HINDU MARRIAGES Essay, Research Paper

Most of the Hindu marriages conducted in India andelsewhere are both social and religious functions. There is nouniformity on their social side. These are based on local customsand traditions. On the religious side, with minor variations, theyfollow some specific rituals that are followed from the Vedas. Themarriage ceremonies are called Vaidika.

Marriage ceremonies last two days, one day prior to theMuhurtha day and the day on which the actual wedding occurs.The day previous to the marriage, its customary practice to visit anearby temple to offer many prayers. The Lagna Patrika, adocument indicating the details of the BG & Bride and thetiming and place of marriage, signed by the parents of the BG &Bride, is read out and signed by the two sets of parents. Thisserves the purpose of a formal agreement binding on both parties.

The next day ceremonies start with Kasi Yatra, MalaiMaatral and Oonjal (Jhoola). These have no religiousas such. These rituals vary from community to community.

The Kasi Yatra ritual which is peculiar to Brahmincommunity is one when the father of the Bride symbolicallyweans away the BG from the pursuits of Brahmacharya, whichis symbolically represented by his journey towards Kasi, the seatof Vedic culture knowledge, and requests him to enterGrahasthasrama by marrying his daughter.

Oonjal, is a ladies ceremony, where BG & the Bride aremade to sit in a swing and propitiation is done, to ward off theeffect of ?evil eyes? (bad peoples evil thoughts or curses) on thecouple.

The real and important Vedic side of the ceremony startsafter the two rituals are performed. The ceremony begins with thepromise from the bride side to offer the girl in marriage. The bridethan takes a bath in Holy water. Then the two worship theirancestors. The BG & Bride then garland each other.

This is an important ritual wherein the girl is gifted away tothe BG?s family and the Bride loses her family identity completely.The Brides father makes BG sit in a seat and washes the feet ofBG considering BG to be an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, theprotector. At the time, BG recites a mantra which says:

?Let the holy water which is poured on my feet safeguard meagainst all enemies and let me glow in splendour equal to theBrahma. He then takes a mixed liquid made of honey and curd.?

The Hindu marriage ceremony is very unique and involvesseveral rituals. The Hindus strongly believe in their gods and theirprotection from evil and incur it in their marriage ritual.