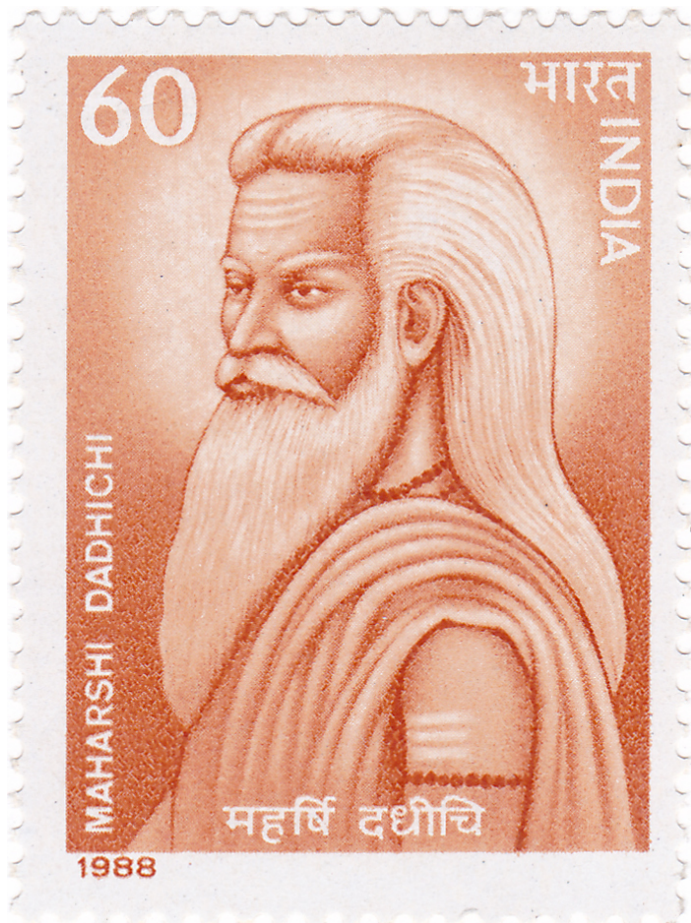


# The Strange Story of Dadhichi and the Horse's Head

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## Genesis of this Study

This is the fourth consecutive paper I have presented at this conference exploring folk motifs of the ancient cultures of India and comparing them, whenever possible, to the Native American cultures of Missouri, Iowa, Kansas and Oklahoma. The first paper examined the vision quest practices of both peoples, practices of fasting, asceticism, and solitude aimed at gaining divine knowledge through visions of and communication with talking spirit-animals. The second paper was about the relationship in both cultures of food and dogs. Among the native Sac and Fox tribes dogs were eaten as part of several sacred ceremonies and celebrations. Dogs among the Sac and Fox have special sacred power and are pleasing offerings to the Manitou, the spirit beings who are believed to populate and influence the world. In India, dogs are represented in the family names of many ancient and respected sages, the great sages Śaunaka (Son of Little Dog), Śunaḥpuccha (Dog Tail), and Śunaḥkarṇa (Dog's Ear) for instance. Moreover an interesting story from an old upaniṣadic wisdom text, presents a group of dogs acting as *brāhmaṇa* priests and creating sacred chants to alleviate scarcity of food in times of

famine. While I was working on that paper I came across another interesting connection between the roles of dogs in both cultures. In both, dogs are somehow connected with death and death rites. This increased my curiosity about the meaning dogs have in these two cultures separated so distantly in space and time. Of course, the connection of dogs with food in both cultures is not unrelated to their connection with death. Without food death is certain.

In this paper-presentation I am shifting my attention to horses. During the course of my studies this year I discovered some strange stories in which horses, or at least their heads, play important roles. There can be no doubt about the importance of horses to both the ancient culture of India and that of more recent Native Americans. The ancient story of Dadhīci, as old as 3,000 years or perhaps older, provides a number fascinating folk motifs many of which are shared with cultures around the world including those of many Native Americans. There can be no doubt that the domestication of the horse was a major milestone in the development of human civilization and part of this story touches on what horses came to represent symbolically around the world.

So who was Dadhīci? We are not exactly sure. Different texts say different things about him. They all agree, however, that he was the son of Atharvan who is said to be the author or compiler of the Atharva Veda, the fourth and latest of the Vedas, the ancient, sacred texts of India (1200-800 BCE). The Atharva Veda contains many spells for obtaining various objectives, like the love of a special woman, the destruction of one's enemies, or protection from accidents, evils and sins. Dadhīci (also called Dadhyaṅ or Dadhyaṅc in some texts) was born from Atharvan's wife Śānti (or, according to the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Citti, Atharvan's other wife.). He and his father are said to be the initiators of fire ceremonies (like the Pravargya rite described later) and the Soma rites.<sup>1</sup> Dadhīci is referred to in six hymns of the oldest text of the Hindu tradition, the Ṛg Veda (Ī200-1000 BCE)<sup>2</sup> and he is featured in a story from India's great epic the *Mahābhārata* (4th cent. BCE to 2nd cent. CE)<sup>3</sup> and the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (8th cent to 10th cent. CE).<sup>4</sup> A portion of the Yajur Veda, the third of the four Vedas, is also ascribed to Dadhīci.<sup>5</sup> His wife was Svarcā and his son was another famous sage named Pippalāda. He willingly gave up his life for the sake of the gods (Indra, the king of gods, and the rest) so that Indra could have his backbone made into

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<sup>1</sup>Soma is the elixir of immortality in Hindu mythology. It was prepared and offered to the gods in several fire ceremonies described in the Vedas.

<sup>2</sup>RV., 1.80.16, 1.84.13-4, 1.116.12, 1.117.22, 1.139.9, and 9.108.4

<sup>3</sup>Mbh., 3.86-95.

<sup>4</sup>Bhāg., 6.9-10

<sup>5</sup>Probably the chapters on the Pravargya rite, a ritual preparatory to the Soma rite.

a thunderbolt weapon in order to face Indra's most powerful enemies, the demons (*asuras*) headed by Vṛtra.



The Gods Headed by Indra Approach Dadhici for a Favor.  
(Bottom) Indra Kills Vritra with his Thunderbolt made of Dadhici's Backbone.

It isn't, however, this part of his life, interesting as it is as folklore, that we will focus on here, however. We will focus instead on Dadhici as the teacher of two secret doctrines to the divine twin gods, the *Aśvins* (Horse-/men).

## The Story of Dadhīci's Teachings to the Aśvins

The story of Dadhīci as a teacher is hinted at in the Ṛg Veda in one of the hymns to the twin gods, his students the Aśvins. The commentator on the hymn Sāyaṇācārya fills the story in. The twelfth verse of hymn 116 of the First Circle (Maṇḍala) of the Ṛg Veda goes like this:

*tadvāṃ narā sanaye daṃsa ugram  
āviṣkṛṇomi tanyaturna vṛṣṭim |  
dadhyañ ha yadmadhvātharvaṇo vām  
aśvasya śiṛṣṇā pra yadimuvāca ||*<sup>6</sup>

I reveal, O you two men, that  
incredible deed for your gain  
like thunder in clouds reveals rain:  
how Dadhyañ, son of Atharvan,  
taught you both the honey wisdom  
by means of the head of a horse.

Sāyaṇa's commentary on this verses tells the following story: Indra, the king of the gods, taught Dadhīci the Pravargya wisdom (*vidyā*), a fire ceremony, and the Honey wisdom and warned him that if he taught those secret meditations to anyone else, he would cut off his head. Then, the Aśvins [who wanted to learn those wisdoms and who were expert surgeons] cut off Dadhīci's head and, putting it safely aside, replaced it with the head of a horse. With that horse head on his shoulders, Dadhīci taught the Aśvins the hymns, songs (Sāmans), and mantras related to the Pravargya (fire ceremony) wisdom and the lore establishing the Honey wisdom. Indra found out about it and cut off Dadhīci's head with his thunderbolt. Then the Aśvins, as they previously promised Dadhīci, restored his own head to his body.

So what are these wisdoms and why choose a horse's head to reveal them? The two wisdoms in question here are rite called the Pravargya rite and a teaching called the Honey wisdom, a collection of fifteen meditative verses which were incorporated into the two oldest Upaniṣads, the *Great Forest Teaching* (*Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad*)<sup>7</sup> and the *Hymn-singer's Teaching* (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad*). The *mantras* (sacred chants) for the Pravargya rite are given in books 36-39 of the White Yajur Veda and in Book 14 of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (The Hundred Path Expansion) the mythological background of the rite and instructions for its performance are given. Thus, whatever their status once was, they are no longer secret teachings any more.

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<sup>6</sup>RV., 1.116.12

<sup>7</sup>See the Appendix for the version given in the *Great Forest Teaching*.

The story of the transmission of these two wisdoms serves to call attention to them as, in a sense, turning points or new revelations in the ancient Vedic tradition. The Pravargya rite is treated in the last set of chapters (36-39) in the White Yajur Veda, leading upto the final chapter, the *Íśopanīṣad* (The Teaching on the Lord), which replaces the old worldview of the ceremonialists for worldly gain with a new concern for ultimate meaning and release or freedom from worldly bondage. It signals a turn away from action or ritual to knowledge as represented by these wisdoms and the knowledge texts that follow them, the Upaniṣads. The Pravargya rite is the preliminary rite for the Soma ceremonies. Soma is regarded as the elixir of immortality (*amṛta*), the drink of the gods which gives them their power, longevity, and wisdom. The Honey wisdom seems also to be about Soma.<sup>8</sup> The offerings of heated milk in the Pravargya rite are for the Aśvins who as healers, rescuers, and rejuvenaters bring about regeneration in those they help. That seems to be the objective of the Pravargya rite. I will discuss this in more detail later.

## Who are the Aśvins?

The Aśvins or Horsemen are twins who are described as physicians to the gods. They are also called the Nāsatyas, the meaning of which is unclear. It could be a combination of *na* (not) and *asatya* (untrue). “The first mention of the Nāsatya twins is from the Mitanni documents of the second millennium BCE, where they are invoked in a treaty between Suppiluliuma and Shattiwaza, respectively kings of the Hittites and the Mitanni.”<sup>9</sup> They are, according to Hindu myth, the twin sons of the Sun god (Sūrya) and his wife Saraṇyu who had taken the forms of horses to make love. There is a beautiful picture of their birth in the LACMA collection of Indian miniatures:

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<sup>8</sup>It is not clear what Soma was made of, but one theory is that it was made from a hallucinogenic mushroom which once grew in South Asia, but has now migrated on. See Wasson’s book *Soma*.

<sup>9</sup>Beckman, Gary M.. *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 53. United States: Scholars Press, 1999. Citation taken from Wikipedia article, Oct. 29, 2020.



There are over fifty hymns devoted to them in the Ṛg Veda, one of which—praising them for all their rescues, healings, rejuvenations, and

resuscitations—can be found in the Appendix. They are sometimes depicted in human forms and sometimes with horse heads:





They are also called the *Aśvinikumāras* because they never seem to age, but remain permanently youthful and handsome.



They have been identified as an example of ancient Proto-Indo-European divine horse twins similar to many others found in other Indo-European cultures in Europe. Other examples are the *Diós-kouroi* (Castor and Pollux) in ancient Greece and possibly the English Hengist and Horsa, and the Welsh Bran and Manawydan. In India their horse connection came to have a special meaning as we shall see next.

## Symbolic Meaning of Horses in India

Why did the *Aśvins* replace *Dadhīci*'s head with that of a horse? Hinduism is full of gods who have the heads of animals. There is the joyful god and remover of obstacles *Gaṇeśa* who has the head of an elephant. Then there is the *avatāra* of *Viṣṇu* named *Narasimha* who has the head and claws of a lion and the body of a man. *Viṣṇu* has descended according to the various Hindu scriptures as a fish (*Matsya*), as a tortoise (*Kūrma*), as a dwarf (*Vāmana*), and he has also descended as *Hayagrīva*, the horse-headed man. Still, the *Aśvins* could have transplanted the head of any animal or human being on to *Dadhīci*'s shoulders. They must have chosen the head of a horse for some special reason. One possible reason is that as "Horsemen" they certainly

had access to numerous horses and could easily on short notice acquire a horsehead. However, there is probably a deeper reason for this preference for a horse.

In ancient India the horse had a special meaning and symbolism. The horse seems to have stood for power, especially royal power, as indicated by the empire-building ritual known as the *Aśvamedha* or the horse sacrifice. As part of this enormously costly ritual a horse representing the king who is financing the rite is turned loose to wander wherever it wishes for a year, followed by the king's army. If the horse wanders into the kingdom of another king, that king has a choice: either he challenges the owner of the horse to a battle or he accepts the other king as his lord and agrees to pay tribute to him. If the invaded king chooses to fight, but loses, he then becomes a vassal of the invading king and pays perhaps a steeper tribute to him. In this way over the course of a year the horse wanders freely winning submission from neighboring kings and accumulating an empire for the king he represents. Thus, the horse as a substitute for the king commands respect and stands for authority. Much of the shift from ritual to knowledge mentioned earlier was engineered by the *Rājanya* or kingly power as is evident from the roles played in the new literature known as *Upaniṣad* (secret or confidential teachings). At the actual sacrifice at the end of the year the horse is sacrificed in place of the king, solidifying the horse's role as substitute for the king.

There are a couple of other considerations here, too. I mentioned before that *Viṣṇu*, one of the great gods, descended as a horse-headed man. The role he played during that descent is significant here. The *Hayagrīva* (horse-neck) descent was specifically staged to recover the sacred Vedas which had been stolen from the creator god *Brahmā* by two demons, *Madhu* and *Kaitabha*. The role of *Hayagrīva* as a recoverer and protector of the sacred writ may have had something to do with the choice made by the *Aśvins*. In addition, there are certain signs in the text of the *Pravargya* rite that suggest that the horse was once considered pure in the way that the cow later was. The horse's dung, for instance, is recommended in the *Pravargya* as a purifying or fumigating agent much as cow dung is today in India.

## **Pravargya Ritual**

The *Pravargya* rite is a fire ceremony that is performed prior to the *Soma* rites. The rite is supposed to be performed on the land where the Gods' sacrificed, that is, at a place called *Kurukṣetra* (the Field of the Kurus) in northern India where later the great war described in the *Mahābhārata* was

fought. The rite's main feature is the creation of a clay pot<sup>10</sup> which is considered the head of Makha (Adorable) or Mahāvira (Great Hero). There is a story told about how this head became severed in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (The Thousand Path Expansion):<sup>11</sup>

Makha, who is identified as Viṣṇu, was attending a sacrifice with Agni, Indra, and other gods. They all agreed to share whatever benefits they accrued from it. Makha seems to have gained the most glory and appeared to be preparing to leave without sharing with the others. The other gods surrounded him, but were reluctant to attack him. Makha stood there leaning on his bow watching them. A group of termites (white ants) approached the gods and asked them what they would get if they were able to chew through Makha's bow string and disarm him. The Gods responded that they would get food aplenty and protection for the rest of their lives. The termites snuck up on Makha and chewed through his bow string. The bow snapped straight catching Makha's throat and severing his head from his body. His head is identified as the main pot, Makha or Gharma, in the ritual, and after it is filled with milk that is offered to the Aśvin twins, they in turn reconnect it to Makha's body at the end of the rite.

The pot is formed from clay dug up from the earth during the ritual and then is heated on a fire. When the pot is white hot it is taken off the fire and filled with milk. When the milk is hot it is offered to the Aśvin twins. At the end of the rite, the ritual utensils are organized in the shape of a human body lying stretched out on the ground and the Makha pot is placed where the head should be. One text suggests that the name of the rite, Pravargya, refers to the body reassembled and laid out on the ground at the end of the rite. The purpose of the rite according appears to be regeneration of the performer of the rite in preparation for the Soma rite. In this respect the ritual is much like the initiation rites of shamans throughout Asia and among Native Americans in which in dream or a substance-induced vision the body of the initiate is disassembled and cleaned and then reassembled, often with some part or other missing. The following set of *mantras* represent the reconstruction of the body of the performer at the end of the rite:

To the hair svāhā!  
To the hair svāhā!  
To the skin svāhā!  
To the skin svāhā!  
To the blood svāhā!  
To the blood svāhā!

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<sup>10</sup>Actually three pots are created, but one is the main pot called Makha or Mahāvira or Gharma and is considered identicle with the sun.

<sup>11</sup>SB., 14. Loosely retold here.

To the fats svāhā!  
To the fats svāhā!  
To the fleshy parts svāhā!  
To the fleshy parts svāhā!  
To the sinews svāhā!  
To the sinews svāhā!  
Svāhā to the bones!  
Svāhā to the bones!  
To the marrows svāhā!  
To the marrows svāhā!  
To the seed svāhā!  
To the anus svāhā!  
(and so on)<sup>12</sup>

## Madhu Meditation

The Madhu wisdom is a meditation on the inter-relatedness and inter-dependence of all things in existence and on the forces that draw us to those things and beings. Madhu means honey and stands for that attractive force, a sweetness and nourishment that is at the basis of attraction and love. In a related but secondary sense it stands for Soma, the elixir of immortality, and thus the immortal or eternal aspect of things however one may conceive of that. In a fundamental sense we are all eternal because of what we are made of: the fundamental elements of the universe such as carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, etc. When the combination of these elements that make us up disintegrates, they will continue to exist in other combinations and groupings. For the ancient Hindus, however, there was a belief in a deeper self that animates the bodies and substances we see around us but which is separate from them. Its presence and departure was the difference between life and death. This self or *ātman* is described here as a “shining, immortal person.” Even the earth is animated by such a self or person to whom we are all related and to whom we are all drawn. That person is the “honey” that draws us all to it and culminates in the recognition that we are one with that person. Otherwise what attraction can mere carbon molecules have for us?

The Madhu meditation goes as follows:

1. This earth is honey for all creatures, and all creatures are honey for this earth. This shining, immortal Person who is in this earth, and, with

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<sup>12</sup>WYV., 39.10

reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who is in the body he, indeed, is just this Soul (Ātman), this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

2. These waters are honey for all things, and all things are honey for these waters. This shining, immortal Person who is in these waters, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who is made of semen he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

3. This fire is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this fire. This shining, immortal Person who is in this fire, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who is made of speech he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

4. This wind is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this wind. This shining, immortal Person who is in this wind, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who is breath he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

5. This sun is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this sun. This shining, immortal Person who is in this sun, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who is in the eye he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

6. These quarters of heaven are honey for all things, and all things are honey for these quarters of heaven. This shining, immortal Person who is in these quarters of heaven, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who is in the ear and in the echo he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

7. This moon is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this moon. This shining, immortal Person who is in this moon, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person consisting of mind he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

8. This lightning is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this lightning. This shining, immortal Person who is in this lightning, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who exists as heat he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

9. This thunder is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this thunder. This shining, immortal Person who is in thunder, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who is in sound and in tone he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

10. This space is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this space. This shining, immortal Person who is in this space, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who is in the space in the heart he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

11. This Law (*dharma*) is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this Law. This shining, immortal Person who is in this Law, and, with ref-

erence to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who exists as virtuousness he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

13. This Truth is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this Truth. This shining, immortal Person who is in this Truth, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who exists as truthfulness he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

13, This mankind (*manuṣa*) is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this mankind. This shining, immortal Person who is in this mankind, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who exists as a human being he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

14. This Soul (*ātman*) is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this Soul This shining, immortal Person who is in this Soul, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who exists as Soul he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

15. Verily, this Soul is the overlord of all things, the king of all things. As all the spokes are held together in the hub and felly (rim) of a wheel, just so in this Soul all things, all gods, all worlds, all breathing things, all selves are held together.<sup>13</sup>

## Conclusion

In concluding, let me point out some of the important and yet commonly shared folk motifs in the story of Dadhīci. Among those are the divine twins, the Aśvins, who are healers and helpers. Several Native American traditions have mythologies and tales involving primordial twins who shape the emerging world in varying ways, some good, some evil. Moreover, the Aśvins as healers represent the medicine men of the native traditions collecting “medicine” or secret wisdom that can be used to help others and that are generally beneficial to the tribal group as a whole (for instance, as with Black Elk). Then there is the horse, the domestication of which was a major step in the evolution of human society and civilization. With the advantages the horse gave to human groups in the form of quicker travel and communication between disparate human settlements and in the rapid transport of troops, the consolidation of power and control in the hands of a few became possible. Large kingdoms and empires were born and more easily organized and defended. The horse thus contributed to the growth of kingly power that in India deemphasized ritual and emphasized knowledge instead. A new worldview was gradually introduced.

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<sup>13</sup>BaU., 2.5.1-15. Trans. by Robert Ernest Hume.

As a result of the emphasis of knowledge over ritual there arises the danger and dilemma of teaching, the danger of teaching certain subjects under threat from more powerful forces who recognize an advantage to themselves of keeping certain topics off the curriculum. In Dadhīci's case, Indra, the king (or President?) of the gods, threatened him with decapitation and certain death if he divulged the secrets of the two wisdoms he had been taught. Indra's fear was that if people learned the secrets Dadhīci had to offer, it would give them powers and defenses only he should have and it would upset the flow of ritual offerings from ordinary people to the gods, offerings on which they depended. There is a famous passage in the *Great Forest Teaching* in which people who see duality between themselves and the gods are described as the animals or beasts of burden (*paśu*) of the gods. Those, however, who see no duality between themselves and the gods, the message of the Madhu wisdom, recognize that they are under no obligation to serve or make offerings to them.<sup>14</sup> They are free.

Then there is the peculiar role of decapitation in the story. The doubt is never raised that if one removes someone's head, he or she might lose whatever knowledge and memory they once had. The head was not regarded as the seat of thought or memory in ancient India. It seems to have been regarded more as an audio attachment through which one might speak and presumably hear others others have to say. One is reminded of Aristotle's view in his works on biology that the brain was just an elaborate organ for cooling meant primarily to cool the body down. In India, knowledge instead belonged to the "shining, immortal person" who is separate from the head or the body or any other physical thing. Thus, whether it be a horse's head or a lion's head or the head of an elephant, one's knowledge, memory, or identity were not impacted.

Finally, the structure of the Pravargya rite is that of an initiatory physical deconstruction and regeneration that is common among shamanistic traditions around the world. In India, it is connected with one of the creation hymns of the Ṛg Veda known as the *Puruṣa-sūkta* (The Hymn of the Person) in which a primordial giant is dismembered and his parts become various elements of the world: the moon was born from his mind, from his eye comes the sun, from his breath the wind is born, and so forth.<sup>15</sup> Naturally, the logical undoing of creation is the reversal of the process in the reassembly of the Puruṣa's body as we have seen in the ending of the Pravargya rite. In a later version of that primordial sacrifice in the *Great Forest Teaching* the Puruṣa (Person) is replaced with a horse.<sup>16</sup> Thus, it is a horse whose

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<sup>14</sup>BU., 1.4.10

<sup>15</sup>RV., 10.90

<sup>16</sup>BU., 1.1.1

dismemberment provides the material for the creation. As the text says: “verily the dawn is the head of the sacrificial horse, the sun his eye, the wind his breath, universal fire, his open mouth. ...”<sup>17</sup> Thus, a horse’s head, though a surprising choice at first glance, seems strangely appropriate to sit on Dadhīci’s shoulders as he dispenses secret wisdom to his two eager students.

## Appendix

### Rg Veda 1.116 A Hymn in Praise of the Aśvins. Griffith Translation

1 I trim like grass my song for the Nāsatyas, and send their lauds forth as the wind drives rain-clouds, Who, in a chariot rapid as an arrow, brought to the youthful Vimada a consort.

2 Borne on by rapid steeds of mighty pinion, or proudly trusting in the Gods’ incitements.

That stallion ass of yours won, O Nāsatyas, that thousand in the race, in Yama’s contest.

3 Yea, Aśvins, as a dead man leaves his riches, Tugra left Bhujyu in the cloud of waters.

Ye brought him back in animated vessels, traversing air, unwetted by the billows.

4 Bhujyu ye bore with winged things, Nāsatyas, which for three nights, three days full swiftly travelled.

To the sea’s farther shore, the strand of ocean, in three cars, hundred-footed, with six horses.

5 Ye wrought that hero exploit in the ocean which giveth no support, or hold, or station,

What time ye carried Bhujyu to his dwelling, borne in a ship with hundred oars, O Aśvins.

6 The white horse which of old ye gave Aghāśva, Aśvins, a gift to be his wealth forever, —

Still to be praised is that your glorious present, still to be famed is the brave horse of Pedu.

7 O Heroes, ye gave wisdom to Kakṣivān who sprang from Pajra’s line, who sang your praises.

Ye poured forth from the hoof of your strong charger a hundred jars of wine as from a strainer.

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<sup>17</sup>ibid., Hume’s translation.



8 Ye warded off with cold the fire's fierce burning; food very rich in nourishment ye furnished.

Atri, cast downward in the cavern, Aśvins, ye brought, with all his people, forth to comfort.

9 Ye lifted up the well, O ye Nāsatyas, and set the base on high to open downward.

Streams flowed for folk of Gotama who thirsted, like rain to bring forth thousandfold abundance.

10 Ye from the old Cyavāna, O Nāsatyas, stripped, as 'twere mail, the skin upon his body,

Lengthened his life when all had left him helpless, Dasras ! and made him lord of youthful maidens.

10 Ye from the old Cyavāna, O Nāsatyas, stripped, as 'twere mail, the skin upon his body,

Lengthened his life when all had left him helpless, Dasras! and made him lord of youthful maidens.

11 Worthy of praise and worth the winning, Heroes, is that your favouring succour, O Nāsatyas,

What time ye, knowing well his case, delivered Vandana from the pit like hidden treasure.

12 That mighty deed of yours, for gain, O Heroes, as thunder heraldeth the rain, I publish,

When, by the horse's head, Atharvan's offspring Dadhyañc made known to you the Soma's sweetness.

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