

On the *Mārtāṇḍa* myth in Rigveda X 72

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X 72 is one of the famous creation hymns in the Rigveda. It has been treated by many scholars, e.g., recently by THIEME (Fs. Risch 1986, 159–175) and FALK (WZKS 38, 1994, 1–22). The present contributor also wrote a detailed article in Japanese (Fs. Hōjō 2004, 415–432). The meaning and importance of its last two strophes on *Mārtāṇḍa* relating the origin of the human being as well as the death is nevertheless not yet duly recognized.

The myth of *Mārtāṇḍa* ‘the one derived from a dead egg’ as the eighth and last brother of the *Ādityas* has been convincingly reconstructed by Karl HOFFMANN from the details told in the prose of the Yajurveda-Samhitās and some fragmental references in the Iranian texts (MSS 11, 1957, 59–71 = Aufsätze II 422–438). *Mārtāṇḍa* was as large as two persons (or gods) in the mother’s womb, which reminds us of the “*androgynos*” in Plato’s Symposium. Though he was aborted by his elder brothers, the *Āditya* gods who were afraid of his great abilities, his mother *Aditi* rescued him through cutting off the dead parts. The poet of the Rigveda utilizes this Indo-Iranian myth in order to explain the meaning of the death. A human being cannot avoid dying. When he comes together with the death, he recovers his original perfect state and gains access to the heaven: *For the propagation, and for the death on the other side, she (Mother Aditi) brought him back (on the earth)* [Strophe 9cd].

Some other features in the hymn will be discussed, e.g., the relationship to the *Viśvakarmaṇ-* and *Puruṣa-sūkta*. I would like to present also the Vādhūla-version found by IKARI about *Mārtāṇḍa* (Vādhūla-Anvākhyāna I 3–7).