

Sap̥tyā in one passage of the Rigveda (viii. 41, 4) seems to denote a 'racecourse.'

Sa-bandhu ('of the same kin') in the Rigveda¹ and later² denotes 'related.'

¹ iii. 1, 10; v. 47, 5; viii. 20, 21, etc. | ² Av. vi. 15, 2; viii. 2, 26; xv. 8, 2, 3, etc.

Sabhā is the name of an 'assembly' of the Vedic Indians as well as of the 'hall' where they met in assembly. It is often mentioned in the Rigveda¹ and later,² but its exact character is not certain. The hall was clearly used for dicing,³ presumably when the assembly was not transacting public business: a dicer is called *sabhā-sthānu*, 'pillar of the assembly hall,' doubtless because of his constant presence there.⁴ The hall also served, like the Homeric λέσχη, as a meeting-place for social intercourse and general conversation about cows and so forth,⁵ possibly for debates and verbal contests.⁶

According to Ludwig,⁷ the *Sabhā* was an assembly not of all the people, but of the Brahmins and *Maghavan*s ('rich patrons'). This view can be supported by the expressions

¹ vi. 28, 6; viii. 4, 9; x. 34, 6. Cf. *sabhā-saha*, 'eminent in the assembly,' x. 71, 10.

² Av. v. 31, 6; vii. 12, 1, 2; viii. 10, 5; xii. 1, 56; xix. 55, 6; Taittirīya Saṃhitā, i. 7, 6, 7; Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā, iv. 7, 4; Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā, iii. 45; xvi. 24; xx. 17; Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa, i. 1, 10, 6; Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, ii. 3, 2, 3; v. 3, 1, 10; Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa, vii. 9, etc.

³ Rv. x. 34, 6; Av. v. 31, 6; xii. 3, 46 (here *dyūta* is used in place of *Sabhā*).

⁴ Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā, xxx. 18; Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa, iii. 4, 16, 1, with Sāyaṇa's note. Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben*, 172, inclines to see in the formula (Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā, iii. 45; xx. 17; Taittirīya Saṃhitā, i. 8, 3, 1; Kāthaka Saṃhitā, ix. 4; Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā, i. 10, 2) 'what sin we have committed in the village, the jungle, the *Sabhā*' a reference to attacks on the great

(Mahīdhara on Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā, iii. 45), or partiality in deciding disputes (Mahīdhara, *ibid.*, xx. 17). But it may refer to gambling or other non-political activity, as Eggeling, *Sacred Books of the East*, 12, 398, takes it, though he renders it differently, *ibid.*, 44, 265.

⁵ Rv. vi. 28, 6. Cf. viii. 4, 9. So in Av. vii. 12, 2, the assembly is hailed as *naviṣṭā*, 'merriment.' But the same hymn (vii. 12, 3) contains a clear reference to serious speech in the *Sabhā*. For the blending of serious political work and amusement, cf. Tacitus, *Germania*, 22.

⁶ So Zimmer, *op. cit.*, 174, takes *sabheya* in Rv. ii. 24, 13.

⁷ Translation of the Rigveda, 3, 253-256. He quotes for this view Rv. viii. 4, 9; x. 71, 10 (passages which are quite vague). Cf. also Rv. vii. 1, 4; Av. xix. 57, 2.