

of a family has become its head owing to the decrepitude¹⁰⁴ of the parents, his wife then taking the place of the mistress of the joint family while the brothers and sisters are still unmarried. It is not inconsistent with the great stress elsewhere¹⁰⁵ laid on the respect due to a father-in-law, who then is probably regarded as still in full possession of his faculties, and controls the house while his son continues to live with him. The respect would no doubt equally apply if the son had set up a separate family of his own.¹⁰⁶

Moreover, the wife was a regular participator in the offerings of the husband. In this connexion the term **Patnī** regularly applies to her in the Brāhmana, ¹⁰⁷ where **Jāyā** designates her in her conjugal capacity, not in that of sharer in the sacrifice. In this respect her position gradually deteriorated: thus the Śatapatha Brāhmana¹⁰⁸ describes a certain ceremony in which the wife (*jāyā*) alone offered the oblation in former times, while later a priest might do so instead. The same Brāhmana shows other traces of a lowering in the position of women, probably due to the growing sense of the importance of ceremonial priority.¹⁰⁹ So in the Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā¹¹⁰ women generally are classed with dice and drink as three chief evils, and woman is declared to be 'untruth,'¹¹¹ and connected with Nirṛti, 'calamity.'¹¹² A woman too, according to the Taittirīya Saṃhitā,¹¹³ is inferior even to a bad man, and a sarcastic reference is made in the Kāthaka Saṃhitā¹¹⁴ to her power of

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Rv. i. 70, 5, where an old father's goods are divided by his sons, and Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben*, 327. Cf. also the possible case of a father who recovers after giving over all his goods to his son, Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad, iv. 15.

¹⁰⁵ Av. viii. 6, 24; Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā, ii. 4, 2; Kāthaka Saṃhitā, xii. 12 (*Indische Studien*, 5, 260); Taittirīya Brāhmana, ii. 4, 6, 12; Aitareya Brāhmana, iii. 22; Delbrück, *Die indogermanischen Verwandtschaftsnamen*, 514, 515.

¹⁰⁶ No doubt it might also apply even if the father-in-law were decrepit; but it is hardly likely that, in these circumstances, the strong sense of

respect evident in Av. viii. 6, 24, which implies fear, would have developed.

¹⁰⁷ Śatapatha Brāhmana, i. 9, 2, 14; Pāṇini, iv. 1, 33; Delbrück, *op. cit.*, 510, 512.

¹⁰⁸ i. 1, 4, 13. For the older practice, cf. Rv. i. 122, 2; iii. 53, 4-6; viii. 31, 5 *et seq.*; x. 86, 10, etc.

¹⁰⁹ E.g., i. 3, 1. 9. 12. 13. Cf. Lévi, *La doctrine du sacrifice*, 157, 158.

¹¹⁰ iii. 6, 3.

¹¹¹ i. 10, 11.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ vi. 5, 8, 2. Cf. Śatapatha Brāhmana, i. 3, 1, 9.

¹¹⁴ xxxi. 1. Cf. Aitareya Brāhmana, iii. 22.