Hindu Marriage: Real Values Behind the Rite of Passage

Elizabeth Riedman

Through the analytic summary of scholarly works and additional interviews with married women in Pune, India, this paper aims to compare traditional values of Hindu Marriage with those emphasized in current marriages today. Seven core values were found in the reviewed text, limited but not confined to endogamy, ritual preservation, female purity, male responsibility, young age of marriage, pativrata and female purity. These values were then compared against two current generations of married Hindu women, those married more than twenty five years and those married less than five. Out of these two generations, a strong presence and influence of all seven values could be seen with small differences between generations. Constructed through a qualitative analysis of the ten women interviewed, this research paper aims to shed light on vital aspect of Indian society, working to close gaps in knowledge often made by assumptions, generalizations and cultural misunderstandings in an ever growing global world.