

At right angles to the axle was the pole of the chariot (līṣā, Prauga). Normally there was, it seems, one pole, on either side of which the horses were harnessed, a yoke (Yuga) being laid across their necks; the pole was passed through the hole in the yoke (called Kha¹⁰ or Tardman¹¹), the yoke and the pole then being tied together.¹²

The horses were tied by the neck (*grīvā*), where the yoke was placed, and also at the shoulder, presumably by traces fastened to a bar of wood at right angles to the pole, or fastened to the ends of the pole, if that is to be regarded, as it probably should, as of triangular shape, wide at the foot and coming to a point at the tip.¹³ The traces seem to be denoted by *Rasmi* and *Rasanā*. These words also denote the 'reins,' which were fastened to the bit (perhaps *śiprā*) in the horse's mouth. The driver controlled the horses by reins, and urged them on with a whip (*Kaśā*).¹⁴ The girths of the horse were called *Kakṣyā*.¹⁵

The normal number of horses seems to have been two, but three or four¹⁶ were often used. It is uncertain whether, in these cases, the extra horse was attached in front or at the side; possibly both modes were in use. Even five steeds could be employed.¹⁷ Horses were normally used for chariots, but the ass (*gardubha*)¹⁸ or mule (*aśvatari*)¹⁹ are also mentioned. The ox was employed for drawing carts, and in fact derived its

¹⁰ This seems to be the sense of Rv. viii. 91, 7; but it has also been taken as the opening in the yoke through which the ox's head passed (the Homeric ἵνυλα). See Cowell's note on Wilson's translation; Griffith, *Hymns of the Rigveda*, 2, 237, n.

¹¹ Av. xiv. 1, 40.

¹² Rv. iii. 6, 6; v. 56, 4; x. 60, 8.

¹³ Zimmer, *op. cit.*, 249, thinks that *vāṇi* in Rv. i. 119, 5, denotes the two bars of wood to which the traces were fastened. This is also the view of Roth, St. Petersburg Dictionary, s.v., Böhtlingk's Lexicon, and Grassmann. The word may mean 'two voices' (Griffith, *Hymns of the Rigveda*, 1, 162).

¹⁴ Rv. v. 83, 3; vi. 75, 6.

¹⁵ Rv. x. 10, 13: *kakṣya-prā*, 'filling

out the girths' (i.e., 'well fed'), is an epithet of Indra's horses, i. 10, 3.

¹⁶ Three horses are mentioned in Rv. x. 33, 5, and *Pras̥ti* in Rv. i. 39, 6; viii. 7, 28, etc., may have the sense of 'third horse.' See also Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, v. 1, 4, 11; 2, 4, 9, etc.; Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa, xvi. 13, 12. For four horses, cf. Rv. ii. 18, 1; Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, v. 4, 3, 17; 1, 4, 11; Eggeling, *Sacred Books of the East*, 41, 21, n. 1.

¹⁷ *Rathaḥ pañcavāhi*, Kāthaka Samhitā, xv. 2; Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā, ii. 6, 3. In the parallel passage the Taittirīya Samhitā, i. 8, 7, 2, has *prastivāhi*.

¹⁸ Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, iv. 9, 4.

¹⁹ Chāndogya Upaniṣad, iv. 2, 1; v. 13, 2; Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, iv. 9, 1.