

The Ashwins, Lords of Bliss¹

RV 4.45

ṛṣi: vāmadeva gautama; devatā: aśvinikumāra; chanda: jagatī, 7 triṣṭup

एष॑ स्य॒ भानु॑र् उ॒द् इ॒यर्ति॑ यु॒ज्यते॑ रथः॒ परि॑ज्मा दि॒वो अ॒स्य॑ सान॒वि ।
 पृ॒क्षा॒सो अ॒स्मिन् मि॒थुना॑ अधि॒ त्रयो॑ दृ॒तिस् तुरी॑यो म॒धुनो॑ वि र॒श्शते॑ ॥ ४-०४५-०१
 उ॒द् वाम् पृ॒क्षा॒सो म॒धुम॑न्त ई॒रते॑ रथा॒ अश्वा॑स उ॒षसो॑ व्युष्टिषु ।
 अपो॑र्णु॒वन्तस् तम॑ आ॒ परी॑वृतं॒ स्वर॑ ण शु॒क्रं तन्व॑न्त आ॒ रजः॑ ॥ ४-०४५-०२
 म॒ध्वः पि॒बत॑म् म॒धुपे॑भिर् आ॒सभिर् उ॒त प्रि॒यम् म॒धुने॑ यु॒ज्ञाथां॑ रथम् ।
 आ॒ वर्त॑निम् म॒धुना॑ जि॒न्वथ॑स् पथो॒ दृतिं॑ वहे॒थे म॒धुम॑न्तम् अ॒श्विना॑ ॥ ४-०४५-०३
 हंसा॑सो॒ ये वाम् म॒धुम॑न्तो अ॒स्त्रिधो॑ हिर॒ण्यपर्णा॑ उ॒हुव॑ उ॒षर्बुधः॑ ।
 उ॒दप्रु॑तो म॒न्दिनो॑ म॒न्दिनि॑स्पृशो म॒ध्वो न म॑क्षः स॒वनानि॑ ग॒च्छथः॑ ॥ ४-०४५-०४
 स्व॒ध्वरा॑सो म॒धुम॑न्तो अ॒ग्नय॑ उ॒स्त्रा ज॑रन्ते॒ प्रति॑ व॒स्तोर् अ॒श्विना॑ ।
 यन् नि॒क्तह॑स्तस् तर॒णिर् वि॒चक्षणः॑ सोमं सु॒षाव॑ म॒धुम॑न्तम् अ॒द्रिभिः॑ ॥ ४-०४५-०५
 आ॒केनि॑पासो अ॒हभिर् द॑विध्वतः॒ स्वर॑ ण शु॒क्रं तन्व॑न्त आ॒ रजः॑ ।
 सूर॑श् चिद् अ॒श्वान् यु॒युजा॑न ई॒यते॑ वि॒श्वानु॑ स्व॒धया॑ चे॒तथ॑स् पथः ॥ ४-०४५-०६
 प्र॒ वाम् अ॒वोच॑म् अ॒श्विना॑ धि॒यंधा॑ रथः स्व॒श्वो अ॒जरो॑ यो अ॒स्ति ।
 येन॑ सद्यः॒ परि॑ रजा॒सि या॒थो ह॒विष्म॑न्तं तर॒णिम् भो॒जम् अ॒च्छ ॥ ४-०४५-०७

¹ Volume: 15 [CWSA] (The Secret of the Veda), Page: 326 polished one on a more cool March

Analysis of RV 4.45

एष॑ स्य॑ भानु॑र् उदू॑ इय॑र्ति॑ युज्य॑ते रथः॑ परि॑ज्मा दि॒वो अ॒स्य सा॑नवि॑ ।
पृ॒क्षासो॑ अ॒स्मिन् मि॒थुना॑ अधि॒ त्रयो॑ दृति॒स् तुरी॑यो मधु॒नो वि र॑प्शते ॥ ४-०४५-०१

eṣā syā bhānúr úd iyarti yujyāte
ráthaḥ párijmā divó asyá sānavi
pṛkṣāso asmin mithunā ádhi tráyo
dṛtis turīyo mádhuno ví rapśate 4.045.01

1. Lo, that Light is rising up and the all-pervading car is being yoked on the high level of this Heaven; there are placed satisfying delights in their triple pairs and the fourth skin of honey overflows.

Interpretation:

"This is indeed the light that is rising, *eṣā syā bhānúr úd iyarti!* And the ever-present chariot [to carry it] is being yoked [to the horses], *yujyāte ráthaḥ*, on the summit of this heaven, *divó asyá sānavi!* The three pairs in this movement are mixed with light and darkness, *pṛkṣāso asmin mithunā ádhi tráyo*, and the fourth one is overflowing with (or dripping with) honey, *dṛtis turīyo mádhuno ví rapśate.*"

The light is rising and the car, which is moving all over, is yoked on the top of heaven (divo asya sānavi). The image of the car being yoked on the summit of this Heaven above, when the light is rising, indicating its emergence from below, shows the relation of the two sources of light: evolving and involving. Both are needed for the sacrifice symbolized by the chariot moving all around (rathaḥ parijmā).

And then it is said: 'spotted are they, the three pairs of horses in this chariot'. Pṛkṣāsaḥ, spotted, the swiftnesses of Pṛśni, the Mother of Intermediary levels where the light and darkness are being mixed. And the fourth one is the transcendental opening, dripping with honey. Dṛti, is from root dṛ, to divide, to break asunder, to burst, to split open.

There is an interesting passage in the Aitareya Upanishad, which might be a psychological rendering of this Vedic imagery:

*sa iḥsata katham nv idaṃ madṛte syād iti/ sa iḥsata katarena prapadyā
iti/ sa iḥsata yadi vācābhivyāhṛtaṃ yadi prānenābhiprānitam yadi cakṣuṣā
dṛṣṭam yadi śrotreṇa śrutam yadi tvacā sprṣṭam yadi manasā dhyātam
yady apānenābhyapānitam yadi śísnaena visṛṣṭam atha ko 'ham iti/ sa
etam eva sīmānaṃ vidāryaitayā dvārā prāpadyata/ saisā vidṛtir nāma
dvās tad enan nāndanam/*

"He thought: 'how indeed could this be without me?' He thought: 'by what path should I enter?' He thought: 'if it is spoken by Speech, and breathed by Breath, and seen by Eye, and heard by Hearing, and touched

by the Skin, and thought by the Mind, and breathed out by Breathing out, and procreated by the procreatory organ, then 'Who am I?'

There is a mystery of the involved and transcendental perception of the Soul. The transcendental perception wonders about the involved. There is a gap between the two, it feels like there is a difference. The involved soul is perceived as different from the transcendental. The question: "Who am I?" put forward by the transcendental Self in this case becomes a source of rediscovering oneself anew. It becomes a source of additional ānanda of self-finding in another.

What is significant here is that the word *vi-dṛti* is used here, as it is in the text of RV 4.45.1, and here it is explained that it is a door of (or to) delight, *dvās tad enan nandanam*, which in our text is depicted as 'the transcendental opening dripping with honey', *dṛtis turīyo mādhuṇo vī rapśate*.

And the text continues mentioning the three pairs of being and consciousness, dwelling and perceiving it as a dream:

tasya traya āvasathās trayaḥ svapnāḥ/ ayam āvasatho 'yam āvasatho 'yam āvasatha iti/ sa jāto bhūtāny abhivyaikhyat kim ihānyaṃ vāvadiṣad iti/ sa etam eva puruṣaṃ brahmatatamam apaśyat/ idam adarśam iti/ tasmād idandro nāmedandro ha vai nāma tam idandram santam indra ityācakṣate parokṣeṇa/ parokṣapriyā iva hi devāḥ/ parokṣapriyā iva hi devāḥ// AitUp 1.3.3

"His are the three states/dwellings and the three dreams. This is the dwelling, this is the dwelling, [and] this is the dwelling! Being born [here] he saw in detail [all the] beings which are born here: "Whom else do you want to speak here?" [- he asked]. He saw this Puruṣa, most extended in the Brahman. 'I saw this!' [- he said]. Therefore he is named *idandra*, 'cleaving This'; his name is indeed 'cleaving This'; and secretly they speak of him, who is 'cleaving This', as Indra. For the gods as if are fond of secrecy, they are indeed fond of secrecy."

Idam-dra is 'this-cleaving', and *in-dra*, is a kind of abbreviation of *idam-dra*. But in both cases root *dra/dṛ* is used, which gives the name to the transcendental opening *dṛti* of Rig Veda, or *vidṛti* of Aitareya Upaniṣad.

Vocabulary:

- *sānu*, m. n. (accord. to Uṇ. i , 3 fr. san; collateral form 3. snu) *a summit, ridge, surface, top of a mountain*, (in later language generally) *mountain-ridge, table-land* RV. &c. &c.; (L. also , *a sprout; a forest; road; gale of wind; sage, learned man; the sun* "").
- *parijman*, mfn. (gam) *running or walking or driving round , surrounding , being everywhere , omnipresent* (said of the sun , of the clouds , of sev. gods &c.) RV. AV.; (as loc. or ind. all around , everywhere RV.)
- *prkṣa*, mfn. (either connected with *prśni*, *prṣat*, or fr. 1. *prc*) *spotted , dappled* (others `` fleet , swift "" ; others , having or bringing food ""); m. *a spotted* (or a swift &c.) *horse* (others `` beast of burden "" ; others `` food , nourishment , abundance "") RV.
- *dṛti*, m. (fr. *dṛ*) *a skin of leather, a leather bag* for holding water and other fluids (fig. = a cloud), *skin, hide, a pair of bellows* RV. AV. Br. Mn. MBh. &c.

- rapś, (only occurring in the pr. p. below and in pra- and vi-rapś q.v.), *to be full* RV.
- vi-rapś, A. vi-rapsate, *to be full to overflowing, abound in* (gen.), *have too much of* (instr.) RV. AV.

उद् वाम् पृक्षासो मधुमन्त ईरते रथा अश्वास उषसो व्युष्टिषु ।

अपोर्णुवन्तस् तम आ परीवृतं स्वर ण शुक्रं तन्वन्त आ रजः ॥ ४-०४५-०२

úd vām pṛkṣāso mādhumanta īrate ráthā áśvāsa uṣāso víuṣṭiṣu
apornuvāntas táma ā páriṽṛtaṃ súvar ṇá śukráṃ tanuvānta ā rájaḥ
4.045.02

2. Full of honey upward rise the delights; upward horses and cars in the wide-shinings of the Dawn and they roll aside the veil of darkness that encompassed on every side and they extend the lower world into a shining form like that of the luminous heaven.

Interpretation:

“The mixed ones full of honey elevate your chariots and horses, *úd vām pṛkṣāso mādhumanta īrate ráthā áśvāsa*, in the breaking of the Dawn, *uṣāso víuṣṭiṣu*.

They uncover the all encompassing darkness, *apornuvāntas táma ā páriṽṛtaṃ*, [and] they spread bright here the lower space like the Svar, *súvar ṇá śukráṃ tanuvānta ā rájaḥ*.”

Sri Aurobindo translates the mixed ones, *pṛkṣāsaḥ*, as delights here. It is the delight which is based on the sense of oneness and the perception of difference. These additional delights are activating or raising the swiftesses and the chariots of the being at the breaking of the spiritual Dawn. These are the hidden forces of Asvins, the dynamo or the engine of the whole process of manifestation. The higher and pure Ananda is being mixed into the lower and diluted being. It gives a new perception of things, a detailed and unique self-awareness and the aspiration in the being to rise and to realize oneself in fullness of ones possibilities.

They make the lower hemisphere bright like that of the Svar world. They don't recreate the Svar world here directly, but make this world shine like the Svar world. The difference between the two is essential for manifesting the additional delight in the world.

They uncover the all enveloping darkness. The world which appears out of this unveiling of darkness is like the bright world of Svar, which is beyond, and still it is a unique world different from Svar.

Vocabulary:

apornu, apornute, *to uncover, unveil, open* RV. AV. ŚBr.: A. *to uncover one's self*. TS. ŚBr.

मध्वः॑ पि॒बतम्॑ म॒धुपे॑भिर् आ॒सभिर्॑ उ॒त प्रि॒यम् म॒धुने॑ यु॒ञ्जाथां॑ रथम् ।

आ॒ वर्त॑निम् म॒धुना॑ जि॒न्वथ॑स् पथो॒ दृतिं॑ वहे॒थे म॒धुम॑न्तम् अ॒श्विना॑ ॥ ४-०४५-०३

mádhvaḥ pibatam madhupébhīr āsábhīr
 utá priyám mádhune yuñjathāṃ rátham
 ā vartanīm mádhunā jinvathas pathó
 dṛtiṃ vahethe mádhumantam aśvinā 4.045.03

3. Drink of the honey with your honey-drinking mouths, for the honey yoke your car beloved. With the honey you gladden the movement and its paths; full of honey, O Ashwins, is the skin that you bear.

Interpretation:

"Drink of this Honey, with your mouths drinking honey, *mádhvaḥ pibatam madhupébhīr āsábhīr!* Yoke for [getting] Honey this beloved chariot, *utá priyám mádhune yuñjathāṃ rátham !* Returning/rotating/rolling you animate the path with Honey. The transcendental opening dripping with Honey bring [closer to us here], O Ashvins!

Sāyaṇa translates *dṛti* as 'a vessel with juicy stuff, made of leather': *rasa-dravyādhāraḥ padārthaś carmamayo dṛtir ityucyate*². The image of *dṛti* can be also seen as the sack full of honey dripping through with honey.

The last line of this verse may be considered as essential in understanding the function of Ashvins, we can translate it as:

'you two animate, *jinvathaḥ*, the return of the Path, *ā vartanim pathaḥ*, with honey, *madhunā*, bringing the opening dripping with (or full of) honey [to us] closer, *dṛtiṃ vahethe madhumantam*'.

It is on the path returning to its origin that the Ashvins animate it with honey. They make the journey back to the source, the ascent to the Truth joyful, bringing closer the opening full of Honey to the aspirants.

Vocabulary:

āsan, n. (defective Pāṇ. 6-1 , 63) , *mouth , jaws* RV. AV. VS. ŚBr. TBr.

vartani, f. *the circumference or fellow of a wheel* RV. Br. *the track of a wheel, rut, path, way, course* ib. AV. ChUp.; *the course of rivers* RV. TS.

āvartana, mfn. *turning round or towards revolving* TS.; (am) n. *turning , turning round , returning* RV. x , 19 , 4; *circular motion, gyration, churning, stirring anything in fusion; the time when the sun begins to cast shadows towards the east or when shadows are cast in an opposite direction, noon; repeating, doing over again.*

² P. 584, R̥gveda-saṃhitā, Sāyaṇācāryakṛta-Bhāṣya-saṃvalitā, Chakhambā Vidyabhavan, Vārāṇasī, 2007

हंसासो ये वाम् मधुमन्तो अस्त्रिधो हिरण्यपर्णा उहुव उषर्बुधः ।
 उदप्रुतो मन्दिनो मन्दिनिस्पृशो मध्वो न मक्षः सवनानि गच्छथः ॥ ४-०४५-०४

haṃsāso yé vām mádhumanto asrídho
 híraṇyaparṇā uhúva uṣarbúdhaḥ
 udaprúto mandíno mandinispṛśo
 mádhvo ná mákṣaḥ sávanāni gachathaḥ 4.045.04

4. Full of the honey are the swans that bear you, golden-winged, waking with the Dawn, and they come not to hurt; they rain forth the waters, they are full of rapture and touch that which holds the Rapture. Like bees to pourings of honey you come to the Soma-offerings.

Interpretation:

"The Swans with golden wings, who carry you, are full of Honey, and perfect in their movement, *haṃsāso yé vām mádhumanto asrídho híraṇyaparṇā uhúva!* They wake with the Dawn, *uṣarbúdhaḥ!* They splash the heavenly waters in their ecstatic movement, *udaprúto mandíno,* and touch the one who is in ecstasy *mandinispṛśo!* You come [O Ashvins], to our offerings, *sávanāni gachathaḥ,* like bees [come] to honey, *mádhvo ná mákṣaḥ.*"

Vocabulary:

asridh, mfn. *not failing, not erring* RV.

uhū, mfn. (vah) , *bearing , carrying* RV. iv , 45 , 4.

uda-prut, mfn. *causing water to flow* [Sāy.] , *swimming or splashing in water* [BRD.] RV. AV.

savana, n. *the act of pressing out the Soma-juice* (performed at the three periods of the day); RV. &c. &c.; *the pressed out Soma-juice and its libation, a Soma festival, any oblation or sacrificial rite.*

स्वध्वरासो मधुमन्तो अग्रय उस्त्रा जरन्ते प्रति वस्तोर् अश्विना ।
 यन् नित्तहस्तस् तरणिर् विचक्षणः सोमं सुषाव मधुमन्तम् अद्रिभिः ॥ ४-०४५-०५

suadhvarāso mādhumanto agnāya
 usrā jarante prāti vāstor aśvīnā
 yān niktāhastas tarāṇir vicakṣaṇāḥ
 sōmaṃ suṣāva mādhumantam ādribhiḥ 4.045.05

5. Full of the honey the fires lead well the sacrifice and they woo your brightness, O Ashvins, day by day, when one with purified hands, with a perfect vision, with power to go through to the goal has pressed out with the pressing-stones the honeyed Soma-wine.

Interpretation:

“When the movement beyond to the goal, using clean hands of power, and the pure vision of knowledge, *yān niktāhastas tarāṇir vicakṣaṇāḥ*, has extracted the Essence of Honey with the pressing stones of the unconscious being, *sōmaṃ suṣāva mādhumantam ādribhiḥ*, then shining flames possessing Honey are getting perfect in their sacrificial journey, *suadhvarāso mādhumanto agnāya usrā*, for they all invoke some of your brightness, O Ashvins, *jarante prāti vāstor aśvīnā!*”

Vocabulary:

nikta-hasta, mfn. *clean-handed* RV.
 vastu, f. (for 2. see p. 932 , col. 3) *becoming light, dawning, morning* RV. VS.; (gen. vastoh , in the morning ; vāstor vastoh , every morning ; vāstor asyāḥ , this morning ; prati vastoh , towards morning ; dat. vastave see under 2. vas).
 jṛ, 1. A. (jarante, -rasva ; p. jaramāṇa) *to come near, approach* RV. i-iv , vii
 prati-jṛ, *to roar (as fire) in the direction of, to call out to, salute* (acc.) RV.
 tarāṇi, mfn. *moving forwards (as the sun &c.), quick, untired, energetic* RV. AV. xiii , 2 , 4 and 36 *carrying over, saving, helping, benevolent* RV. TBr. ii , 7 , 13 ; m. *the sun* KapS. iii , 13 BhP.; f. = -ṇī, *a boat* Prab. Vop. Śatr.

आकेनिपासो अहभिर् दविध्वतः स्वर ण शुक्रं तन्वन्त आ रजः ।
 सूरश् चिद् अश्वान् युयुजान ईयते विश्वाँ अनु स्वधया चेतथस् पथः ॥ ४-०४५-०६

ākenipāso āhabhir dávidhvataḥ súvar ṇá śukráṃ tanuvānta ā rájah
 sūraś cid áśvān yuyujāná iyate víśvāṃ́ ánu svadháyā cetathas patháḥ 4.045.06

6. Drinking the wine near them, the fires ride and run and extend the lower world into a shining form like that of the luminous heaven. The Sun

too goes yoking his steeds; by force of Nature's self-arranging you move consciously along all paths.³

Interpretation:

"Being close to them [the flames] drink [of Honey] by the days, *ākenipāso áhabhir*, marching towards the goal, *dávidhvataḥ*, expanding the space here bright, like Svar *súvar ṇá súkrām tanuvánta ā rájah*. And the Sun comes yoking his horses, *sūras cid ásvān yuyujāná iyate*, thus you become conscious of all the paths in accordance with self-establishing [power of Nature], *vísvān ánu svadháyā cetathas patháh*."

Vocabulary:

ākenipa, mfn. (said of the horses of the Ashvins) *protecting in the vicinity* RV. iv, 45, 6
davidhvataḥ, *Sāyaṇa* = *kampayantaḥ*, *dhvaṃsayantaḥ*; Intensive of *dhvaṃs/dhū/dhāv*?

प्र वाम् अवोचम् अश्विना धियंघा रथः स्वश्वो अजरो यो अस्ति ।
येन सद्यः परि रजांसि याथो हविष्मन्तं तरणिम् भोजम् अच्छ ॥ ४-०४५-०७

prá vām avocam aśvinā dhiyaṃdhā
ráthaḥ suásvo ajáro yó ásti
yéna sadyáḥ pári rájāṃsi yāthó
haviṣmantam tarānim bhojám ácha 4.045.07

7. I have declared, O Ashvins, holding the Thought in me, your car that is undecaying and drawn by perfect steeds,—your car by which you move at once over all the worlds towards the enjoyment rich in offerings that makes through to the goal.

Interpretation:

"Forward I have expressed, *prá vām avocam*, O Ashvins, you as the holders of Thought, *dhiyaṃdhā*. And your car which is perfect and immortal, *ráthaḥ suásvo ajáro yó ásti*, by which you go all over in a moment, *yéna sadyáḥ pári rájāṃsi yāthó*, carrying the offering, *haviṣmantam*, over to the goal, *tarānim*, being full of joy, *bhojam accha*.

³ Or, you take knowledge of all the paths in their order.

Commentary

The hymns of the Rig Veda addressed to the two shining Twins, like those addressed to the Ribhus, are full of symbolic expressions and unintelligible without a firm clue to their symbolism. The three leading features of these hymns to the Ashwins are the praise of **their chariot, their horses and their rapid all-pervading movement**; their seeking of honey and their joy in the honey, madhu, and the satisfying delights that they carry in their car; and their close association with the Sun, with Suryā the daughter of the Sun and with the Dawn.

The Ashwins like the other gods descend from the Truth-consciousness, the Ritam; they are born or manifested from Heaven, from Dyaus, the pure Mind; their movement pervades all the worlds,—the effect of their action ranges from the body through the vital being and the thought to the superconscient Truth. It commences indeed from the ocean, from the vague of the being as it emerges out of the subconscious and they conduct the soul over the flood of these waters and prevent its foundering on its voyage. **They are therefore Nāsatyā, lords of the movement, leaders of the journey or voyage.**

They help man with the Truth which comes to them especially by association with the Dawn, with Surya, lord of the Truth, and with Suryā, his daughter, but they help him more characteristically with the delight of being. They are lords of bliss, śubhaspatī; their car or movement is loaded with the satisfactions of the delight of being in all its planes; they bear the skin full of the overflowing honey; they seek the honey, the sweetness, and fill all things with it. They are therefore effective powers of the **Ananda** which proceeds out of the Truth-consciousness and which manifesting itself variously in all the three worlds **maintains man in his journey.** Hence their action is in all the worlds. They are especially riders or drivers of the Horse, Ashwins, as their name indicates,—**they use the vitality of the human being as the motive-force of the journey:** but also they work in the thought and lead it to the Truth. They give health, beauty, wholeness to the body; they are the divine physicians. Of all the gods they are the most ready to come to man and to create for him ease and joy, āgamiṣṭhā, śubhaspatī. For this is their peculiar and perfect function. They are essentially lords of weal, of bliss, śubhaspatī.

This character of the Ashwins is brought out with a continual emphasis by Vamadeva in the present hymn. In almost every verse occurs with a constant iteration the words madhu, madhumān, honey, honied. It is a hymn to the sweetness of existence; it is a chant of the delight of being.

The great Light of lights, the Sun of Truth, the illumination of the Truth-consciousness is rising up out of the movement of life to create the illumined Mind, Swar, which completes the evolution of the lower triple world. Eṣa sya bhānur udiyarti. By this rising of the Sun in man, the full movement of the Ashwins becomes possible; for by the Truth comes the realised Delight, the heavenly beatitude. Therefore, the chariot of the Ashwins is being yoked upon the height of this Dyaus, the high level or plane of the resplendent mind.

That chariot is all-pervading; its motion goes everywhere; its speed runs freely on all planes of our consciousness. Yujyate rathaḥ parijmā divo asya sānavi.

The full all-pervading movement of the Ashwins brings with it the fullness of all the possible satisfactions of the delight of being. This is expressed symbolically in the language of the Veda by saying that in their car are found the satisfactions, *ṛkṣāsaḥ*, in three pairs, *ṛkṣāsa asmin mithunā adhi trayāḥ*.

The word *ṛkṣa* is rendered food in the ritual interpretation like the kindred word *prayas*. The root means pleasure, fullness, satisfaction, and may have the material sense of a "delicacy" or satisfying food and the psychological sense of a delight, pleasure or satisfaction. The satisfactions or delicacies which are carried in the car of the Ashwins are, then, in three pairs; or the phrase may simply mean, they are three but closely associated together. In any case, the reference is to the three kinds of satisfaction or pleasure which correspond to the three movements or worlds of our progressive consciousness,—satisfactions of the body, satisfactions of the vitality, satisfactions of the mind. If they are in three pairs, then we must understand that on each plane there is a double action of the delight corresponding to the double and united twinhood of the Ashwins. It is difficult in the Veda itself to distinguish between these brilliant and happy Twins or to discover what each severally represents. We have no such indication as is given us in the case of the three Ribhus. But perhaps the Greek names of these two Dioskouroi, *Divo napātā*, sons of Heaven, contain a clue. *Kastor*, the name of the elder, seems to be *Kashtri*, the Shining One; *Poludeukes*⁴ may possibly be *Purudansas*, a name which occurs in the Veda as an epithet of the Ashwins, the Manifold in activity. If so, the **twin birth of the Ashwins recalls the constant Vedic dualism of Power and Light, Knowledge and Will, Consciousness and Energy, Go and Ashwa.** In all the satisfactions brought to us by the Ashwins these two elements are inseparably united; where the form is that of the Light or Consciousness, there Power and Energy are contained; where the form is that of the Power or Energy, there Light and Consciousness are contained.

But these three forms of satisfaction are not all that their chariot holds for us; there is something else, a fourth, a skin full of honey and out of this skin the honey breaks and overflows on every side. *Dṛtis turiyo madhuno vi rapśate*. Mind, life and body, these are three; *turiya*, the fourth plane of our consciousness, is the superconscient, the Truth-consciousness. The Ashwins bring with them a skin, *dṛti*, literally a thing cut or torn, a partial formation out of the Truth-consciousness to contain the honey of the superconscient Beatitude; but it cannot contain it; that unconquerably

⁴ The k of *Poludeukes* points to an original ś; the name would then be *Purudaṃśas*; but such fluctuations between the various sibilants were common enough in the early fluid state of the Aryan tongues.

abundant and infinite sweetness breaks out and overflows everywhere drenching with delight the whole of our existence.

With that honey the three pairs of satisfactions, mental, vital, bodily are impregnated by this all-pervasive overflowing plenty and they become full of its sweetness, madhumantah. And so becoming, at once they begin to move upward. Touched by the divine delight all our satisfactions in this lower world soar upward irresistibly attracted towards the superconscient, towards the Truth, towards the Beatitude. And with them,—for, secretly or openly, consciously or subconsciously it is the delight of being that is the leader of our activities,—all the chariots and horses of these gods take the same soaring upward movement. All the various movements of our being, all the forms of Force that give them their impulsion, all follow the ascending light of Truth towards its home.

Ud vāṃ prkṣāso madhumanta irate, rathā aśvāsa uṣaso vyuṣṭiṣu. “In the wide-shinings of the Dawn” they rise; for Dawn is the illumination of the Truth rising upon the mentality to bring the day of full consciousness into the darkness or half-lit night of our being. She comes as Dakshina, the pure intuitive discernment on which Agni the God-force in us feeds when he aspires towards the Truth or as Sarama, the discovering intuition, who penetrates into the cave of the subconscient where the niggard lords of sense-action have hidden the radiant herds of the Sun and gives information to Indra. Then comes the lord of luminous Mind and breaks open the cave and drives upward the herds, udājat, upwards towards the vast Truth-consciousness, the own home of the gods. Our conscious existence is a hill (adri) with many successive levels and elevations, sānūni; the cave of the subconscient is below; we climb upwards towards the godhead of the Truth and Bliss where are the seats of Immortality, yatrāmṛtāsa āsate.⁵

By this upward movement of the chariot of the Ashwins with its burden of uplifted and transformed satisfactions the veil of Night that encompasses the worlds of being in us is rolled away. All these worlds, mind, life, body, are opened to the rays of the Sun of Truth. This lower world in us, rajas, is extended and shaped by this ascending movement of all its powers and satisfactions into the very brightness of the luminous intuitive mind, Swar, which receives directly the higher Light. The mind, the act, the vital, emotional, substantial existence, all becomes full of the glory and the intuition, the power and the light of the divine Sun,—tat savitur vareṇyaṃ bhargo devasya.⁶ The lower mental existence is transformed into an image and reflection of the higher Divine. Aporṇuvantas tama ā parivṛtam, svar ṇa śukraṃ tanvanta ā rajaḥ.

This verse closes the general description of the perfect and final movement of the Ashwins. In the third the Rishi Vamadeva turns to his own ascension, his own offering of the Soma, his voyage and sacrifice; he

⁵ R.V. IX.15.2.

⁶ The great phrase of the Gayatri, R.V. III.62.10.

claims for it their beatific and glorifying action. The mouths of the Ashwins are made to drink of the sweetness; in his sacrifice, then, let them drink of it. Madhvaḥ pibatam madhupebhir āsabhiḥ. Let them yoke their chariot for the honey, their chariot beloved of men; uta priyam madhune yuñjātham ratham.

For man's movement, his progressive activity, is made by them glad in all its paths with that very honey and sweetness of the Ananda. Ā vartaniṃ madhunā jinvathas pathaḥ. For they bear the skin full and overflowing with its honey. Dṛtim vahethe madhumantam āsvinā. **By the action of the Ashwins man's progress towards the beatitude becomes itself beatific; all his travail and struggle and labour grows full of a divine delight.** As it is said in the Veda that by Truth is the progress towards the Truth, that is to say by the growing law of the Truth in the mental and physical consciousness we arrive finally beyond mind and body to the superconscient Truth, so here it is indicated that by Ananda is the progress towards the Ananda,—by a divine delight growing in all our members, in all our activities we arrive at the superconscient beatitude.

In the upward movement the horses that draw the chariot of the Ashwins change into birds, into swans, haṃsāsaḥ. The Bird in the Veda is the symbol, very frequently, of the soul liberated and upsoaring, at other times of energies so liberated and upsoaring, winging upwards towards the heights of our being, winging widely with a free flight, no longer involved in the ordinary limited movement or labouring gallop of the Life-energy, the Horse, Ashwa. Such are the energies that draw the free car of the Lords of Delight, when there dawns on us the Sun of the Truth. These winged movements are full of the honey showered from the overflowing skin, madhumantaḥ. They are unassailable, asridhaḥ, they come to no hurt in their flight; or, the sense may be, they make no false or hurtful movement. And they are golden-winged, hiraṇyaparṇāḥ. Gold is the symbolic colour of the light of Surya. The wings of these energies are the full, satisfied, attaining movement, parṇa, of his luminous knowledge. For these are the birds that awake with the Dawn; these are the winged energies that come forth from their nests when the feet of the daughter of Heaven press the levels of our human mentality, divo asya sānavi. Such are the swans that bear the swift-riding Twins. Haṃsāso ye vāṃ madhumanto asridho, hiraṇyaparṇā uhva uṣarbudhaḥ.

Full of the honey these winged energies shower on us as they rise the abundance of the waters of heaven, the full outpouring of the high mental consciousness; they are instinct with ecstasy, with rapture, with the intoxication of the immortal wine; and they touch, they come into conscious contact with that superconscient being which is eternally in possession of the ecstasy, rapturous for ever with its divine intoxication. Udaṇto mandino mandiniṣṛṣāḥ. Drawn by them the Lords of delight come to the Rishi's Soma-offerings like bees to tricklings of honey; madhvo na makṣāḥ savanāni gacchathaḥ. Makers themselves of the sweetness, they like the bees seek whatever sweetness can serve them as their material for more delight.

In the sacrifice the same movement of general illumination already described as the result of the ascending flight of the Ashwins is now described as being effected by the aid of the fires of Agni. **For the flames of the Will, the divine Force burning up in the soul, are also drenched with the overflowing sweetness and therefore they perform perfectly from day to day their great office of leading the sacrifice⁷ progressively to its goal.** For that progress they woo with their flaming tongues the daily visitation of the brilliant Ashwins who are bright with the light of the intuitive illuminations and uphold them with their thought of flashing energy.⁸ Svadhvarāso madhumanta agnaya usrā jarante prati vastor āsvinā.

This aspiration of Agni happens when the Sacrificer with pure hands, with a perfectly discerning vision, with power in his soul to travel to the end of its pilgrimage, to the goal of the sacrifice through all obstacles, breaking all opposers, has pressed out the immortalising wine with the pressing-stones and that too becomes full of the honey of the Ashwins. Yan niktahastas taraṇir vicakṣaṇaḥ, somaṃ suṣāva madhumantam adribhiḥ. For the individual's delight in things is met by the Ashwins' triple satisfactions and by the fourth, the delight pouring from the Truth. The cleansed hands of the Sacrificer, niktahastaḥ, are possibly symbolic⁹ of the purified physical being; the power comes from a fulfilled life-energy; the force of clear mental vision, vicakṣaṇa, is the sign of the truth-illuminated mind. These are the conditions in mind, life and body for the overflowing of the honey over the triple satisfactions of the Ashwins. When the sacrificer has thus pressed out the honey-filled delight of things in his sacrifice, the flames of the Will are able to drink them from near, they are not compelled to bring them meagrely or with pain from a distant and hardly accessible plane of consciousness. Therefore, drinking immediately and freely, they become full of an exultant force and swiftness and run and race about over the whole field of our being to extend and build up the lower consciousness into the shining image of the world of free and luminous Mind. Ākenipāso ahabhir davidhvataḥ, svar ṇa śukraṃ tanvanta ā rajaḥ.

The formula used is repeated without variation from the second Rik; but here it is the flames of the Will full of the fourfold satisfaction that do the work. There the free upsoaring of the gods by the mere touch of the Light and without effort; here the firm labour and aspiration of man in his sacrifice. For then it is by Time, by the days, that the work is perfected,

⁷ Adhvara, the word for sacrifice, is really an adjective and the full phrase is adhvara yajña, sacrificial action travelling on the path, the sacrifice that is of the nature of a progression or journey. Agni, the Will, is the leader of the sacrifice.

⁸ śavīrayā dhiyā, R.V. I.3.2.

⁹ The hand or arm is often, however, otherwise symbolic, especially when it is the two hands or arms of Indra that are in question.

ahabhiḥ, by successive dawns of the Truth each with its victory over the night, by the unbroken succession of the sisters of which we have had mention in the hymn to the divine Dawn. **Man cannot seize or hold at once all that the illumination brings to him; it has to be repeated constantly so that he may grow in the light.**

But not only the fires of the Will are at work to transform the lower consciousness. The Sun of Truth yokes also his lustrous coursers and is in movement; *sūraś cid aśvān yuyujāna iyate*. The Ashwins too take knowledge for the human consciousness of all the paths of its progress so that it may effect a complete, harmonious and many-sided movement. This movement advancing in many paths is combined in the light of the divine knowledge by the spontaneous self-arranging action of Nature which she assumes when the will and the knowledge are wedded in the perfect harmony of a fully self-conscious, intuitively guided action. *Viśvān anu svadhayā cetathas pathaḥ*.

Vamadeva closes his hymn. He has been able to hold firmly the shining Thought with its high illumination and has expressed in himself by the shaping and fixing power of the Word the chariot, that is to say, the immortal movement of the delight of the Ashwins; the movement of a bliss that does not fade or grow old or exhaust itself,—it is ageless and undecaying, *ajaraḥ*,—because it is drawn by perfect and liberated energies and not by the limited and soon exhausted, soon recalcitrant horses of the human vitality. *Pra vām avocam aśvinā dhiyaṃdhā, rathaḥ svaśvo ajaro yo asti*.

In this movement they traverse in a moment all the worlds of the lower consciousness, covering it with their speeding delights, and so arrive to that universal enjoyment in man full of his offering of the Soma-wine by which they can lead him, puissantly entering into it, through all opposers and to the great goal. *Yena sadyaḥ pari rajāṃsi yātho, haviṣmantam taraṇim bhojam accha*.