

ET LOGOOLI-BRYLLUP

Teksten her er udarbejdet af Jean Kidula. Den beskriver en traditionel bryllupsdag inden for den kristne Logooli-tradition i Kenya og den supplerer videoklippene. Her omtaes kun aktiviteterne i umiddelbar relation til den kirkelige vielse.

Logooli/Luyia Wedding day

On a typical wedding day, the focus is mostly on the woman because she is the one who will leave her home and officially go to live in her husband's house or homestead. While the man can have only one escort and maybe several friends and relatives standing with him at the altar, typically the woman has a bestmaid, other bridesmaids, flower girls and page boys as part of her procession. There is also much more activity at the woman's place on the morning of the wedding day before it shifts to the church and then on to the reception area and maybe to a party later at the man's home or wheresoever they have decided to have an afterparty.

At home

A typical day for the bride begins at 5 a.m. she is woken up and prayers are said on her behalf mostly by her mother and her mother's friends and family relatives. These prayers might take up to an hour and are interspersed with singing mainly of church songs. Any last minute womanly advice is supposed to be extended at this time.

The family and other people who may have slept in the homestead in the village or house in the city then take care of morning ablutions and breakfast. The bride is during this time not only fed breakfast but until about 10 a.m. or thereabouts - if the wedding is at noon - she is bathed (or takes a bath) and prepared for the wedding. Before she dresses, she is required to eat Ugali (Swahili word, Vuchima in Logooli) - a corn based food that resembles Polenta. Ugali can also be made from millet and sorghum and is in fact the preferred alternative because the food can sit in the stomach for a long time - ensuring that the bride will not faint from hunger during the church ceremony. Typically it is eaten with Chicken stew, and no vegetables. That way she will not have the urge to go to the toilet during the long day. Then the bridal party will dress up in preparation for the wedding. The bride will then come into the sitting room area where she will be prayed for.

The bride is being picked up

Meanwhile the groom has to make sure that there are vehicles to transport the bride, her entourage, her relatives and any other people from her home to the church site. He will send at least 2 cars and maybe a van or bus all decorated with flowers, balloons, ribbons and any other stuff deemed festive to the bride's home. Depending on the family, the bride's family can try to make it difficult for the groom by demanding for some kind of goodwill (money usually) before they can "release" the bride. It has been known for a wedding to be delayed up to 5 hours by stubborn relatives due to these demands. The demands are usually made by stubborn aunts who may have felt left out of the wedding plans etc. In any case, the woman has to be released by her parents and relatives in order to procession out of the house.

The video of Josephine and Cleophas (1) as well as that of Charlie and Nancy (2) shows that they are either carried out of the house, or Kangas/lessos or sheets are spread on the ground so that the bride will not dirty her dress and long train. A Kanga is a rectangular cloth usually with interesting designs and writing on the border that is commonly worn for work or play by women in East Africa, wither tied around the waist, so it has to be able to go around a waist of 30" comfortably, and reaches the ground, or else is it tied above the breasts and stretches down below the knees sometimes up to the ankles. Sometimes special Kangas are bought with words (usually in Kiswahili language) that expresses best wishes and prayers of the buyers towards the bride. The bride is escorted to the car amid traditional Logooli and Luyia songs. They can include songs like the arrangement of Ni vudinyu, or mwana Mberi (song 1, 5).

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Towards the church

The escort party, particularly those in the minivans or bus can also sing all the way to the church whether in the city or in the village. They herald the journey of the bride and her arrival. One can hear the different songs with instrumental interludes. The only difference is there are no melody instruments but there are drums, bells and whistles etc.

Entering the church

When the party arrives at the church, the escort part will continue to sing and then the services will be different relative to the requirements of different Christian churches.

In the case of Josephine and Cleophas (1), they had to procession from the car to the church vestry, then procession from the vestry to the church. During the procession from the car to the vestry, one observes the flower girls outside. The bride walks in front of the choir who sing a song in kwaya Style in Swahili language. The song itself says, Mapambano, Leo ni Furaha, Mapambano Ndoa Takatifu. (A coming together like a fight – Today is joy, A coming together, A holy wedding). The processional into the church is done to a prerecorded song that was very popular in 2006 (Yesu Eh Nakupenda by Rose Muhando. You can google the song on Youtube and you can see it there). The song is long enough and has been reworked so it can replayed without stopping.

In The Susan and Jairo video clip (3), the bride is escorted into church with the group walking very close to each other. The escort from the car to the front of the church uses the same song. The song is played on a cassette player that is carried by one of the members of the processional. Every time the song ends, the girl has to rewind the tape and everybody stops until the song starts again, then they start to move.

In the wedding of Charlie and Nancy (2) as well as that of Julie and Nelson (4), once the party arrives at church and is welcomed by the singing group, they line themselves outside the church building and specific songs and played for the bridal party on live piano/organ, and a different song for the bride.

The ceremony

The service proper starts after the party has arrived into church and the woman stands next to her man who may have processional into church using special music or just entered with his entourage from a side door.

Most people will first pray and then sing a hymn. The most common hymn for Quakers and Pentecostal of Logooli Heritage and strong ethnic pull is *Oh happy day* (text by Doddridge and Tune by Rimbault). In the city it is usual to sing *To God be the Glory* (text by Fanny Cosby, Tune by Doane). In other Christian denominations, other songs will be used, for example the Josephine/Cleophas wedding (1), who are of a luyia group called Samia who belong to the Anglican church, a favorite hymn is *There shall be showers of Blessing* (text by El Nathan, tune by James McGranaham).

In rural based services (which can be in a rural area or in the city), proper mass will be performed, as in the case of Josephine's wedding (1). In this case they first had to ensure that Josephine was the right bride and not someone else hiding under a veil. The church broke into song when Josephine was unveiled. The song text is *Zekilekile Zambe bamwoyo Masia a*. It is in Lingala language, a language of Congo. The song is in popular style and calls for celebration that God gave his son the Messiah. The main attraction for the wedding is in the lyrics that say, celebrate, and the celebration is heard in the exuberant singing and the ululation. The rest of the mass uses songs in Swahili – a testament as to how Christianity's otherness is located in the

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people's conscience, even if that otherness is now a part of themselves. The songs also appropriate different music styles from contemporary worship songs such as Ni wewe Bwana (It is only you Lord), to Kwaya (choir) special numbers in stanza refrain form that is performed after the vows: "Mtoto wetu siku ya leo, Mungu alipenda muishi pamoja, Muogope jina lake Mungu, Mumesema mbele yake Bwana (our child today, God willed that you live together, That you Fear the name of the Lord as you have vowed before the Lord.). There will also be a sermon and singing.

The pact

The couple and their best man and best maid much sign a certificate, as required by Kenyan Law, to the accompaniment of singing as in the Julie and Nelson wedding (4), then announcements are made before the processional to leave the church.

Garlanding and gifts

The garlanding of the bride and groom can happen in church (Josephine/Cleophas (1)) especially because the church ceremony can also include speeches that would ordinarily take place at a reception but if there is no hall big enough to accommodate the public, all that happens in church and then the people disperse to eat in different homesteads. But the garlanding can also take place during a separate section in the reception as in Charles and Nancy's wedding reception. Here the female relatives of the bride and groom, usually the mothers, are escorted by friends and relatives with song to garland the couple. Garlanding was borrowed from Indian Hindu populations who have lived in Kenya since the beginning of the 20th century.

Dinner

After garlanding and after people have eaten, then presents will be presented to the couple after cake cutting, if there is a cake. The best example is in the Nancy/Charles wedding (2) when the gift giving began first with the invited singers performing while different family members gave presents, but this soon became a dance party and everyone started to sing and dance indigenous songs. Some songs even say the parents want to give them a gift.

Leaving the church

If the garlanding and gift giving take place in church, then the party processions out after that. If the garlanding takes place during a separate reception, the bridal party will procession out of church and be met at the door of the church with singing (see Nancy and Charlie wedding (2)). Pictures or photos can be taken at church or in a separate venue, and the whole wedding group will leave to a reception venue where the congregation will be seated to wait for the wedding party. They meet that party with song and dance, but also people may be inside a hall eating when the party arrives. People will continue eating until the master of ceremonies begins to ask different people to speak, or garland the couple, cut cake and give gifts. After gift giving, people will leave. Sometimes the bridal party leaves first, other times, they leave after everyone has left.

Party

There can be an after party hosted by the Grooms' side of the family where family members and friends will congregate again. Otherwise people go to their homes and the couple will either go home or go elsewhere for a honeymoon.

Here is a transcription of the most famous song:

mwanamberi

Mwana mberi vaya -yi mwana mbe-ri vaya - yi mwana mberi ni shyiikhoyero

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