

# An Analysis of Female Foeticide by Virtue of Sanskrit Literature

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**Abstract:** Woman is the greatest gift of God for human being. But in present scenario this greatest gift of God has changed into the worst tragedy because the superstition and weakness feeling of human. Many women are killed in the name of dowry and female foeticide in our society. It is very shameful fact for the society that a girl child is a burden for parents and her family. She is not allowed to take birth and if by mistake she takes birth then she must suffer for her whole life. Because our society is a man dominated society. In India women are handicapped due to their biological weakness such as menstruation, pregnancy, menopause and religious restriction. This freedom of movement is controlled by men and society. The practice of abortion is spreading like a deadly disease in India. It has become a business for greedy and soulless doctors. They are killing unborn babies without fear and without any feeling of guilt. The practice of abortion is a sin which is depicted in Sanskrit literature.

**Key Words:** Garbhadhan, menstruation, Amniocentesis, ultrasonography, foeticide, abortion and foetus.

## 1. INTRODUCTION:

In present society a son is the solution to every emotional, economic, spiritual and social problem in life. Now the birth of a son is announced with the beat of a brass thali and the distribution of sweets and money, but the birth of a girl is met with silence and defection. So, sex determination has become a business for many doctors. The cause of female foeticide–

- Inequality or gender bias
- Dowry tradition
- Male as the bread winner of family
- Illiterate thinking
- Sickness mind
- Continuity of lineage.
- Old age security.
- Easily available means of sex determination
- Two child or one child norm.

Women are treated as untouchable during the years of menstruation. In the past, woman devotees of menstruating age were not permitted to worship in Sabarimala temple which is situated in Kerala state. Women are facing many problems in the name of child marriage, practice of sati, prohibition of widow remarriage, exploitation of widows and devadasi system. Now in our present society we can see a measure problem of woman that is abortion. According to our Sanskrit literature killing of unborn baby is a sin.

## 2. ANALYSIS:

In the ancient period people celebrated Garbhadhana samskara. The meaning of Garbhadhana means attaining the wealth of the womb. Garbhadhana is a composite word such as – “Garbha” means womb and “Dhana” means attain or wealth. Here Samskara means educating the mind of the foetus. People believed that a child's mental and behavioural development starts as soon as she is conceived. So, the baby's mind influenced by the mother's state of mind during pregnancy. In Mahabharat, Abhimanyu the son of Arjun and Subhadra, learnt the technique of Cakravyuha in his mother's womb. Abhimanyu only learnt the art of getting inside the Cakravyuha. He could not learn the technique to get out of the Cakravyuha because his mother had fallen asleep midway while listening to his father Arjun. We find the prayer for progeny and prosperity in Rig Veda such as –

प्रजां च धत्तं द्रविणं च धत्तम् ।<sup>1</sup>

In Rig Veda there are so many hymns depicted the desire for having a child, without specifying the gender of the child.

विष्णुर्योनिं कल्पयतु त्वष्टा रूपाणि पिंशतु ।  
आ सिञ्चतु प्रजापतिर्धाता गर्भं दधातु ते ॥

गर्भं धेहि सिनीवालि गर्भं धेहि सरस्वति ।  
गर्भं ते अश्विनौ देवावाधत्तां पुष्करस्रजा ॥  
हिरण्ययी अरणी यं निर्मन्थतो अश्विना ।  
तं ते गर्भं हवामहे दशमे मासि सूतवे ॥<sup>2</sup>

People prayed “May Vishnu construct the womb. May Twashta nurture your organs of your body. May Prajapati sprinkle the seed. May Dhata cherish the embryo. May Sinivali protect this foetus. Goddess Sarasvati please be helpful for conceiving. Ashwini Kumar who garlanded with lotuses, sustain the embryo. We invoke the embryo which the Ashwini Kumar have churned with the golden pieces of arani (firewood) for which I establish the foetus within you for ten months. After Garbhadhana Samskara how a man can want to abort his child from her mother’s womb. We pray God for forgive us from the sin. In Vedic hymns we find there is a prayer like –

अर्यभ्यं वरुण मित्र्यं वा  
सखायं वा सदमिद् भ्रातरं वा ।  
वेशं वा नित्यं वरुणारणं वा  
यत् सीमागश्चकृमा शिश्रथस्तत् ॥<sup>3</sup>

If we have harmed a nobleman or well-wisher or friend or brother or neighbour or stranger, then the God Varuna free us from the sin. If we harm anybody unknowingly then we pray for forgive but killing an infant is knowingly how can we pray for forgive. This is shameless thinking for us. There is a hymn in Rig Veda denotes that I should die today if I am a demon or if I have taken one’s life or life period.

अद्या मुरीय यदि यातुधानोऽस्मि  
यदि वायुस्तप पुरुषस्य ।<sup>4</sup>

In Rigveda there is also a hymn that denotes the work of two hands. One hand is fortunate and other hand is superior in glory. One hand cures all ills and other is auspicious. The hymn of Rigveda says:

अयं मे हस्तो भगवानयं मे भगवत्तरः ।  
अयं मे विश्वभेषजोऽयं शिवाभिमर्शनः ॥<sup>5</sup>

We pray God to give hard work in my right hand and victory in my left.

कृतं मे दक्षिणे हस्ते जयो मे सव्य आहितः ।<sup>6</sup>

So how can a doctor whose work is to give life he takes the life of an unborn baby in his own hand.

In Mahabharat there is a verse denotes that weapons should not be used against women.

स्त्रीषु गोषु न शस्त्राणि पातयेद् ब्राह्मणेषु च ।  
यस्य चान्नानि भुञ्जीत यश्च स्याच्छरणागतः ॥<sup>7</sup>

But doctors are involved in sex selective abortions through techniques such as amniocentesis and ultrasonography. In the Amniocentesis the chromosome test done on the amitotic fluid taken from the womb of pregnant lady can be used to predict whether the unborn baby is a male or female. In ultrasonography ultrasound instrument check the growth of the foetus and examine the foetus inside the uterus. A woman should not be hurt by anyone. The verse of Mahabharat says:

स्त्रियो ह्यवध्याः सर्वेषां ये धर्मविदुषो जनाः ।<sup>8</sup>

When the wife is feeling secure then the progeny also is secure. When the children are feeling secure then a man (the self) is protected. The verse of Mahabharat says:

भार्यायां रक्ष्यमाणायां प्रजा भवति रक्षिता ।  
प्रजायां रक्ष्यमाणायामात्मा भवति रक्षितः ॥<sup>9</sup>

Not only a man is a victim of making abortion A woman also change their mind according to man. She has forgotten that the baby whom she wants to kill is gifted by God. She will give her a name as mother. In this context there is a very good saying in Venisamhar -

स्त्रीणां हि सहचर्याद्भवन्ति चेतांसि भर्तृसदृशानि ।  
मधुरापि हि मूर्च्छयते विषविटपिसमाश्रिता वल्ली ॥<sup>10</sup>

The abortion of girl is a sin. In Mrchakatikam courtier said to his master Sakar that you may beat me master. You may kill me, master. I will not involve in your sin.

तवापि पापिनं पतनात् स्त्रीवधदशनेनातीव पातिता वयम् ।<sup>11</sup>

When Sakar ordered courtier to kill Vasantasena, the courtier said to him If I kill her sinless what boat will bear me on the gloomy river? The verse of Mrchakatikam says:

बालां स्त्रियञ्च नगरस्य विभूषणञ्च वैश्यामवेश सदृश। णयोपचाराम्प्र-  
एनामनागसमहं यदि मारयामि केनोदुपेन परलोकनदीं तरिष्ये ॥<sup>12</sup>

So, the killing of woman is a shameless unconscionable and sinful work but now doctors are doing abortion which is immodest work.

Man is incomplete without woman. The husband protected by the wife. Because the wife begets the husband himself by the birth of a son or daughter. The verse of Mahabharat says:

आत्मा हि जायते तस्यां तस्माज्जाया भवत्युत ।  
भर्ता च भार्यया रक्ष्यः कथं जायान् ममोदरे ॥<sup>13</sup>

### 3. CONCLUSION:

In our country Goddess Shakti, Durga and Kali signify strength, power and personality. We worship the goddess Lakshmi who is known as the goddess of wealth but in other hand we are feminizing poverty. The constitution of India provides equal rights to Indian women. It does not make any discrimination on the ground of sex. The Indian government has passed Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act (PCPNDT) in 1994 to ban prenatal sex screening and female foeticide. So, women will fight for their rights and fight against gender discrimination.

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