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## REVIEW OF THE USE OF CROCODILE BREAD IN TRADITIONAL BETAWI WEDDING CEREMONIES: TRADITIONS, MEANING AND INFLUENCE ON LOCAL CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to reveal the symbolic meaning of crocodile bread in traditional Betawi wedding ceremonies, analyze its impact on the development of local culture, and highlight the evolution of this symbolism in facing the challenges of globalization. The research method used is a qualitative approach with case studies to explore the practice of using crocodile bread and its symbolic meaning in depth. The research results show that crocodile bread is not just a decorative object but a symbol that carries meaning about fertility, reporting, and family unity in Betawi society. Its use is not only to maintain local cultural identity but also as an effort to preserve traditional values amidst globalization. In conclusion, crocodile bread plays a vital role in maintaining and developing Betawi culture, while its adaptation to changing times reflects the origins of a relevant and sustainable culture. This research suggests that further efforts are needed to promote and understand the symbolic values of crocodile bread to maintain Indonesia's cultural heritage in the modern era.

**KEYWORDS:** - Betawi traditional wedding, cultural symbolism, cultural identity, preservation of cultural heritage.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Betawi traditional wedding ceremonies are essential in maintaining and passing on Indonesia's diverse cultural riches. As a conventional ceremony rich in symbolism and ritual, this ceremony celebrates the union between two individuals and strengthens the unique local cultural identity. Among the various elements that attract attention is crocodile bread, a deep and distinctive symbol in traditional Betawi weddings. Crocodile bread is not just a decorative object; More than that, this

symbol extends to the spiritual and social values that are firmly held by the Betawi people (Ma'rifa, 2019).

Although the importance of this symbol is recognized, research that explores in depth the use of crocodile bread and its symbolic meaning still needs to be explored. These limitations highlight the need for a more detailed study to comprehensively understand the symbolic role of crocodile bread in traditional Betawi wedding ceremonies and its impact on local cultural dynamics. A deeper exploration of how this symbol is maintained and changes over time can provide a broader view of the evolution of Betawi culture in facing the challenges of the modern era (Rachmad&Sasongko, 2023).

The use of crocodile bread represents the Betawi people's efforts to maintain their cultural heritage amid globalization, which is increasingly influencing local traditions. Changes in social, economic, and cultural values play a role in the way these ceremonies are performed and interpreted from generation to generation. Therefore, understanding how crocodile bread functions as a symbol of togetherness, fertility, and abundance in Betawi traditional weddings reveals the values this community upholds and reflects cultural adaptations that continue to move forward (Rizal, 2009).

Crocodile bread is a symbol in traditional Betawi wedding ceremonies and marks the community's commitment to preserving their cultural identity amidst the inevitable flow of modernization. Despite various pressures from the outside, traditional symbols such as crocodile bread are still carefully guarded to maintain the authenticity and integrity of Betawi culture. The role of symbolism in supporting and adapting to changing times is becoming increasingly relevant, highlighting the importance of symbols such as crocodile bread in building and confirming a solid and sustainable local cultural identity (Purbasari, 2010).

The main problem in this research is the lack of in-depth understanding of how using crocodile bread in traditional Betawi wedding ceremonies impacts local cultural identity and how this symbol interacts with social and economic changes and cultural values in Betawi society. Although crocodile bread has been integral to Betawi wedding rituals for centuries, research comprehensively exploring its symbolic significance is still very limited. No study has investigated how the Betawi people receive and interpret this symbol in cultural dynamics that continue to change and develop.

These limitations in understanding reflect the urgent need to bridge the knowledge gap about traditional cultural practices, such as the use of crocodile bread, with the realities of rapidly changing times. In this era of globalization, where cultural values are often faced with pressure from modernization and global integration, the importance of understanding how traditional symbols such as crocodile bread can survive and adapt becomes increasingly urgent. By deepening this understanding, it is hoped that this research can make a significant contribution to promoting the maintenance and development of rich local culture amidst the challenges of ever-changing times.

This research aims to explore the tradition of using crocodile bread in traditional Betawi wedding ceremonies, reveal its symbolic meaning in local culture, and analyze its impact on current cultural

development and transformation. By focusing on how crocodile bread is implemented in wedding ceremonies, this research also aims to understand how the Betawi people receive and interpret this symbol to maintain their traditional values. Through this approach, research hopes to contribute to the preservation and relevance of cultural symbols in facing the challenges of ongoing social, economic, and cultural changes in Betawi society.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Betawi Traditional Wedding Ceremony**

Betawi traditional wedding ceremonies stand out as an essential part of Indonesia's diverse and valuable cultural riches. The tradition is not just an event to strengthen the marriage relationship between two individuals but also represents a profound celebration and reflection of local cultural values that are firmly maintained (Anjani&Siregar, 2023). The procession in this wedding ceremony presents a series of rituals filled with symbolism and deep meaning. Every step of the ritual, from beginning to end, is designed to guarantee the sanctity and blessing of the wedding, making it not only a private event but also a driving force and expansion of the distinctive Betawi cultural identity (Tiffany, 2023).

Betawi traditional wedding ceremonies are not just a series of formal actions but also reflect the complexity of conventional values passed down from generation to generation. The rich symbolism in this ceremony includes everything from crocodile bread to specific traditional procedures, which collectively reflect the importance of maintaining harmony, unity, and blessings in family life and Betawi society more broadly. Through an in-depth understanding of this ceremony, we can see how this tradition has not only survived in the face of modern times but continues to develop as an inseparable part of cultural heritage that deserves preservation and maintenance (Siregar&Rochelman, 2021).

### **Symbolism in Wedding Ceremonies**

Symbolism in wedding ceremonies not only acts as a decorative element or a sign of respect but also as a means of communicating deep and complex cultural messages. Symbols such as crocodile bread are not simply seen as visual objects but also hold rich meanings related to fertility, storytelling, and family unity. The use of these symbols can be interpreted as a real effort to maintain and maintain the cultural identity of the Betawi people, allowing these traditional values to remain relevant and be passed on from generation to generation (Siregar&Yahaya, 2022).

The presence of symbolism in traditional Betawi wedding ceremonies reflects how local culture integrates deep values into daily life practices. More than just an aesthetic symbol, each symbolic element plays a vital role in weaving a story about the unity, abundance, and blessings expected in domestic life. Thus, the use of traditional symbols such as crocodile bread in wedding ceremonies not only revives the rich cultural heritage but also strengthens social and spiritual ties that are a strong foundation in Betawi society (Sihotang et al., 2019).

### **Use of Crocodile Bread in Betawi Traditional Wedding Ceremonies**

Crocodile bread is a very typical symbol in traditional Betawi wedding ceremonies. Crocodile bread is seen as a visual object decorated with traditional motifs. It plays a vital role in a series of

rituals involving the bride and groom and their extended families. The use of crocodile bread in wedding ceremonies is not just a decorative element but also a symbol that is believed to carry deep meaning about fertility, conversation, and blessings for newly married couples. The ritual of its use not only reflects the traditional values upheld in Betawi society but is also an inseparable part of maintaining the sacredness and blessing of the wedding ceremony, strengthening the spiritual bond between the bride and groom and their families (Rahmawaty et al., 2023).

Besides being an essential symbol in wedding ceremonies, crocodile bread also illustrates how blessed it is with a rich cultural heritage. Decorated with traditional motifs full of meaning, the roti crocodile reflects aesthetic beauty and represents the continuity of Betawi culture, which is sought to be maintained from generation to generation. Its presence at every stage of the wedding ceremony is not only to decorate the banquet table but to present symbolism that evokes respect for ancestors and ancestral traditions. As a profoundly ritualistic symbol, crocodile bread carries with it symbols that strengthen the values of togetherness and solidarity within the extended family, emphasizing the importance of tradition and symbolism in maintaining a unique and valuable cultural identity for the Betawi people (Novalia&Irtawidjanti, 2020).

### **3. RESEARCH METHOD**

This research uses a qualitative approach focusing on case studies to explore the use of crocodile bread in traditional Betawi wedding ceremonies. This approach was chosen to gain a deep understanding of symbolic meaning and its impact on local culture. The case study was selected because of its relevance in exploring specific and complex cultural phenomena, such as using crocodile bread in traditional Betawi wedding ceremonies. This approach allows researchers to examine one case in depth to understand the process and outcomes of using these symbols in actual life practice.

These observations allowed researchers to understand directly how crocodile bread was used, decorated, and interpreted in the ceremony. Interviews will be conducted with key figures such as traditional elders, the bride and groom, and family members involved in the wedding ceremony. The interviews aim to gain a deeper understanding of the symbolic meaning of crocodile bread, its role and ritual function in ceremonies, and their views on the changes that have occurred in using this symbol.

### **4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

#### **The Symbolic Meaning of Crocodile Bread**

Crocodile bread in traditional Betawi weddings has a rich and deep symbolic meaning. This symbol is not only seen as an ordinary decorative object but is also considered to have a deep meaning related to fertility, abundance, and unity in the family. The use of crocodile bread in wedding ceremonies is not just a symbol of material or status but also an expression of the Betawi people's spiritual and social values. This reflects the importance of symbolism in strengthening social and spiritual ties between the bride and groom, their families, and the wider community (Handayani et al., 2023).

In practice, crocodile bread is not only seen as a material object decorated for purely aesthetic purposes but as an integral part of a series of rituals that deepen the meaning of Betawi wedding ceremonies. Each stage of use is arranged in such a way as to ensure a symbolic presence that brings blessings and holiness to the wedding. The ritual of using crocodile bread carries a vital spiritual aspect, becoming a symbol of spiritual agreement between the two married parties and a symbol of family unity that supports each other in navigating married life.

Not only as a ritual, has the use of crocodile bread reflected the Betawi people's efforts to preserve their cultural heritage. By maintaining traditional practices like these, the Betawi people respect their ancestors and teach these values to the younger generation as part of education and cultural inheritance. Using conventional symbols such as crocodile bread in traditional Betawi wedding ceremonies also strengthens local cultural identity amid globalization, which increasingly influences local traditions in various parts of the world.

When understood more deeply, the symbolic meaning of crocodile bread reflects how values such as fertility, reporting, and family unity remain relevant in ever-changing social and cultural dynamics. Further research on the use and interpretation of the symbolism of crocodile bread can provide greater insight into how Betawi culture adapts and survives in a modern era full of challenges and changes. Crocodile bread in traditional Betawi weddings is not just a static symbol but an entity that lives and continues to develop in cultural and social changes. Its use reflects the richness of local values that continue to be relevant amidst globalization. Through further research and in-depth appreciation of the symbolism of crocodile bread, we can shed more light on how these traditional symbols play an essential role in shaping a society's identity and cultural desires.

### **Ritual Function**

Crocodile bread is not just a decorative object but also has a profound function in maintaining the sanctity and blessing of the wedding ceremony. Using it is essential in traditional Betawi wedding ceremonies, connecting spiritual and social aspects in harmonious unity. Each step in this ritual is carefully designed to ensure that the values upheld in Betawi society, such as blessings, fertility, and family unity, are reflected (Lesmana& Jura, 2022).

Crocodile bread is not just a formality but also contains a deep meaning about the union of two families that will unite through the bonds of marriage. Crocodile bread is considered a symbol of spiritual agreement between the two married parties and a symbol of support from the extended family in navigating married life. In this case, crocodile bread is not only the center of attention in the ceremony but also shows a solid commitment to maintaining traditions and values that have been accepted for generations. The ritual use of crocodile bread also reflects an effort to deepen the meaning of Betawi wedding ceremonies. Each stage of this ritual is designed to ensure that the symbolism of crocodile bread brings blessings and purity to the couple who is getting married. This shows the importance of the spiritual aspect in forming a solid foundation for a happy and successful home life. Crocodile bread is also an integral part of efforts to preserve Betawi's cultural heritage. By keeping traditional practices like these alive and relevant, the Betawi people honor their ancestors and pass on these values to the next generation.

Using traditional symbols in wedding ceremonies, such as crocodile bread, is one way to strengthen local cultural identity amid globalization, which increasingly influences local traditions in various parts of the world. The symbolic meaning of crocodile bread also reflects how values such as fertility, reporting, and family unity remain relevant in ever-changing social and cultural dynamics. Further research on the use and interpretation of the symbolism of crocodile bread can provide greater insight into how Betawi culture adapts and survives in a modern era full of challenges and changes.

Apart from its symbolic value, crocodile bread is also a work of art that enriches the aesthetics of traditional Betawi wedding ceremonies. Crocodile bread artisans use this object as a medium to convey religious and social messages and develop their creativity in decorating crocodile bread with beautiful and meaningful motifs. Therefore, crocodile bread is a ceremonial object and a marker of cultural identity and artistic beauty in traditional Betawi weddings.

### **Local Cultural Development**

Although the tradition of using crocodile bread has persisted for generations in Betawi society, research shows that there have been significant changes in its practice and symbolic meaning over time. In the current era of globalization and modernization, external influences such as mass media, technology, and cross-cultural interactions play an essential role in changing the way traditional symbols are interpreted and carried out. In the past, crocodile bread may have been understood in a more limited way as a symbol of fertility, conversation, and family unity (Edwanto&Siregar, 2023).

With the advent of globalization, the understanding of crocodile bread as a symbol has expanded to include new aspects such as social status, cultural identity, and artistic expression. This shows the Betawi people's culture of adapting to changing times while maintaining traditional solid roots. The influence of globalization can also be seen in the way crocodile bread is produced and distributed. As technology advances, crocodile bread artisans may use more modern techniques and materials to create more detailed and exciting works of art. However, efforts to keep the essence and symbolic meaning intact in every crocodile bread are maintained to respect the values passed down from generation to generation.

Globalization has also expanded the reach of crocodile bread as a symbol of Betawi culture. With more accessible access to global markets, crocodile bread has not only become part of traditional ceremonies in local communities. Still, it can also be appreciated by people outside the region and even internationally as a symbol of Indonesia's rich culture. This shows that, despite the challenges in maintaining traditions in the global era, roti crocodiles can adapt and even develop to promote and appreciate the richness of Betawi culture in the modern world.

The influence of globalization on crocodile bread represents a dynamic change in the way traditional symbols interact with the modern world. This development not only influences how we understand and interpret crocodile bread as a symbol but also encourages us to be more careful in protecting and preserving this cultural treasure. As a symbol in Betawi traditional ceremonies, crocodile bread expresses deep conventional values such as fertility and family unity. It reflects



how local culture adapts to the ever-changing currents of globalization. Steps to understanding the impact of globalization on crocodile bread can provide insight into how local cultural values survive and continue to thrive amidst modern challenges.

Crocodile bread is a preserved cultural artifact and an indicator of how local people interact with the outside world. Efforts to protect crocodile bread are about maintaining tradition and respecting values that may be threatened by rapid social and economic change. Thus, crocodile bread is a symbolic symbol in a wedding ceremony and a central point in discussions regarding cultural sustainability in this global era.

### **Cultural Conservation**

The use of bread as a symbol in traditional Betawi wedding ceremonies is not just an act of formality but also reflects the earnest efforts of the Betawi people to maintain and strengthen their cultural identity. Crocodile bread is not only seen as a decorative object in the ceremony but also has a meaning that connects the past, present, and future of the Betawi community. This symbol is a strong marker in expressing commitment to ancestral traditions and values passed down from generation to generation (Afrilian, 2015).

Amid ongoing modernization, traditional symbols such as crocodile bread face pressure to adapt to changing times. However, the Betawi people show tenacity in maintaining the integrity of their culture, including through efforts to preserve and support the use of crocodile bread in traditional ceremonies. This reflects their pride in their unique and distinctive cultural identity and their strong desire to pass it on to future generations as part of a valuable heritage.

The use of crocodile bread also reflects an attitude of respect for ancestors and traditions that have given the Betawi people a strong identity for centuries. In every wedding ceremony, crocodile bread is a symbol of formality and carries a deep meaning of fertility, abundance, and family unity. The ritual implementation is carefully regulated to ensure that Crocodile Bread's spiritual and social values are maintained and conveyed appropriately to future generations. More broadly, the use of crocodile bread in traditional Betawi wedding ceremonies reflects how local culture can adapt and survive in changing social and cultural dynamics. Despite the challenges of modernization and globalization, the Betawi people show determination in maintaining their traditional symbolism to support Indonesia's cultural diversity. This is not just about keeping rituals but also about strengthening collective identity and honoring the cultural roots that form the basis of their lives.

The use of crocodile bread in traditional Betawi wedding ceremonies is a ritual formality and a symbol of the values valued in Betawi society. Crocodile bread symbolizes not only the union between the bride and groom but also the rich culture that has been preserved from generation to generation. Crocodile bread is a bridge that connects the past with the present, strengthening social networks between individuals and families and uniting communities in appreciation for their cultural heritage.

Crocodile bread is more than just symbolism; it also shows the preservation of the culture firmly held by the Betawi people. Amid rapidly changing times, maintaining traditions like this is a way to

maintain collective identity and ensure that noble values and local wisdom remain relevant and valuable for future generations. By preserving traditional practices rich in meaning, such as crocodile bread, the Betawi people not only strengthen the foundations of their own culture but also make a valuable contribution to preserving Indonesian culture.

### **Dynamics of Change**

Social and economic changes have significantly impacted how wedding ceremonies are performed and how their symbolic meaning is understood in society. In this modern era, changes in social and economic structures often create new challenges and opportunities to adapt to cherished traditional values. The use of crocodile bread in traditional Betawi wedding ceremonies can be seen as an example of cultural adaptation to broader changes in time. Wedding traditions in Betawi society, including crocodile bread as a symbol, are transforming along with the development of urban culture and integration with global markets. In the past, crocodile bread might have been decorated with traditional motifs that had deep meanings, such as fertility and family unity (Novalia&Irtawidjajanti, 2020).

Today, crocodile bread may undergo modifications in design, ingredients, and even serving methods to accommodate the changing preferences and demands of the times. This cultural adaptation not only reflects changing social dynamics but is also a strategy for maintaining cultural relevance in facing the challenges of globalization. By retaining traditional symbols such as crocodile bread in wedding ceremonies, the Betawi people preserve their cultural identity and integrate old values with new social and economic realities. This shows that, despite the pressures of modernization, local cultural riches can still adapt and survive amidst rapid changes. How the use of bread and other traditional symbols of crocodiles change over time can provide deeper insight into cultural adaptation. This is about how cultural values are reinterpreted and how local communities respond and adapt to the changes around them. By understanding these dynamics, we can better appreciate how Betawi culture and other cultures live and develop in an increasingly global environment.

### **Influence of Globalization**

Globalization is not only an economic and political phenomenon but also has a profound impact on local cultures around the world. Traditional symbols such as crocodile bread in traditional Betawi wedding ceremonies and globalization play an essential role in changing how local communities understand, interpret, and even carry out these symbols. Globalization, which influences perceptions and practices related to cultural symbols, is relevant in this research because it highlights cultural conditions under pressure from increasingly strong global flows (Siregar&Yahaya, 2022).

Globalization expands accessibility to information and influences from outside. Through mass media and information technology, traditional symbols such as crocodile bread can be accessed by more people around the world. This can affect how these symbols are understood by people outside the original community and how local communities reinterpret the meaning of these symbols in new, more global terms. Globalization also facilitates more intensive cross-border exchanges. With increased mobility, both physical and virtual, traditional symbols can be transformed through a



process of acculturation or adoption by other communities. This creates new dynamics in the way symbols such as crocodile bread are used and understood in cultures beyond their origins.

Meanwhile, in the society of origin, globalization may trigger deeper self-reflection about the importance of maintaining traditional cultural values in the face of global homogenization pressures. The main challenge of globalization is how local communities support the authenticity and integrity of their culture while interacting with an increasingly connected outside world. Using crocodile bread as an example can show how the Betawi people adapt to global values without losing their cultural roots. In this case, crocodile bread is a symbol in traditional ceremonies and reflects cultural adaptation and sustainability strategies in facing complex global dynamics.

The influence of globalization on cultural symbols such as crocodile bread is relevant not only to understanding how local cultures change and adapt under global pressures. Still, it is also essential to establish policies supporting cultural diversity preservation in this increasingly connected era. Globalization brings significant challenges in maintaining a unique cultural identity amidst the unlimited flow of information and cultural influences. By understanding these dynamics more deeply, we can develop strategies that protect precious cultural heritage and promote respect for the complexity and uniqueness of every culture around the world. By recognizing that globalization brings technological and economic progress and influences traditional ways of life and values, we can take wiser steps in advancing mutually respectful and beneficial intercultural dialogue. Through this approach, we can develop policies that enable local communities to maintain their unique culture while remaining involved in unavoidable global dynamics.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The influence of globalization on cultural symbols such as crocodile bread is not only relevant for understanding how local cultures adapt in this modern era. Still, it is also crucial for formulating policies supporting cultural diversity preservation. Globalization affects the way traditional symbols are interpreted and implemented in society. These changes reflect ever-changing social and cultural dynamics where the symbolism of crocodile bread can evolve from being just a local symbol to a cultural representation valued globally. Through a deep understanding of the interactions between globalization and local cultural symbols such as crocodile bread, we can appreciate cultural complexity and find ways to promote mutually beneficial intercultural dialogue.

Globalization also challenges maintaining cultural integrity amidst the unlimited flow of information and global influence. However, the use of crocodile bread as a symbol in traditional Betawi wedding ceremonies shows the resilience of the Betawi people in maintaining their cultural roots while adapting to changing times. This is about preserving traditions and strengthening local cultural identity under the increasingly intense pressure of globalization. Thus, further study of the dynamics of the use and interpretation of the symbolism of crocodile bread can provide deeper insight into how Betawi culture adapts and survives in a changing global environment.

The Jakarta Regional Government is advised to preserve Betawi culture by prioritizing education and arts programs that promote and protect traditional practices such as crocodile bread in wedding ceremonies. Active collaboration with the Betawi community and establishing Betawi Culture in

Jakarta can also be a strategic step in supporting the preservation of this local cultural center. Meanwhile, the Betawi Community needs to increase awareness of the importance of maintaining this tradition by actively participating in cultural activities and teaching cultural values to the younger generation to ensure the continuity of this valuable cultural practice in society.

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