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DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN STUDIES

**M.Phil
SEMESTER – II**

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PAPER – V [WOMEN IN INDIAN HISTORY]

**PPT PRESENTATION
ON
GROWTH OF SOCIAL REFORM
MOVEMENTS IN COLONIAL INDIA**

PAPER – V . UNIT - III

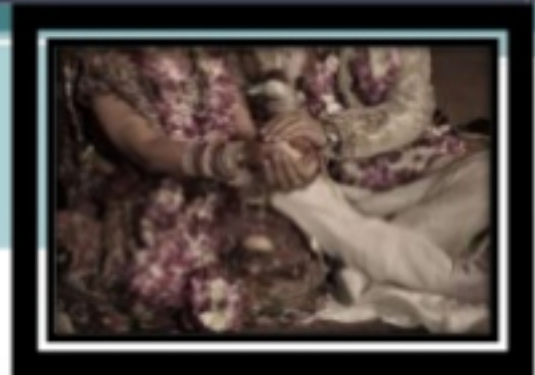
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REFORM MOVEMENT



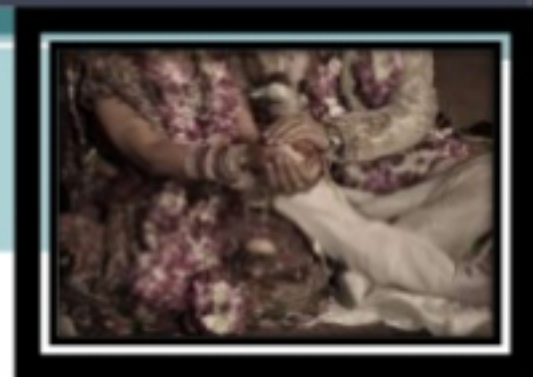
GROWTH OF REFORM MOVEMENT

WIDOW REMARRIAGE



- The most active campaigner on widow remarriage during this period was **Iswar chandra vidyasagar**, a Bengali Writer who published a pamphlet “ marriage of hindu widows” and presented petition to the government on the issue.

WIDOW REMARRIAGE



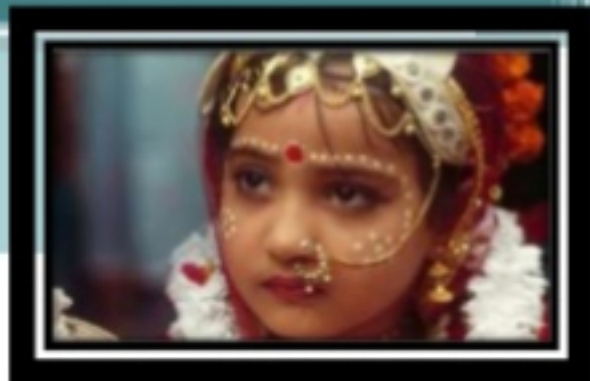
- **Debendranath Tagore**, an activist of Brahma Samaj formed a organization to campaign for widow remarriage and against other evils affecting women.
- This agitation led to the Act of 1856 which legally permitted the remarriage of widows.

POLYGAMY



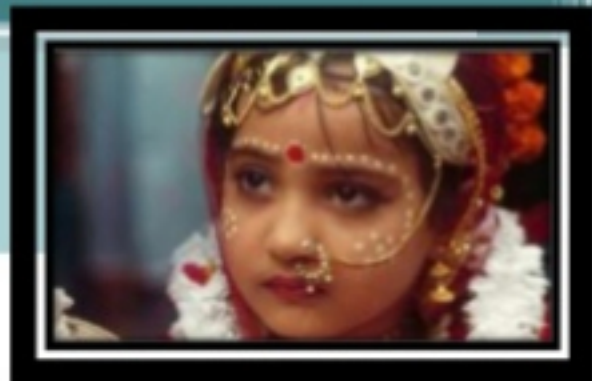
- Polygamy was practiced in India by both Hindus and Muslims, the Muslim being allowed four wives and the Kulin Brahmin were permitted on indefinite wives.
- The campaign was continued by **vidyasagar** who, in 1870s wrote tracts exposing the evils of polygamy.
- Government policies at that time was against too much interference in traditional practices affecting family life.

CHILD MARRIAGE



- The issue of child marriage was also taken up by social reformers of the 19th century.
- The practice was considered as a religious and social obligation by higher castes.
- the reformers best known for their agitations was **Keshab, Vidyasagar and Gopal Hari Deshmukh.**

CHILD MARRIAGE



- Vidyasagar pointed out in 1850 that child marriage was linked to the problem of Indian widows because many of the child brides were widowed at an early age.
- **Dayananda Saraswati** argued that girls should be educated and only allowed to marry at the age of 16 or 18.

Marriage Act



- In 1872, some success was achieved with the Marriage Act which set higher age limits for marriage, 14 for girls and 18 for men.
- Further agitation and publication was made by reformer **Behramji Malban**, who had used the press for campaign against child marriage led to the age of consent bill of 1891 which raised the legal age of consent for sexual intercourse from 10 to 12 for girls.

PROPERTY RIGHTS FOR HINDU WOMEN



- Existing unwritten practice was particularly harsh on the Hindu widow who had no claim on her husband's property except the right of maintenance
- In 1874 the right of property Act gave a widow a life interest in her husband's share of property and a share equal to that of a son

Other major agitation for the rights of low caste women



- **Joti Rao Phule**, a Maharashtrian of low caste led an anti-Brahmin struggle, also opposing polygamy and child marriage and advocating women education and widow remarriage.
- Phule had set up school for girls in Pune and two schools for untouchables. And in 1863 he started a home for prevention of infanticide , to care for unwanted children of widows.
- Phule's forceful writings on Marathi had an impact, especially works like Gulamgiri(1872)
- **Darsonda Mujli** was a influential Gujarati reformer who had a newspaper Satya Prakash which led attack on the immorality of Maharashtra.

Other major agitation for the rights of low caste women



- Another of the early maharashtrian reformers was **Gopal Hari Deshmukh** who in 1840s had began to attack Brahmin traditional practices including caste system, child marriage and treatment of widows.
- **Rabindranath Tagore** came out strongly against traditional custom and practices, while adapting a modern attitude to the role and status of women in society. shantiniketan was open to women and he placed great emphasis on conditions necessarily for the release of creative potential in women.

FEMALE EDUCATION



FEMALE EDUCATION



Since the reform of social evils was linked to the issue of preserving and strengthening basic family structures and creating good wives and mothers, that question that frequently arose was that of female education.

Many liberal reformers and conservatives campaigned in favor of female education. The Indian reformers thought that social evils could be best eliminated through education.

FEMALE EDUCATION



- The education enabled some women to break into avenues of employment that had previously been denied to them.
- **Cornela Subarji** , a parsee was the first Indian women to graduate law at Oxford in 1882.
- **Anandibhai Joshi** was one among the early women doctors who graduated in 1886 from women's medical college Philadelphia.
- **Kadambini Hanquli**, who graduated from Calcutta university, was bengals first women doctor.