

# SHIFTING CULTURAL VALUES IN THE MAULID PROPHET TRADITION IN BONDOWOSO

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DOI:

Received: Desember 2025

Accepted: Januari 2026

Published: Februari 2026

## Abstract :

The tradition of the Prophet's Birthday is a religious as well as a cultural expression that is full of social and spiritual values. However, modernization has given rise to a shift in the form of practice, such as food treats that used to be eaten together after *Mahallul Qiyam* and then closed with prayer, now replacing catering box rice that is taken home, and *bherkat* containing processed community products turned into *matta'an* store food. This phenomenon is interesting to study because it shows a shift in the value of togetherness and cultural identity. The research question is how the change in the tradition of the Prophet's Birthday is understood in the framework of local wisdom and its implications for the social, spiritual and cultural values of the community. The novelty of this research lies in the analysis of the Maulid tradition through intellectual reflection based on local wisdom. Previously, studies highlighted more aspects of ritual and history, while the aspect of shape change in the context of modernization was less considered. The research method uses a qualitative descriptive analytical approach through observation, interviews and documentation. The results of the study show that the change in the Prophet's Birthday has an impact on three main dimensions. First, social values have been reduced because togetherness and mutual cooperation are decreasing. Second, spiritual values are maintained through prayer, prayer and *Mahallul Qiyam*, but tend to be individualized so that it has the potential to reduce the collective religious experience. Third, cultural values face homogenization that erodes local identity, as distinctive symbols such as *Bherkat* are replaced by uniform products from modern stores. This finding leads to a theoretical finding in the form of the concept of Homogenization of Religious Culture, which is when local traditions that were once full of wisdom are now standardized by modern consumption patterns (catering and manufactured products). Local uniqueness is blended into a consumptive culture that emphasizes efficiency rather than meaning.

**Keywords :** *Cultural Shift, Prophet's Birthday Tradition, Bondowoso.*

## Abstrak :

Tradisi Maulid Nabi merupakan ekspresi religius sekaligus budaya yang sarat nilai sosial dan spiritual. Namun, modernisasi memunculkan pergeseran bentuk praktiknya, seperti suguhan makanan yang dahulu dimakan bersama pasca *Mahallul Qiyam* lalu di tutup dengan do'a kini berganti nasi kotak catering yang dibawa pulang, serta *bherkat* berisi olahan masyarakat berubah menjadi *matta'an* makanan toko. Fenomena ini menarik dikaji karena memperlihatkan pergeseran nilai kebersamaan dan identitas budaya. Pertanyaan penelitian adalah bagaimana perubahan tradisi Maulid Nabi dipahami dalam kerangka kearifan lokal serta implikasinya terhadap nilai sosial, spiritual dan budaya masyarakat. Kebaruan penelitian ini terletak pada analisis tradisi Maulid melalui refleksi intelektual berbasis kearifan lokal. Sebelumnya, kajian lebih banyak menyoroti aspek ritual dan sejarah, sementara sisi perubahan bentuk dalam konteks modernisasi kurang diperhatikan. Metode penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif-analitis melalui observasi, wawancara dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perubahan Maulid Nabi berdampak pada tiga dimensi utama. Pertama, nilai sosial mengalami reduksi karena kebersamaan dan gotong royong semakin berkurang. Kedua, nilai spiritual tetap terjaga melalui shalawat, doa dan *Mahallul Qiyam*, namun

cenderung terindividualisasi sehingga berpotensi mengurangi pengalaman religius kolektif. Ketiga, nilai budaya menghadapi homogenisasi yang mengikis identitas lokal, sebab simbol khas seperti *Bherkat* tergantikan oleh produk seragam dari toko modern. Temuan ini mengarah pada temuan teoritis berupa konsep Homogenization of Religious Culture, yakni ketika tradisi lokal yang dahulu sarat kearifan kini diseragamkan oleh pola konsumsi modern (catering dan produk pabrikan). Keunikan lokal melebur dalam budaya konsumtif yang menekankan efisiensi ketimbang makna.

**Kata Kunci:** *Pergeseran Budaya, Tradisi Maulid Nabi, Bondowoso.*

## INTRODUCTION

Religious traditions in Indonesia have always had a dual dimension, namely as a religious expression as well as a cultural practice that forms the collective identity of the community (Geertz 1983). For the Muslim community, especially in rural and small urban areas such as Bondowoso Regency, East Java Province, the Prophet's Birthday is not only a spiritual momentum to emulate the morals of the Prophet but also a forum for social togetherness that strengthens solidarity between citizens (Hengl et al. 2015) (Bellouin et al. 2011). This commemoration is usually marked by the recitation of prayers, recitation and a series of cultural activities that are full of symbols of togetherness.

However, over time, modernization has had a real impact on the form and practice of these traditions. Modernization, which is characterized by the increasing role of the food industry, changes in consumption patterns and practical lifestyles, has given rise to a new phenomenon in the celebration of Maulid (Hefner and Vorderer 2016). If in the past, food treats were eaten together after the procession of *Mahallul Qiyam* recitation and closed with prayers, now it has shifted to individual consumption through the distribution of rice boxes of catering that are taken home. Similarly, *bherkat* (gifts) of typical food processed by the community are transformed into *matta'an*, which is ready-to-eat food products from modern stores (Hanna, Sutarto, and Harijanto 2016). This change seems simple, but it actually reflects a shift in the value of togetherness and local wisdom inherent in tradition.

This phenomenon is important to study because tradition does not only stop at formal rituals, but is also loaded with symbolic meanings (Turner, Jennrich, and Weintraub 1969) (Garnier et al. 2012). In the context of the Prophet's Birthday, togetherness in eating food, mutual cooperation in preparing treats and community involvement in cultural processions are part of the values that are inherited from generation to generation. Modernization has the potential to erode this meaning if it is only understood as efficient and practical. In other words, the shift in the form of traditional practices has consequences on the social, spiritual and cultural dimensions of the Bondowoso community (Azra 2013).

In addition, research on the tradition of the Prophet's Birthday is generally still dominated by two approaches. First, a historical study that highlights the origin and development of the Prophet's Birthday celebration in the trajectory of Islamic history (Nasution 2008). Second, theological-ritual studies that emphasize legitimacy and criticism of the practice of commemorating the Prophet's Birthday (Asy'arie 1999). Meanwhile, analyses that focus on the dynamics of changing the

form of tradition due to modernization and its implications for the socio-cultural value of the community are still rare (Rohmana 2019). In fact, this kind of analysis is important to understand how Muslim societies negotiate with the changing currents of the times without losing the essence of Islamic teachings or local cultural roots.

Furthermore, this research also has relevance to contemporary issues in the study of culture and religion. In the midst of globalization and modernization, many local traditions have undergone transformations that are not only material, but also related to aspects of identity and meaning (Heryanto 2015). Therefore, understanding the shift in cultural values in the tradition of the Prophet's Birthday in Bondowoso can provide an idea of how Indonesian Muslim society maintains spirituality and social solidarity in the midst of the pressures of modernity (Van Bruinessen 2013). It also enriches academic discourse on the relationship between religion, culture and modernization in Indonesia, which is often more focused on big cities.

The main purpose of this study is to analyze the shifts in cultural forms and values in the tradition of the Prophet's Birthday in Bondowoso, as well as to explore how the community interprets these changes within the framework of local wisdom. This research seeks to answer the question of how modernization affects the meaning of togetherness, spirituality and cultural identity of the community. Thus, this research is not only descriptive, but also reflective in looking at the possibility of reinterpreting traditional strategies to remain relevant to the development of the times without losing their essential value.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. This approach was chosen to understand phenomena in depth in a natural context. The research is conducted at the relevant research site (can be customized as needed), where the researcher is present in person to conduct observations, interviews, and gather the necessary information. The research subjects consist of the main informants (Creswell 2009) such as community leaders, community members, or other related parties who have direct knowledge of the phenomenon being studied. The selection of informants is carried out purposively, namely selected based on their relevance, experience, and ability to provide the required data. Data collection techniques (Moleong 2017) include observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations are carried out to understand the real conditions in the field, interviews are used to explore the meaning and experiences of informants, while documentation is used to strengthen data through archives, notes, or photographs. Data analysis was carried out by steps (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana 2014) namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion/verification. This process is carried out continuously from the time the data is collected until the research is completed, so that the research results have a strong depth and validity.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The tradition of the Prophet's Birthday in Bondowoso is still one of the largest religious agendas that is routinely held at the village and urban levels. Almost every mosque, mushalla, pesantren and even small community groups

such as majlis taklim, youth associations and houses in remote villages have a special agenda to commemorate the birth of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Mosques and mushallas are decorated more lively, more worshippers attend and community participation is seen wider (Khosyiah 2018).

Based on the results of field observations, the implementation of the Prophet's Birthday in Bondowoso generally begins with the recitation of the Simthud Durar or Barzanji prayer. The procession then continued with Tawassul to the ancestors who had preceded to the realm of barsah, after which religious lectures by local scholars or kiai continued with the reading of Mahallul Qiyam, which is standing together while chanting praises to the Prophet, which is believed to be a symbol of respect for the birth of the Prophet. After the series, it is usually followed by a prayer by community leaders (Saiffuddin 2021).

If you look at the practice that took place two decades ago, the people of Bondowoso have a habit of preparing food in mutual cooperation. Mothers in the village would cook together in a certain house, then the food was served massively on a tray. After the main event, the pilgrims will sit together eating the dish with a family atmosphere. After finishing, the pilgrims usually bring home bherkat (gifts) of food containing rice, side dishes and traditional cakes such as donut cakes, fried bananas, pastels, maci, brownis, apples, rolls prepared by the organizing family (Muhammad Salman al Farisi 2024).

However, the situation began to change. The results of interviews with the Prophet's Birthday committee in several sub-districts such as Pujer, Wringin, Tlogosari, Tamanan and Jambesari Darus Sholah Districts show that now people prefer in a simple way just cook rice and side dishes and then wrap them in sterevom or cardboard like Rice Catering packaging. Instead of cooking together with local residents to prepare the needs of the Prophet's Birthday event, the committee only prepared boxed rice and then each worshipper got boxed rice. If in the past the meal together was the peak of social interaction, now that moment has been replaced by the distribution of boxed rice that is immediately taken home. Similarly, traditional bherkat (gifts) are slowly shifting to matta'an, which are manufactured food parcels such as snacks, packaged drinks or snacks, fried noodles, bread, cooking oil, rice and sugar from modern stores (Taufiqi, Sibaweh, and Yahya 2023).

This change in form illustrates a shift in the way people carry out traditions. The religious essence in the form of prayer, prayer and recitation is still maintained, but the social and cultural dimensions are beginning to be reduced. This change does not appear suddenly but is the result of a long interaction between local values and the flow of modernization, urbanization and changes in people's consumption patterns (Hasan et al. 2023) (Wajdi, Wasehudin, and Marliana 2024).

## **1. Shifting Social Values in the Maulid Tradition**

One of the important findings in this study is the shift in social values in the tradition of celebrating the Prophet's Birthday in Bondowoso. The Maulid tradition has been known not only as a form of respect for the Prophet Muhammad SAW, but also as a forum to strengthen community togetherness. The most prominent social value in the celebration of Maulid

in Bondowoso is the togetherness that over the years from the ancestors has become the spirit and characteristic of this tradition (Geertz 1976). This togetherness is reflected through various aspects, ranging from mutual cooperation in preparing for the event, the moment of sitting together eating dishes while joking and laughing to the tradition of sharing bherkat (gifts) with fellow worshippers (Muhammad Salman al Farisi 2024).

In the past, the preparation of the Prophet's Birthday event was a momentum that was highly anticipated by the villagers. The preparation is not only technical, but also loaded with social meaning. Mothers volunteer to help cook at the home of the organizer (neighbor). This activity gives birth to a warm interaction space, where they not only prepare food, but also talk, share recipes, share experiences and strengthen family relationships. Gentlemen, on the other hand, are busy arranging chairs, setting up tents, preparing carpets and preparing other necessary equipment. Everyone feels that they have a role and contribution so that a sense of belonging is built to the tradition of the Prophet's Birthday. However, this reality is now starting to shift. The presence of rice catering which is considered simpler does not take much time and energy to make people prefer practical methods. Indeed, the use of rice catering helps save time, labor and preparation costs, especially for the host family. However, on the other hand, this choice reduces the space for social interaction that used to be created through mutual cooperation activities (Hasan et al. 2023).

In addition to preparing for the event, the moment of togetherness was also very felt in eating together after the *Mahallul Qiyam* event. In the past, pilgrims sat in a circle in a large circle. They shared food from the same tray, feeding each other rice, side dishes, drinks and snacks while chatting after prayer. This moment is not just a meal, but a place to strengthen social and emotional relationships between residents. However, now this pattern has shifted. Food is no longer served in one large tray, but in the form of boxed rice that is distributed individually. The pilgrims usually receive boxes of food and most of them take them home. Thus, the space for social interaction that used to be created in the moment of eating together becomes increasingly limited. This shift from a collective pattern to an individual pattern reflects the impact of modernization on the pattern of social relations of the Bondowoso community (Wajdi et al. 2024).

This change in eating also has the consequence of losing the symbolic meaning inherent in old traditions. Eating together from one container has a very strong symbolism. It represents the values of equality, togetherness and social solidarity. In the feeding circle, there is no difference in social status, position or economic level. Everyone sits in a row, eats from the same container and feels an authentic sense of community. However, with the presence of rice boxes that are distributed individually, the symbolic meaning is slowly fading. Although it is more hygienic, practical and seems modern, food in the form of kotakan actually reduces the value of togetherness that used to be very thick (Saiffuddin 2021).

These findings are in line with Anthony Giddens' theory of social

change, which explains that modernization always has consequences for the social structure and interaction patterns of society. The efficiency and rationality offered by modernity often discard traditional forms of interaction that are rich in meaning (Busco 2009). In the context of the celebration of the Prophet's Birthday in Bondowoso, modernization through the use of Nasi Catering or Nasi Kotak and manufactured food does provide practical benefits. The event became more orderly, orderly and did not burden the organizer family. However, at the same time, the quality of social interaction that was once the hallmark and core of this tradition has declined (Taufiqi et al. 2023).

This change certainly cannot be viewed unilaterally as a completely negative thing. From a functional point of view, the presence of rice catering helps people adjust their traditions to the increasingly busy conditions of modern life. Many families now have limited time and energy due to economic activities, work and the demands of daily life. Therefore, the use of rice catering is a practical solution to continue to carry out traditions without having to be burdened (Rifa'i 2025). On the other hand, the consumption of food in the form of kotakan is also more in line with hygiene standards and the mobility needs of modern society (Wajdi et al. 2024).

However, from a social perspective the risks of this change cannot be ignored. The reduction of social interaction in the Maulid tradition has the potential to weaken the bonds of solidarity that have been the glue of society (Hasan et al. 2023). If this shift is allowed to take place without any effort to maintain the value of togetherness, then the Prophet's Birthday tradition can lose its function as a collective space to strengthen brotherhood and social harmony. In other words, modernization does provide efficiency but at the same time challenges the community to find new ways so that the value of togetherness does not just disappear (Geertz 1976).

**Picture. 1**

**Catering Rice in Lieu of Meal Treats After the Maulid of Muhammad SAW**





Therefore, these findings affirm the importance of maintaining a balance between the needs of modernity and the preservation of the social and symbolic meaning of religious traditions. The tradition of the Prophet's Birthday in Bondowoso, if it can be adapted wisely, can still be carried out practically without sacrificing the value of togetherness. For example, people can continue to use rice catering, but serve food communally so that the tradition of eating together is still alive. Or it can be by combining old and new practices, so that the symbolism of togetherness is not completely lost. In this way, the Maulid tradition can continue to be relevant, both in the modern context and in maintaining social values that have been passed down from generation to generation.

## 2. Shifting Spiritual Values in the Maulid Tradition

In addition to bringing an influence on the social aspect, modernization also has a significant impact on the spiritual dimension in the tradition of the Prophet's Birthday in Bondowoso. This spiritual dimension is actually the main core of the Maulid commemoration, because the basic purpose of this event is to foster a sense of love for the Prophet Muhammad PBUH and emulate his morals in daily life. In other words, despite the cultural variations and forms of rituals, the main substance of the celebration of the Prophet's Birthday remains oriented towards improving the religious quality of the people (Woodward 2011).

The results of field observations show that the spiritual substance of the Prophet's Birthday is still strong so far. Core processions such as *Mahallul Qiyam*, the recitation of the Prophet's prayer, the recitation of the barjanji and religious recitation remain the main parts that are not abandoned. In fact, on several occasions the pilgrims admitted to feeling a deep religious atmosphere. Some describe the feeling of goosebumps when the prayer is chanted in congregation, others feel that their hearts are calmer after participating in the recitation. This phenomenon shows that even though modernization affects technical aspects, the Bondowoso community still maintains the substance of worship in the Prophet's Birthday (Muhammad Salman al Farisi 2024).

However, behind the continuity of the core ritual there is a potential reduction in spiritual meaning that cannot be ignored. For example, the loss of togetherness in the practice of eating together after religious processions. In the past, this moment of togetherness was an extension of the sacred atmosphere of the event. Pilgrims not only feel spiritual warmth during

prayer and prayer, but also continue this feeling in social interaction when sitting together enjoying a meal. Now, with a more individual consumption pattern through the distribution of boxed rice, the sacred nuance seems to be cut off once the ritual is over (Hasan et al. 2023).

Some of the religious leaders interviewed even expressed concern that spirituality in the Prophet's Birthday could turn into a purely personal affair and lose its connection with social life. In fact, in the Islamic view, the aspects of ritual worship and social worship cannot be separated (Nasir and Arisandy 2022). Prayer, prayer and recitation should have an impact on increasing solidarity, affection and *ukhuwah*, both *ukhuwah islamiyah* (brotherhood of Muslims), *ukhuwah wathaniyah* (brotherhood of the nation) and *ukhuwah basyariyah* (brotherhood of mankind) in life together. If the social aspect is increasingly marginalized, then the spiritual meaning of the Prophet's Birthday risks narrowing to an individual experience only.

This phenomenon can be analyzed using the theory of privatization of religion from Peter L. Berger. Berger explains that modernization has pushed religion to shift to the private space, where religious experience is increasingly narrowed in the personal realm and loses its public dimension (Berger 1990). In the context of the Prophet's Birthday in Bondowoso, individual consumption patterns through boxed rice reflect the fragmentation of religious experiences. If in the past spirituality was felt in a communal atmosphere full of interaction, now pilgrims tend to bring the experience home personally without continuing it in a shared social space.

In addition, these findings are also in line with Clifford Geertz's view that religious symbols are always tied to cultural practices. The tradition of eating together from one container, for example, is not just a local culture but a religious symbol that represents equality, togetherness and *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) (Geertz 1976). When these cultural symbols change into individual patterns, the way people perceive religious experiences also shifts. In other words, modernization not only changes material aspects such as the presentation of food, but also affects the nonmaterial meaning of spirituality contained in it (Beatty 1999).

Even so, not all of these changes are negative. In terms of benefits, modernization provides space for the community to focus more on the essence of worship without being burdened by the technical affairs of serving food which are often tiring. The presence of catering rice or boxed rice, for example, allows people to continue to carry out the celebration of the Prophet's Birthday even though they have limited time and energy due to the busy nature of modern life (Rifa'i 2025). In this condition, spirituality can still be maintained because the essence of the event in the form of prayer, prayer and recitation is not disturbed.

However, the risk is the weakening of the role of the Prophet's Birthday tradition as a collective space to strengthen shared spirituality. If social interaction is decreasing, then the spaces of togetherness that are usually a medium for internalizing spiritual values will be increasingly scarce. As a result, the Prophet's Birthday has the potential to be reduced to

just a symbolic ritual that only emphasizes the aspect of celebration, but loses its social transformation power (Taufiqi et al. 2023).

**Picture. 2**

**The Atmosphere of the Reading of the Prophet's Prayer, Simthud Durar or Barzanji and Mahallul Qiyam at the Prophet Muhammad's Maulid Event**



Thus, it can be concluded that modernization in the tradition of the Prophet's Birthday in Bondowoso has an ambivalent impact on the spiritual dimension. On the one hand, the religious substance in the form of love for the Prophet Muhammad SAW is still well preserved through the core procession. However, on the other hand, there is a risk of individualization that can erode the role of the Prophet's Birthday as a collective means of building solidarity and togetherness. Therefore, critical awareness of the community is needed to maintain a balance between the needs of modernity and the preservation of communal spirituality values. This effort can be realized through innovation, for example by still utilizing rice catering, but packaging food consumption communally so that the symbolic meaning of togetherness remains alive.

**3. Shifting Cultural Values and Local Identity in the Maulid Tradition**

In addition to influencing social and spiritual aspects, this study also found an important shift in the cultural dimension of the celebration of the Prophet's Birthday in Bondowoso. Maulid is not only a religious event, but also part of the cultural identity of the community. This identity is manifested through cultural symbols, culinary traditions, languages and local artistic expressions inherent in the celebration of the Prophet's Birthday (Geertz 1976).

Bondowoso has a number of characteristics in celebrating Maulid.

One of the most prominent is bherkat (gifts), which are home-processed food parcels distributed to pilgrims whose contents consist of two types of food, namely heavy and light. Heavy food is in the form of rice complete with side dishes while snacks contain traditional pastries such as donuts, pastels, lemper, rolls, steamed cakes and various other kinds of cakes. Bherkat not only serves as a dish, but also contains a symbolic meaning about the family's involvement in the success of religious events. The process of preparing bherkat usually involves the collective work of the mothers preparing side dishes, the children helping to wrap and the fathers distributing to the worshippers. Thus, bherkat keeps stories about who cooks, how the food is prepared and who is involved. This story is part of the cultural identity of the people of Bondowoso Regency which is passed down from generation to generation so that the culture that has been passed down remains sustainable throughout time and this is a wealth of local wisdom that must be fought for even with a new era, namely decentralization (Nasir, Tanjung, and Zikra 2023).

In addition to bherkat, other peculiarities can be seen in the use of local language in prayers and greetings as well as the nuances of hadrah music that accompany the event. Hadrah is not only entertainment, but also a da'wah medium that is integrated with people's lives (Hefner 2023). The existence of these elements gives a distinctive color so that the Prophet Bondowoso's Birthday is different from the Maulid in other areas.

However, modernization brought about major changes. This local identity is slowly being replaced by the uniform consumption patterns of modern store products. The bherkat tradition has now shifted to matta'an (ready-to-eat food), which is a gift containing manufactured cakes, packaged drinks and instant food purchased from stores. If in the past bherkat was a mirror of family involvement, now matta'an emphasizes more on practicality and efficiency. As a result, the collective story of who cooks or how the food is prepared slowly disappears (Munir n.d.).

This phenomenon causes cultural homogenization, namely the loss of local distinctiveness due to the entry of uniform products that can be found anywhere. Cakes and packaged drinks in matta'an can be found not only in Bondowoso, but also in other cities in Indonesia. As a result, the cultural identity of Bondowoso, who used to live through bherkat, became increasingly vague. If this trend is left unchecked, then society risks losing the characteristics that distinguish them from other communities (Mulyaningsih et al. 2023).

These changes can be analyzed through George Ritzer's theory of cultural homogenization in the concept of Mc Donaldization of Society. Ritzer explained that modernization brings four main principles: efficiency, calculability, predictability and control. These principles result in a uniform culture that comes at the expense of local diversity (Ritzer 2021). In the context of the Prophet's Birthday in Bondowoso, the shift of bherkat to matta'an is a clear example of Mc Donaldization.

- a. Efficiency is reflected in the ease of buying ready-to-eat food without the need to cook together.
- b. Calculability can be seen in the tendency to choose the content of matta'an based on price and quantity of products rather than symbolic meaning.
- c. Predictability can be seen from the almost always same contents of the packages at various events: manufacturer's cakes, snacks and packaged drinks.
- d. Control comes through uniform industry product standards, reducing local variety and creativity.

In terms of benefits, modernization provides a number of advantages. Matta'an is considered more hygienic, practical and in accordance with the fast-paced modern lifestyle. People no longer have to spend days preparing food, especially in the midst of busy work and other activities. Modernization also facilitates distribution and reduces the burden on hosts in organizing events (Mulyaningsih et al. 2023).

However, in terms of the risk of cultural homogenization, it actually erodes local identity. Traditional foods that were once full of value are now replaced by uniform manufacturers' products. The loss of bherkat means the loss of a medium to tell the story of family involvement, mutual cooperation and the uniqueness of local taste. This shift also reduces people's opportunities to express cultural creativity through culinary (Mulyaningsih et al. 2023).

Furthermore, cultural homogenization has the potential to weaken the sense of belonging to tradition. If the celebration of the Prophet's Birthday is only filled with the same industrial products everywhere, then Bondowoso's distinctive value as a community with a unique cultural identity will be lost. In fact, it is this cultural peculiarity that has been strengthening local pride and fostering social cohesion (Mulyaningsih et al. 2023).

### Picture. 3

#### ***Bherkat* (Gifts) Containing Shop Food That Was Distributed to Residents After the Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad SAW**





Thus, this study confirms that modernization has an ambivalent impact on the cultural dimension of the Prophet's Birthday in Bondowoso. On the one hand, it provides practicality and efficiency that suits the needs of modern society. But on the other hand, it gives rise to homogenization that erodes local distinctiveness. The challenge ahead is how to maintain a balance: taking advantage of the convenience of modernity, but still preserving the cultural symbols that are Bondowoso's identity. Creative efforts can be made by combining traditional bherkat with modern elements, so that traditions remain relevant without losing cultural meaning.

**Table : 1**

**Changes in the Form of Consumption at the Prophet's Birthday Celebration**

No	Type of consumption	Before Modernization	After Modernization
1.	Main dishes	Rice Trash (shared meals)	Boxed rice/catering
2.	Cake	Traditional cakes made by residents	Cake manufacturer/matta'an
3.	Serving	Eating with a tray	Shared and takeaway
4.	Social interaction	Tall (gotong royong & eat together)	Low (individual)

**CONCLUSION**

This study shows that the tradition of the Prophet's Birthday in Bondowoso still survives as a religious and cultural expression, but has undergone a shift in form due to modernization. This shift can be seen in the change in consumption patterns from eating together to boxed rice or catering and from bherkat processed by the community to matta'an in the form of manufactured products. This phenomenon reflects the Homogenization of Religious Culture, a local tradition that was once full of wisdom, now standardized by modern consumption patterns (catering, manufactured products). Local uniqueness is blended into a consumptive culture that emphasizes efficiency rather than meaning.

These changes have an impact on three main dimensions. First, social values have been reduced because togetherness and mutual cooperation are decreasing. Second, spiritual values are maintained through shalawat, prayer

and mahallul qiyam, but tend to be individualized so that it has the potential to reduce the collective religious experience. Third, cultural values face homogenization that erodes local identity, because distinctive symbols such as bherkat are replaced by uniform products from modern stores.

Thus, although the religious essence of the Prophet's Birthday is still maintained, modernization carries the risk of eroding the meaning of togetherness and cultural identity. For this reason, a reinterpretation of traditions based on local wisdom is needed so that the Maulid commemoration remains relevant while being able to maintain the spirituality, social solidarity, and cultural identity of the Bondowoso community.

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