is therefore not surprising that they should play an important part in the four-month sacrifices performed in spring, in the rains, and in the autumn, at the beginning of each season.¹⁹ They receive offerings in all three rituals; on the occasion of the second of these, the

¹⁴ On the Tryambaka ritual see e.g.: Oldenberg, H. (1923): *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 441 ff. Stuttgart und Berlin⁴; Arbman, *op.cit.*, p. 48 ff.; 294 ff.; Hillebrandt, A. (1929): *Vedische Mythologie*. Vol. 2 p. 438 ff., Breslau².

¹⁵ The stanza recited by the circumambulating girls recurs as (is a modification of?) a wedding stanza in which Aryaman, the divine 'groomsman' (RV.10, 85, 23; 43), takes the place of Tryambaka. For Ambikā see also Yājñavalkya 1, 289, and compare MānGS. 2, 14, 30 f.

¹⁶ On the god's name Charpentier, J. in W.Z.K.M. 23 p. 177 ff.; Hillebrandt, *op.cit.*, p. 439, n. 5. For three goddesses and *tri-* in proper names see: Gonda, J. (1976): *Triads in the Veda*, p. 69 f.; 109. Amsterdam Acad.

¹⁷ For a characterization of Rudra see Gonda, J. (1978): *Die Religionen Indiens*, 1 p. 85 ff., Stuttgart².

¹⁸ See also Macdonell, A. A. (1897): *Vedic mythology*, p. 74; 78. Strassburg.

¹⁹ Full details in Kane, P. V. (1941): *History of Dharmasāstra*, 2 p. 1091 ff. Poona.

Varuṇapraghāsa, essentially a rite to secure rain and an abundance of flocks, the figure of a ewe (ĀpŚ. 8, 6, 12 f.)²⁰; they are invoked and mentioned in *mantras* (19; 24), etc. In the third seasonal festival the number of offerings they receive is considerable. The texts mention oblations made to the Maruts who are Heaters or Scorchers (ŚB. 2, 5, 3, 3; ŚŚ. 3, 15, 5 f.; BŚ. 5, 10: 141, 12; BhŚ. 8, 12, 24; ĀpŚ. 8, 9, 15; VaitS. 9, 2), to the Maruts who have a share in the domestic sacrifices (*gṛhamedhinaḥ*, rather than “Householders” ŚB. 4; ŚS: 7 f.; BŚ. 141, 13; BhŚ. 8, 12, 7; 9; 14; 8, 13, 4; 8; 10; 16 f.; ĀpŚ. 8; VaitS. 9, 8) and to the Sporting (*krīḍinaḥ*) Maruts (ŚB. 2, 5, 3, 20; ŚS. 14 f.; BŚ. 5, 10: 142, 15; BhŚ. 8, 14, 1; 10; VaitS. 9, 5).

It is worth noticing that according to the authorities (KB. 5, 5 (5, 6, 9 ff., copied in GB. 2, 1, 23); BŚ. 5, 10: 141, 17 ff.; 142, 15 f.; BhŚ. 8, 12, 14; 8, 13, 4; 8, 14, 10; ŚŚ. 3, 15, 6 ff.; ĀpŚ. 8, 9, 2 ff.; VaitS. 9, 2) one should sacrifice at midday to the Maruts who are Scorchers (*sāṃtapānāḥ*), “because at midday it is hot” (*sāṃtapati*, KB.); in the evening to the Maruts who are *gṛhamedhinaḥ*: “as to the fact that in the evening they are engaged in (what relates to) the domestic ritual (*gṛhamedhīyena caranti*), (that which relates to) the domestic ritual is a rite for prosperity (*puṣṭikarma*)²¹, and prosperity is in the evening ...” (KB.). With regard to the Sporting Maruts – to whom one should sacrifice in the morning of the next day (see also VaitS. 9, 4) – KB. 5, 5 (5, 7, 1 ff.) says: “in that he worships them by means of a sacrifice (*yan marutaḥ krīḍino yajati*), they are Indra’s, therefore he worships them in conjunction with Indra”. It is no great surprise that the Maruts, as atmospheric gods, should be connected with the heat at the middle of the day. As to the Sporting Ones the verb *krīḍ-* “to play, sport” and the adjective *krīḍa* “sporting” are more than once (RV. 1, 37, 1; 5; 1, 166, 2; 5, 60, 3) used to picture the Maruts as the gods of the (roaring) winds or of the moving air. Morning-wind, matutinal downslope winds etc. are well-known phenomena;²² hence probably the sacrifice to this ‘aspect’ of the Maruts in the early morning.²³ The *gṛhamedhinaḥ* obtain a portion of a porridge (*caru*) such as is prepared in the domestic ritual: see the long description in ĀpŚ. 8, 9, 8 ff.; also BŚ. 5, 10: 141, 18 ff. (*gṛhamedīyaṃ caruṃ śrapayitvā*); a more elaborate but on the other

²⁰ Cf. Caland’s notes on ĀpŚ. 8, 6, 12; 15 (*op.cit.*, 2 p. 24).

²¹ This term is in GG. 3, 10, 2 used in connexion with the *aṣṭakā* ceremonies; it occurs also BDh. 2, 14, 1; Kauś. 7, 2; 24, 45. For the share of the Maruts in the domestic sacrifices see Gonda, V. R. ch. XX; on certain occasions one offers, for instance, portions of food (*bali*) to them; see e.g. PG. 2, 10, 3.

²² I refer to Gonda, J. (1974): *The dual deities in the religion of the Veda*, p. 226. Amsterdam Acad.

²³ Other (mythological) explanations (ŚB. 2, 5 and 6; TB. 1, 6, 6, 3 ff.) need not be considered here.

hand considerably simplified ritual in BhŚ. 8, 12, 7 ff.; cf. also VaikhŚ. 9, 1 and 2).²⁴

According to ŚS. 3, 15, 15 and ĀśvŚ. 2, 18, 16 the invitatory and oblatory *mantras* for the last (morning) sacrifice are the very suitable stanzas ṚV. 1, 37, 1 and 5, 60, 3 (containing the words *krīḷám* “sporting” and *krīḷatha* “you are playing” respectively). For the sacrifice to the Scorching Maruts the texts (ŚS. 3, 15, 6; ĀśvŚ. 2, 18, 3; TS. 4, 3, 13 k and l; MS. 4, 10, 5: 154, 7; 9; KS. 21, 13: 54, 6; 8; see also VaitS. 9, 2 quoting AVŚ. 7, 77, 1) prescribe the use of ṚV. 7, 59, 9 and 8, the former beginning with “O Scorching (*sāṃtapānāḥ*) Maruts, this offering (is yours), do ye enjoy it” and the latter requesting the gods to slay the man “who wishes to kill us with your extremely hot blow” (*tāpīṣṭhena hānmanā hantanā tām*, TS.; KS. and AVŚ. 2 reading *t. tapasā h. t.* “... with your extremely burning heat”). There is no denying that this use of the two *mantras* is most suitable. So is that of ṚV. 7, 59, 10 and 7, 56, 14 which are the invitatory and consecratory *mantras* for the Maruts who have a share in the domestic sacrifices, the *gr̥hamedhinaḥ* (ŚS. 3, 15, 9; ĀśvŚ. 2, 18, 4; TS. 4, 3, 13 r and t; MS. 4, 10, 5: 154, 12; 14; KS. 21, 13: (cf. 54, 10;) 54, 12).

The conclusion seems inevitable²⁵ that the redactor of the Ṛgveda (or one of his predecessors) has ‘added’ the at first sight isolated stanza 12 to the preceding stanzas because it belonged to the Tryambaka rite which was an integral part of the *sākamedha* celebrations, and the stanzas 8, 9 and 10 were required for consecrating the preceding oblations offered to the Maruts, Rudra’s sons. No better place could be imagined.

There is another question, however. As intimated elsewhere,²⁶ ṚV. 7, 59 in its entirety as well as its first seven *mantras*²⁷ individually are nowhere found in a ritual context. St. 11 is used as the invitatory *mantra* for a sacrifice to the Maruts in the Vaiśvadeva ritual (the first of the three seasonal sacrifices): ŚS. 3, 13, 14 (cf. 9); ĀśvŚ. 2, 16, 11; MS. 4, 10, 3: 15, 6; KS. 20, 15: 36, 1: “Here, just here do I choose (to perform) for you a sacrificial rite, O inherently powerful

²⁴ VaikhŚ. 19, 6: 295, 2 ff. distinguishes between Maruts who are to be worshipped in the wilderness (*aranya*) obviously called or characterized as *dhuni* “boisterous” (for this epithet see ṚV. 1, 64, 5; 1, 87, 3, etc.) and the troops that are worshipped in the village (*grāmya*), viz. those that occur also at ĀpŚ. 17, 16, 17; HŚ. 12, 5, 30 (*agnicayana*: cf. VS. 17, 85), the *svatavas* (see below), *praghāsin* “voracious” (VS. 3, 44; KŚ 5, 5, 9), *sāṃtapana*, *gr̥hamedhin*, *krīḍin*, *sākin* “mighty” (ṚV. 5, 52, 17 and VS. *sākin*) and *ūrjisin* “sappy, vigorous” (SV. *ujjesin* “victorious”). Here also the four classes of Maruts that are under discussion are closely connected.

²⁵ See Arbman, *op.cit.*, p. 293; left unmentioned by Geldner, loc. cit.; Renou, I. cit. and Velankar, H.D. (1963): *Ṛgveda maṇḍala VII*, p. 138. Bombay.

²⁶ Gonda, J. (1978): *Hymns of the Ṛgveda not employed in the solemn ritual*, p. 106. Amsterdam Acad.

²⁷ I leave the employment of st. 3 (as SV. I, 241) in SVidhBr. 2, 8, 1 (for obtaining handsome and long-lived sons) out of account.

ones, O Maruts” (*ihéha vah svatavasah . . . yajñám maruta á vrñe*). The adjective *svátavas*, which is also in RV. 1, 64, 7 an epithet of the Maruts (see also 6, 66, 9 *márutāya svátavase*), no doubt denotes, after the Scorching Maruts and the Maruts who have a share in the domestic rites – *gṛhamedhāsah* in RV. 7, 59, 10 –, a third aspect, function, or division of the troop: see KB. 5, 2, 13 ff. “in that he sacrifices to the Maruts who are (or: as) inherently powerful (strong) – and the Maruts who are (or) as inherently powerful are terrible –, verily thus he makes a remedy” (the section deals with the *Vaiśvadeva*). Yet, this aspect of the Maruts obviously was not universally recognized: “if”, ŚB. 2, 5, 1, 14 states in the section on the *Vaiśvadeva*, “(the priests) do not find an invitatory and an oblatory *mantra* addressed to the *svatavasas* (Maruts), it (the oblation) must be (offered) simply to the Maruts”: the stanza is indeed not prescribed in the White Yajurveda or in the *sūtras* of the Taittirīyas and the Maitrāyaṇīyas. Interestingly enough, the morning sacrifice is according to ĀpŚ. 8, 11, 22 dedicated to the *krīḍiṇah* or to the *svatavasah* Maruts, whose worship normally belongs to the *Vaiśvadeva* ritual (see above; KŚ. 5, 1, 11; however, BŚ. 5, 1: 128, 15; BhŚ. 8, 1, 19 omit the adjective *svatavas*). VaikhŚ. 9, 1: 90, 4 speaks of three sacrifices (*iṣṭi*), viz. to Agni Anīkavat (ApŚ. 9, 2, 2 etc.), the *sāṃtapana* and the *gṛhamedhīya* (these take place on the same day).

This ritually somewhat uncertain position of the third group – they are not always given a special offering in this less important seasonal ritual – is in agreement with the structure of the three stanzas: 9 and 10 have much in common: the terms *sāṃtapanāḥ* and *gṛhamedhāsah*, the vocatives *márutah*, the expressions *yuṣmākotī* occupy exactly the same initial positions, the second *pādas* end in *-tana* (imperative ending), the third ones in *-ah* (plural). These features are missing in st. 11. On the other hand, these three stanzas have the *gāyatrī* metre in common. One can hardly escape the conviction that they belong more closely together than to the other stanzas of the hymn and may have formed a separate unit before being included in that poem.

At first sight it seems perhaps somewhat strange that st. 8 which is in the *triṣṭubh* metre and is quite differently structured is used as the oblatory stanza after st. 9 in the sacrifice to the Scorching Maruts. However, the invitatory and oblatory stanzas of the same sacrificial rite are very often found in different hymns of the *Rgveda*, or in different ‘sections’ of the same hymn (e.g. RV. 1, 91, 10 and 4 at ŚŚ. 3, 12, 5). As already observed st. 8 is very suitable for its ritual purpose. It has moreover forms of the root *tap-* (in TS. *tapīṣṭhena tapasā*) and the imperative ending in *-tana* in common with st. 9. The supposition seems legitimate that, whatever its origin, it was united with what follows and subsequently included in RV. 7, 59 together with 9 and 10 or 9–11 after (or because) it had come to form a pair of *yājyānuvākya*s with 9 in the *sākamedha* ritual. In this connexion attention should be drawn to the fact

that the st. 8 and 9 occur, in inverted order, also as AVŚ. 7, 77, 2 and 1, where they are followed by a third stanza (half *triṣṭubh*, half *jagatī*) so as to form a Marut text which in Kauś. 48, 38 is used in a witchcraft rite (it is to accompany the laying on of fuel from an upright dry tree which is no doubt supposed to have withered through the Maruts' scorching activity). Stanza 3, which, irrespective of some variants, recurs as TS. 4, 3, 13 m, praises the Maruts as "belonging to the year" (*saṃvatsarīnāḥ*), which the commentary explains by "who will appear every year" (in the seasonal sacrifices ??, or simply, in the phenomena of nature?) and as "heating" or "scorching" (*sāmtapanāḥ*, see above and st. 1 of AV. 7, 77; it also requests them to deliver those speaking from the fetters of sin (*enas*; distress, *amhas* in TS.). Here the two stanzas 1 and 2 are supplemented by a third one which, while like the two others emphasizing the 'much heating' activity of the Maruts – remember that they are often associated with lightning (e.g. RV. 1, 64, 5; 5, 54, 2) – is not a request to destroy an enemy but a complementary prayer for release from evil. The very existence and function of this small *sūkta* may be regarded as an argument in favour of the hypothesis that at one time the stanzas 8 and 9 formed a sort of unity or at least could, for more than one purpose, form part, as a unit, of more than one larger whole.

Whether or not st. 7 has ever accompanied a ritual act, though joining st. 8 in being composed in the *triṣṭubh* metre, there is no doubt that it – contrary to the stanzas 8 ff. – takes the Maruts to revel in the *soma* draught: for *sāvane mādantaḥ* cf. e.g. RV. 1, 161, 8; 2, 18, 7 etc.²⁸ Of the other stanzas 1, 2 and 4 pray the favour of the Maruts and praise them because of their reliability in rendering help and assistance. The stanzas 3, 4, 5 and 6 refer explicitly to the pressing and drinking of *soma*, characterizing these gods even as "desirous of drinking" (4 *pipīṣavaḥ*). Is it warranted to venture the supposition that at a later moment when the Maruts had gained access to *soma* ceremonies,²⁹ or – to express myself more cautiously – that on behalf of those who performed the usual *soma* ritual in which these gods participated, a poet or redactor added the first six or seven stanzas to the pre-existing second part of the hymn?³⁰

²⁸ It is true that in later texts *savana* can denote also the three moments or periods of the day (morning, noon, and evening; see e.g. Manu 6, 22) but I would not hazard the supposition that this is the meaning here or rather that this is what the poet meant to say but was reinterpreted by the redactor.

²⁹ There exists, to a certain extent, a parallelism between the part played by the Maruts in the *sāhamedha* (sacrifices three times a day) and their rôle in the *soma* ceremonies where they appear, in the midday pressing, in the company of Indra, and in the evening pressing, in that of Agni (see e.g. Hillebrandt, V.M., ²II, p. 290 ff.). In the morning it is Vāyu (not the Maruts) who is invited to drink the draught. Remember the above observation on the Sporting Maruts.

³⁰ Beside Marut hymns that mention the *soma* draught (e.g. 1, 85; 86; 87) there exist others which are silent on this point (e.g. 1, 38; 39).