

Mātur-bhrātra is a curiously formed compound, occurring once in the *Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā*¹ as a designation of the 'maternal uncle,' who in the *Sūtra* period bears the name of **Mātula**. Thus little is heard of the maternal uncle in the Vedic period: it is not till the *Epic*² that traces appear of his prominence as compared with the paternal uncle (*pitr̥vya*). This fact is significant for the 'patriarchal' character of the early Indian family organization.³

¹ i. 6, 12.

² Hopkins, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 13, 141.

³ Delbrück, *Die indogermanischen Ver-*

wandtschaftsnamen, 484, 586-588. Cf. also Rivers, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1907, 629 et seq.

Mātula,¹ 'maternal uncle,' is found only in the *Sūtras*² and later.

¹ This peculiarly formed word was presumably a dialectic form which made its way into the written speech.

² *Āśvalāyana Gṛhya Sūtra*, i. 24, 4, etc.

Mātr is the regular word for 'mother' from the *Rigveda* onwards,¹ being a formation probably developed under the influence of an onomatopoeic word *mā*,² used like *Ambā*³ and *Nanā*.⁴

The relations of wife and husband, as well as of mother and children, are treated under **Pati**. It remains only to add that details are given in the *Sūtras*⁵ of the respectful attention paid to a mother, and of the ceremonies in which she is concerned. The mother also appears interested in the fate of her children as in the story of the sale of **Sunah̥śepa** for adoption by **Viśvāmitra** in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*.⁶

¹ i. 24, 1; vii. 101, 3, etc.; *Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā*, xlii. 21, etc.; *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, ii. 6, etc.

² Böhtlingk and Roth, *St. Petersburg Dictionary*, s.v., note.

³ Cf. *ambe ambike ambalike*, *Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā*, xxiii. 18, with variations in *Taittiriya Saṃhitā*, vii. 4, 19, 1; *Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā*, iii. 12, 20; *Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa*, iii. 9, 6, 3; also

ambā ambāyavi, ambayā, in the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad*, i. 3.

⁴ *Rv.* ix. 112, 3 (*Upalaprakṣinī*). See von Schroeder, *Mysterium und Mimus*, 412.

⁵ Cf. Delbrück, *Die indogermanischen Verwandtschaftsnamen*, 460, 476, 477.

⁶ vii. 18 seq. Cf. also Leist, *Altarisches Jus Gentium*, 104; Jolly, *Die Adoption in Indien*, 16, 17.