

Holger Hoffmann

2 PROJECTS:

| A NOMADS' WEDDING IN CHAD

| THE HOUSES OF THE KASSENA



*The Perfumed Groom
and the Hidden Bride*

A NOMADS' WEDDING IN CHAD

The Perfumed Groom and the Hidden Bride

A NOMADS' WEDDING IN CHAD

“ LITTLE IS KNOWN ABOUT THE 'NOMADES ARABES' LIVING IN CHAD AND, LEAST OF ALL, ABOUT THEIR FESTIVALS AND CUSTOMS. DURING THE DRY SEASON, THEY STAY NEAR THE RIVERS FOR A LONGER PERIOD OF TIME, GIVING THEM TIME TO CELEBRATE. IT IS WEDDING SEASON.

Construction of the future house for the newlyweds
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Hoffmann*



The Perfumed Groom and the Hidden Bride

A NOMADS' WEDDING IN CHAD

Little is known about the 'Nomades Arabes' living in Chad and, least of all, about their festivals and customs. During the dry season, they stay near the rivers for a longer period of time, giving them time to celebrate. It is wedding season.

Directed by the bride's mother, a colorful group of women build the future home for the newlyweds in a matter of hours. All the components have been constructed in months of preparatory work leading up to the wedding and are now spread out on the floor: wooden poles for the supporting structure, curved wood

Top: Arrival of the wedding guests
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Right Page Top:
Catering for the wedding party
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Right Page Bottom:
Construction of the future house for the newlyweds
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for the roof, substantial braided mats for the walls and the roof, red fabric panels for the interior decoration, mattresses, pillows, mosquito nets, and dozens of yellow and red bowls attached to the long wall or hung in leather nets.

At the same time, another group of women is taking care of the catering for the wedding party. An approximately 10-meter-long channel is dug into the ground, firewood is burned to charcoal, and huge pots are placed on it. In these, millet porridge – called boule – and the meat of a freshly slaughtered cow are being cooked.

The wedding guests arrive continuously, on foot, by horse, donkey, or camel, and even whole groups on horse carts, while the young men dash into the crowd on their horses. Even before everyone finishes lunch, there is new movement again in the camp. The groom, dressed in light blue, wearing sunglasses, and proudly waving his shining sword, rides into the camp on horseback, accompanied by his friends, who are also mounted. He is flanked on one side by his sister and a group of clapping girls and young women on the other. Together, they circle the future home several times, which is now immersed in warm evening light.



Now, they arrange in a semicircle in front of it to pay homage to the groom by repeatedly posing in front of him with a drawn dagger or a waving whip or by dousing him and the dancing women in perfume. The women, wearing their most beautiful clothes, dance continuously and clap rhythmically. Young men join them, the rhythm becomes faster, and the girls' braids fly higher. The youth continues to dance until dark.

In the meantime, the sun has set. The close relatives celebrate the groom by lifting him off the horse and tossing him into the air three times before the entrance of his future home. He then sits in front of his hut and accepts congratulations and gifts. The bride's mother accepts the guests' monetary gifts, and everyone cheers when a donation is presented.

Top: Paying homage to the groom
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Right Page Top: Young men dash into the crowd on their horses
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Right Page Bottom: Arrival of the groom
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**The Perfumed Groom
and the Hidden Bride**
A NOMADS' WEDDING IN CHAD



The wedding party is in full swing
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Bottom: Dancing goes on until dark
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Horse races are a part of every wedding. The sandy plains are ideal for this sport. Any distinguished man takes good care of his racehorses and has them ridden by exceptionally talented young men. Bets are eagerly made, and the race winner receives a cash prize.

The festival is slowly dissolving. Before the first guests leave, some vultures settle in the trees. As soon as a family has cleared their picnic area, the scavengers fly in and look for leftovers. Time for us to leave.

As custom dictates, the bride is absent during a wedding celebration. Over the past month, this bride has stayed in her hut and will only be brought to the marriage bed by the groom under the cover of the night.

” THE CLOSE RELATIVES CELEBRATE THE GROOM BY LIFTING HIM OFF THE HORSE AND TOSSING HIM INTO THE AIR THREE TIMES BEFORE THE ENTRANCE OF HIS FUTURE HOME.



Relatives celebrate the groom by tossing him into the air three times
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A NOMADS' WEDDING IN CHAD



Top: Accompanied by his friends, the groom circles his future home several times
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Tis Image: Horse races are a part of every wedding
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Right Page Bottom: Horse races are a part of every wedding
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” HORSE RACES ARE A PART OF EVERY WEDDING. THE SANDY PLAINS ARE IDEAL FOR THIS SPORT. ANY DISTINGUISHED MAN TAKES GOOD CARE OF HIS RACEHORSES AND HAS THEM RIDDEN BY EXCEPTIONALLY TALENTED YOUNG MEN.



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The bride's mother
accepts the guests'
monetary gifts
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