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## **CULTURAL RENAISSANCE OF WOMEN: ANCIENT AGE TO MODERN AGE**

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### **Abstract :**

*Today, the world has a dream, a simple dream which all of us share. It is the dream of turning the image of woman around and making it regain the same prestige and glory that it once enjoyed and commanded. Today women share the platform with men in almost every field. They are contributing significantly to family, community and Nation. But her journey from the Ancient Age to Modern Age was not so straightforward. She had to struggle hard to get that position. Therefore in the present research paper attempt has been made to focus on the voyage of women in the process of becoming modern woman.*

**KEYWORDS :** Cultural Renaissance of Women ,voyage of women , animal life , eating grains .

### **CONDITION OF WOMEN IN ANCIENT AGE**

5 to 10 million years ago, after the evolution of man from animal life, when he was living on trees and in caves and eating grains and fruits, no discrimination was there between men and women. The biological fact that women can do some certain essential things that men cannot like, carry, give birth to and nourish offspring, which leave men with feelings of inadequacy, because men cannot compete with women in these vital areas. Women were taking care of home and animals and they were also doing the works of agriculture. Men were hunting and searching the new forests. In the division of labour the status of men and women was considered same. Marriages were formed in groups. But due to such kind of mass marriages it was difficult to ascertain the father. The child was identified by his mother. Because of this major reason matriarchal tradition was established and status of woman had been increased. This increased status and matriarchal tradition started deteriorating when man was thinking that son will continue his alleged 'legacy' and will keep his family name alive. Due to such kind of selfish thinking, he put ample restrictions on women who were delivering their children. It was the right of men on the livestock and agriculture. According to heredity this right was given to son. Instead of mass property, personal property came into existence. Therefore feudal system emerged. In feudal system the place of woman was very terrible. Men could have sex with several women. Due to which courtesan system built up. Later on the version of courtesan changed into prostitution. This condition is very well described by Francis Bacon, when he says:

“Wives are young men’s mistresses,  
Companions for middle age, and  
Old men’s nurses.” (Bacon, p.75).

In traditional age, patriarchal society was not only dominating but also against the fundamental rights of women. These traditional people strictly opposed to give the full freedom to women.

### **TRANSFORMATION OF WOMEN**

As Modernism affected the every walk of life, it did not spare women also. The Traditional Woman changed into Modern Woman as the society changed. But it was not easy for women to transform herself into Modern Women, on the background of patriarchal society, where people always targeted her, for her every different behaviour. But as soon as women got acknowledged with their capabilities after the World War I, they started different kinds of movements to get their rights. Women entered the public sphere through their work for social change.

Nowadays society's attitude towards woman is changing. The society knows it very well that though women have some feminine qualities like, emotions, tolerance, love, care, and forgiveness; at the same time she has courage to handle the every extreme situation very bravely. With the help of education, she is grabbing every field very speedily. By getting the knowledge of every field and every technology she has become a Modern Woman, with qualities of decision making, management, economical independence, confidence, quality to cope with the situation and their basic right, to take education.

### **CONDITION OF WOMEN IN MODERN AGE**

In this speedily changing Modern World, every human being is struggling for individual identity. Not only men but women are also trying to become modern at the same time pursue their personal freedom. The women who accept a free minded thoughts in her behaviour, by breaking all the unnecessary shackles of traditional age and always ready to face every difficulty of life without any hesitation is known as 'Modern Woman'. Today's woman needs to get her own identity because identity is the key for all human beings. To achieve this identity, women are regularly performing duties that were traditionally assigned to male only. As time has progressed, fluctuations in the economy have made it necessary for a woman to obtain a career in order to provide the essential funds to support and maintain a family. In the beginning when women were entering the workforce, they have proven that they are every bit as capable and qualified as men, therefore, they deserve equality in the world of this patriarchal society. Today, women have proved that they are equal to men. By discarding their homely image, they are making a meaningful contribution to the progress of the Nation. They do play a very vital role in the society. According to Richard Whatly:

“Woman is like the reed which bends  
to every breeze, but breaks not in the  
tempest.” (Whatly, p.779).

Woman has a multifaceted personality with the power of benevolence, adjustment, ability, integrity and tolerance. She is the companion to man with equal mental faculty and provides the embodiment of love and affection. Women are the builder and the moulder of Nation's destiny. Though they are delicate and soft as lily, they have a heart, far stronger and bolder than men. They are the supreme inspirations for men's onward march. Really women have much potency than men.

Women are educating themselves and work outside the home. Even in her traditional roles as mother and homemaker, there have been many changes. Such changes partly reflect with the changing times, and are partly the result of efforts made intentionally to change her position in society through Women's Movements. There are evidences that women can bring different approaches and ideas to the consideration of administrative and corporate problems when they are involved in decision making bodies. In general as woman make decisions they think about

more variables, consider more options and outcomes, recall more point of views and see more ways to proceed. As life style changed, the woman is expected to do many more tasks than earlier and that her life still revolves around her children. She shops, she goes to banks, she entertains, she invests, she cleans, she works, she drives her kids to classes and she exercises. The list could go on and on. This work is increasing; there is no end to it. A woman today has to provide to a whole range of demands that her mother never had to deal with. About the women's role in every field, Ranjit Kumar Samanta rightly points out:

“Women have an equal contribution to make in every sphere of human development activity where it is in agriculture, industry, services or small business; their role can not be minimized.” (Samanta, p.75).

In the age of civilization, when man-woman as partners came to know their potentials as human beings, something distinct from other species, the man developed and enriched with logical power, enslaved the woman, through linguistic and social encoding. To decode this encoding, the feminist linguist and critic, Simone De Beavoir, in the second part of her book ‘The Second Sex’, in 1949, writes:

“One is not born a woman;  
rather one becomes a  
Woman.” (#1).

Logically it can be said that, woman is prepared to take the new challenges. In the Modern Age there is the changing significance and new meaning to women's reformation, women's education and women's liberty. As compared to the ancient period, in Modern Age there are drastic positive changes in the women equality and women liberty but the political, social and economical kinds of problems are in front of her. Today women enjoy improved living conditions on all fronts. They also enjoy the fundamental rights of receiving education wherever they like. Freedom of expression is another privilege they enjoy today, though they are fighting against innumerable social evils like dowry systems, female infanticide, sex selection abortions, health hazards and domestic violence.

Women have traditionally been judged primarily for their beauty, which was considered to be their most important quality. Now they are educated and aware enough to deal with any situation completely. In the present Age, they are no longer the inanimate objects. They have to struggle hard to establish the identity of their own. They can possess enough strength and self confidence in a new world.

## CONCLUSION

Culture was responsible for negative stereotype images of girl and woman. But women proved that they have more strength than men, as they maintain the astonishing balance between the outdoor and the indoor duties at the same time. This Modern Woman not only performs her duties sincerely but always tries to give the glimpse of perfection to her every work, whether it is related with office or to organize any family function. By trying to overcome all the obstacles in her path, the Modern Woman works to achieve what she considers the perfect balance between professional and family life, without losing her sanity in the process. Woman shows all these qualities by performing the roles, as a marvellous daughter, adorable sister, wonderful mother and outstanding friend. She is not only a dreamer but also achiever. She has willingness to listen, patience to understand, strengths to support, and heart to care.

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