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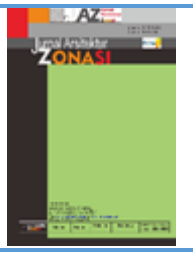

The Role of Ornamentation in Architecture: A Study of Madinah Mosque Tgk. Japakeh in Pidie Jaya, Aceh

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ABSTRACT

Ornamentation serves as a crucial decorative element in architecture, functioning not only as an aesthetic enhancement but also as a cultural and spiritual symbol. In the context of Islamic architecture, ornaments are widely employed to beautify structures while conveying profound religious meanings. These ornaments manifest in various forms, including geometric patterns, calligraphy, floral motifs, and arabesques each embodying distinct philosophical and artistic values within Islamic art. This study examines the ornamentation of Madinah Mosque Tgk. Japakeh in Pidie Jaya, Aceh, a historic mosque constructed in 1623. The mosque represents a blend of traditional Acehnese architecture and strong Islamic influences, establishing itself as an essential part of the local community's heritage and identity. The research employs a qualitative descriptive methodology with a purposive sampling approach. Data collection was conducted through literature reviews, field observations, interviews with local figures, technical measurements, and visual documentation. The findings classify the mosque's ornamentation into four primary types. Geometric ornaments symbolize order and divine perfection, calligraphy serves as a spiritual reminder through Qur'anic verses, floral motifs reflect the beauty of God's creation and the harmonious relationship between humans and nature, while arabesque patterns enhance architectural elements with intricate designs, representing continuity and spiritual elegance in Islam.This study highlights that the ornamentation of Madinah Mosque Tgk. Japakeh functions not merely as a decorative element but also holds significant historical and philosophical value. Consequently, preserving and understanding the meaning of mosque ornamentation is vital in safeguarding cultural heritage amid evolving times.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Aceh is a province located at the northern tip of Sumatra Island, Indonesia. Often referred to as the "Veranda of Mecca," Aceh holds a strong Islamic identity, reflected in the way religious teachings shape its architectural landscape. Mosques, as the central places of worship, are widespread across the province—from cities and districts to villages showcasing the deep-rooted influence of Islam in daily life. Many mosques in Aceh adopt Middle Eastern architectural styles, largely shaped by the contributions of earlier Islamic scholars who introduced the principles of Islamic art and architecture to the region. This influence is evident in the intricate ornamentation, structural design, and symbolic elements embedded in the architecture, demonstrating a blend of tradition and faith. (Andeng & Darmiwati, 2022).

A mosque serves as a place of worship for Muslims and plays a vital role as a spiritual, social, and cultural hub within the community. In Islamic architecture, mosques are not merely constructed to fulfill functional needs but also to embody religious values and Islamic aesthetics. Through their intricate designs and symbolic ornamentation, mosques reflect the principles of Islamic art, emphasizing harmony, spirituality, and devotion. These architectural elements, from geometric patterns to calligraphy, showcase the deep-rooted connection between faith and artistic expression, making mosques more than just places of prayer—they are living representations of Islamic heritage (Jamil, 2023). Historic mosques in Indonesia serve not only as places of worship but also as profound representations of the nation's rich Islamic history and cultural heritage. These mosques, deeply embedded within society, reflect centuries of religious devotion, artistic tradition, and architectural evolution. Beyond their spiritual significance, these mosques stand as cultural landmarks, showcasing unique blends of local craftsmanship and Islamic architectural principles. Their intricate ornamentation, structural designs, and historical narratives embody the enduring legacy of Islam in Indonesia, reinforcing the connection between faith, identity, and historical continuity (Meutia & Araby, 2020).

Masjid Tuha, as an example of a historic mosque, embodies Aceh's deep-rooted cultural legacy. Constructed during the early spread of Islam in the Indonesian archipelago approximately between the 16th and 19th centuries it stands as more than just a place of worship. Throughout history, Masjid Tuha has served as a vital religious hub while simultaneously functioning as a center for social gatherings and education. Its architectural design reflects the harmonious fusion of Islamic principles with local traditions, reinforcing its significance not only as a spiritual space but also as a cultural symbol of Aceh's historical evolution. (Putri et al., 2019). The architecture of this mosque is designed to blend harmoniously with its surroundings, emphasizing a serene and peaceful atmosphere. The ornamentation often features traditional Acehnese carvings, incorporating floral and geometric motifs that reflect both Islamic artistic principles and local craftsmanship. The main doors and pulpit (mimbar) are adorned with intricate carvings, showcasing the exceptional skills of Acehnese artisans. These detailed embellishments not only enhance the mosque's aesthetic appeal but also symbolize the cultural and spiritual values embedded in Acehnese heritage (Annisa et al., 2023).

Pidie Jaya Regency in Aceh is home to several historic mosques with significant architectural and historical value. One such mosque is Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh, located in Gampong Dayah Kruet. Built in 1623 by Teungku Japakeh, a prominent Islamic scholar and military advisor to Sultan Iskandar Muda, this mosque remains an enduring testament to Aceh's rich Islamic heritage and cultural legacy. Despite its age, Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh still stands strong, serving as a vital historical monument. It reflects the deep intertwining of

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Islamic traditions and local Acehnese identity, symbolizing the resilience and devotion of the community in preserving its sacred spaces (Mansyah & Jamil, 2024).

Masjid Tuha Tgk. Japakeh is not merely a place of worship it stands as a profound symbol of art and history. Its ornamentation seamlessly integrates traditional Acehnese architectural elements with influences from classical Islamic design, creating a visual narrative that reflects the deep philosophical, spiritual, and social values of the Acehnese community. The mosque's decorative patterns encompass a variety of motifs, including geometric designs, representing divine order and perfection; floral motifs, symbolizing the beauty of creation and harmony between humanity and nature; arabesque patterns, illustrating the continuity of spiritual life; and Arabic calligraphy, which conveys religious messages through verses from the Qur'an. These intricate embellishments not only enhance the aesthetic quality of the mosque but also serve as a testament to the rich Islamic heritage preserved within Aceh's architectural landscape (Fuadah & Arzaqina, 2025).

In Islamic tradition, ornamentation is generally classified into four main categories (Anetama et al., 2022):

a. Geometric Ornamentation: Represents perfection and order as a symbol of Tawhid (the oneness of God).
b. Calligraphic Ornamentation: Used to inscribe Qur'anic verses, prayers, and the names of Allah and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), serving both decorative and spiritual purposes.
c. Floral Ornamentation: Symbolizes the beauty of nature and humanity's connection to the Creator, often depicting organic forms like flowers and vines.
d. Arabesque Ornamentation: Reflects the abstract beauty of nature, representing the divine creation through intricate and interwoven patterns.

The use of ornamentation in historic mosques also illustrates the process of acculturation between Islamic culture and local traditions. These artistic elements do not merely serve decorative purposes but represent the harmonious blending of Islamic aesthetics with indigenous craftsmanship and symbolism. Local artisans often adapted Islamic artistic principles, integrating traditional motifs, materials, and techniques unique to their communities. As a result, historic mosques exhibit distinct architectural styles that reflect both spiritual devotion and cultural identity, showcasing the dynamic interaction between Islamic teachings and regional artistic heritage (Arthur & Nur, 2023). In Aceh, many mosque ornaments blend traditional Acehnese motifs with Islamic values, creating a distinct aesthetic that sets Acehnese mosques apart from those in other regions of Indonesia. This fusion of styles manifests in intricate wood carvings, floral patterns, geometric designs, and Arabic calligraphy, all integrated into architectural elements like doors, mihrabs, and minbars. These ornaments not only enhance the visual appeal of the mosques but also reflect the deep spiritual and cultural connection between Islamic teachings and Acehnese artistic traditions. (Islami et al., 2023). Floral carvings, such as Acehnese leaf and flower motifs, serve a purpose beyond mere decoration they symbolize life, growth, and prosperity. These intricate patterns, often found in mosque ornamentation, reflect the harmonious relationship between humans and nature, embodying the Islamic philosophy that beauty is a manifestation of divine creation. The use of floral designs in Acehnese architecture integrates local artistic heritage with Islamic values, reinforcing the spiritual and cultural depth of the region. These motifs not only enhance the aesthetic appeal of mosques but also act as visual reminders of abundance, renewal, and the blessings of faith.

The study of mosque ornamentation is crucial in the context of cultural preservation, architectural education, and the reinforcement of local identity. Research on the ornamentation of Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh plays a significant role in strengthening local historical narratives while expanding the understanding of the symbolic meaning embedded

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within its architectural elements. This study aims to identify the types, forms, motifs, and techniques used in the creation of the mosque's ornamentation and to analyze the philosophical and cultural significance inherent in these designs. By examining these elements, the research contributes to the appreciation and safeguarding of Aceh's Islamic architectural heritage, ensuring its continued relevance amid modern developments.

The study of ornamentation in Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh, Pidie Jaya, holds significant importance in cultural preservation, symbolic interpretation, acculturation, architectural education, and the reinforcement of local identity. This research not only provides new insights into local history and culture but also contributes to the development of architectural design that remains relevant to contemporary local contexts. The study aims to identify the various types of ornamental elements adorning the mosque, examining their forms, motifs, and construction techniques. Additionally, it analyzes the symbolic and cultural meanings embedded within each ornament and explores how they reflect the spiritual and societal values of the local community.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive qualitative methodology, aiming to achieve an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon through the interpretation of meanings constructed by participants within specific social and cultural contexts.

The descriptive approach is utilized to provide a comprehensive depiction of the ornamentation at Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh, including its forms, symbolic meanings, and the socio-cultural context that underlies its development. By analyzing these aspects, the research seeks to uncover the deeper philosophical and artistic values embedded within the mosque's architectural elements (Annisa Rizda Anfa & Susi Susanti, 2020).

Descriptive research aims to systematically and factually explain the characteristics of the studied object, encompassing activities, transformations, forms, as well as similarities and differences with other objects. This method provides a structured and detailed representation of the subject, allowing researchers to capture and analyze various aspects of its development, interactions, and contextual significance (Qalam et al., 2021). The selection of this approach is based on the necessity to explore the philosophical and aesthetic meanings embedded in ornamentation meanings that cannot be adequately explained through quantitative methods. By employing a qualitative descriptive approach, this study seeks to uncover the symbolic depth, artistic significance, and cultural influences behind the ornamentation, allowing for a more nuanced and interpretative analysis that goes beyond numerical representation.

The research is centered on Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh, located in Gampong Dayah Kruet, Pidie Jaya Regency, Aceh Province. The selection of this site is strategic, based on the consideration that, to date, no previous studies have specifically examined the ornamentation of this mosque. Additionally, Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh holds significant historical and artistic value, making it highly relevant to the focus of this study. Its unique architectural features, rich cultural heritage, and intricate ornamental details provide an important foundation for further analysis and exploration (Fuadah & Arzaqina, 2025).

The research object was selected using the purposive sampling method, a sampling technique in which samples are intentionally chosen based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. This approach ensures that the selected samples align with the study's focus, allowing for an in-depth exploration of ornamentation, historical significance, and cultural relevance within Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh. By applying purposive sampling, the study targets key architectural elements and symbolic aspects that contribute to a more

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comprehensive understanding of Islamic ornamentation in Aceh (Sofatur Rizky et al., 2023). Among several historic mosques in Pidie Jaya Regency, such as Masjid Tgk. Di Pucok Krueng, Masjid Baitul Abrar Nyong, and Masjid Peuduek, Masjid Tgk. Japakeh was selected due to its prominent architectural and ornamental characteristics, which have been well-preserved over time. This mosque stands out for its historical authenticity and cultural integrity, maintaining its original design and ornamentation despite the passage of centuries. As a result, it serves as a significant case study, offering valuable insights into the traditional Acehnese architectural style and Islamic artistic influences.

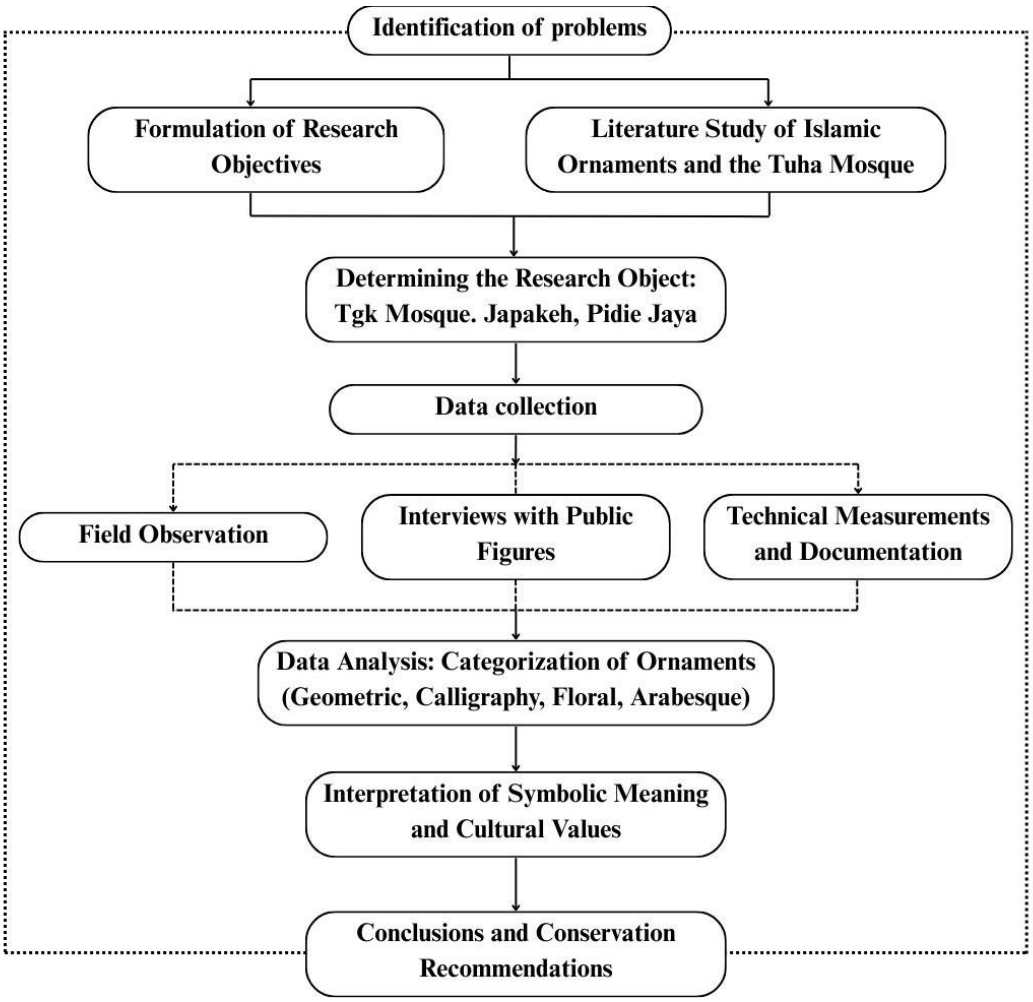

Figure 1. Research Flow
(Source: Author's dokumetation, 2024)

Figure 1 illustrates the data collection method. This method is carried out using several techniques, including:

- Literature Review: Examining relevant texts, manuscripts, and previous studies to provide a theoretical foundation.
- Field Observations: Directly observing the architectural elements and ornamentation of Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh.
- Interviews: Conducting discussions with local historians, religious figures, and artisans to gain insights into historical and cultural interpretations.
- Technical Measurements: Documenting structural dimensions and ornamentation patterns for accurate architectural analysis.
- Visual Documentation: Capturing photographs and sketches to support the identification and classification of ornamental elements.

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The data analysis in this research employs a comparative approach, which involves comparing data obtained from various sources to identify patterns, similarities, and differences that emerge in relation to previously outlined theories and concepts. By systematically analyzing these variations, this approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of the ornamentation in Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh, revealing its historical, cultural, and artistic significance. This method ensures a structured evaluation, contributing to both academic discourse and architectural heritage preservation. (Supatmo & Syafii, 2019). Data Analysis Process: Reduction, Presentation, and Conclusion Drawing.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study reveals that Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh in Pidie Jaya integrates various types of traditional Islamic ornamentation, including geometric, calligraphic, floral, and arabesque designs. Each type of ornamentation is not merely an aesthetic element but carries profound symbolism, closely tied to the spiritual, cultural, and philosophical values of the local community. These decorative elements reflect Islamic principles while showcasing the rich artistic heritage of Aceh. Through their intricate designs, they communicate a deeper historical and religious narrative, reinforcing the mosque's role as both a spiritual sanctuary and a cultural landmark.

This is in accordance with James Trilling's (2003) concept in The Language of Ornament (Oktavian & Hidayati, 2024), This function is clearly visible in Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh, where decorative elements are more than aesthetic embellishments. For instance, the geometric patterns on the ceiling and mihrab not only enhance the visual beauty of the mosque but also express principles of order, balance, and eternity, which are fundamental values in Islamic architecture. These patterns symbolize divine harmony, reflecting the concept that architectural space is not merely physical but also spiritually significant.

In the study of lexical and cultural meanings in the ornamentation of Rumah Tuo Rantau Panjang (Rizkia et al., 2023) Emphasizing that ornamentation derives its meaning from the mindset and culture of its speakers. This meaning can evolve depending on the cultural context in which it is situated. In their study on the ornamentation of North Aceh traditional houses, researchers revealed that these decorative elements hold profound symbolic meanings, reflecting the cultural, religious, and philosophical values of the local community (Amalia et al., 2022) Ornamentation serves not only as a decorative element but also as a medium for conveying messages and cultural identity. Through its intricate designs, motifs, and symbolism, ornamentation reflects the values, beliefs, and historical narratives of the society that creates and preserves it. In architectural and artistic traditions, ornaments act as visual storytellers, encoding spiritual, social, and philosophical meanings within their patterns. In the context of Islamic and Acehnese architecture, for example, geometric designs symbolize divine order, calligraphy reinforces religious devotion, and floral motifs embody harmony between humans and nature.

Based on the theory that has been presented (Winarti & Al-Obaidi, 2024) there are four types of ornamentation, namely:

3.1. Geometric Ornamentation

Geometric ornamentation is prominently found in the ceiling, mihrab, and columns of the mosque. Patterns such as triangles, hexagons, and symmetrical lines convey a sense of order and continuity, which are fundamental principles in Islamic teachings. This aligns with the findings of Rizkia et al. (2023), who explain that ornamentation reflects the mindset of the society that interprets it in this context, order symbolizes submission to divine law. Furthermore, the use of geometric patterns in the mosque embodies Islamic architectural

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principles, which reject anthropomorphism and instead favor symbolic expression through abstract forms. Locally, the repetitive rhythm of wood carving techniques showcases the skill of Acehnese artisans and the preservation of traditional values.

The application of geometric ornamentation in Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh can be found in the following areas:

1) Mosque Ceiling

The geometric ornamentation on the ceiling of Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh is presented through repetitive patterns such as triangles, squares, stars, and circles. These motifs create a sense of harmony and balance, symbolizing order and continuity, which are fundamental principles in Islamic teachings. By incorporating these geometric patterns, the mosque fosters an atmosphere of spiritual tranquility, while also reflecting the mathematical precision and symmetry characteristic of Islamic architectural philosophy. The repetition of these elements reinforces the idea of unity and infinite continuity, mirroring the divine nature of creation in Islamic art.



Figure 2. Geometric motif on the ceiling
(Source: Author's dokumetation, 2024)

The ceiling of Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh features wooden panels arranged in repetitive linear patterns, complemented by moldings or profiles that establish a visual rhythm. These structured compositions not only enhance the aesthetic beauty of the mosque but also embody principles of order and discipline, which are central to Islamic teachings. The repetition of geometric forms symbolizes continuity, balance, and divine harmony, reinforcing the idea that architectural space serves as both a functional structure and a spiritual medium. Through careful craftsmanship, Acehnese artisans integrate mathematical precision and cultural tradition, ensuring that the ornamentation reflects both religious devotion and artistic heritage.



Figure 3. Geometric motif on the ceiling
(Source: Author's dokumetation, 2024)

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2) Mihrab and Pulpit (Mimbar)

In the mihrab and mimbar of Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh, geometric ornamentation is applied through wood carvings or ceramic tiles with symmetrical patterns, such as hexagons and octagons. These decorative elements serve to enhance the visual appeal of the imam's area and emphasize its spiritual significance during prayer leadership. The precise symmetry in these motifs reflects Islamic artistic principles, symbolizing balance, continuity, and divine perfection. By integrating these geometric forms, the ornamentation reinforces the sacred nature of the space, guiding worshippers' focus toward spiritual contemplation.



Figure 4. Geometric motifs on columns and walls
(Source: Author's dokumetation, 2024)

3) Walls and Column

The geometric carvings adorning the walls and pillars of Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh form repetitive patterns that symbolize stability and order, which are fundamental principles in Islam. These designs consist of triangles, hexagons, and symmetrical lines meticulously arranged to create visual harmony while reinforcing the concept of perfection in creation. Beyond their decorative function, these carvings also strengthen the mosque's structure and enhance its monumental presence. The orderliness embedded in these geometric motifs reflects Islamic values, emphasizing the balance between worldly life and the hereafter, as well as human submission to divine laws.

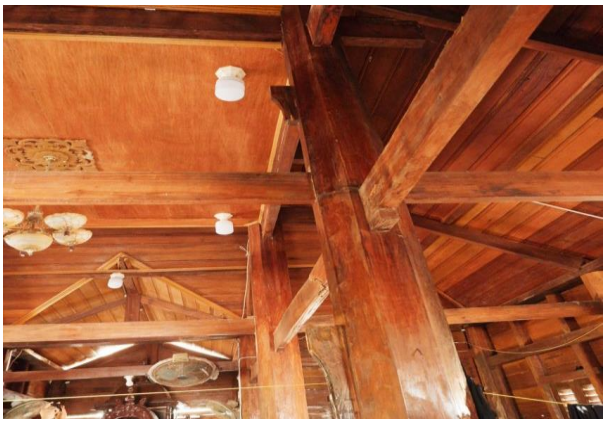

Figure 4. Geometric motifs on columns and walls
(Source: Author's dokumetation, 2024)

3.2. Calligraphic Ornamentation

Calligraphy is found on the pulpit and mosque doors. Quranic verses and sacred prayers, written in Kufi and Thuluth styles, enhance the spiritual atmosphere and serve as a reminder of Allah's greatness (Ridhi et al., 2024), Calligraphy in Acehnese traditional architecture is not

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merely decorative but serves as a medium for conveying religious and cultural messages. In Masjid Tgk. Japakeh, the use of gold and silver tones enhances the sacred atmosphere, drawing the congregation's focus to key spiritual spaces within the mosque.

These artistic choices highlight the significance of calligraphy in Islamic architectural expression, reinforcing its role as a visual reminder of faith and devotion while preserving cultural heritage.

In the context of semiotics, calligraphy functions as a visual text that conveys spiritual meaning through form, color, and composition. These elements strengthen the relationship between architecture and faith, transforming calligraphy into more than just decoration—it becomes an integral medium for religious expression. By utilizing symbolic inscriptions, Islamic architecture embeds divine messages within its structures, allowing worshippers to engage with their surroundings in a spiritual and intellectual way. The deliberate arrangement of letters and motifs serves to enhance sacred spaces, guiding contemplation and reinforcing the presence of divine wisdom.

The application of calligraphic ornamentation in Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh can be found in the following areas:

1) Pulpit (Mimbar)

The main wall of the pulpit is adorned with Quranic calligraphy, including verses such as Ayat Kursi or short surahs that hold profound significance for Muslims. These inscriptions are typically designed in bold and geometric Kufi script or flowing, refined Naskh script, enhancing the sacred and spiritual atmosphere of the space. Beyond its aesthetic function, this calligraphy serves as a reminder of Allah's greatness and the importance of spiritual reflection in worship. Additionally, the use of gold and silver tones in the inscriptions further highlights the beauty and majesty of these sacred texts, making the pulpit a central focal point within the prayer hall.



Figure 6. Calligraphic Motifs on the Upper Section of the Pulpit
(Source: Author's dokumetation, 2024)

2) Door

The mosque door is adorned with beautiful calligraphy, featuring prayers for entering the mosque, such as "*Allahummaftah li abwaba rahmatik*" (O Allah, open for me the doors of Your mercy). This inscription, written in Kufi or Thuluth script, enhances both the sacred ambiance and architectural aesthetics of the mosque. The presence of this prayer inscription serves as a reminder for worshippers to enter the mosque with pure intentions, maintain respectful conduct, and cultivate spiritual awareness before stepping into the prayer space. Additionally, placing calligraphy at the entrance signifies the transition from the outside world into an atmosphere of devotion and tranquility within the mosque. This calligraphy is often embellished with floral or geometric ornaments, further enriching its artistic and spiritual value, making the entrance an essential element in Islamic architectural symbolism.

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Figure 7. Calligraphic Motifs on the Upper Section of the Entrance Door
(Source: Author's dokumetation, 2024)

3.3. Floral Ornamentation

Floral ornamentation is present on the pulpit (mimbar) and pillars, seamlessly blending with geometric patterns and occasional calligraphic inscriptions to create a complex visual composition that represents unity in diversity. The flowing and symmetrical arabesque designs not only enhance the aesthetic appeal but also symbolize spiritual transcendence, illustrating the soul's journey toward the Divine. By integrating these intricate elements, the architecture of Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh embodies spiritual harmony, where each artistic motif serves as both a decorative feature and a reflection of Islamic philosophical principles

As stated by (Shafiq, 2014) Floral ornamentation in Islamic architecture is not merely decorative but serves as a symbol of eternity and infinity. These intricate patterns reinforce the order of the cosmos and the role of humanity within it. In the local context, the presence of arabesque designs highlights how Islamic influences, though originating externally, have been successfully adapted and integrated with local values through traditional carving techniques. This fusion of artistic traditions demonstrates cultural continuity, where spirituality and aesthetics coexist in harmony.

The application of floral ornamentation in Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh can be found in the following areas:

1) Fascia Board

The floral carvings on the fascia board feature harmonious vine and flower motifs, reflecting the beauty of Allah's creation. These designs consist of circular leaf patterns and symmetrically arranged flowers, adding both natural and aesthetic appeal to the mosque's architecture. The repetitive vine patterns symbolize the continuity of life and spiritual growth, while the flower motifs represent purity and divine magnificence. Beyond decoration, the floral engravings on the fascia board serve to soften the transition between the roof and walls, creating a balanced and unified architectural composition that blends seamlessly with its surroundings. The carving techniques employed demonstrate the expertise of local artisans, who preserve the rich philosophical and artistic heritage of Islamic ornamentation through their craftsmanship.



Figure 8. Floral Motifs on the Fascia Board
(Source: Author's dokumetation, 2024)

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2) Ceiling

The floral carvings on the ceiling, meticulously crafted into wooden panels, serve as decorative elements that enhance both the aesthetic appeal and spiritual ambiance of the mosque. Positioned as a central focal point, often around hanging lamps, these intricate engravings incorporate flowing vine motifs harmoniously blended with symmetrical floral patterns at the center reflecting balance and harmony in traditional carving artistry. The flowing flower designs, with their complex detailing, represent the beauty of nature, symbolizing growth, life, and prosperity. Beyond their artistic elegance, these ornaments hold profound spiritual significance, where the orderliness of the patterns mirrors cosmic balance and the greatness of Allah's creation. In traditional architecture, particularly in historic or religious buildings, these carvings invite observers to reflect on the perfection of artistry and the wisdom embedded in deeply philosophical designs bridging aesthetics, spirituality, and craftsmanship in a seamless expression of cultural identity.



Figure 9. Floral Motifs on the Fascia Board
(Source: Author's dokumetation, 2024)

3) Pulpit (Mimbar)

The floral carvings on the pulpit illustrate a harmonious relationship between humanity and nature, enriching the aesthetic appeal of the mosque. The gently flowing vine motifs symbolize balance and the continuity of life, while the intricately carved flowers represent purity and the magnificence of Allah's creation. Beyond their decorative function, these carvings serve as symbolic elements, reminding worshippers of their connection with nature and the Divine. In certain sections, the floral motifs are integrated with geometric patterns, creating a dynamic and harmonious composition that reinforces the spiritual essence of the mosque. The expert craftsmanship behind these engravings showcases the remarkable skill of local artisans, who bring intricate details to life, adding both artistic and spiritual depth to the mosque's interior design.



Figure 10. Floral Motifs on the Pulpit
(Source: Author's dokumetation, 2024)

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4) Door

Floral ornamentation on the door frame or wooden panels of the mosque often features intricate vine and flower motifs, either carved or painted in repetitive patterns, reflecting the harmonious beauty of nature. These motifs are frequently combined with geometric elements, creating an elegant and meaningful visual balance. Beyond their aesthetic appeal, these ornaments carry deep symbolic significance. The flowing vine patterns symbolize continuous spiritual growth, while the harmony between floral and geometric motifs represents the divine order in creation. Thus, as worshippers step through the mosque's entrance, they are reminded of Allah's greatness, invited to experience serenity and spiritual balance in their worship.



Gambar 11. Floral Motifs on the Door Frame
(Source: Author's dokumetation, 2024)

3.4. Arabesque Ornametation

Arabesque ornamentation appears on the pulpit (mimbar) and pillars, blending geometric, floral, and occasional calligraphic patterns to create a visually complex composition that symbolizes unity in diversity. The flowing and symmetrical arabesque patterns not only enhance aesthetic appeal but also serve as spiritual symbols, illustrating the soul's journey toward the Divine. These interconnected motifs embody balance and harmony, reflecting the cosmic order while reinforcing the spiritual significance of the mosque's architectural elements. The use of arabesque in Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh demonstrates how Islamic artistic influences have been adapted to local traditions, preserving both philosophical depth and craftsmanship excellence.

As stated by (Nur & Suseno, 2019), Arabesque in Islamic architecture is not merely decorative but serves as a symbol of eternity and infinity. These intricate patterns emphasize the cosmic order and the role of humanity within it.

In the local context, the presence of arabesque designs highlights how Islamic influences, despite originating externally, have been successfully adapted and blended with local values through traditional carving techniques. This artistic fusion preserves cultural identity, demonstrating how spirituality and aesthetics coexist in harmony.

The application of floral ornamentation in Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh can be found in the following areas:

1) Pulpit (Mimbar)

Beyond its aesthetic function, the arabesque ornamentation on the pulpit serves as a symbolic transition from the material world to the spiritual realm. The refinement and precision of its carvings reflect the high level of craftsmanship among local artisans, who have preserved Islamic artistic heritage across generations.

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The carving techniques employed typically follow traditional methods, using manual chiseling tools to ensure that each ornamental detail is crafted with exquisite beauty and precision. With the presence of arabesque ornamentation, the mosque's pulpit not only functions as the place where the imam delivers sermons but also stands as a visual focal point, conveying the beauty of Islam, the sanctity of worship, and the harmonious connection between humanity and the Divine.



Figure 12. Calligraphic Motifs on the Pulpit
(Source: Author's dokumetation, 2024)

2) Pillars and Columns

The mosque pillars are adorned with circular or vertical arabesque patterns, symbolizing growth, stability, and order. These motifs often take the form of elongated plant-like tendrils, extending upwards to reflect the spiritual concept in Islam that emphasizes humanity's journey toward perfection and closeness to God. Additionally, these ornamental designs lend a monumental presence to the pillar structures, reinforcing the identity of Islamic architecture, which prioritizes balance and harmony in every design element.



Figure 13. Calligraphic Motifs on the Pillars and Columns
(Source: Author's dokumetation, 2024)

When compared with the findings of Rizkia et al. (2023) on Rumah Tuo Rantau Panjang and Amalia et al. (2022) on traditional houses in North Aceh, it is evident that the ornamentation in Masjid Tgk. Japakeh not only continues the symbolic traditions of Aceh but also strengthens the spiritual dimension of worship spaces. Unlike traditional houses, which emphasize family identity or social status, the ornamentation in the mosque serves as a clear

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reminder of religious values and the greatness of God.

Thus, this study enriches the Islamic architectural heritage of Nusantara, particularly in Aceh, by demonstrating how aesthetic elements are consciously used to shape spiritual atmospheres, communicate cultural values, and preserve ancestral legacies.

4. CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the ornamentation in Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh holds deep symbolic meanings, serving not only as aesthetic elements but also as expressions of spiritual and cultural values.

1. Geometric Ornamentation
   - Found on the ceiling, mihrab, pulpit, walls, and columns.
   - Symbolizes order and balance, reflecting Allah's greatness and creating visual harmony.
2. Calligraphic Ornamentation
   - Present on the pulpit, doors, and other elements.
   - Functions as a medium for Islamic teachings, reinforcing religious awareness through Quranic verses and prayers.
3. Floral Ornamentation
   - Visible on the fascia board, pulpit, and doors.
   - Represents the harmonious relationship between humanity and nature, illustrating Allah's creation's beauty.

4.Arabesque Ornamentation
   - Used to adorn the mihrab, pulpit, pillars, and roof.
   - Embodies spiritual beauty through a fusion of geometric and floral patterns, symbolizing divine harmony.

The ornamentation in Masjid Madinah Tgk. Japakeh not only preserves Acehnese symbolic traditions but also strengthens the spiritual dimension within the mosque. Unlike traditional houses, which emphasize family identity or social status, the ornamentation in this mosque serves as a profound reminder of religious values and the greatness of God.

Thus, this study enriches the understanding of Islamic architectural heritage in Aceh, demonstrating how aesthetic elements are consciously employed to shape spiritual atmospheres, communicate cultural values, and maintain ancestral traditions. It also serves as a valuable reference for the preservation and development of mosque architecture that honors local traditions while remaining deeply rooted in Islamic philosophy.

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