

Samhitās and Brāhmaṇas lists are given of expressions connected with dicing. The names are Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara, Āskanda, and Abhibhū in the Taittirīya Samhitā.¹⁶ In the Vājasaneyi Samhitā,¹⁷ among the victims at the Puruṣamedha, the *kitava* is offered to the Akṣarāja, the *ādinava-darśa* to the Kṛta, the *kalpin* to the Tretā, the *adhi-kalpin* to the Dvāpara, the *sabhā-sthānu* to the Āskanda. The lists in the parallel version of the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa are *kitava*, *sabhāvin*, *ādinava-darśa*, *bahiḥ-sad*, and *sabhā-sthānu*,¹⁸ and Akṣarāja, Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara, and Kali. From the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa¹⁹ it appears that another name of Kali was Abhibhū, and the parallel lists in the Taittirīya and Vājasaneyi Samhitās suggest that Abhibhū and Akṣarāja are identical, though both appear in the late Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa list. The names of some of these throws go back even to the Rigveda and the Atharvaveda. Kali occurs in the latter,²⁰ and Lüders²¹ shows that in a considerable number of passages in the former Kṛta means a 'throw' (not 'a stake'²² or 'what is won'²³), and this sense is clearly found in the Atharvaveda.²⁴ Moreover, that there were more throws (*ayāḥ*) than one is proved by a passage in the Rigveda,²⁵ when the gods are compared to throws as giving or destroying wealth.

The nature of the throws is obscure. The St. Petersburg Dictionary conjectures that the names given above were applied either to dice marked 4, 3, 2, or 1, or to the sides of the dice so marked, and the latter interpretation is supported by some late commentators.²⁶ But there is no evidence for the former interpretation, and, as regards the latter, the shape of the Vibhīdaka nuts,²⁷ used as dice, forbids any side being properly on the top. Light is thrown on the expressions by the descrip-

¹⁶ iv. 3, 3, 1. 2.

¹⁷ xxx. 18.

¹⁸ iii. 4, 1, 16. These must be persons conversant with dicing, but the exact sense of the names is unknown.

¹⁹ v. 4, 4, 6.

²⁰ vii. 114, 1.

²¹ *Op. cit.*, 43 *et seq.*

²² St. Petersburg Dictionary, s.v.

²³ Grassmann's Dictionary, s.v.

²⁴ vii. 52. See Rv. x. 42, 9 (*hṛtaṃ vicinoti*); 43, 5; x. 102, 2; v. 60, 1; ix. 97, 58; i. 132, 1; x. 34, 6; i. 100, 9; viii. 19, 10.

²⁵ x. 116, 9.

²⁶ Ānandagiri on Chāndogya Upaniṣad, iv. 1. 4; Nilakanṭha on Mahābhārata, iv. 50, 24.

²⁷ Lüders, *op. cit.*, 18.