

Medieval indian women medieval india was considered

[Countries](#), [India](#)



Medieval Indian Women Medieval India was considered the "Dark Ages" for Indian women. It would not be correct to say that the caste system was the only baneful feature of Hindu society. There was a progressive deterioration in the position of women in the society since Manu's times, which reached the lowest point during this period. The practical recommendations given in the Manu-samhita were those of a bigot. Though not exactly regarded as a piece of property, the woman's secondary status is highlighted in this manner. "In childhood, a female must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead, to her son. A woman must never be independent." Naturally, this was sweet music to the ears of neo-brahmans of the period and women were subjected to all such restrictions almost religiously. Ladies of the ruling elite, however, enjoyed some freedom, but no such relaxation was applicable to common womenfolk. Confined mostly to the four walls of the house, they depended entirely on their male earning members. Child marriage and female infanticide were prevalent. Polygamy was there, the upper castes indulged in it generally, due to their economic well-being. Widow marriage was not encouraged and that added to the burden of the society in general. According to J. L. Mehta, Rajput women enjoyed freedom in society and were known for their chastity and devotion to their husbands. Swayamvar was in vogue among princesses for the purpose of selecting their husbands. The custom of sati, though prevalent, was not insisted upon. Some enjoyed education and the freedom to participate actively in public life. There are instances of Rajput women participating in warfare, many of whom did not lag behind their menfolk in bravery or heroism. The rite of jauhar was prevalent in Rajput society : upon

the defeat or death in battle of the menfolk, the women committed suicide en-mass by burning themselves alive. This was done to safeguard their honour and self-respect.