

Stoma denotes 'song of praise' in the Rigveda.¹ Later² the term has the technical sense of the typical forms in which the **Stotras** are chanted.

¹ i. 114, 9; iii. 5, 2; 58, 1, etc.

² Taittiriya Saṃhitā, iii. 1, 2, 4; Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā, ix. 33; x. 10, etc.

Cf. Weber, *Indische Studien*, 9, 229, 276; 10, 355; Hillebrandt, *Ritual-litteratur*, 101.

Strī is the ordinary word in poetry and prose for 'woman,' without special reference to her as a wife or as a maiden. **Nārī** has the same sense, but disappears in later prose, while **Gnā** refers only to the wives of the gods, and **Yoṣit**, with its cognate words, denotes the young woman as ripe for marriage.¹ In the Rigveda² **Strī** stands opposed to **Pumāms**, 'man,' and once to **vṛṣan**, 'male person'; not until the Atharvaveda³ does it mean 'wife' as opposed to **Patī**, 'husband,' and even in the Sūtras it is sharply opposed to **Jāyā**.

In Vedic India by far the greater part of a woman's life was taken up in her marriage and marital relations (see **Patī** and **Mātr**). There is no trace in the Rigveda of the seclusion of women, which was practically complete in all but the earliest Epic:⁴ the maiden may be assumed to have grown up in her father's house, enjoying free intercourse with the youth of the village, and sharing in the work of the house. Education⁵ was not denied to them, at any rate in certain cases, for we hear in the Upaniṣads of women who could take no unimportant part in disputations on philosophical topics. Moreover, women were taught to dance and sing, which were unmanly accomplishments.⁶

Of the exact legal position of daughters the notices are few and meagre. The Rigveda,⁷ however, shows that in the place

¹ Cf. Delbrück, *Die indogermanischen Verwandtschaftsnamen*, 417.

² Rv. i. 164, 16; v. 61, 8, etc. So also often later—e.g., Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā, iv. 7, 4; Taittiriya Saṃhitā, vi. 5, 8, 2.

³ xii. 2, 39. Cf. Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, iii. 22, 1.

⁴ Hopkins, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 13, 349, 350.

⁵ Cf. Hopkins, *op. cit.*, 351, 352.

See **Gārgī Vācakaṇvī** and others enumerated in the Āśvalāyana Grhya Sūtra, iii. 4, 4; Weber, *Indische Studien*, 10, 118, 119.

⁶ Taittiriya Saṃhitā, vi. 1, 6, 5, Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā, iii. 7, 3; Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, iii. 2, 4, 3-6.

⁷ i. 124, 7. Cf. Av. i. 14, 2; 17, 1; Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben*, 328; Hopkins, *op. cit.*, 341, and see **Syāla**, **Putrikā**.