

COMPARISON OF WEDDING CEREMONIES IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH TRADITIONS.

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Abstract

This article explores and compares the wedding ceremonies of Uzbek and English cultures. It highlights the historical background, main traditions, symbolic elements, and modern transformations of weddings in both societies. The study aims to identify similarities and differences in customs, social meanings, and family roles. The findings show that while Uzbek weddings emphasize large family gatherings and traditional rituals, English weddings focus more on individual choice, personalization, and formal church or civil ceremonies.

Keywords

Uzbek wedding, English wedding, cultural traditions, marriage ceremony, comparison, customs, family values, rituals

Introduction. Weddings are important social events in every culture, representing the union of two people and their families. Although marriage has universal significance, each nation performs wedding ceremonies differently based on history, belief systems, and cultural values. This article examines

the wedding traditions of Uzbek and English cultures, focusing on preparation, rituals, family involvement, and modern-day changes. Understanding these cultural differences provides deeper insight into how societies express identity through marriage ceremonies.

Uzbekistan and England are two countries with very different wedding styles, but both value the meaning of marriage. First of all, Uzbek wedding ceremonies, known as Nikokh-Tui, are big and lively events that happen in several stages. The process begins with matchmaking and the engagement ritual known as Fotikha-Tui. The wedding day includes the religious Nikah performed by an imam, the legal marriage registration, and a large «To'y» full of music, dancing and food. A well-known final ritual is Kelin Salom, during which the bride greets her new

family members. In English wedding ceremonies there are many steps: engagement, preparation for legal registration, arrival that guests arrive and the groom and bride come. In the procession part the couple exchanges rings and officiant pronounces them as official family and cake cutting.

Literature Review. Wedding traditions have been studied by many cultural researchers. According to ethnographic sources, Uzbek weddings are deeply rooted in Central Asian customs, emphasizing community participation, hospitality, and traditional rituals such as fatiha, kelin salom, and chak-chak.

Scholars also note that Uzbek weddings have preserved many ancient elements despite modernization.

In contrast, English weddings are influenced by Christian traditions and European cultural development. Literature describes typical English rituals such as the engagement ring, church ceremony, exchanging vows, and the wedding reception. Researchers highlight that English weddings have become highly personalized, giving couples greater freedom in choosing themes, locations, and forms of celebration.

Overall, previous studies show that both cultures value marriage highly but express it through different forms of celebration.

Analysis: Comparison Uzbek weddings are more traditional and collective. Rituals, large guest lists, and strong family involvement play central roles. English weddings, however, are more personalized and formal, focusing on symbolic vows and smaller gatherings.

Futhermore, the comparison reveals differences in wedding preparation and role of modern influences. In Uzbek culture, the preparation period often extends over several weeks or even months, involving relatives, neighbors, and the wider community in collaborative tasks such as cooking, decorating, and organizing pre-wedding rituals. This collective preparation illustrates the strong communal bonds within Uzbek society. In English culture, however, wedding preparation tends to be more structured and professionalized, with couples frequently relying on planners, formal booking, and service providers to arrange venues, catering, and photography.

Another notable distinction lies in the symbolism expressed through attire and ceremonial items. Uzbek brides traditionally wear richly decorated national dresses reflecting regional identity, while English brides typically choose white gowns symbolizing purity in Western traditions. The study also identifies the impact of globalization on both cultures. While Uzbek weddings increasingly incorporate modern music, photography style, and restaurant-based receptions, English weddings are adopting more personalized themes influenced by global media and

multicultural practices. Despite these changes, each culture continues to preserve key elements that maintain its historical identity.

Today the Uzbek ceremonies reflect the traditions taken from the ancestor and mixed with Islamic influence also modern adaptation and pass it to future generation. Dr. Akmal Murodov says: "Uzbek ceremonies reflect the deep respect for family, traditions and hospitality in Uzbek culture". It shows that it is one of the most important customs of our mentality. The wedding ceremony in Uzbekistan has several periods. For instance, pre-wedding, the wedding day and post-wedding rituals. Take an example "Fatiha-tuyi". It is a great chance for each family member to know each other closely. The first, the word "Fotiha" refers to the Quran's first sura "Al-Fotiha". It means the beginning of a young couple's beautiful married life. This event often includes Quran recitation, greetings between families and traditional foods. In addition, Nikoh-Tui is the holiest and largest of all Uzbek ceremonies when the Imam blesses and legalizes the marriage. This wedding tradition is very important for Uzbeks. Nikah ceremony is a ceremony in which the marriage of a couple is officially announced according to religious or state laws. From this day they completely become a real family. The big wedding day starts with an early morning palov also called "Padar oshi". This ceremony especially arranges the girl's family. Moreover, in Uzbek tradition has a post-wedding ceremony like "Yuz ochdi" in English "Face-opening". In this celebration, every relative takes place at the groom's house with close relatives and neighbors and give presents for the new couple.

English weddings are known for their elegance, order, and emotional atmosphere. First, the celebration usually begins with an engagement when the groom proposes with a ring. At that time, they prepare a guest list and decoration. The main part of the wedding is the ceremony which can take place either in a church or in a civil registry office. And guests gather, the groom waits at the front and the bride enters the room accompanied by music. After this they exchange rings, the couple signs the marriage register. From this moment, they become officially confirmed in their union. After the ceremony comes the reception where everyone celebrates together. There is a traditional meal known as the "wedding breakfast," Emma Jordan, a wedding planner from London. She says: "The beauty of English weddings lies in their simplicity and emotional depth. Every moment, from the bride's entrance to the cutting of the cake. It is designed to create a warm and unforgettable atmosphere."

Finally, many couples end their celebration with an evening party and then leave for their honeymoon.

Conclusion. Uzbek and English wedding ceremonies reflect the cultural values and historical development of each society. Uzbek weddings emphasize tradition, family unity, and large community celebrations.

English weddings, on the other hand, focus on formality, symbolism, and individuality. Although the rituals differ, both cultures share the same goal: celebrating the union of two people and the beginning of a new family. So that, the comparative examination of Uzbek and English wedding traditions demonstrates how cultural identity is preserved through ceremonial practices despite the pressures of modernization. Both cultures integrate new trends, yet each retains core values – community solidarity in Uzbek weddings and individual expression in English ceremonies. These similarities and differences highlight the way marriages function not only as social events but also as reflections of collective memory, historical development, and cultural continuity.

Ultimately, understanding these traditions fosters greater cross-cultural awareness. It shows that while wedding customs vary in scale, symbolism, and organization, they share a universal purpose: strengthening social bonds and marking the start of a committed partnership. This study affirms that wedding ceremonies, regardless of cultural context, remain essential expressions of heritage and evolving social values.

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