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Jalan Tun Fuad Stephens, Sinsuran, Kota Kinabalu, 88000, Malaysia

**The Wedding ceremony as an Expression of Modern Muslim Identity:
The Case of Central Java**

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This paper examines the recent change of Muslim wedding ceremonies in Central Java, Indonesia. Recently, the trend of wearing a veil is popular in Indonesia, especially among the middle class and high educated women. This trend is caused by many reasons, for example the Islamic revival, the withdrawal of restrictions on wearing veils in public schools and the public offices, fashion trends and so on. Linked with these trends, Muslim wedding ceremonies are also changing. Two phenomena can be seen in the Muslim Wedding ceremony, the former is the change of wedding dress and the latter is the change of wedding ceremony.

The recent Muslim wedding apparel style changes can be seen in the wearing of Muslim-style veils, long-sleeves and long dresses. Some full-colored fashion magazines and tabloids for Muslim brides are also influential. Many modern Muslim wedding dresses which are based on ethnic wedding dresses are featured. Some dresses are based on western white wedding dress and the groom wear a suit. English words are obvious in the magazine, for example, trendy, simple, elegant and so on. And an Indonesian word is also prominent that is the word “modern” or modern in Indonesian.

Some brides who do not wear veils daily, also wear the Muslim style veil at the wedding ceremony. So, this act is not only to emphasis the Muslim style but is sometimes simply based on a fashion trend. And wearing a veil is more efficient than the traditional Javanese wedding style.

Javanese women put up their hair in *sanggur* style on formal occasions, including wedding ceremonies. But, recently many women, not only the bride but also the relatives and guests, tend to wear veils at the wedding ceremony. The dressing of *sanggur* hair takes time, so wearing a veil is sometimes considered more efficient since they can save the time and money that is needed to go to the hair salon to put their hair up for *sanggur* style.

The second, the change of the wedding ceremony is based on the emphasis of Muslim style. At my study site in Central Java, some component of ritual, which includes mainly offerings to the spirits, is no longer common since it is perceived to be and explained as a non-Islamic component. Some Javanese ceremonial acts which take place at the wedding ceremony are also omitted. Because of this, some Muslim wedding ceremonies have become simple and can be completed in a short time. The preparations for Muslim-style wedding also can save time, money and labor since the Javanese style wedding is full of ceremonial acts and is more complicated.

The wedding can be conceived of, as an occasion to show their identity since Javanese weddings are very large-scale and it is not rare to invite hundreds of guests to the ceremony. The recent change of the wedding is based on the emphasis of Modern Muslim identity especially among the middle class Muslims. And this style of wedding is more suitable to their modern life-style since it is more efficient than the traditional one.