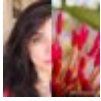


Twitter Thread by Savitri Mumukshu - ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■



Savitri Mumukshu - ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■
[@MumukshuSavitri](#)



1

Manyavar's recent ad featuring Alia Bhatt demeans the Hindu marriage ritual of Kanyadan by claiming it objectifies women. In reality, no other marriage ceremony in the world honors & reveres the bride as completely as the Hindu Vivah (marriage) ceremony.



2

Apparently Manyavar never bothered to research the tradition of Kanyadan before labelling it regressive. Hindu literature is full of references showing that rituals in the Vivah Samskara are designed to empower both bride & groom as equal partners in a life of spiritual growth.

Marriage is seen as a means of spiritual growth; the husband and wife are co-partners in religious life and function, the wife is not a mere pleasure companion of her husband for the temporal life. Manu (9.26) states: 'The husband is said to be one with the wife.'

The idea of the designation of the wife as *ardhangini* i.e. the half part of the body of the husband as constituted by the wife, is further attested to in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (1.4.3):

Women are created, by the Atman, as equal halves of man, thereby completing them, like halves of a shell completing the whole shell.

3

Undoubtedly, patriarchal distortions crept into Hindu marriages, due to the dark age of Islamic rule when women were raped, molested & killed relentlessly. Social evils like child marriage & dowry arose due to the desperation of Hindus to marry their daughters & protect them.

4

Authoritative Hindu texts however specifically forbid treating the bride as a material object to be exchanged. The Manu Smriti clearly warns that anyone selling their daughter for any price & treating her like property is assured a place in Hell.

it a sale in the guise of marriage. Manu says, "The learned father of the girl should not accept even the least amount of price. Accepting the price out of greed, he becomes the seller of children".⁵⁴ According to Āpastamba-Smṛti, "not even a Śūdra should accept money while giving away his daughter. Taking money is a sale in disguise".⁵⁵ Not only this much. In the opinion of some writers, "a purchased wife cannot attain the full status of a wife and is not entitled to share the worship of gods

5

None of these later patriarchal distortions in the Vivah rituals were sanctioned by original Hindu sacred texts. The Hindu Vivah has always based its essential rituals on the famous cosmic marriage described in the most ancient Rig Veda (Mandala 10, Sukta 85)

M-879

4

॥सुक्त॥

सत्येनो
॥२॥

मासो क्रेदष्टाय तस्थुः ॥३॥ द्वेते चक्रे सूर्ये ब्रह्माण क्रतुथाविदुः ॥ सूर्यायै दे
वेभ्ये मित्राय वरुणाय च ॥ येभूतस्य प्रचेतसः इदं तेभ्यो करं नमः ॥ पूर्वापरे
चरतो माययै तोशि शूक्री जं तोपरियातो अध्वर ॥ विश्वान्यन्यो भुवना
भिचष्टः अस्तूरन्यो विदध ज्ञायते पुनः ॥ नवो नवो भवति जायमानो
ह्यं केतु रूपसो मे त्यग्रं ॥ भागं देवेभ्ये विद्म दधात्यां प्रद्रुमास्तिरते दीर्घ
मायुः ॥ सु किं शु कं श ल्मलिं विश्वास्वं हिरण्य वर्णं सुवृतं सुचक्रं ॥ आ
रोह सूर्येऽमृतस्य लोकं स्थो नंपत्ये वरुतं कृणुष्व ॥२॥ उदीर्ष्यातः प
तिवतीद्ये ३ षा विश्वावसुं नमसा गीभि रीजे ॥ अन्यामि च्छ पितृषदं
व्यक्तां सते भागो जनुषा तस्य विद्धि ॥ उदीर्ष्याता विश्वावसो नमसे इवा ॥२॥

राम
॥२॥

6

The Rig Vedic verses describe the cosmic union of the Sun with the Moon. Surya Savitri is the sun bride & Soma, the moon groom. The Vivah honors this celestial marriage by reciting the same Rig Vedic Mantras as a reminder of the sanctity & cosmic significance of Vivah.



7

Surya & Soma are the prototype for all Hindu couples as human marriages follow the pattern of the celestial union. The bride & groom re-enact it to unify & elevate their lives & walk together on the path to Moksha, as Hindus believe humanity is a reflection of divine life.

The performance of marriage was seen as an important institution in Rig Vedic society. The Rig Vedic marriage form is unfolded in the 85th Sukta of the 10th Mandala of the Rig Veda Samhita. The main purpose of this composite hymn is the ceremony of marriage in general and more especially the wedding of Surya Savitri, who is the bride; Soma, the moon, is depicted as her husband. Surya and Soma typify the prototype for all bridal couples since in Hindu religious thought all human marriages follow the celestial marriage ceremony pattern. This is indicative of the religious sanctity accorded to *Vivaha* and its performance from the Vedic age to the present day. The implication of its performance is seen in that man's life has an additional dimension; it

8

The Nirukta provides the etymological basis of Vedic terms. It defines Kanya as derived from the root “Kan” which means to illuminate. So the bride/Kanya symbolizes the illumined sun who fulfills creation & the groom symbolizes the moon who receives & reflects her light.

derived from (the root) *kan*, meaning to shine. ‘The words relating to the seats of the maidens are in the locative singular,’ says Śākapūṇi,¹ i. e. on

9

This deliberate usage of the word “Kanya” reveals the real intent of Kanyadaan. If it was about giving away a daughter, Putri or Duhita would suffice. The specific usage of Kanya emphasizes the Rig Vedic view of the bride as the illuminating sun, Surya Savitri.



10

Vedic rituals were later elaborated in many Grihya Sutras such as Apastambha, Bharadwaja, Baudhayana, etc. to understand the ceremony, rituals & local customs according to Gotra. These rites demonstrate how the Hindu bride is revered & respected in every part of the Vivah.

11

From the initial betrothal ceremony (Kanyavarana) itself, tradition requires the groom to appear in his best clothes to ask for the guardian’s consent to the marriage. Once consent is given, he must first worship the bride & pray to her for good luck, health & children.

as to how they were performed. One tradition is recorded in the Nārada-Smṛti. Here betrothal is called Kanyāvaraṇa. According to it, not only the friends of the bridegroom, but the bridegroom himself with friends went to the father of the bride for the formal settlement of the marriage. "Within the month of marriage, on an auspicious day, the Kanyāvaraṇa ceremony should be performed. The bridegroom, well dressed and well adorned, with music and chanting of sacred verses, should go to the bride's home with a loving heart. Then the bride's father should give his consent happily. The bridegroom, having propitiated Śachī, should worship the well adorned bride and pray to her for good luck, health and progeny".²³⁵ It

12

Next the Madhuparka ceremony takes place to exchange auspicious gifts between families & ends with the father-in-law worshipping the bride. The bride is presented with the best garments & jewelry by the groom's family & blessed with Mantras for health, prosperity & vitality.

(9) *The Bridegroom Honoured.*

After the Madhuparka ceremony the bride is worshipped by the father-in-law with scent, garland, sacred threads and a pair of ornaments. The bride seats herself there after having

13

The bride's guardians perform Kanyadana to bestow the luminous Surya (the sun bride) to be received by Soma (the moon groom). Ignorant people understood this to mean donation (dana) of an object, when it actually refers to receiving her energy as Kanya-adana

Source: Cologne Digital Sanskrit Dictionaries: Shabda-Sagara Sanskrit-English Dictionary

Kanyādāna (कन्यादान).—n.

(-nam) 1. Giving a girl in marriage. 2. Receiving the same. E. *kanyā*, and *dāna* gift, or *ādāna* acceptance.

14

During the Kanyadana, the guardians recite Mantras bestowing the bride as Lakshmi who unites with the groom representing Vishnu. This is a symbolic transformation of the cosmic Surya & Soma manifested in earthly forms to mimic the ideal divine pair Lakshmi & Vishnu.

*kanyām kanaka sampannām kanakābharaṇairiyutām
dāsyāmi viṣṇave tubhyaṁ brahma loka jigīṣayā
kanye mamāgrato bhūyāt kanyeme deviparśvayoh
kanyeme sarvato bhūyāt tvaddānānmokṣamāpnuyām
viśvambharāḥ sarvabhūtaḥ sākṣiṇyah sarvadevatāḥ
imām kanyām pradāsyāmi pitṛṇām tāraṇāyaca
kanyām sālaṅkṛtvā sādhvīm suśīlāya sudhīmate
prayatoham pradāsyāmi dharma kāmārtha siddhaye*

May I offer to you, the embodiment of Vishnu, this, my daughter, foremost among all young women, by my side, covered with golden ornaments, so that I may obtain salvation in Brahmaloaka.

With all the gods and these witnesses, in order to liberate my ancestors and to achieve dharma, artha and kama, I give away this gift, my daughter who is virtuous, intelligent and beautifully adorned.



After Kanyadana the groom asks the guardian, "Who gives this bride to me?" And the answer is "Kama" (The god of love). This clearly shows that the Kanya was not given away as an object but symbolically bestowed by the God of love, when she is ready to share her life energy.

After accepting the bride, the bridegroom puts a very significant question to the guardian of the girl: "Who has given this bride to me?" The answer is "Kāma (the God of Love)."²⁵⁸ Then he leaves the nuptial canopy with the bride and in private utters the following formula to her in order to win her over: "Where thou wanderest far away with thy heart to the regions of the world like the wind, may the gold-winged Vaikarṇa (the Wind) grant that thy heart may dwell with me!N.N!"²⁵⁹ The Paddhatis call it the Vadhvādeśa or the

It is only after this that the Pani Grahana (holding hands) shown in the ad follows. The groom clasps the bride's hand to receive prosperity & divine energy. In the Ramayana, Janaka tells Rama that he is accepting prosperity by grasping Sita's hand during this ceremony.

इयं सीता मम सुता सहधर्मचरी तव।

प्रतीच्छ चैनां भद्रं ते पाणिं गृहीष्व पाणिना।।1.73.27।।

मम my, सुता daughter, तव your, सहधर्मचरी with you observing righteous deeds, सीता Sita, इयम् this girl, एनाम् her, प्रतीच्छ च accept, ते भद्रम् prosperity to you, पाणिम् her hand, पाणिना with your hand, गृहीष्व hold.

"This my daughter Sita will be your partner in performing her rightful duty. Accept her. Farewell. Take her hand into your own.

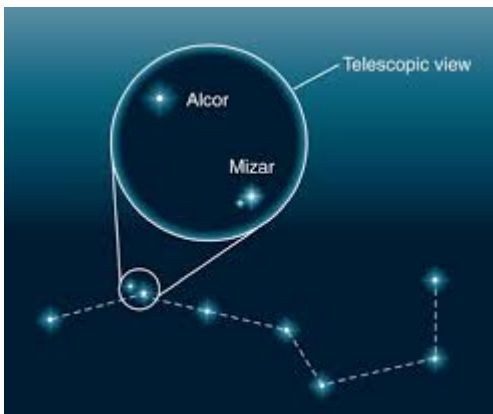
18

After essential ceremonies such as Agniparanayana, Lajahoma, Asmarohana, Saptapadi are all performed, the couple is blessed by everyone. Then the couple does Suryadikshana (homage to the sun) if it is during day or Arundhati darshanam at night.



19

Viewing Arundhati-Vasishta (Alcor-Mizar) indicates Hinduism's profound knowledge. Most binary star systems have one star stationary as the other rotates around it, but here both stars rotate around each other. Neither dominates, both support & travel, in an ideal partnership.



20

Post wedding during the Grihya Pravesh the bride is worshipped as Lakshmi. She tips over a pot of rice at the threshold to symbolize prosperity entering her new home. With feet dipped in red lac, she walks through the home to leave auspicious footprints & bless her new family.



21

Dressed in the best garments & jewelry she worships the family deities & temples. In her role as Lakshmi, she also gives charity to Brahmanas & poor people, on behalf of her new family. The Ramayana recounts how Sita & her sisters performed these rituals on reaching Ayodhya.

मङ्गलालम्भनैश्चापि शोभिताः क्षौमवाससः।

देवतायतनान्याशु सर्वास्ताः प्रत्यपूजयन्।।1.77.13।।

ताः सर्वाः all of them, मङ्गलालम्भनैश्चापि holding auspicious substances, शोभिताः shining, क्षौमवाससः attired in silken apparels, आशु immediately, देवतायतनानि temples, प्रत्यपूजयन् worshipped.

With auspicious articles in their hands, all the new brides who shone in silken apparels immediately went to temples and worshipped the family deities.

अभिवाद्याभिवाद्यांश्च सर्वा राजसुतास्तदा।

स्वं स्वं गृहमथासाद्य कुबेरभवनोपमम्।।1.77.14।।

गोभिर्धनैश्च धान्यैश्च तर्पयित्वा द्विजोत्तमान्।

रेमिरे मुदिताः सर्वा भर्तृभिः सहिता रहः।।1.77.15।।

तदा then, सर्वाः all of them, राजसुताः princesses, अभिवाद्यान् worthy of homage, अभिवाद्य having paid obeisance, अथ thereafter, कुबेरभवनोपमम् resembling the palace of Kubera, स्वं स्वं their own, गृहम् residence, आसाद्य having reached, गोभिः with cows, धनैश्च with riches, धान्यैश्च with corn, द्विजोत्तमान् brahmins, तर्पयित्वा (अर्चयित्वा) having worshipped, रहः in private, भर्तृभिः with husbands, सहिताः united with, मुदिताः well pleased, रेमिरे enjoyed.

Then all the princesses paid obeisance to those worthy of worship and entered their residence that resembled the palace of Kubera. Thereafter pleased with gifting cows, riches and corn to brahmins and satisfying them they joined their husbands and enjoyed themselves in privacy

Fathers and the creatures of the world. This is the life of responsibilities and cares. It is only in this sense that Hindu marriage or "Vivāha" can properly be understood, which means "to lift, to support, to hold up, to sustain". This involves a great compromise and mutual sacrifice. Those,

23.

An analysis of the rituals practiced in a traditional Hindu Vivah demonstrate that the bride is not just respected but worshipped as sacred illumined energy throughout the entire ceremony. No other tradition comes close to giving women such prominence & reverence.



24.

Can Manyavar refute that Hindu texts prove Kanyadana & other rituals of Vivaha ceremony are not patriarchal but instead show immense reverence & Mana for the bride? If not, they must apologize & withdraw this highly offensive ad & stop demeaning & demonizing Hindu customs.

25.

Sources:

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<https://t.co/G9XNGwBQpW>