

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS ON ARRANGED MARRIAGES

- In *Marriage East and West*, authors David and Vera Mace note that many women in cultures where arranged marriages are the norm believe that Western marriage customs can put girls or women in a humiliating position. They believe a girl or woman has to be constantly concerned with the pressure of looking pretty, calling attention to herself, and attracting a boy or man so that she will get married. They think that in the Western way, it is hard for a girl or woman to relax and be herself. A shy female who does not push herself forward might not be able to get married at all.

In addition, many women, the authors say, believe that Western customs can be very competitive, with girls or women fighting each other over boys or men. Finally, many girls in the traditional system believe it is unfair that in modern ways, the male seems to do all the choosing. Romantic love is viewed by some traditional societies as superficial, obscuring a true understanding of who the partner really is.

- From the traditional view, romance is seen as an untrustworthy factor in choosing a marriage partner and, for this reason, it should be eliminated completely. It is believed that parents are much more prepared, because of their age, experience, and concern for their children, to find suitable mates for them. It is therefore thought that the families of both parties are in the best position for doing the choosing. The differences between traditional and Western views can be summed up by saying that in the traditional way, you marry, then fall in love, while in the modern way, you fall in love, then marry.