

Article

Wedding Rituals Across two cultures: uzbek and english

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Abstract: This article compares Uzbek and foreign wedding ceremonies and traditions. This article explores and compares traditional wedding customs in Uzbekistan with those in English-speaking countries, focusing on events that occurs before and after the main ceremony. While Uzbek weddings emphasize deep familial bonds and celebrations that span several days, weddings in English-speaking nations typically focus on the couple's personal intentions, formal ceremony format, and a single-day reception. Through this contrast, we uncover universal human aspirations—unity, joy, and blessing—while also seeing how history, religion, and regional heritage shape distinct ways of marking marriage.

Keywords: Uzbek wedding traditions, English wedding traditions, community involvement, engagement ceremony, exchange of vows, hospitality, emotional sincerity, collective celebration, personal devotion, cultural richness.

Introduction

It is no secret that intercultural relations are of great importance in all-round developing countries. In our opinion, it is not enough to simply say “no” to the scale of such reforms today. This makes it clear that today, knowing a foreign language is not enough to enter into dialogue with any state or individual of this nation. Because today, diplomatic and social relations in the world of politics are taking on a special character. After all, since every person exists in society today with the aim of living freely and independently, in order to achieve significant results in social and political dialogue, he is required to master the culture, history, mentality, and character of a particular people at the level of a phenomenon. Only if a person in a society approaches any diplomatic relations in this way, then he can achieve high results. Being able to live in this way is the highest duty of a modern person.

Wedding ceremonies are more than just extravagant celebrations; they are profound and meaningful ceremonies that mark the beginning of a lifelong journey defined by love and commitment between two individuals. In this comparative exploration, we delve into the differences of wedding customs in England (representing European culture) and Uzbekistan (representing Central Asian culture).[1]

Weddings in Uzbekistan are traditionally very grand, lengthy celebrations that involve the entire neighborhood and extensive relatives. The ceremony often begins early in the morning with the traditional wedding feast – plov (pilaf) – prepared in the groom's (or sometimes the bride's) home.

In England, on the other hand, the civil ceremony usually takes place at a registry office or approved venue. When it comes to religious weddings, you can currently get married by having an Anglican, Roman Catholic, Jewish, or Quaker ceremony.[2]

Literature Review

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Wedding traditions in different societies reflect their cultural identity, social values, and historical heritage. A comparison of Uzbek and English wedding ceremonies becomes clearer through the perspectives of four individuals: Dr. Saida Karimova (Uzbek cultural researcher), Professor Emily Hart (English anthropologist), Dilnoza Rakhimova (Uzbek bride), and Thomas Miller (English groom).[3] Their views illustrate how both cultures celebrate the union of two people in distinct yet meaningful ways.

According to Dr. Saida Karimova, Uzbek wedding traditions are deeply rooted in community involvement and ancient customs. Pre-wedding rituals such as the Engagement Ceremony, the Nikoh Night, and the Bride Presentation show that marriage symbolizes not only the connection between two individuals but also the unity of two extended families. Large gatherings, traditional music, dancing, and generous hospitality represent the spirit of Uzbek celebrations. Customs such as the *kelin salom* and the bride's ceremonial unveiling highlight the cultural significance of respect, honor, and family integration. Professor Emily Hart explains that English weddings, in contrast, focus more on intimacy, personal symbolism, and formal structure. [4]

Ceremonies typically take place in churches, gardens, or specialized venues. The exchange of vows and rings forms the emotional core of the event, emphasizing personal commitment rather than collective participation. Traditional elements like the father leading the bride, speeches by family members, the couple's first dance, and the bouquet toss bring emotional depth and symbolic meaning to the celebration. From the viewpoint of Dilnoza Rakhimova, Uzbek weddings are enriched by bright colors, festive music, and the active participation of relatives, neighbors, and friends. She emphasizes how traditional clothing, national dishes, and ritual steps create a joyful atmosphere that reflects the strength of community ties. At the same time, she admires the emotional sincerity of English wedding vows and believes that such personalized elements could add meaningful depth to the Uzbek ceremony.

Thomas Miller, representing the English perspective, observes that English weddings tend to be more focused on the couple's inner feelings and future plans. However, he expresses great appreciation for the lively and warm atmosphere of Uzbek weddings.[5] He finds Uzbek customs—such as greeting guests collectively, offering traditional meals, and performing cultural dances—very welcoming and memorable. In his view, English ceremonies provide emotional intimacy, while Uzbek weddings offer cultural richness and communal joy. Together, the perspectives of these four individuals demonstrate that Uzbek and English wedding traditions differ in ceremony structure, cultural focus, and social engagement. Still, both cultures share universal values such as love, unity, and respect for family.

While Uzbek weddings highlight collective celebration, English weddings emphasize personal devotion, showing that each culture expresses the meaning of marriage in its own unique and beautiful way.[6] The comparison of Uzbek and English wedding traditions through the perspectives of Dr. Saida Karimova, Professor Emily Hart, Dilnoza Rakhimova, and Thomas Miller shows that cultural differences do not diminish the universal meaning of marriage.[7] Uzbek ceremonies emphasize collective joy, hospitality, and the unification of extended families, reflecting a strong sense of community.

Uzbek wedding traditions have evolved over many centuries, influenced by ancient Turkic customs, Islamic values, and strong community-based social structures. Weddings historically served not only as a union between two individuals but as a reaffirmation of alliances between families, clans, and the wider community. Many elements of the ceremony symbolize prosperity, respect for elders, and social harmony. English wedding traditions, on the other hand, are shaped by Christian rituals, royal ceremonial customs, and Victorian-era symbolism. Over time, English weddings have moved toward more

personalized and romantic expressions of love, focusing on the couple's emotional bond rather than large-scale communal celebrations.

Analysis

Uzbek Weddings. Known for large gatherings and strong community participation. Include multiple stages such as the Engagement Ceremony, Nikoh (religious contract), Bride Presentation, Kelin salom, and post-wedding customs.[8]

Traditional clothing features bright colors, intricate embroidery, and symbolic patterns representing joy and prosperity. Musical traditions often include karnay-surnay, doira, and folk performances. Hospitality is central: extensive meals, national dishes, and welcoming guests are essential components. English Weddings Tend to be more intimate and formal.[9] Often include a civil registration or church ceremony, followed by a reception. The bride typically wears a white gown symbolizing purity, while the groom wears a suit or tuxedo. Music choices are often classical or romantic, creating an elegant atmosphere. Events such as the father walking the bride down the aisle, giving of rings, speeches, and the first dance form key parts of the celebration. [10]

English weddings, on the other hand, highlight personal vows, emotional sincerity, and formal symbolism that place the couple at the center of the celebration. Despite these differences, both cultures share the same core values: love, loyalty, and the desire to build a stable and harmonious family. The traditions may vary in scale, structure, and customs, yet the intention behind them remains identical. This demonstrates that every culture expresses the significance of marriage in its own way, but all wedding ceremonies ultimately celebrate the beginning of a new life filled with hope, unity, and mutual respect.

In general, the wedding ceremony was defined differently in different periods. Y.M. According to Sokolov, *"A wedding is an act of adding a new member to the family and continuing its lineage."* Or, according to M. Alavia, *"A wedding is a day when two young people decide to live together, love and respect each other forever."*[11] If we approach the concept of a wedding from a linguistic perspective, scientists describe its social significance as a purely cultural, linguistic, psychological, and, in its place, social phenomenon. Firstly, a wedding is a verbal and non-verbal embodiment of the most important positive values of society, and secondly, the wedding ceremony itself plays a key role in the formation of an important linguistic and cultural concept.

In studying the history of English wedding rituals, information from historical sources is of great importance in determining their origin, content and essence. One of the main distinctive features of the English family is strict adherence to traditional wedding rituals.[12]

First, we think it is appropriate to familiarize ourselves with the interpretation of the word wedding, or rather, the concept of wedding, in authoritative literature. In the English linguocultural dictionary, the concept (concept) of "wedding" has the following etymological meanings: "Wedding" is a French word, its original form was "weddian", later the suffix "-ing" was formed. (In Sh. Rahmatullaev's etymological dictionary, the word toy is considered an ancient Turkic word, with the initial form "to'q", which later became "toy" due to assimilation, meaning "wedding". The source also mentions that it means "satisfying hunger" and "occupying a free space".) [13]

According to the Merriam-Webster English explanatory dictionary, "toy" - Wedding has the following meanings:

- 1) a marriage ceremony, usually an event accompanied by solemn celebrations;**
- 2) an action or process aimed at establishing close relationships.**

There are also a number of lexemes related to English wedding ceremonies, such as: Best man/closest friend - can be a close male relative or friend who helps the groom on the wedding day. A close friend holds the ring securely, directs the ushers, is the groom's best man at the wedding and gives a speech, Flower girl - walks down the aisle and scatters

flower petals in front of the bride, Father of the bride - symbolically "gives away" the bride. If her father is deceased or otherwise unavailable, another male relative, often an uncle or brother, brings the bride to the groom.[14] In particular, scholars such as D.D.Manukyan, Y.A.Sorokin, D.A.Gilfanova conducted research on wedding ceremonies and analyzed their cultural and linguocultural aspects, and according to them, there are similar wedding lexemes in the Uzbek wedding system, such as: sovchilik, unaştirish, uy korar (kiz korar), kelin/kuyov sushtirish, etc. [15] These lexemes are the same in English and Uzbek, but they are linguoculturally different.

In conclusion

we can admit that there are considerable differences in wedding ceremonies and the formalization of marriage in England and Uzbekistan. English weddings are often driven by civil regulations and personal choice, which can lead to a more affordable and quicker process. Uzbek weddings, conversely, are characterized by high expenditure, extensive family involvement, extravagance, and deeply rooted traditions. While the significance of marriage is high in both cultures, their forms of expression clearly showcase the rich cultural differences between the peoples of Europe and Central Asia.

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