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REFLECTION OF CULTURAL VALUES AND AZERBAIJANIAN NATION CHARACTER IN TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS

The present article deals with such concepts as cultural values of Azerbaijanian people. Typical character of nation under study is presented as well as its key features reflected in traditions and customs. Culture and values of Azerbaijanian nation are not sufficiently known by other nations in comparison with, for example, English or German nation values. The authors of the article being representatives of Azerbaijanian nation reveal the key aspects of their culture.

Keywords: *nation, traditions, cultural values, custom, Azerbaijan.*

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OLD AND NEW WEDDING CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS IN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE USA

There are a lot of different customs and traditions in Great Britain and in the USA. Most of them are very beautiful and old. But we study the most old and beautiful in our report. In our opinion wedding ceremony is one of the most importance events in the life of people, that's why the theme of our report is always currently central. Also, this theme is of great interest for us, because we want to know as much as possible about the English speaking countries. Marriage traditions are changing with the course of time, and in our work we want to follow up these changes. The subject of our work is the studying of old and new wedding customs and traditions in Great Britain and the USA.

Keywords: *marriage, ceremony, customs, traditions, british, american, wedding.*

MARRIAGE CEREMONY IN GREAT BRITAIN

1.1 Wedding Preparations and Forms of Marriage

In Britain the custom of becoming engaged is still generally retained, though many young people dispense with it, and the number of such couples is increasing. As a rule, an engagement is announced as soon as a girl has

accepted a proposal of marriage, but in some cases it is done a good time afterwards. Rules of etiquette dictate that the girl's parents should be the first to hear the news; in practice, however, it is often the couple's friends who are taken into confidence before either of the parents. If a man has not yet met his future in-laws he does so at the first opportunity, whereas his parents usually write them a friendly letter. It is then up to the girl's mother to invite her daughter's future in-laws to a meal or drinks. Quite often, of course the man has been a frequent visitor at the girl's house long before the engagement, and their families are already well acquainted.

When a girl accepts a proposal, the man generally gives her a ring in token of the betrothal. It is worn on the third finger of the left hand before marriage and together with the wedding ring after it. Engagement rings range from expensive diamond rings to rings with Victorian semi-precious stones costing only a few pounds. In most cases the engagement itself amounts only to announcements being made to the parents on both sides and to friends and relations, but some people arrange an engagement party, and among the better-off people it is customary to put an announcement in the newspaper. In the book *«Etiquette»* the author writes that «as soon as congratulations and the first gaieties of announcement are over, a man should have a talk with the girl's father about the date of their wedding, where they will live, how well off he is and his future plans and prospects.» Nowadays this is often not done, one of the reasons being that today the young people enjoy a greater degree of financial independence than they used to, to be able to decide these matters for themselves. However, in working class families, where the family ties are still strong and each member of the family is more economically dependent upon the rest, things are rather different. Quite often, particularly in the larger towns the couple will have no option but to live after marriage with either the girl's or the man's people. Housing shortage in Britain is still acute, and the rents are very high. It is extremely difficult to get unfurnished accommodation, whereas a furnished room, which is easier to get costs a great deal for rent. In any case, the young couple may prefer to live with the parents in order to have a chance to save up for things for their future home. But if the young people, particularly those of the higher-paid section of the population, often make their own decision concerning the wedding and their future, the parents, particularly the girl's, still play an important part in the ensuing activities, as we shall see later.

The period of engagement is usually short, three or four months, but this is entirely of choice and circumstances. As early as the sixteenth, up to the nineteenth century, marriages were arranged by parents or guardians. The bride and bridegroom often were not acquainted until their marriage. The parents often made the marriage arrangements and betrothals while the bride and bridegroom were small children (ages three to seven). The children would continue to live with their own parents and meet from time to time for meals or holiday celebrations.

These prearranged marriages came under fire in the late seventeenth century when a judge held that betrothals and marriages prior to the age of seven were «utterly void». However, they would be valid if, after the age of seven, the children called each other husband and wife, embraced, kissed each other, gave and received Gifts of Token. Later, young couples ran away and had a ceremony privately performed without banns or license. These elopements and private ceremonies represented the beginning of a revolt against parental control of marital selection. The Civil Marriage Act of 1653, passed by the Puritans under Cromwell, required a civil ceremony before a justice of the peace after presentation of the certificate from the parish register that banns had been published. If either party were under twenty-one, proof of parental consent must also be presented. The wedding ceremony consisted of a simple formula to be repeated by the man and woman and was accompanied by hand fastening. The use of a ring was forbidden.

By the Hardwicke Act of 1753, all weddings, except members of the royal family, were to be performed only after publication of banns or issuance of a license, only during the morning hours of eight to twelve, only in an Anglican Church or chapel, and only before an Anglican clergyman. Two or more witnesses were required and a register must be kept. Parental consent was demanded unless the banns had been published.

The Catholic Church, in the Council of Trent, restated its position that marriage was one of the seven sacraments and therefore could not be dissolved.

Up until the early 1990's, it was very difficult to get married in Great Britain. If one wishes to marry in England or Wales, they must do so in a church which has a register, (which is like a special license), and they can do so only in the district (shire) where one of the couple resides. All Church of England parishes (Anglican) are automatically registered, regardless of their size. No blood tests or counseling are required. In England and Wales there are four forms of marriage: by banns, by ordinary licence, by special licence and by a registrar. Marriage by Banns is the form most usually adopted. Banns must be called for three consecutive Sundays in the parish churches of both the future bride and the groom unless they both live in the same parish. They must have been resident for at least fifteen days previous to the first publication of the banns. There is a small fee for the certificate of banns.

The clergyman at the church where the marriage is to take place must be notified by letter of the couple's intention to marry, of their names and addresses and how long they have resided in their parishes. If one of the parties is a minor, a letter of consent must be obtained from the Superintendent Registrar of the district. If the marriage is to take place in the bride's church, a certificate of calling of the banns must be obtained from the bridegroom's parish clergyman. The marriage must then take place within three months of the banns being published.

Marriage by Ordinary Licence is a convenient alternative to the publications of banns. In London, application must be made by one party to the Faculty Office, where he will swear that he does not know of any impediment to the marriage such as being legally married to another or consanguineous relationship, and that one of the parties has lived for at least fifteen days in the parish of the church where the marriage is to take place. A licence is valid in England and Wales for three months after the date of issue. Outside London, it can be obtained from any Bishop's Registry Office in a cathedral town or from a Superintendent registrar in the district of residence. The licence is granted

without previous notice and is available as soon as it is issued, but the marriage must take place in a church named on the licence. Marriage by Special Licence costs 5 pounds and can be obtained only for special reasons such as suddenly being sent abroad. It is never granted lightly. Application must be made in person by one of the parties at the Faculty Office. The marriage can then take place at any time and in any place, celebrated by the rites of the church, and residence qualifications are unnecessary.

Marriage by a Registrar can be celebrated, without any religious ceremony, at a registry office. Notice must be given by one of the parties of the intended marriage, if both have resided in the district for seven days immediately preceding the notice. If one has lived in another district, notice must be given to his or her local registrar. The certificate is issued twenty-one days after the notice has been given. It might be traditional to be a June bride, but marrying in peak time means fighting to secure must-have bookings before hundreds of other brides and grooms. Planning an autumn or winter wedding's a great way of standing out from the crowd and carries hidden benefits that'll make you glad you waited until summer was over. The biggest upside to an off-peak wedding has to be the cost. You can shave thousands off hotel and function room bills by booking out of high season, and there's unlikely to be as much competition for your desired venue as the days grow colder. Suppliers including caterers, photographers and transport specialists often offer similar discounts, so be sure to shop around for a good deal.

The same argument applies to guests, who will be delighted to get an invitation to an event that doesn't conflict with their summer holiday or other weddings on the same weekend. And the stunning alternative scenery's a big plus - marrying outdoors as the trees begin to turn their leaves or against a spectacular snow and frost-covered backdrop will add a fantastic edge to your photos.

Of course, you only find turning leaves and snow when the weather gets colder, which can make the idea of a late-season wedding less appealing. If you're still planning to hold an outdoor ceremony, ensure you've organized a contingency venue, preferably nearby, so unpredictable weather conditions don't spoil your plans. Colour is all-important as the days get greyer, so avoid pastel shades when you're planning your colour scheme. Traditional autumn hues such as deep red, orange, yellow and copper will look gorgeous in flower arrangements, bridesmaids' outfits or as part of your table decoration, while winter whites are well set off by silver, gold or rich jewel colours like burgundy, dark green or midnight blue.

Summer weddings make the most of sunshine and flowers, so it's a good idea to work with what you've got around you in terms of decoration. If your chosen autumn venues got a lot of trees, ask the co-ordinator when they're likely to be on the turn (although places famed for their foliage often charge more money for the privilege.) Have large arrangements of multi-coloured leaves instead of flowers, scatter them over tables, or even try adding a few to your bouquet.

Snow's an increasingly remote prospect for most of us in winter, but don't ignore your natural surroundings. Hang swags of greenery along aisles and dust tables with white rose petals to imitate the effects of a snowfall. Mistletoe clusters will look great as decorations - and can be hung in strategic areas for an extra splash of romance. Since the Civil Partnership Act came into force in December 2005, same-sex couples have been allowed to form a legally recognised partnership and become 'civil partners', affording them similar legal rights to those as married couples. In England and Wales there are more than 4 million couples co-habiting, and although co-habitees are legally protected in some areas, they are significantly worse off than those who are married or are civil partners.

Despite the widely held belief that once a couple have been living together for a number of years they become 'common law' husband and wife, more and more people are finding out to their cost that couples who simply live together have barely any rights comparable to those who are married or have formed civil partnerships.

Before civil partnerships came into force there was no way that a same-sex couples could enjoy similar legal recognition of their relationship in England and Wales. Neither could they have the same protection, benefits and responsibilities as married couples - but this all changed on 5 December 2005 when the Civil Partnership Act 2004 became a reality.

So in a nutshell, the Civil Partnership Act allows same-sex couples to be legally recognised as partners, and affords them equality to heterosexual married couples in terms of legal rights which cover a wide range of areas.

Before a civil partnership can be formed, the couple involved must notify the registration authority of their intention to register a civil partnership. When the notice has been given, the authority will publicize it for 15 days, after which, the partnership can be formed at approved premises (including registry offices) in England and Wales.

1.2 The Ceremony

In Scotland people over the age of sixteen do not require their parents consent in order to marry. Marriage is performed by a minister of any religion after the banns have been called on two Sundays in the districts where the couple had lived for at least fifteen days previously. Weddings may take place in churches or private houses.

Alternatively, the couple may give notice to the registrar of the district in which they have both lived for fifteen days previously. The registrar will issue a

Certificate of Publication, which is displayed for seven days, and it will be valid for three months in any place in Scotland.

Marriage at a registry office in Scotland requires a publication of notice for seven days or a sheriff's licence, as publication of banns is not accepted. Such a licence is immediately valid but expires after ten days. One of the parties must have lived in Scotland for at least fifteen days before the application, which is often prepared by a solicitor.

As soon as the wedding date has been decided the couple will think about the kind of wedding they want. Though comparatively few young people nowadays regularly attend church, most girls still dream of a white wedding, with its solemn ceremony, bridesmaids and the rest. There is no equivalent in England of our Palaces of Weddings, and civic ceremonies in a registry office are very dull. But what with the church fees which are extremely high and other extra expenses, a white wedding costs a great deal of money, so a couple may decide against it on these grounds.

There are practically no special customs attached to weddings at a registry office. For these reason attention will be mainly given to church weddings, with their age-old ritual and customs. However, the reader should bear in mind that by no means all the customs concerning the preparation for a wedding or the wedding ceremony itself are necessarily maintained, quite often reasons of economy.

The rules are not absolutely hard and fast, but generally they are the follows.

The Bride's Parents are responsible for the press announcements, the bride's dress and trousseau, flowers for the church and members of family.

The bridegroom pays for the ring and the wedding licence, fees to the clergyman, the organist and choir, or the awning and anything else directly concerned with the service, although if there are to be order or service, the bride's parents will have these printed at the same time as the invitations. He will pay for the bouquet for his bride and bouquets for the bridesmaids, buttonholes for his best man and ushers and any flowers worn by the bride's mother and his own mother, if they want to wear flowers – many women do not. He pays for the cars which take himself and the best man to the church and the car in which he and his bride will drive from the church to the reception. The cost of cars can, however, be divided between the parents of the bride may wish to pay for it all. This is a matter for mutual arrangement.

The groom is expected to give a small present to each of the bridesmaids, and such a gift can range from a piece of jewellery to a beautifully bound book, a powder compact or any personal and pretty article.

Giving away the bride. The bride's father given her away or, if he is dead or cannot be present at the ceremony, his place is taken by her mother or a close relative, or even a great family friend.

The bridesmaids are usually the sisters, near relatives and close girl friends of the bride, and sisters of the groom. The number is purely a matter of choice but usually does not exceed six. There may be two small page-boys and four grown-up maids, or child attendants only. The bride chooses the material. The custom used to be for the bride's mother to pay for all the bridesmaids' dresses, but today they usually pay for their own. A girl asked to be a bridesmaid can always refuse politely if she feels she cannot afford such a dress.

There is always a chief bridesmaid who will take the bride's bouquet during the ceremony and hand it back to her back before she goes into the vestry to sign the register.

The Best Man is a brother, relative or close friend of the groom, and his main duty, apart from giving moral support before the wedding, is to see to the clergyman's fees, the tips to the vergers and to band the wedding ring to the groom in the church. He is also responsible for seeing that the bridesmaids are looked after during the reception and he should reply to any toast to the bridesmaids.

The Ushers are male relatives and friends of both bride and groom. Their duties are to stand just inside the church and ask each guest «bride or groom?» They will place friends of the bride on the left of the aisle and friends of the groom on the right. The ushers should be at the church at least three-quarters of an hour before the ceremony, and may hand out forms of service if these are not being placed before every pew.

The bridegroom's clothes. When the bride is in white, the bridegroom wears morning dress with a white carnation in his buttonhole (without fern or solver paper).

Widows or Divorcees, when re-marrying, do not wear white, but a short dress or a pretty suit or coat. They remove their first wedding rings and never wear them again. They do not have bridesmaids or pages.

The parents and close relatives of the bride and groom arrive a few minutes before the bride. The bridegroom and his best man should be in their places at least ten minutes before the service starts. The bridesmaids and pages wait in the church porch with whoever is to arrange the bride's veil before she goes up the aisle.

The bride, by tradition, arrives a couple of minutes late but this should not be exaggerated. She arrives with whoever is giving her away. The verger signals to the organist to start playing, and the bride moves up the aisle with her veil over her face (although many brides don't follow this custom). She goes in on her father's right arm, and the bridesmaids follow her according to the plan at the rehearsal the day before. The bridesmaids and ushers go to their places in the front pews during the ceremony, except for the chief bridesmaid who usually stands behind the bride and holds her bouquet.

After the ceremony the couple goes unto the vestry to sign the register with their parents, best man, bridesmaids and perhaps a close relation such as a grandmother. The bride throws back her veil, the verger gives a signal to the organist and the bride and groom walk down the aisle followed by their parents and those who have signed the register. The bride's mother walks down the aisle on the left arm of the bridegroom's father and the bridegroom's mother walks down on the left arm of the bride's father. Guests wait until the wedding procession has passed them before leaving to go on the reception.

The reception. The bride's parents stand first in the receiving line, followed by the groom's parents and the bride and the groom. Guests line up outside the reception room and give their names to the major-domo who will announce them. They need only shake hands and say 'How do you do?» to the parents, adding perhaps a word about

how lovely the bride is or how well the ceremony went. The bride introduces to the husband any friends that he may not already know, and vice versa.

The important parts of the reception are the cutting of the cake and the toast for the bride and groom. There should never be any long speeches. When all the guests have been received the major-domo requests silence and the bride cuts the cake, with her husband's hand upon hers.

The toast to the bride and groom is usually proposed by a relative or friend of the bride. he should not make a speech full of jokes or silly references to marriage. It should be short and dignified. The bridegroom replies with a few words of thanks. He may or may not then propose the health of the bridesmaids. The best man replies with a few words of thanks. If a meal is provided, the toasts may come at the end of it. After the toasts the bride and groom may move around the room talking to their friends until it is time for them to go and change. When they are ready to leave, guests gather to see them off. Wedding presents. Can be anything, according to your pocket and your friendship with the bride or groom. Such presents are usually fairly substantial compared with most other presents, and should preferably be things useful for a future home. Some brides have lists at a large store near their homes. It is always wise to ask is there is one, as this eliminates your sending something the couple may have already. The list should contain items of all prices and when one is bought it is crossed off. A wedding is one of the few occasions when money can be given, usually as a cheque. Presents are sent after the invitations have been received, usually to the bride's home. You address the card to both the bride and bridegroom. After studying this chapter we can make the following conclusions. Wedding in Great Britain is one of the oldest customs. There are a lot of different types of marriage. Some of them require a licence. The preparations usually begin the two months before the wedding. The ceremony itself is always well-organized. Every participant of the ceremony plays his or her important role. After the ceremony newlyweds get a marriage certificate.

MARRIAGE CEREMONY IN THE USA

2.1 American wedding traditions

The American ceremony is probably the most well-known in the world. Although these days there are quite a number of unique wedding ceremonies taking place. Today you are allowed to get married in an airplane or in a drive-in movie theatre, all you need is somebody to marry other people will take care of the rest. Money is either very important or not important at all. In Las Vegas there are marriage ceremonies performed for only twenty dollars, but a wedding ceremony could also be the most expensive occasion in two people's lives. The tradition in the USA is different from The Church of England, in the wedding ring ceremony. Instead of just putting a ring on the woman's finger the groom also gets a ring.

Most weddings in the United States follow a similar pattern to the Italian wedding. Customs and traditions vary, but common components are listed below.

An American wedding is typically a happy, joyous occasion for all people of all backgrounds. American wedding traditions really vary from one religion or culture to another, but in American wedding tradition it's a happy time and the life of the new bride and groom is toasted and celebrated as they come together.

Every American wedding has subtle traditional elements, but there are no really strict guidelines that we follow when planning our big day. Over the last ten years, wedding etiquette has really relaxed and American wedding traditions have become a lot more liberal. This new liberal outlook has enabled couples to marry in a style that they are comfortable with, instead of the sometimes rigid standards that some used to associate with American wedding tradition.

One American wedding tradition is still the white dress for the bride. Brides only used to wear white if she was still a virgin and it was her first wedding. American tradition now dictates that any bride can wear white proudly, even though the second weddings tend to be a little bit less formal. The white dress really seals the deal though, and most women choose to wear it.

Another American wedding tradition is to have the ceremony in a church or place of worship. Those that don't have the ceremony in a place of worship usually have a member of the church clergy marry them in another location such as outdoors the mountains. The majority of people still get married in a place of worship, involving faith in their union, even with less rigid etiquette.

One great follow up to an American wedding is a reception or big party celebrating the bride and groom. The reception usually includes a meal, dancing, and mingling among friends and family of both the bride and the groom. A reception really is a great way to get everyone together as the two families really sort of merges as a result of the wedding. Receptions are often the most anticipated event when planning the wedding because there is so much to plan for.

Following an American wedding and reception it's a tradition for the bride and the groom to go on a honeymoon or vacation. The honeymoon was originally done for the bride and the groom to go away and enjoy the company of one another with chaperones for the first time, and even consummate their marriage. Now, it's more about getting away and just enjoying one another for the first time. A honeymoon gives a new husband and wife the chance to dote on each other with no distractions to sort of nurture the new union.

An American wedding has really morphed into a wedding of personal preference. Couples are free to plan a wedding and join in matrimony as they please and when they please. As long as there is a wedding certificate, all is legal, and everything else is up to them. Unlike many other cultures, there are no rigid guidelines or laws about marriage.

In America all you have to do is love someone, and you can marry him or her. And really, what's better than being free to marry and love whom you wish to? Just one more reason for America is so great. Initially Bridal Shower proposed to brace the friendships between the bride and her female friends. In the 1890s it evolved into an event for friends to present the bride-to-be with small gifts. The gifts were placed in a parasol, which was released above the bride's head, allowing the gifts to «shower» down on her.

Again Bridal Party tradition commenced from the Anglo-Saxon custom of a groom using «Brides knights» to make certain that the bride head for the ceremony and then back to her husband's home without being attacked and the dowry stolen. Now bridal party is all about celebration and enjoyment.

Even today it is mandatory for every American bride to be to wear a Veil. Traditionally it meant that the groom didn't see the bride until the wedding ceremony. It was thought that if the groom had seen the bride before the ceremony was over and didn't like her, he might refuse to get married. So the veil was not lifted until after the ceremony and this is functional even today in modern American wedding. Traditional American weddings are organized in a place of worship like in a church, where family and friends assemble. Here comes the best man, flower girls, exchanging vows and rings, and the wedding music. The wedding ceremony is conducted by the priest. He formally asks the invitees whether they have any objection for this marriage and getting the positive response from the invitees the priest asks the couple to exchange wedding rings and then the couple is marked as husband and wife. Traditionally the newlyweds kiss to seal their union; this is the concept of Kissing the bride.

The groom's Cake is cut post wedding a piece of the cake is distributed amongst each guest as a memento of the wedding. The belief goes that if a woman slept with a piece of the groom's cake under her pillow, she would dream about the man she would marry. Honeymoon meant the newly married couples to drink a fermented wine made from mead and honey for a month (moon) following their wedding. Now it's all about going for a month long vacation and spending time with each other. As the couple leaves the church, they are showered with rice or wheat which is recognized as the symbols of fertility. Then the couple organizes a reception party where all family members and friends of two families dine, enjoy and makes merry. Another American Wedding tradition is to collect money in a wedding wheel for honeymoon from the guests. The guests form two lines, and they pay a dollar or more to dance with the newlyweds.

An American wedding does not follow any rigid customs; it is more of wedding of personal preference. It is mandatory to have a wedding certificate and everything else is up to the couples. The usual attire since ancient times is a white pretty gown for brides and black or blue suit for grooms, this tradition is followed religiously in America.

The host sends invitations to the wedding guests, usually one to two months before the wedding. Invitations may most formally be addressed by hand to show the importance and personal meaning of the occasion. Large numbers of invitations may be mechanically reproduced. As engraving was the highest quality printing technology available in the past, this has become associated with wedding invitation tradition. Receiving an invitation does not impose any obligation on the invitee other than promptly accepting or declining the invitation, and offering congratulations to the couple.

While giving any gift to the newlywed couple is technically optional, nearly all invited guests who attend the wedding choose to do so. Wedding gifts are most commonly sent to the bride's or host's home before the wedding day. Gifts are typically not brought to ceremonies or receptions, and any that are will not be opened, but rather placed aside for later delivery to the newlyweds' home.

A color scheme is selected by some to match everything from bridesmaids' dresses, flowers, invitations, and decorations, though there is no necessity in doing so. Wedding preparations can be overwhelming and endless it seems. Many brides and grooms by their side have had a meltdown prior to the wedding. If you can relate, you are not alone.

Be encouraged and take heart. Fear not! The best is yet to come. It has been said that marriage is like making mashed potatoes. First, you peel the potatoes. Secondly, you place them in hot water to boil. Thirdly, you mash them all up together until they become one.

Maybe you are presently being peeled by life's circumstances and wedding preparations up to your eyeballs. Perhaps you are now boiling in hot water and undergoing some emotional stress. Relationally we are all being brought closer together and smoothing out one another's rough edges. The process however can be like crushing grapes to make wine. Nevertheless remember how delicious and intoxicating the wine can be once the grapes are crushed.

Life and love flows in seasons and stages. There are many circular parallels between nature and life itself. Perhaps you are currently enduring the winter season of your relationship and engagement. Realize your love has not died, but rather its roots are going deep and your love's foundation being strengthened. Commitment surpasses romantic notions and fluctuating feelings. Often love is more of a decision than a feeling. Death and life are always occurring simultaneously. Marital love that lasts a lifetime requires that we welcome and embrace a more intense type of relational interaction as we become one. That means you both must be committed to personal growth individually and together. Therefore when some things are identified as harmful to your marriage, you need to humbly repent of them and be willing to die to them. As you die to deadly habits and refine your character, you will resurrect and breathe fresh life into your marriage. The more you die to self, the more you together as one shall love and live.

The bride and groom to be prepared four months for this day collecting wedding invitations and wedding cards from past weddings that they were able to attend. The couple checked and talked about their collection. Then

they hired a wedding coordinator also who will then set up everything. Right after, the couple have informed them of the desired appearance and them of their wedding and also asked for inputs and suggestions.

From the discussions they had with the wedding coordinator, they decided to purchase and choose well the wedding stationery to write on their invitations, program, vows and every little good thing that need to be put on writing. The wedding invitations and wedding cards were prepared first before anything else. Deciding on the wedding's theme was quite difficult. It lasted for days to finally come up with a final color then the stationery's look was based on this decision.

The wedding invitations and wedding cards were colored white with red accent. The bride chose that because according to her, white is the symbol for purity while red symbolized their love for each other. They also had their wedding invitations and wedding cards embossed with two doves inside a big heart, which signified that the two of them were joined as one because of love.

Aside from the two doves inside a big heart, the wedding invitations and wedding cards were also scented. The couple said that the scent would make it more elegant and presentable. The couple had laid their hands on every detail of the preparation because they wanted to make sure that everything went with what was planned and every guest would feel very special. Moreover, wedding invitations and wedding cards were personally delivered by the two lovebirds for they wanted to make sure that the invitations were directly given to the people they invited for their wedding. Then the lovely couple were very much excited and prepared really hard for this day to arrive. And my wish for them is that, just like the fairytales we've read, may they live happily ever after and love each other for the rest of their lives.

Wedding party is not the party you have where you drink and have fun. A wedding party is a group of people involved in your wedding preparations, people you can count on for help and not just to look good by your side during the wedding. They consist of a Maid of Honour, Best Man, Bridesmaids and Groomsmen. I could have an entire group of ten girls as my bridesmaid and Josiah could have ten groomsmen, but really – do we need all of them? If we were to measure friendship or closeness with that, we could have over 50 bridesmaid and groomsmen. So, the question is – how do we determine who is to be of what role?

A Maid of Honour's role is to help the bride out in times of need, help with planning and coordination, ensure that the bride is not stressed out. My initial perception of a Maid of Honour (MOH) is one that would help with the make-up and ensuring that I feel good and calm down during the wedding dinner, boy was I wrong. A MOH is an all rounder and does not emit stress so things would run smoothly on the day itself. I chose Amber, whereas Josiah chose his brother Johansen as his one and only Best Man who doubled up as Groomsmen. I had my sister in law Joyalene as my bridesmaid and my married sister loosely known as bridesmaid as she was married – I didn't know if she was allowed to be one. My brother in law Kelvin was also loosely known as groomsmen that night for helping out at the reception with my sister and facilitation of guests.

Selecting the wedding party could be tedious at some point. You may want to appoint your best buddy as the Maid of Honour and Best Man (BM). Preferably someone who has seen you grow up, not necessarily friends who have known you for less than a year, because it surely doesn't beat a person who knows you inside out. You need to identify the strengths of your MOH / BM. He or she may be good at work or could be a great friend but may suck at wedding planning, or it could be the other way around, or both. Josiah and I were lucky to have an all-rounder wedding party. Dealing with the wedding party requires a lot of trust and patience on your end. You just have to let go when the time comes and leave it all to their hands. Be alert at all times if you foresee anything that could possibly go wrong. Listen to advices from your family members and friends on all matters including your selection of wedding party. You can't let one person ruin your wedding dinner. If you see a potential for that, quickly remedy it before time runs out. Your wedding party should not be more concerned about themselves before you for that special day. You as the wedding couple should always take good care of their welfare, ensure they have food, look good effortlessly and most importantly have fun. More importantly, a wedding party is to make you both look good with them keeping their decency. If they embarrass you at any point, it becomes your mistake, not theirs.

Registration of Marriage This process is rather simple. First, Josiah and I went to Jabatan Pendaftaran Negara (JPN) at Taman Maluri, Cheras at 8.30 a.m., based on our both IC addresses that are located within Kuala Lumpur. I heard that if your spouse's IC address is in another state, you may have to register in that state. I think it cost us something like RM 10.00 to register. We provided copies of our identification cards and passport photos. It was a short process. They gave us a few dates two months after our application on three days available and we chose a Friday.

2.2 The Ceremony

A wedding ceremony may take place anywhere, but often a church, courthouse, or outdoor venue. The ceremony is usually brief, and is may be dictated by the couple's religious practices. The most common non-religious form is derived from a simple Anglican ceremony in the Book of Common Prayer.

The bride usually wears a white, off-white, silver, or other very light-colored dress, particularly at her first marriage. Brides may choose any color, although black is strongly discouraged by some as it is the color of mourning in the west. The wedding party may form a receiving line at this point, or later at a reception, so that each guest may greet the entire wedding party. At the wedding reception drinks, snacks, (or often a full meal at long receptions) are served while the guests and wedding party mingle. Often the best man and/or maid of honor toast the newlyweds with personal thoughts, stories, and well-wishes; sometimes other guests follow with their own toasts. Champagne is usually provided for this purpose. In a symbolic cutting of the wedding cake, the couple may jointly hold a cake

knife and cut the first pieces of the wedding cake, which they feed to each other. In some sub-cultures, they may deliberately smear cake on each other's faces, which is considered vulgar elsewhere. If dancing is offered, the newlyweds first dance together briefly. Often a further protocol is followed, wherein each dances next with a parent, and then possibly with other members of the wedding party. Special songs are chosen by the couple, particularly for a mother/son dance and a father/daughter dance. In some subcultures, a dollar dance takes place in which guests are expected to dance with the one of the newlyweds, and give them a small amount of cash. This practice, as is any suggestion that the guests owe money to the couple, is considered rude in most social groups as it is contrary to basic western etiquette.

In the mid-twentieth century it became common for a bride to toss her bouquet over her shoulder to the assembled unmarried women during the reception. The woman who catches it, superstition has it, will be the next to marry. In a similar process, her groom tosses the bride's garter to the unmarried men, followed by the man who caught the garter placing it on the leg of the woman who caught the bouquet. While still common in many circles, these practices (particularly the latter) are falling into less favor in the 21st century.

A civil ceremony can take place at a Register Office or other premises approved by the local authority for marriages (a hotel or stately home for example). For a marriage in approved premises, you will need to make your arrangements at the venue in question before booking the registrar and giving your notices of marriage. There are fees (which are set by individual authorities) payable for this option. If you would like your marriage at a register office, you should first contact the Superintendent Registrar of the district where you wish to marry. Once you have booked your ceremony at either the register office or other premises, you will need to give a formal notice of your marriage to the Superintendent Registrar of the district(s) where you live. A fee is payable for giving each notice of marriage.

If you wish to be married in the Church of England or Church of Wales you should first speak to the vicar to arrange your ceremony. Ordinarily you are not required to give notice of marriage to a superintendent registrar at the register office unless the vicar specifically requests you to do so in writing.

If you wish to marry by religious ceremony other than in the Church of England or Church of Wales you should first arrange to see the Minister or other person in charge of marriages at the building to arrange your ceremony. However, the Church or religious building in question must normally be in the registration district where you or your partner live. Once you have booked your ceremony, it will also be necessary to give formal notice of your marriage to the Superintendent Registrar of the district(s) where you live. A fee is payable for giving each notice of marriage. You may also need to book a Registrar if the church does not have an authorised person to register the marriage or that person is unavailable.

The state of matrimony, as understood by us, is a state ennobled and enriched by a long and honorable tradition of devotion, set in the basis of the law of the land, assuring each participant's equality before the law, and supporting the common rights of each party to the marriage. There is assumed to be a desire for a life-long companionship, and a generous sharing of the help and comfort that husband and wife ought to have from each other, through whatever circumstances of sickness or health, joy or sorrow, prosperity or adversity, the lives of these parties may experience. Marriage is therefore not to be entered upon thoughtlessly or irresponsibly, but with a due and serious understanding and appreciation of the ends for which it is undertaken, and of the material, intellectual and emotional factors which will govern its fulfillment. It is by its nature a state of giving rather than taking, of offering rather than receiving, for marriage requires the giving of one's self to support the marriage and the home in which it may flourish.

It is into this high and serious state that these two persons desire to unite.

There are many factors which determine the validity of a marriage. Assuming, though, that the notary public is duly appointed and commissioned at the time of the ceremony, that both the bride and the groom are qualified to be joined in marriage, that the couple have obtained the required marriage license, and that the marriage ceremony is performed in Florida, the marriage would be «legal and binding.» Florida law will presume a marriage to be legal until otherwise shown. An attorney may be able to provide more specific information, if required.

A notary public or other authorized person may not perform a marriage ceremony without a marriage license issued in accordance with the requirements set forth in Chapter 741 of the Florida Statutes. Florida law further provides that a marriage license may not be issued unless:

Completing the marriage certificate portion of the marriage record is not the same act as performing the marriage ceremony. Actually, the certificate is the notary's way of certifying that he or she performed the ceremony. A notary should not falsely certify that a ceremony was performed when, in fact, one had not been.

The ceremony does not have to be in any particular form. Any form of ceremony to solemnize a marriage that the parties choose ordinarily suffices, so long as there is an agreement by words of present assent. The words used or the ceremony performed are mere evidence of a present intention and agreement of the parties. A marriage ceremony is usually performed for the sake of notoriety and certainty and must be conducted by a person authorized by law to perform the ceremony.

The purpose of inviting guests is to have them witness a couple's marriage ceremony and vows and to share in their joy and celebration. Gifts for the wedding couple are optional, although most guests attempt to give at least a token gift of their best wishes. Some couples and families feel, contrary to proper etiquette, that in return for the expense they put into entertaining and feeding their guests, the guests should pay them with similarly expensive gifts or cash.

The couple often registers for gifts at a store well in advance of their wedding. This allows them to create a list of household items, usually including china, silverware and crystal ware, linens or other fabrics, pots and pans, etc. Registries are intended to aid guests in selecting gifts the newlyweds truly want, and the service is sufficiently profitable that most retailers, from luxury shops to discount stores, offer the opportunity. Registry information should, according to etiquette, be provided only to guests upon direct request, and never included in the invitation. Some couples additionally or instead register with services that enable money gifts intended to fund items such as a honeymoon, home purchase or college fund. Some find bridal registries inappropriate as they contravene traditional notions behind gifts, such as that all gifts are optional and delightful surprises personally chosen by the giver, and that registries lead to a type of price-based competition, as the couple knows the cost of each gift. Traditionally, weddings were considered a personal event and inviting people to the wedding who are not known to at least one member of the couple well enough to be able to choose an appropriate gift was considered inappropriate, and registries should therefore be unnecessary. Whether considered appropriate or not, others believe that weddings are opportunities to extract funds or specific gifts from as many people as possible, and that even an invitation carries an expectation of monetary reward rather than merely congratulations.

Letters of thanks for any gift are traditionally sent promptly after the gift's receipt. Tradition allows wedding gifts to be sent up to a year after the wedding date. Thanks should be sent as soon as possible, preferably within two weeks.

After the second chapter we can make the following conclusions.

The American wedding ceremony is well-known in the world. Its traditions are not so strict as British. Americans can marry in the church or at a Register office. Usually the ceremony is brief. After the ceremony the marriage certificate is also given. Actually, the certificate is the notary's way of certifying that he or she performed the ceremony.

CONCLUSION

In our report we dealt with two different types of marriage in two different countries. We got to know how is the preparation going on and what the ceremony itself represents. We viewed all the main traditions of this custom both in Britain and America, compared them, found some differences and similarities.

In the first chapter we told about the marriage ceremony in Britain, have characterized it's essential parts and necessary things. The first part of preparation for marriage is engagement. The groom should get an acquaintance with the bride's parents and make a good impression on them. After the agreement the main preparation begins. In Britain there are a lot of different types of marriage. Some of them need marriage licence. And after the ceremony newlyweds get marriage certificate. Also we described participants of marriage ceremony and their responsibilities. In the second chapter we told about American wedding traditions. We carefully studied the oldest traditions and compared them with nowadays wedding. We also observed preparations and the main subjects of ceremony.

Consequently we can say that wedding is a very important custom in human life. Wedding is the most beautiful and happy holiday. It is full of love and hopes. After finishing our work we know everything about wedding traditions and customs, what is the engagement, how are the preparations going on and what parts the ceremony consists of.

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СТАРЫЕ И НОВЫЕ СВАДЕБНЫЕ ОБЫЧАИ И ТРАДИЦИИ В ВЕЛИКОБРИТАНИИ И США

Есть много различных обычаев и традиций в Великобритании и в США. Большинство из них очень красивые и старые. Но мы изучаем самый старый и красивый в нашей работе. По нашему мнению, свадебная церемония является одной из наиболее важных событий в жизни людей, поэтому тема нашей работы всегда занимает центральное место. Кроме того, эта тема представляет большой интерес для нас, потому что мы хотим знать как можно больше об англоязычных странах. Традиции брака меняются с течением времени, и в нашей работе мы хотим следовать этим изменениям. Предметом нашей работы является изучение старых и новых свадебных обычаев и традиций в Великобритании и США.

Ключевые слова: *брак, церемония, обычаи, традиции, британский, американский, свадьба.*

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