

Pitu in the Rigveda<sup>1</sup> and later<sup>2</sup> has the general sense of 'nutriment,' whether food or drink.

<sup>1</sup> i. 61, 7; 132, 6; 187, 1; vi. 20, 4. etc.

<sup>2</sup> Av. iv. 6, 3; Taittiriya Samhitā,

v. 7, 2, 4; Vajasaneyi Samhitā, ii. 20; xii. 65; Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, i. 13.

Pitr, common from the Rigveda onwards, denotes 'father,' not so much as the 'begetter' (*janitr*),<sup>1</sup> but rather as the protector of the child, this being probably also the etymological sense of the word.<sup>2</sup> The father in the Rigveda<sup>3</sup> stands for all that is good and kind. Hence Agni is compared with a father,<sup>4</sup> while Indra is even dearer than a father.<sup>5</sup> The father carries his son in his arms,<sup>6</sup> and places him on his lap,<sup>7</sup> while the child pulls his garment to attract attention.<sup>8</sup> In later years the son depends on his father for help in trouble,<sup>9</sup> and greets him with joy.<sup>10</sup>

It is difficult to ascertain precisely how far the son was subject to parental control, and how long such control continued. Reference is made in the Rigveda<sup>11</sup> to a father's chastising his son for gambling, and Rjraśva is said to have been blinded by his father.<sup>12</sup> From the latter statement Zimmer<sup>13</sup> infers the existence of a developed *patria potestas*, but to lay stress on this isolated and semi-mythical incident would be unwise. It is, however, quite likely that the *patria potestas* was originally strong, for we have other support for the thesis in the Roman *patria potestas*. If there is no proof that a father

<sup>1</sup> Pita *janita* is used of gods in the Rigveda—e.g., iv. 17, 12.

<sup>2</sup> As derived from *pā*, 'protect.' But, as Böhtlingk and Roth, St. Petersburg Dictionary, s.v. *Mātar*, footnote, suggest, *pā* and *mā* were probably the much older original onomatopoeic names for 'father' and 'mother,' which in a later reflective age influenced the formation of *pitr* and *mātṛ* (which themselves go back to the Indo-European period).

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., iv. 17, 17; viii. 86, 4.

<sup>4</sup> Rv. x. 7, 3.

<sup>5</sup> Rv. vii. 32, 19; viii. 1, 6.

<sup>6</sup> Rv. i. 38, 1.

<sup>7</sup> Rv. v. 43, 7.

<sup>8</sup> Rv. iii. 53, 2.

<sup>9</sup> In Rv. x. 48, 1, the *jantavaḥ* possibly are the sons.

<sup>10</sup> Rv. vii. 103, 3. Cf. i. 24, 1.

<sup>11</sup> Rv. ii. 29, 5.

<sup>12</sup> Rv. i. 116, 16; 117, 17. There is also the case of the sale of Sunahṣepa, Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, vii. 12-18; and cf. Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, v. 3, 3, 3.

<sup>13</sup> *Allindisches Leben*, 316.