



## Research Paper

# SATI- From Widow Immolation To Widow Re-Marriage

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### RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This paper seeks to-

- Analyse the emergence of Sati
- Analyse the situation of women
- Analysis of the struggle and modification.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What is the meaning of SATI?
- What was the origin of SATI?
- What was the situation of women?
- What is the role and process of the indian philosophers?

### SCOPE OF RESEARCH

Sati is said to be the reflection of ancient India , its practices and norms which guided the behavior of the society. Sati was an evil practice which made people question the patriarchal culture and norms of the society which demeaned the position of women. The research helped in widening the horizon to contemplate, collect and question the practice with analysis of changes in the society.

### SATI

*From Widow Immolation To Widow Re-Marriage*

### ABSTRACT

Sati is the Indian custom of a wife immolating herself either on the funeral pyre of her dead husband or in some other fashion soon after his death. <sup>1</sup>The sati lifestyle changed into conventional amongst positive sects of the society in historic India, who both took the vow or deemed it an amazing honour to die at the funeral pyres in their husbands. The ritual of sati changed into banned through the British Government in 1829 through Lord Bentinck, the Governor-General of India and later the Sati (Prevention) Act 1987. In the current times, there had been some times of sati in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh Madhya Pradesh and in Chhattisgarh. The exercise of Sati primarily occurs in components of northern and primary India. Isolated incidents can be extra however now no longer suggested formally that brought about a variety of controversy and social turmoil within side the use of a time and again. Women sometimes suffered immolation before their husbands' expected death in battle, in which case the burning was called *jauhar*<sup>2</sup>.The authorities of India have dropped its flow to improve the regulation in opposition to sati. This paper will have a look at the applicable provisions of regulation and in addition to socio felony tangle of this issue

<sup>1</sup> Suttee. (n.d.). Retrieved February 15, 2021, from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/suttee>

<sup>2</sup> Suttee. (n.d.). Retrieved February 15, 2021, from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/suttee>

## I. INTRODUCTION

Stories according to the mythology stated that sati was not a widow she was rather the daughter of Daksha who was son of Brahma who once was performing a grand ceremony of sacrificial where he did not invite his son in law as to humiliate him. Sati was outraged by the actions of the father Daksha.

In order to take revenge sati performed an act of burning herself and getting reduced to ashes. The sati tradition was prevalent among certain sects of the society in ancient India, who either took the vow or deemed it a great honour to die on the funeral pyres of their husbands<sup>3</sup>. This was termed as a divine example of devotion towards her husband. Thus, this practice was named after her and later came to be known as sati. Women who performed sati were later honoured and venerated by the society and later it was an act which did not demand the acceptance of the wife rather it was named as a customary practice. not only prevalent in India but also on the soils of Nepal while there were variations in the practice of sati under different names like Jauhar in Rajasthan where female used to commit suicide which was completely voluntary in order to save their pride and show loyalty towards the husband when the used to go to wars.

## II. THE RITUAL OF SATI

Historically, the practice of sati was to be found among many castes and at every social level, chosen by or for both uneducated and the highest ranking women of the times.<sup>4</sup> In a rustic that avoided widows, sati became taken into consideration the maximum expression of wifely devotion to a useless husband It became deemed an act of peerless piety and became stated to purge her of all her sins, launch her from the cycle of beginning and rebirth and make certain salvation for her useless husband and the seven generations that observed her. Because its proponents lauded it as the specified behavior of righteous women, it became now no longer taken into consideration to be suicide, in any other case banned or discouraged via way of means of Hindu scripture "The widow on her way to the pyre was the object of all public attention...Endowed with the gift of prophecy and the power to cure and bless, she was immolated amid great fanfare, with great veneration"(1)

. Only if she became virtuous and pious could she be worth of being sacrificed; therefore being burned or being visible as a failed spouse have been regularly her only. Indeed, the very connection with the widow from the factor at which she determined to emerge as a "Sati" eliminated any in addition private connection with her as an person and improved her to a far off and untouchable context.

## III. INITIAL STRUGGLE AND MODIFICATIONS

In the sixteenth century, Humayun became the primary to strive a royal settlement in opposition to the exercise. Akbar became subsequent to problem reputable orders prohibiting Sati and given that then it became executed voluntarily through women. He additionally issued orders that no lady may want to dedicate Sati with out a particular permission from his leader police officers. The ritual of sati was banned by the British Government in 1829 by Lord Bentinck, the Governor-General of India<sup>5</sup>. By the stop of the 18th century, the exercise have been banned in territories held through a few European powers The Portuguese banned the exercise in Goa through 1515 The Dutch and the French banned it in Hugli-Chunchura and Pondicherry The British argued that Sati became now no longer practiced so as to ship the husband and spouse into heaven, however due to the fact widows, entitled to a number of the own circle of relatives belongings after their husband's death, have become a legal responsibility because of the worry that they could declare it. Thus, coercing them into the funeral pyre became a secure bet. the British desired to show that indigenous human beings observed spiritual practices with out a sense of right and wrong and that they changed the interpretations to healthy their goal, notwithstanding having evidence that it can be otherwise. This assumption have become the reputable discourse on Sati. While the goal of the British became to show that faith became the premise of the lifestyles of the human beings of the Indian subcontinent, they desired to accomplish that with out without delay infringing upon their sentiments. In 1813, the regulation that allowed Sati became changed, in line with which there has been now a *legal* Sati and an *illegal* Sati – the previous that means that the widow consented to it and the latter that means that she became coerced into it. Two matters pop out of this arrangement – one, that the British did now no longer goal Sati as it became a exercise merciless to women, however to argue that it became the *men* who had been barbaric, and two, that volition or consent are invalid right here due to the fact there has been no manner to inform if the widow had consented or became compelled to consent.

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<sup>3</sup> (PDF) Sati tradition - Widow burning In India: A Socio-Legal Examination. (n.d.). Retrieved

<sup>4</sup> Kashgar. (n.d.). The practice of sati (widow burning). Retrieved February 15, 2021,

<sup>5</sup> (PDF) Sati tradition - Widow burning In India: A Socio-Legal Examination. (n.d.).

#### **IV. THE FATHER OF INDIAN RENAISSANCE**

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was hailed as the father of Indian Renaissance<sup>6</sup>. He is referred to as the pioneer of women's rights in India, specially due to the fact he got here out in guide of the abolition of Sati. Since 1818, Roy wrote in remarkable element approximately Sati and the way he become pro-abolition. Roy become privy to the patriarchal context at the back of consent withinside the case of women committing Sati, however that remained withinside the margins of the colonial debate. In his works, he defended the non secular scriptures and asserted that widowhood become glorious – a existence of asceticism become the manner for widows to live. Just just like the court-appointed Pandits, Roy made his case with the assist of the *shastras* such as *Manusmriti*, *Shrutis* and *Smritis*, also affirming which scripture is extra sacred than the opposite. *Manusmriti*, in keeping with him, become primarily as it did now no longer point out Sati anywhere. In 1830, The Hindu conservatives had a different, honest factor of view – they have been in opposition to the abolition of Sati as it become part of their customs. They argued that Sati become a exercise that could supply the husband and his wife instantaneously non secular bliss. Ascetic widowhood, on the opposite hand, become suffering.

#### **V. CONDITION OF WOMEN**

Between 1815 and 1828, a complete of 8,134 instances of Sati had been recorded, specifically among (however now no longer confined to) top caste Hindus. The facts had its loopholes – the figures covered deaths of ladies that had not anything to do with Sati; a few died of sickness. A true percent of ladies had been above forty years of age after they carried out the act, contradicting the belief that widowhood changed into unacceptable. The first sati rule stated that any widow who was pregnant, menstruating or had very young children, couldn't partake in this ritual<sup>7</sup>. The ladies on this discourse with the aid of using guys had been decreased to a dichotomy of superheroes and slaves, all relying on whether or not they walked into the pyre with the aid of using consent or coercion. Even Roy, who understood the social inequalities in the back of Sati, glorified ladies going into the pyre with the aid of using calling them heroes. There had been recorded instances of ladies resisting the coercion, however that changed into now no longer visible as a fabricated from the essential trouble with scriptures and customs, however because the incapability of the *guys* who had been forcing this lifestyle on them. Any signal of ladies's corporation changed into invisibilised.

In a few elements of India, the widows must stay existence like a saint. They had been now no longer allowed to stay like a not unusualplace character. They had been predicted to steer a existence of austerity and extremities like no makeup, no new clothes, no true food, a boycott from fairs or even scolding from all participants of the own circle of relatives and society. Widows needed to put on a white Saree of coarse material. The widow changed into taken into consideration because the unfortunate character for the complete own circle of relatives. Women who committed sati were said to have died chaste, which, people believed, meant she would have good karma and a much better life in her next birth.<sup>8</sup>

Remarriage changed into now no longer authorized even though the widow changed into a baby and the wedding changed into now no longer even consummated.

#### **VI. FROM BURNING TO REMARRIAGE**

Ishvarchandra Vidyasagar become the primary Indian highbrow to efficaciously argue in opposition to those strictures. A Sanskrit student and passionate social reformer, Vidyasagar become a main proponent of widow marriage in colonial India, urging his contemporaries to reject a ban that brought on infinite ladies to go through needlessly. Vidyasagar's extremely good approach paired a rereading of Hindu scripture with an emotional plea on behalf of the widow, ensuing in an natural reimagining of Hindu regulation and custom. Vidyasagar made his case thru the two-component publication *Hindu Widow Marriage*, a excursion de pressure of logic, erudition, and humanitarian rhetoric. In 1854, he began writing against the practice for Tattvabodhini Patrika, a progressive journal<sup>9</sup>. Before the passage of the Hindu Widow's Re-marriage Act of 1856, Hindu subculture required a girl to stay as a digital outcast after her husband's death. Widows had been predicted to shave their heads, discard their jewelry, stay in seclusion, and go through everyday acts of penance.

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<sup>6</sup> Soman, P. (n.d.). RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY AND THE ABOLITION OF SATI SYSTEM IN INDIA. Retrieved from International Journal of Humanities, Art and Social Studies

<sup>7</sup> Jain, R. (2018, April 12). The dark history BEHIND 'SATI', a BANNED Funeral custom in India.

<sup>8</sup> Jain, R. (2018, April 12). The dark history BEHIND 'SATI', a BANNED Funeral custom in India.

<sup>9</sup> Wangchuk, R. (2019, September 26). Vidyasagar: The brilliant man who stood up for 19th century women.

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