

Āśva is the commonest word for 'horse' in the Vedic literature. The horse is also called 'the runner' (*atyā*), 'the swift' (*arvant*), 'the strong,' for pulling (*vājin*), 'the runner' (*sapti*), and 'the speeding' (*haya*). The mare is termed *āśvā*, *atyā*, *arvatī*, *vaḍavā*, etc. Horses of various colour were known, dun (*harita*, *hari*), ruddy (*aruṇa*, *aruṣa*, *piśānga*, *rohita*), dark brown (*śyāva*), white (*śveta*), etc. A white horse with black ears is mentioned in the Atharvaveda as of special value.¹ Horses were highly prized,² and were not rare, as Roth³ thought, for as many as four hundred mares are mentioned in one *Dānastuti* ('Praise of Gifts').⁴ They were on occasion ornamented with pearls and gold.⁵

Mares were preferred for drawing chariots because of their swiftness and sureness.⁶ They were also used for drawing carts, but were not ordinarily so employed.⁷ No mention is made of riding in battle, but for other purposes it was not unknown.⁸

Horses were often kept in stalls,⁹ and fed there.¹⁰ But they were also allowed to go out to grass,¹¹ and were then hobbled.¹² They were watered to cool them after racing.¹³ Their attendants

¹ Av. v. 17, 15.

² Rv. i. 83, 1; iv. 32, 17; v. 4, 11; viii. 78, 2, etc.

³ *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 35, 686.

⁴ Rv. viii. 55, 3. Cf. v. 33, 8; vi. 47, 22-24; 63, 10; viii. 6, 47; 46, 22, and Hopkins, *American Journal of Philology*, 15, 157.

⁵ Rv. x. 68, 11.

⁶ Pischel, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 35, 712-714; *Vedische Studien*, 1, 10, 305. Cf. *ratho vadhūmān*, Rv. i. 126, 3; vii. 18, 22, *vājinivān*, vii. 69, 1.

⁷ *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, v. 5, 4, 35.

⁸ The *Āśvins ride*, Rv. v. 61, 1-3. An *āśva-sāda* is referred to in *Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā*, xxx. 13; *Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa*, iii. 4, 7, 1; and riding is meant in Rv. i. 162, 17; 163, 9. Av. xi. 10, 24, is doubtful. Cf. Hopkins, *Journal of the*

American Oriental Society, 13, 262; Ludwig, *Translation of the Rigveda*, 3, 221. Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben*, 230, denies the use; but see p. 295, where it is admitted for ordinary purposes.

⁹ Cf. the epithet of richness, 'filling the stalls with horses' (*āśva-pastya*), in Rv. ix. 86, 41, and see Av. vi. 77, 1; xix. 55, 1.

¹⁰ Av. *loc. cit.*

¹¹ Zimmer, *op. cit.*, 232, denies this, but it is the natural sense of the *Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā*, xv. 41.

¹² The expression for this is *paḍbīṣa*, Rv. i. 162, 14, 16; *Byhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, vi. 2, 13; *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, v. 1, 12; *Sāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka*, ix. 7. Cf. Pischel, *Vedische Studien*, 1, 234-236.

¹³ Rv. ii. 13, 5; 34, 3; *Maitrāyaṇi Saṃhitā*, i. 11, 6; Pischel, *op. cit.*, 1, 189, 190.