
WOMEN THROUGHOUT THE AGES

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Abstract: Throughout the ages, women were considered inferior to man. She was considered as curse, witch, unlucky for society. Even about sixth century BCE, women were regarded as the chief obstacle to salvation and enlightenment. Women came to be looked upon as the source of all evils and as potent instrument of destroying the soul of men. In every age women faced discrimination, even woman also think that she is inferior to men which led to the low female sex ratio. India achieved Independence in 1947 but this independence was not for the women of the country. As said by M.K Gandhi "The day a woman can walk freely on the roads at night, that day we can say India has achieved independence." Women are still facing the problems and the problem is increasing day by day. The devadasi system, sati system were banned by the government but this system were still followed in many parts of India. As per the report of NCRB (National crime records bureau) 3% rape victims were below 6 years in 2014. There were also some cases in which man raped dead bodies of girls because these bodies don't make noise. We have no words to explain the condition of women because such conditions prove that this is ending of humanity as well as of mankind. We don't know why people hate woman although they can't live without her. She is the mother, the maker, the leader. Now this is our tendency to use woman as an object of amusement or as pleasure.

Keywords: Women, India, Devadasi, Crime.

Introduction: "The day a woman can walk freely on the roads at night, that day we can say India has achieved independence".- M.K Gandhi
 India, the Bharat Mata achieved independence on 15th Aug 1947. But the women in India not achieved independence. Actually they got independence from British, not from Indians. Throughout the different ages we have always seen that woman is considered inferior than man but on the other hand, man worshiped woman as Shakti or the power. It is mentioned in the Manu Smriti "day and night women must be kept in dependence by males of their families. Her father protects her in childhood, her husband protects her in youth, and her sons protects her in old age; a woman is never fit for independence." The misinterpretation of the word 'protection' by men led to the restrictions on the women rights. Nowadays, this protection is changed into rule. In ancient times, this is believed that man is physically superior than women but in later times woman is also considered as an curse so it led to the problems like female infanticide, female feticide etc. Guru Nanak Dev ji also wrote some words for women, through which we are able to understand the condition of women in medieval times. As it is mentioned that

"Bhand jamiye bhand nimmiye,
 bhand mangan veaho.
 Bhando hovey dosti,
 bhando challe raho.
 Bhand mua bhand bhaliye,
 bhand hove bandhaan.

So kyon manda akhiye, jit jamme rajaan. Bhandahu hi
 bhand oopjai bhandai baajh na ko-ay.
 Naanak bhandai baahra ayko sachaa so-ay.

Translation: From woman, man is born; within woman, man is conceived; to woman he is engaged and married.

Woman becomes his friend; through woman, the future generations come.

When his woman dies, he seeks another woman; to woman he is bound.

So why call her bad? From her, kings are born. From woman, woman is born; without woman, there would be no one at all.

Oh Nanak, only the true lord is without women. As Guru Nanak Dev ji explained that only God or the supreme person is superior to woman. Man is created by women as well as by God or the real creator. It has been tendency of man to use woman as an object of amusement or as pleasure. Men and Women both are the creation of God. Both have their internal strengths and no one is superior to each other. History provides us the information that Woman was able to do all things that man did. But man can't do things which were done by women. A woman bears the suffering caused by the pains of labour, but she forget them in the joy of creation. She is essentially not the object of man's lust, but is the mother, the maker the leader. This is the mental intention of man who thinks that woman is a living object. About sixth century BCE, women were regarded as the chief obstacle to salvation and enlightenment. Women came to be looked upon as the source of all evils and as potent instrument of destroying the soul of men. Now I want to arise the question that how can one achieve the salvation that has physical attractions? This is not the woman, who acts as an obstacle to salvation, but this is the mindset of man which always claims him as right and woman as wrong.

History is the opinion that woman helps man to achieve enlightenment and salvation. In Vedic times, there were many women who composed the Vedic hymns. The most famous composers and saints among them were Gargi Vachaknavi, Vadava Pratitheyi, Sulabha Maitreyi. This period is also the beginning of Buddhism. As it is said by the present Dalai lama "The Buddha gave equal opportunities to men and women, but we, even as follower of Buddha neglected that." In later Vedic period, the position of widow was gradually becoming worse; the custom of sati (self-immolation of the wife on her husband's funeral pyre) gradually came into prominence. The Vishnu Smriti mentioned that 'the widow can go the way of the departed soul by dying after him.' The sati was abolished by Raja Ram Mohan Roy through British government in 1829 but this is still followed in many parts of the country. India's history is the most precious gift for the people but on the other hand there are also some traditions which leave a dark speck on India's culture. One of the most worst tradition among them is Devadasi system. In this system girl (between the age of four or six) marry to lord Krishna or any other God and she became the devadasi i.e. female servant of god. The girl is not allowed to marry with any mortal because she is married with the immortal one. Originally, in addition to taking care of the temple and performing rituals, these women learned and practiced Bharatanatya, Odissi and other classical Indian artistic traditions and enjoyed a high social status as dance and music were essential part of temple worship. In the ancient times the devadasis were divided into seven categories. They are known as Dutta, Hruta, Bikrita, Bhrutya, Alankara and Gopika or Rudraganika. Such categories reveal the origin and status of the devadasis. When a sacred man offered his daughter to a temple as a devadasi, she is known as "Dutta devadasi". But when a lady was kidnapped and subsequently employed in a temple, she is known as "Hruta devadasi". Sometimes when a lady was sold to the administrator or the priest of a temple, she is known as "Bikrita devadasi". If a lady voluntarily worked in a temple as a devadasi, she is known as "Bhrutya devadasi". Some women who devotionally offered themselves to serve the temple are known as "Bhakta devadasi". When a woman after attaining a certain degree of competence, is offered to the temple with ornaments, she is known as "Alankara devadasi". The devadasis who were getting remunerations for offering dance and music in the temple in a particular time became

identified as "Gopika" or "Rudraganika". These classes of the devadasi were receiving fixed remunerations and some landed property for their personal use. Nowadays, most of the devadasis are affected by HIV. The Indian government banned this practice through many laws like IPC section 372 and 373 Madras Devadasis (Prevention of Dedication) act 1947, Maharashtra Devadasis Abolition Act, 2006 and Karnataka Devadasis (Prohibition of Dedication) Act, 1982. But this is still followed in many parts of the country. In modern world, where the concepts like Feminism, Women empowerment are exists but the conditions of women have not any major change. Throughout the ancient times, women are facing discrimination, sexual harassment and exploitation. Although there are many laws and international societies but the crime rate against women is increasing day by day. In India, most of the people believed that the main cause of rape is their clothes and not man. Even most of the criminals also said that they raped her because her clothes provoke them. So I want to break their face because their stupidity provokes me. This is not only man who doesn't like girls, but woman also believes that women are inferior to man. So in most of the cases of crime against women it was seen that women were the main cause of the crime. According to National Crime Records Bureau report 2014, there were 36,735 rape cases in which 16.1% in age group of 12 - below 16 years, 11.8% in 6- below 12 years and 3% below 6 years. The animalism in India was shown through the cases in which men raped dead bodies because they don't make noise. What will be the punishment for this kind of people not people they are demons. The crime rate against women in 2014 was 56.3%. Delhi UT has reported the highest crime rate (169.1) compared to 56.3 at all India level during the year 2014, followed by Assam (123.4), Rajasthan (91.4), Tripura (88.0), West Bengal (85.4), Madhya Pradesh (79.0) and Telangana (78.3). In the last we want to explain the words of William Golding (a noble prize winner): "I think women are foolish to pretend they are equal to men, they are far superior and always have been. Whatever you give a woman, she will make greater... if you give her a house, she will give you a home. If you give her groceries, she will give a meal. If you give her a smile, she will give you her heart. She multiplies and enlarges what is given to her. So, if you give her any crap, be ready to receive a ton of shit."

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