

# Pragmatic-Semantic Analysis of the Demak Great Mosque and Acculturation of the Surrounding Communities

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## Abstract

The Great Mosque of Demak, Indonesia, is the oldest on Java Island, built in 1477 AD and is used as a place of prayer, religious center, and socio-cultural educational facility. This study examines the pragmatic and semantic power of the Great Mosque of Demak. It was conducted using a qualitative approach in 2023, with a case study of the Great Mosque. Data were gathered through observations and interviews with tourists, mosque managers, traders, and local community members.

The findings suggest that the Great Mosque of Demak's construction prioritizes functional components over aesthetics, as seen in the mosque's places for prayer, education, tourism, business, and socio-cultural activities. The Great Mosque of Demak has also been designed by emphasizing semantic aspects, as evidenced by the usage of ornaments from three civilizations at once, Islam, Hinduism, and Java. They occur in both the interior and the exterior of the mosque. Acculturation at the Great Mosque of Demak is not only seen in building designs that use a variety of architectural designs, namely Islamic, Javanese, Hindu, and modern, but also contributes to developing socio-cultural aspects and improving the local community's economy through conserving traditions, ornamentation, and tourism. As a predecessor to the development of Islam in Java, the Great Mosque of Demak can change from time to time to become a historical, cultural, and religious building, a symbol of glory and tolerance among the religious communities.

**Keywords:** Great Mosque of Demak, pragmatics, Islamic ornaments, Javanese ornaments, Hindu ornaments

## Introduction

The widespread acceptance of Islam in Indonesia in 1416 was a significant step in the nation's historical and cultural journey on Java Island (Supatmo, 2016). The arrival of Islam on the island of Java resulted in the collision of numerous pre-Islamic cultural entities with Islam, giving rise to pluralism and multi-culturalism (Lombard, 2000). According to historical sources, the Demak Sultanate, also known as the Demak Bintoro Sultanate, was the first Islamic dominion on the Java island, significantly contributing to Indonesia's Islamization (Hendro,

2018). According to the local legend, the Sultanate of Demak used to come from the village of Gelagahwagi, which was used as a Muslim colony under the leadership of Raden Fatah (Muslimah and Maskhuroh, 2019).

Together with the Wali Songo, this sultanate succeeded in embedding a significant Islamic influence in most sections of the archipelago in the late 15th and early 16th centuries AD (Marwoto and Wulandari, 2017). The Demak Regency is also known as the City of Wali since it is the meeting site for the nine Wali or guardians, or "Wali Songo" (Demak Regency Tourism Office, 2022).

The Sultanate of Demak was founded under the influence of *kejawen*, a local (Javanese) culture. Symbols and emblems abound in the Javanese cultural system, and even the regulation of utilizing colour for each decoration is a kind of self-expression for the Javanese; symbols can also describe societal characteristics and self-needs in the utility of a building (Feldman, 1967). This expressive form confirms that a building, particularly the mosque, has been designed with a distinct function and significance because the mosque construction is essential as a symbolic expression expressing Muslims' values, hopes, and life goals (Ronald, 2005).

Buildings with Javanese architectural ideals whose inhabitants are ancient societies constantly communicate something through meaningful symbols. Symbols are regularly associated with meaning. Empirical principles always influence the process of visualizing ideas. Symbols can have dimensions, transcendence, horizontal-vertical linkages, and metaphysical implications in addition to having a horizontal-immanent size (Daeng, 2008). The significance of an architectural work is inextricably linked to its symbolic form, which is always connected to concepts, ideas, symbols, and allusions. Javanese architectural works are bound to be rich in symbols and meanings corresponding to semantic and semiotic notions in visual design (Ronald, 2005). Javanese architecture is used in residential buildings and religious structures such as the Great Mosque of Demak.

The Sultanate of Demak Bintoro's only surviving legacy is the Great Mosque of Demak, the oldest mosque in Java (Andeng and Darmiwati, 2022). This mosque, built in 1477 AD and completed in 1479 AD / 1401 Saka, demonstrates the greatness of the Demak Sultanate (Supono, 2016). The Great Mosque of Demak is considered sacred because it holds religious meanings and historical significance for some Indonesians (Qodriana, 2007).

The mosque, built by Raden Fatah with the assistance of Wali Songo, attempts to integrate Hindu and Islamic cultures in Java (Hardyanto and Abdullah, 2015). Acculturation is the Sultan of Demak's awareness and admiration for local culture and other ethnicities outside Demak that were formerly influenced by the Majapahit Kingdom, of which the majority were Hindu-Buddhists (Rokhim, Banowati, and Setyowati, 2017).

Apart from being influenced by Hindu culture, the architecture of the Great Mosque of Demak is also influenced by Islamic and Javanese cultures, as is the local culture of the Bintoro, Demak people (Purnamasari, 2014). This acculturation can be seen in the employment of decorations as symbolic instruments, which lend a mystical aspect to the Great Mosque of Demak (Lücking, 2014). Acculturation at Demak's Great Mosque is the first instance of Hindu-Buddhist acculturation at a mosque in the Java region (Ashadi, Antariksa, and Purnama, 2015).

The Demak Great Mosque's mission in development is not only a way of promoting the Islamic religion but also a new means of reproducing the cultural world for the local population (Idham, 2021). According to pragmatic philosophy, the architecture of the Great Mosque of Demak is basic but functional, emphasizing aspects of service, ease, comfort, security, and safety of the visitors (Yunianti, 2015). The ornaments in the mosque serve more than only as beautiful features; they can also help communicate between the mosque's founder and the environment in which he lives (Ronald, 2005).

Previous research investigates the architectural design and ornamentation of mosques in Demak Grand Mosque. Ashadi, Antariksa and Purnama (2015) in their study showed that the syncretism in architectural forms of the Demak Grand Mosque could be traced through the relation of local architecture, i.e., Javanese (*Kejawen*) architecture and Hinduism/Buddhism architecture, with foreign architecture, i.e., Nabawi Mosque, Pan-Islamism mosques, modern architecture, and colonial architecture. Another research conducted by Supatmo (2016) showed

that The use of decorative arts, both architectural and ornamental decorative arts, in the building of the Great Mosque of Demak is a continuation of tradition and values in it from pre-Islamic to Islamic which are internalized by the supporting community as a symbol of da'wah used by the Wali. Meanwhile, the findings of Andeng and Darmiwati (2022) revealed that at the Great Mosque of Demak, there is a symbol of traditional Indonesian architecture that is distinctive and full of Islamic meaning. It looks simple but seems majestic, elegant, beautiful, and very charismatic. The background above found a gap between this study and other studies. Suppose other studies identify more the diversity and beauty of ornaments in it. In that case, this research further discusses mosque ornaments' pragmatic and semantic elements and their philosophical meanings. In addition, this research also seeks to present acculturation in building design and community groups without prejudice to race or other religions. Its aims and objectives are to examine the pragmatic and semantic power contained in the building of the Great Mosque of Demak as an artefact from the Kingdom of Demak full of symbolic functions and meanings.

## **Theoretical basis**

### **The Concept of Pragmatics and Semantics**

Charles Morris created the notion of pragmatics in 1938, which relates to the science of signs known as semiotics. According to Leech (1983), pragmatics is the study of the link between a sign and the person who generated the sign, which is related to semantics. Semantics, pragmatism, and complementarianism are used to characterize relatedness. This implies that pragmatics can exist within semantics and *vice versa* and complement one another even though each has its field of study. Pragmatics relates to non-linguistic characteristics such as art, design, and language. Broadbent (1980) defines pragmatic design as the process of trial and error in creating a building using diverse existing materials to generate structures with specific aims and objectives. According to Atthalibi, Amiuzza, and Ridjal (2016), three semiotic factors are used in understanding architectural grammar, one of which is pragmatics. With semantic and syntactical aspects, pragmatics attempts to connect the sign systems or symbols with their users. As a result, pragmatics encompasses all psychological and sociological variables about the goals and objectives of building design.

Pragmatic design process is people's first step when developing an efficient architectural structure that stresses functional qualities over aesthetics. According to Pinem (2016), the physical form of pragmatic architecture focuses on the meaning of utility rather than aesthetics. Decorative components add beauty to structures and serve other practical purposes. As Guy (2010) explains, pragmatic architectural design can be a solution for an environmentally friendly and sustainable building because it adapts to the climatic, geographic, and socio-cultural conditions of the people in the area around the building.

### **Acculturation**

Acculturation is the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members (Maehler, Weinmann and Hanke, 2019). Chirkov (2009) defines acculturation as a process executed by an agentic individual after meeting and entering a cultural community that is different from the cultural community where he or she was originally socialized. Berry (2005) explains that acculturation at the group level involves changes in social structures and institutions and in cultural practices. At the individual level, it involves changes in a person's behavioral repertoire. Schwartz *et al.* (2010) points out that initially the concept of acculturation was recognized as one-dimensional (unidimensional) in which the strength of the previous culture and the new culture was a continuum of opposites but could be united due to the acquisition of a new culture. According to this unidimensional model, when migrants acquire new values, practices and beliefs that differ from what they previously believed, they are expected to adopt the new beliefs, values, and practices that are incompatible with the new culture. Meanwhile, acculturation can be formed as a bidimensional like the model made by Berry (1983) that the two-dimensional acculturation model makes old culture and new culture as an independent unit. Within Berry's model, these two dimensions intersect to create four

acculturation categories, such as integration (adopts the receiving culture and retains the heritage culture), assimilation (adopts the receiving culture and discards the heritage culture), separation (rejects the receiving culture and retains the heritage culture), and marginalization (rejects both the heritage and receiving cultures). Two variations (unidimensional and bidimensional acculturation) in adaptation have been identified, involving psychological well-being and sociocultural competence.

On the other hand, Sam and Berry (2010) note one important thing about relationships between how individuals acculturate and how well they adapt. They say that often people who integrate (defined as being engaged in both their heritage culture and in the larger society) are better adapted than those who acculturate by orienting themselves to one or the other culture (by way of assimilation or separation) or to neither culture (marginalization). Because acculturation refers to cultural change, it is essential to specify how culture is defined. Culture refers to shared meanings, understandings, or referents held by a group of people (Triandis, 1995; Shore, 2002). Rudmin (2003) contend that the similarity between the receiving culture and the migrant's heritage culture could help to determine how much acculturation is needed to adapt to the receiving culture. Changes in acculturation always look at the socio-demographics of the people, such as economic status, available resources, the local community in their new location, and the language used. Therefore, local governments do not only face great challenges in successfully integrating large numbers of culturally, linguistically, and religiously diverse immigrants into their educational systems and citizenship but also in preserving social cohesion.

### **Islamic ornaments**

In his study of the semiotics of the Baiturrahim Gorontalo Great Mosque, Isla (2019) has discovered five domes, one great dome representing the Prophet Muhammad's apostolate and the other four lesser domes representing the Prophet's attributes (*Shiddiq, Amanah, Tabligh, Fathanah*). Another Islamic-themed structure at the Baiturrahim Great Mosque is a 35-meter-tall tower that symbolizes Allah's oneness and Islamic teachings that Muslims must believe in till the end. According to Kassim, Abdullah and Taib (2014), Islamic ornaments are typically used in mosques in the mihrab room, a location of prayer that directly faces the Qibla (Mecca) of Muslims. The placing of Islamic ornaments in the mihrab room contains the meaning of making people feel comfortable when worshipping, and it is interpreted that Allah likes things beautiful. Thus, the location for prayer is decorated with elements of beauty.

Meanwhile, Suratno (2013) suggests that Islamic cultural ornaments are usually applied to iron railings at mosque stairs, garden fences, and wall ornaments. In line with this, Nirmala, Violaningtyas and Damayanti (2019) elaborate that Islamic ornaments in Dian Al-Mahri Mosque are also applied to mosques' pillars, floors, and ceilings. Green and blue colors are chosen to be applied to Islamic ornaments because of the cool and breeze sensation

Sojak, Taufik and Shahminan (2020) examine the symbolic meaning of Islamic ornaments in mosques that uphold sharia principles in Islam. Seven principles in Islamic ornaments must show the values of monotheism (tauhid), moderation, benefit, harmony, progress, cleanliness, and honor. Ornaments that contain the value of monotheism (tauhid) and bring someone to the memory of God are calligraphy. Ornaments in the form of nature show simplicity modesty, and do not interfere with the solitude of prayer and are superseded by the primary function of the mosque. Ornaments on lighting and facades generally contain beneficial values that provide beauty and remind the existence of God. Ornaments that contain a value of harmony generally mean harmonization between the mosque and nature, the community, and conformity to the rules of Islamic principles. Ornaments with a cleanliness value mean that Islamic ornaments must be easy to clean and maintain properly. Ornaments with an honor value mean that these ornaments do not express arrogance. They are a symbol of love and affection. Meanwhile, symbols of progression ornaments such as arabesque and geometric mean that Islam is very up-to-date on the development of art.

### **Traditional Javanese Ornament**

Mosque architectural styles and traditional Javanese ornamentation are intricate, including influences from other cultures. Idham (2021) has investigated Javanese-style architectural designs in the Demak Grand Mosque and found that Javanese-style architecture may be noticed in the usage of *joglo* and *tajug* roofs and the building's *limasan* (pyramid) shape. The use of the Joglo roof is suspected to be linked to traditional Javanese beliefs, specifically Islam *Kejawen*. Furthermore, most mosques in Java feature saka guru pillars and minarets acculturated with Hindu culture. According to Supriyadi (2008), there are similarities and differences in geometric motifs between the two mosques consisting of lines and geometric shapes, as a combination of straight and curved lines that form a certain pattern. At the Great Mosque of Demak, these geometric ornaments are directly related to the people's belief in ancestral traditions and the philosophy of life of the Javanese people, namely *sangkan paraning dumadi*. Meanwhile, very few Javanese ornaments are visible at the Menara Kudus Mosque. Meanwhile, Widayat and Prameswari (2022), have concluded that the influence of Javanese culture was felt in the building design and ornaments in the mosque. The Javanese ornaments that appear are in the form of flora and fauna motifs that convey the meaning of life. Meanwhile, the building design using Javanese architecture is a form of preserving a local culture that is simple but still elegant. In addition, the local community interprets the building design and ornaments of the mosque, which take a Javanese theme as something unique and aesthetic. It has historical value because it symbolizes the tolerance and strength of the Surakarta Kasunanan Palace.

Handoko (2013) describes an architectural design of mosques in Java that already exists and is matched to architectural forms and building requirements that are idiocentric for Islamic beliefs in his research of the architectural characteristics of ancient mosques. Accommodation between the pre-Islamic and Islamic architectural traditions may still be evident in numerous mosques partially built from the Hindu-Buddhist architectural remains at the time. Even some ancient mosques in Java feature a terraced *punden* that recalls prehistoric Megalithic civilization. The ornament design reflects the Javanese clerics' tolerance for the surrounding society and the reigning King's political form. The palace's location near the Great Mosque and in the city center symbolizes the royal kings' intimate ties with Islamic culture. The Great Mosque construction must have a central design, *soko guru* (four main pillars), *mustaka* (crown on the roof), outer colonnades, *serambi* (outer porch), walled courtyard with two gates, *bedug* and *kentongan*, and land tombs of the mosque's founders.

### **Hindu ornaments**

Hindu ornaments have played a significant role in beautifying mosque buildings as a form of acculturation that has occurred since the entry of Islam into the archipelago. Rosyid (2022), examining the Hindu and Islamic ornaments at the Langgar Dalem Mosque, Kudus, found that it consisted of drums, *kentongan*, *tumpal isen - isen*, *sengkalan pinulet*, *mustaka* on the roof, brick walls on the inside of the mosque, as well as the doors and windows of the mosque. The Hindu ornaments at the Langgar Dalem Mosque contain the meaning of cultural tolerance until Sunan Kudus and Muslim generations have preserved it.

Supatmo (2019) shows the various forms (aesthetic), functions, and symbolic meanings in the ornaments of the Sendang Duwur Mosque-Graveyard building. In the Sunan Sendang Duwur graveyard area, there are five gates with the structure and form of the split temple and paduraksa. The structure and form of these gates were not different from the sacred buildings of other Hindu-Buddhist temples. Dominant ornaments exactly the motifs and patterns of pre-Islamic traditions, such as *sulur-suluran* motifs or *lung-lungan* (vines), motifs with animal patterns (lions, peacock, deer), mythological creatures (dragon, kala-merga, wings), and natural objects (rocks, clouds, mountains). On some gravestones, there are ornaments of the Surya Majapahit symbol. Overall, the ornament of the Sendang Duwur Mosque-Graveyard was a harmonious combination of the ornament with the tones of Islamic tradition and pre-Islamic tradition as a manifestation of cultural tolerance values which are respected and live in support of society until now.

Supriyadi *et al.* (2022) have found that the presence of Hindu ornaments dominated all the ornaments in the mosque. The ornaments consist of the kala makara motif on the padmasana, the rabbit and deer motif on the gate, the *lung - lungan* motif from North Bali on the mosque's walls, and the Majapahit plant motif on the pillars of the pavilion. The unique shape of the mosque with characteristic towers such as the *bale kulkul* and the gate resembling a temple has its meaning where the building is deliberately made similar to Hindu culture so that pre-Islamic people who are just learning Islam do not feel foreign and can adapt well without leaving the beauty that is contained in the former religion. It is also acknowledged that the motifs of Hindu ornaments in the Great Mosque of Demak are symbols of tolerance taught by Sunan Kudus to adherents of Hinduism.

Acculturation between Islamic culture and Hindu culture in Javanese mosques does not use figurative ornaments in the form of animals and other living things because there are rules in Islam prohibiting animal ornaments. Hindu ornaments in mosques are usually geometric and plant ornaments, such as *keketus*, *kakul-kakulan*, and *patra*. The acculturation of mosques with Hindu culture can also be seen in buildings resembling temples and gates. This is done so that people who have just embraced Islam do not feel alienated and can slowly accept a new culture that is different from the previous one. Even though these cultures differ in their meaning, Hindu ornaments are considered to give an aesthetic impression to everyone who worships.

## Research Methodology

This study uses qualitative research methods with a case study of the Great Mosque of Demak. According to Aspers and Corte (2019), qualitative research unifies and analyses data obtained empirically through case studies, individual experiences, history, interactions between living things, or visual texts that describe social phenomena. Observations were carried out and interviews were conducted to collect data. Interviews involved eight informants: three visitors, two mosque administrators, one local community member and two traders.

Purposive sampling using the following criteria were used:

- 1) having visited a mosque at least 5 times;
- 2) knowing the history and ornaments in mosques.

Data analysis adopted the research of Atthalibi, Amiuza, and Ridjal (2016), which was used to analyse the pragmatic and semantic elements of Islamic, Hindu, and Javanese ornaments at the Great Mosque of Demak. Meanwhile, this research also adopts the study of Widayat and Prameswari (2022) to analyse the influence of mosques on the socio-cultural and economic development of the community around the mosque.

Following are the types of analysis of the data in this study.

1. Pragmatic Analysis of the Kauman Bintoro Area.
2. Semantic Analysis of Islamic Ornaments at the Great Mosque of Demak
3. Semantic Analysis of Hindu Ornaments at the Great Mosque of Demak
4. Semantic Analysis of Javanese Ornaments at the Great Mosque of Demak
5. The influence of the mosque on the socio-cultural development of the community around the mosque
6. The effect of the existence of the mosque on the economy of the community around the mosque

The demographic data of the informants, which include visitors, mosque authorities, and members of the surrounding community are shown in the table below.

**Table 1:** Data Informants' Demography  
Source: Author

No	Name	Gender	Age	Occupation	City of Origin	Number of Visit Frequency
1.	Ahmad	Male	36	Merchant	Demak	5 times
2.	Sari	Female	35	Merchant	Demak	6 times
3.	Sri Nuryati	Female	57	Merchant	Demak	5 times
4.	Kani	Male	53	Horse Coachman	Demak	5 times
5.	Sofyan	Male	25	Visitor	Demak	5 times
6.	Ubaydillah	Male	28	Local Community	Demak	5 times
7.	Ahmad Yani	Male	58	Mosque Administrator	Demak	Everyday
8.	Suryanto	Male	37	Visitor	Semarang	6 times
9.	Rita	Female	42	Local Community	Demak	6 times

According to the table above, the demographic features of the informants included 6 males and 3 females aged 25 to 58 years. Each informant had three merchants, two visitors, one horse coachman, two from the local community, and one mosque administrator (*takmir*). Eight informants came from Demak and one informant came from Semarang.

## Findings and the Discussion

### Pragmatic Analysis of the Kauman Bintoro Area

The pragmatic aspects of the Great Mosque of Demak evaluated include the mosque's construction location, the building designer (architect), the year the mosque was founded, the length of construction, the purpose for which the mosque was built, and the mosque's function then and now.

The Great Mosque of Demak is located in the heart of Demak City and was previously part of the Demak Kingdom's palace complex. The Great Mosque of Demak is located in the Kauman Hamlet, Bintoro Village, Demak Regency, Central Java. This mosque is in the city center, immediately across from Simpang Enam Demak Square (Andeng and Darmiwati, 2022). The designer, Raden Fatah, and Wali Songo started the construction of the mosque in 1477 AD. It was completed in 1479 AD, which is marked by an inscription or chronogram of the *sengkalan memet* in the shape of a *bulus* (turtle) in the *mihrab* room, which marks the number 1401 Saka or 1479 AD (Muarifah, 2020). Meanwhile, the construction of the minaret of the Great Mosque of Demak was carried out on August 2, 1932, during the government of the Regent R.A.A. Sosrohadiwidjojo, with a Dutch architect, N.V. Lyndetives Semarang. Thus, it tends to have a modern feel compared to the mosque architecture with a local nuance (Demak Regency Tourism Office, 2022).

The Great Mosque of Demak is being built to serve as a center for Islamic religious study and a gathering place for the Wali. Furthermore, it signifies the arrival of Islam in the Demak Bintoro area. It is located near the heart of the government and the Demak plaza, meaning being a unifier between the king and his people as creations of God Almighty (Mukkaram, 2001). It comprises two structures: the main building with a *tajug* roof and a foyer with a *limasan* or pyramid roof. In contrast, the supporting structures are mosque minarets with steel frames (Fig. 1).



**Fig. 1:** Demak Great Mosque (Front view)

Source: Authors




In the past, the Great Mosque of Demak served as a preaching and worship place. However, its use is evolving, and it is now used for religious events, historical functions, as an educational institution, a community economic center, and as a tourism icon for the Demak Regency. Meanwhile, the mosque's minarets serve primarily as a storage location for the loudspeakers that reverberate the calls to prayer.

### Semantic Analysis of Islamic Ornaments at the Great Mosque of Demak



Islamic ornamentations appear to predominate at Demak's Great Mosque as well. The Islamic ornaments in this mosque, along with the design of traditional (local) Javanese ornaments, are the symbols that the Great Mosque of Demak, a pioneer of mosques in Java and a center for spreading Islam, has produced. The Islamic meanings, represented in symbols that breathe Islam, are shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2:** Semantic analysis of Islamic ornaments

Source: Authors

No	Figure	Function	Meaning
1		The calligraphy carving reads the intention of I'tikaf (to remain silent in the mosque). This calligraphy is above the <i>bledeg</i> door—white calligraphy on a black background framed by brown wood.	The existence of calligraphy carvings with the intention of I'tikaf is more concerned with functional aspects than aesthetics because these carvings serve as a marker for the Wali and visitors who want to do I'tikaf (stay silent in the mosque).
2.		Calligraphic carving with the word Allah engraved in a brown circle surrounded by golden plant carvings. This calligraphy is on the wall above the first row of prayers.	Calligraphy with the pronunciation of Allah denotes that Allah is the Supreme Being and that Muslims must worship only Allah. The colourful plants on the calligraphy frame represent beauty.
3.		<i>Maksurah</i> is a small room in the mosque at the very front south of the <i>mihrab</i> . The outside of the <i>Maksurah</i> is filled with Arabic calligraphy and green and gold decorative ornaments. The <i>maksurah</i> room is	The spatial design of the pulpit, mihrab, and <i>maksurah</i> are all in one architectural mass, symbolising the need for the world's life, God, and science to be balanced. Meanwhile, the calligraphy



		functional, specifically designated as a place for the Sultan to seclusion, pray, or perform prayers. The location of the <i>maksurah</i> is side by side with the <i>mimbar</i> and <i>mihrab</i> .	embellishments on the <i>maksurah</i> walls indicate that the chamber is sacred. The golden yellow colour represents beauty and elegance, while green is Rasulullah Muhammad SAW's favourite colour, representing coolness and a plant symbol.
4.		The Arabesque motif is in a brown circle decorated with a plain yellow gold frame. This motif is located on the right and left of the initial <i>saf</i> wall. The function of this decoration is as a decorative element.	The decorative carvings of Arabesque motifs symbolize Islam's decorative nature, which does not allow symbolic elements, so the motifs are curved and complicated. The concept of this Arabesque motif depicts Divine nature (Divinity) without the limits of space and time.
5.		The padma patterned ornament found on the <i>umpak</i> (porch foundation) comes from a stylization of the Arabic letters, namely mim ( م ) (ha ( ح ), mim ( م ), and dhal ( ذ ), which Muhammad read) functions as an aesthetic element in the building.	<i>Umpak</i> , with the symbol of lafadz Muhammad means that the Prophet Muhammad is the messenger of Allah who is always accompanied by Him, especially in mosque buildings.

The Islamic embellishments in Demak's Great Mosque serve particular purposes. Existing decorations prioritize decorative and aesthetic components above usefulness. Due to an Islamic tenet forbidding painters from using living beings as figurative parts, most ornaments use Arabic calligraphy and Arabesque themes. The extant embellishments are also indicators of the designer's declaration that the design of the Great Mosque of Demak, in addition to showcasing local architecture, strives to blend the architectural designs of the Prophet's Mosque and Pan-Islami that evolved in the Middle East at that time. As a result, the concept of Islamic decoration themes in Demak's Great Mosque is always associated with Illahiyah nature (Divinity).




Based on the analysis results from Table 2, it can be concluded that the fifth symbolization of Islamic ornaments in Demak Grand Mosque always prioritizes the meanings of monotheism and apostolate. Not infrequently, the ornaments are in the form of calligraphy, verses from the Koran, or arabesque. This is a form of respect for the Islamic religion, so ornaments are always related to Sharia principles.



### Semantic Analysis of Hindu Ornaments at the Great Mosque of Demak

Hindu ornaments assist and enhance the ornamentation at Demak's Great Mosque. The Majapahit Kingdom was the first to popularise Hindu jewelry, as shown in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Semantic analysis of Hindu ornaments**

Source: Authors

No	Figure	Function	Meaning
1.		<p>The Surya Majapahit ornament is an eight-star with a round yellow circle in the middle. The philosophy describes the sun that is shining. Surya Majapahit ornaments are on the mimbar, the initial <i>saf</i> wall, the <i>mihrab</i>, and above the fifth row. Visually, <i>Surya Majapahit</i> has a golden geometric shape with a dark green background.</p>	<p>The Surya Majapahit ornament is a depiction of the sun shining. The Surya Majapahit ornament contains the meaning of images of nine gods and eight beams of shining sun, which point to the eight cardinal directions. In Hinduism, the circle in the centre represents nine gods called <i>Dewata Nawa Sanga</i>.</p>
2.		<p>The carving motif on the <i>Saka Majapahit</i> column combines creeping plant motifs (<i>sulur-suluran</i>), <i>tumpal</i>, and lotus leaf petals at the bottom of the column. The shape of these motifs is a circle, <i>krawingan</i> (concave) with <i>ukel</i> tips and hibiscus and fern leaves, and concave-shaped <i>Patran</i> (leaves) with the central motif in the form of a curve like a question mark.</p>	<p>In the Hindu-Buddhist tradition, ornaments with motifs on the <i>Majapahit saka</i> columns convey the meaning of beauty and harmony in life. The <i>sulur-suluran</i> (lung-lungan) symbolizes hope, gentleness, and respect between humans and the universe. Ornaments with <i>sulur-suluran</i> motifs mean beauty, happiness, and prosperity. While the <i>tumpal</i> decoration has a magical function or symbolic meaning of power, according to the concept of cosmology: microcosm (human), macrocosm (universe), and metacosm ("other realms"), as a depiction of the worldly (immanent) nature towards the metaphysical realm.</p>
3.		<p><i>Saka Majapahit</i> or pillars in the foyer of the Great Mosque of Demak. There are 8 pillar columns, the primary support for the <i>limasan</i> roof. 28 other pillars surround <i>Saka Majapahit</i>. The material that makes up <i>Saka Majapahit</i> is made of teak wood with typical Majapahit carvings, supported by <i>umpak</i> (foundation) of <i>andesite stone</i>. Meanwhile, 28 pillars (<i>soko pengarak</i> on the sides) are made of concrete supported by <i>umpak</i> (building foundation).</p>	<p>Apart from being a gift from King Brawijaya V to Raden Fatah, <i>Saka Majapahit</i> means that the Great Mosque of Demak strongly influenced Majapahit culture as a pre-Islamic culture developed in the Demak Bintoro area before Islam came.</p>

4.		<p>Bedug and <i>kentongan</i> are tools that function as a marker that the time for prayer has arrived, so drums and <i>kentongan</i> are used to call people to pray in congregation at the mosque.</p>	<p><i>Bedug</i> and <i>kentongan</i> are acculturation from Hindu culture where these two tools are usually placed in the <i>bale kulkul</i> of the temple as a tool to call the community when there is an assembly.</p>
5.		<p>The ornaments on the <i>Bledheg</i> Door consist of several <i>tumpal</i>, crowns, dragon heads, vases, flower, lung, and <i>camara</i> motifs. The inscription "Condro Sengkolo" reads <i>Nogo Mulat Saliro Wani</i>, meaning 1388 Saka or 1466 AD, or 887 H. In ancient times, the <i>bledeg</i> door served as a lightning rod. But currently, the <i>bledeg</i> door only functions as a decorative element in the Demak Great Mosque Museum. Inside the <i>Bledheg</i> Door is a Surya Majapahit ornament that has been changed to look like a dragon's eye. Javanese-Buddhist culture also influences the ornament marked by a <i>lung</i> (Kalpalata) arrangement pattern. The <i>Bledheg</i> door uses red, green, and white colours.</p>	<p>The <i>tumpal</i> motif on the <i>Bledheg</i> Door symbolizes the vertical relationship between humans and God; the crown motif means Allah is the only One and Has no partner for Him (Al-Wahid). The dragon head motif is a symbol of Wali Songo's strength in preaching, the vase motif is a symbol of Islam, and the flower motif is a symbol of fertility and prosperity. While the colours red, blue, and white are symbols of safety.</p>

The numerous Hindu embellishments on the Great Mosque of Demak's architecture represent acculturation between Islamic and pre-Islamic cultures in the shape of mosque constructions. Most of these ornaments are Majapahit Kingdom relics, bestowed and taken due to the loss of the war. The adaptation of the form of adornment to Islamic principles does not necessarily mean that the original significance of the existing decoration is lost. Surya Majapahit, for example, is not merely an ornament but an expression of Hinduism's belief in the existence of gods. Philosophically, this starkly contrasts the fundamentals of Islamic monotheism (the pillars of Islam and the pillars of faith), which deny the existence of gods. On the other hand, the Wali sees this distinction as a sign of tolerance that Muslims must uphold. As a result, the acculturation of the Great Mosque of Demak became a model for later mosques built in the island of Java during the Wali Songo era.




Based on the results of the analysis of table 3, it can be concluded that the glory of the Majapahit Kingdom heavily influenced the Hindu ornaments in the Great Mosque of Demak in the past, but due to differences in belief principles, Hindu ornaments only functioned as decorations.



### Semantic Analysis of Javanese Ornaments at the Great Mosque of Demak

The Javanese ornaments on the Great Mosque of Demak appear to outnumber all other forms of ornamentation. These decorations have diverse purposes and meanings in semantic aspects, as shown in Table 4 below.

**Table 4:** Semantic analysis of Javanese ornaments

Source: Authors

No	Figure	Function	Meaning
1.		<i>Mustaka</i> is at the top of the <i>tajug</i> roof and shaped like a breadfruit tree leaf. <i>Mustaka</i> has a brown brick colour, like the shape of a traditional Javanese building. The dome of the top is decorated with an organically shaped crown. Above the crown is placed Arabic calligraphy with the words Allah in green.	<i>Mustaka</i> , or crown, is a manifestation of the pinnacle of a king's position. While the word Allah at the top of the <i>mustaka</i> symbolizes that Islam and the word of Allah must guide a King because Allah is the Supreme King.
2.		The shape of the <i>soko guru</i> at the Great Mosque of Demak is round with a circular cross-section. The <i>soko guru</i> is unique, namely geometric cylinders, have no ornament, and without carving or decoration. <i>Soko guru</i> functions as the primary support for the roof of the <i>tajug</i> and the main structure or <i>dalem</i> .	There is a name for each Sunan who is said to have contributed to the four <i>soko guru</i> . The four Sunans are; Sunan Ampel, Sunan Gunung Jati, Sunan Bonang and Sunan Kalijaga. Sunan Bonang contributed the pillars in the Northwest, Sunan Gunung Jati donated the <i>soko</i> in the Southwest, Sunan Ampel donated the <i>soko</i> in the Southeastern part, and the <i>soko</i> that stands in the Northeast is a gift from Sunan Kalijaga or is called <i>saka tatal</i> because they are made to connect one wood to another.
3.		The Bulus or <i>Sengkalan Memet</i> inscription is in the nook of the <i>mihrab</i> room. In the middle, there is a ceramic ornament with a butterfly pattern. The ornament with a <i>bulus</i> design reminds the year the Great Mosque of Demak was founded. <i>Sengkalan memet</i> is composed of inscriptions that can be read in Javanese " <i>iku thothok bulus sikil papat endhas sidji, tahun Çaka angka 1401 sengkalan adegipun masjid Demak</i> ".	Each member of <i>Bulus'</i> body has its meaning. The head of the <i>bulus</i> /turtledove facing upwards symbolizes the number one, the 4 legs symbolize the number four, the body of the turtledove means the number zero, and the turtle's tail represents the number 1. So that 1401 Saka (1479 AD) is the year the Great Mosque of Demak was founded. The year the Great Mosque of Demak was founded is essential

		Sengkalan memet can also be read "Saliro Sunyi Kiblat Ing Gusti "	because it became a milestone in the journey of Islam in Java, so it is vital to perpetuate it.
4.		<i>Dhampar Kencana</i> , is a remnant of the Majapahit Kingdom in the XV century. Initially, <i>Dhampar Kencana</i> was a gift from Prabu Brawijaya V to his son and the 1st King of the Kingdom of Demak, Raden Fatah, to be used as the King's throne. Currently, <i>dhampar kencono</i> is a preaching platform only used for Friday prayers. <i>Dhampar Kencana</i> contains many ornamental motifs, a blend of Javanese culture and Hindu culture, in the form of <i>ukel</i> and <i>kruweng</i> with a medallion-like frame on the outside.	This artifact bears silent witness to Majapahit's defeat at Girindrawardana by the Sultanate of Demak.
5.		In the centre of the mosque are a chandelier that pivots on the tip of the <i>tajug</i> roof and the crown of the mosque. The part of the lamp that crosses the middle of the <i>blandar</i> is carved with a breast decoration to symbolize <i>teluk pak - telu sing cemepak - so dodho paesi</i> . The placement of this chandelier is the same as the design of <i>the Joglo</i> house room.	There is <i>the pajupat</i> concept of the four pillars of the instructor or the four cardinal directions that defend the chandelier and the <i>pancer</i> idea of the chandelier as a depiction of the essence of the human being himself. Aside from lighting, the chandelier also represents the human soul, which is always adorned with holy actions.

Traditional Javanese ornaments fill almost the entire room of the Great Mosque of Demak. Indeed, the shape of the Mosque became a reference for the construction of Islamic mosques in Java with the characteristic roof terraces and the use of pillars supporting the mosque (*soko guru*). Traditional ornaments are limited not only to functional elements, but each ornament has its meaning related to the concept of life and philosophy of Javanese culture. The influence of the Bintoro people, who used to cling to the pre-Islamic beliefs, is inseparable from the usage of Javanese architectural traits, such that when Islam arrived in the area, they still merged Islam with the pre-Islamic beliefs (*kejawen*) to establish the *Kejawen* Islamic religion. *Islam Kejawen* arose as Wali Songo's strategy of spreading Islam to remote locations, therefore, to honour the local population, the Great Mosque was built on the principles of *Islam Kejawen* while retaining the concepts of monotheism so that worshippers feel at ease. Nonetheless, its architecture has become a "mecca" for constructing other mosques in Indonesia. Supatmo and Syafii (2019) have discovered that traditional ornaments on mosques on the North shore of Java as a legacy of the Wali have a variety of aesthetic shapes, purposes, and symbolic meanings directed toward the local architectural styles.

Based on the analysis of Table 4, it can be concluded that traditional Javanese ornaments at the Great Mosque of Demak are heavily influenced by Javanese culture, which is

full of the meaning of life. Unlike Hindu and Islamic ornaments which focus more on aesthetic functions, semantically Javanese ornaments have an applied and aesthetic function full of meaning. The meaning contained is not far from the cosmological concept of the Javanese people, who still adhere to the concept that life must be in harmony with God and other humans.

### **The Influence of Mosques on the Socio-Cultural Development of Society**

The Great Mosque of Demak serves as a place of worship and a centre for education, religious tourism, and Islamic socio-cultural activities. According to Muhajarah (2022), the human urge for religion and tourism fosters the practice of religious tourism in mosques, particularly in underdeveloped nations. This likewise happened to the Great Mosque of Demak, symbolizing Islam's greatness throughout the Wali Songo era.

According to Suryanto, one of the visitors, the Great Mosque has a lot of history and originality, which is why travelers come immediately to learn about the culture at the Mosque:

*"The Great Mosque of Demak is steeped in history and is notable for the pillars brought by Sunan Kalijaga himself." In terms of architecture, this mosque is also heavily influenced by Javanese design, unlike other modern mosques. As a result, I wish to teach my children about the rich history of this mosque."*

(Suryanto, 2023: personal communication, April 6).

The uniqueness of the building of the Great Mosque is also the philosophy of Muslims in carrying out their lives, as explained by Ubaydillah, one of the visitors, as follows:

*"The shape of the Demak Great Mosque's building is unique, Mas." The three-layered roof represents Muslims, particularly Islam, Faith, and Ihsan. These three aspects cannot be separated and will remain inherent in Muslims; thus, a tajuk roof is a reminder of Islam's founding. Another feature of the pillars is that all Sunans give the poles they make. Sunan Kalijaga's saka tatal, constructed one after the other, is the most well-known. His worldview is linked to Sunan Kalijaga's desire for unification and oneness for Muslims and people of all faiths."*

(Ubaydillah, 2023: personal communication, April 9).

This distinctiveness cannot be separated from the Demak region's acculturation of Islamic culture with pre-Islamic culture, as noted by Ahmad, one of the merchants:

*"I know this mosque was built during the Wali Songo era, but the architectural design did not fully incorporate Javanese elements. Although the façade appears to be more typical Javanese, the foyer is dominated by Hindu Majapahit history. The ornaments are also a cross between Hinduism and Islam. Perhaps the cultural acculturation distinguishes and attracts visitors to this mosque."*

(Ahmad, 2023: personal communication, April 9).

The process of acculturation that took place at the Great Mosque affected not only the structure of the mosque building but also a form of respect for the surrounding non-Muslim people. As Ahmad Yani, a mosque administrator, points out, the types of acculturation in the present and the past are also distinct:

*"Sunan and Raden Fatah carried out acculturation in this mosque to respect residents of different religions." Acculturation forms in the past and today are also distinct. Historically, cultural acculturation can be seen in the shape of buildings that follow Hindu architecture. Previously, non-Muslims who wanted to attend Sunan Kalijaga's advice were encouraged to wash their feet, hands, and face to replace ablution. As a result, they entered the mosque spotless. Meanwhile, today's acculturation takes the shape of service to non-Muslim groups. We will explain if*

*they come here to learn about Islamic culture. We are also happy when Muslim and non-Muslim communities here can exchange ideas and culture. The most important thing is not to violate Islamic beliefs."*

(Ahmad Yani, 2023: personal communication, April 9).

Apart from studying history, visiting tourists to the Great Mosque of Demak is also a form of preserving the pilgrimage tradition to Wali's tomb, as told by Sofyan, a visitor, as follows:

*"I come here not only to study the history of the Great Mosque of Demak but more often to visit the tombs of the Wali who have spread Islam."*

(Sofyan, 2023: personal communication, April 6).

As Rita pointed out, the presence of a mosque not only leaves cultural remnants but also influences the preservation of customs.

*"The Great Mosque of Demak has had a lot of influence on the social life of our community; for example, the people around Kauman used to pray in congregation at the mosque. We also routinely hold joint recitations, and then there are the hauls (commemoration of the death/birthday) of Raden Fatah, Sultan Trenggono, and Raden Pati Unus. Usually, this haul is a big event, which begins with the tradition of visiting the graves of the Wali and the Kings of Demak whose haul is being celebrated. There is also a tradition of Blackjack (the 21st of each month). During Ramadan, people routinely distribute free takjil in front of the mosque. Coincidentally, we do recitations every night of the Nuzulul Qur'an (17 Ramadhan). Thus, this Sultan not only abandoned the physical form of the mosque but also spiritually made the people here more religious and respect each other."*

(Rita, 2023: personal communication, April 9).

The survival of the Great Mosque of Demak and the Kauman area, in addition to having a favorable effect on the continuity of communal traditions, is also a symbol of tolerance amongst religious communities, as Rita, a local community, below notes.

*"I believe the non-Muslim community living around the Great Mosque of Demak is very tolerant." They are not bothered by the presence of worshippers in this mosque. People here do not hesitate to distribute killed animal meat to non-Muslim populations during the Eid al-Adha festival."*

(Rita, 2023: personal communication, April 9).

Ubaydillah, a visitor, admits that the people of Demak are very open to differences and the multicultural life around the mosque:

*"I believe Demak's people are very open to differences." A temple and a church were built before this mosque, but we have always worshipped and respected each other, and there has never been discrimination amongst religious communities."*

(Ubaydillah, 2023: personal communication, April 9).

Rita, a resident, revealed that with the Great Mosque of Demak, the people of Demak also feel acculturated:

*"The residents of Demak used to be Hindus because they followed the Majapahit Kingdom, but after Raden Fatah came and built the Great Mosque of Demak, the people of Demak were also introduced to Islamic culture, which was still foreign to their ears. However, thanks to the struggle of the Wali Songo, especially Sunan*

*Kalijaga, the people gradually began to accept Islamic culture and many even followed the teachings of the Wali Songo.”*

(Rita, 2023: personal communication, April 9).

Ahmad Yani also expressed the same thing, that Wali Songo played a major role in creating acculturation in the Demak community:

*“The acculturation brought by Wali Songo did not necessarily change the socio-cultural tradition as a whole, but was carried out slowly, and they even tried to insert the habits of the people in the pre-Islamic period so that they could easily accept Islamic culture, which was very much different from Hindu culture. Sunan Kalijaga, in particular, tried to attract people's interest in Islam through traditional arts and games, which not all Demak people at that time were native to the Javanese tribe. Sunan Kalijaga also allowed the Demak people who had embraced Islam to maintain their ancestral traditions as long as they did not depart from Islamic law, which we know today as Kejawen Islam.”*

(Ahmad Yani, 2023: personal communication, April 9).

Ubaydillah admits that the acculturation that occurred in the past and the acculturation in the present are different because it is influenced by globalization, as follows:

*“Acculturation that still occurs today is usually in the form of preserving customs such as the celebration of Islamic holidays or the commemoration of the birthday of the Sultan of Demak, which are also visited by all elements of society from various cultural entities. Besides that, we often wear traditional Javanese clothes or clothes that Sunan Kalijaga often wore during his lifetime. Of course, this differs from acculturation in the past, which focused more on cultural acculturation between Hindus and Muslims. Currently, acculturation is more flexible and tends not to be realized by society.”*

(Ubaydillah, 2023: personal communication, April 9).

The acculturation at the Great Mosque of Demak was seen as buildings that adopted Javanese, Islamic, Hindu, and Arabian architectural designs. Still, acculturation was also felt in the local community. Acculturation that occurs in society consists of acculturation in the past and acculturation in the present. Acculturation of the Demak people in the past was inseparable from the Wali Songo's role in spreading Islam. Wali Songo, especially Sunan Kalijaga, tries to preach and attract the interest of people who previously adhered to Hinduism to convert to Islam through arts and cultural activities, including wayang, songs, gamelan music, carving, and clothing. Even though wayang itself is a Hindu religious art, Sunan Kalijaga was able to modify the characters and stories in wayang, which were originally about the Mahabharata and Ramayana, into Islamic stories that were easily accepted by the public. In terms of music, the use of songs and musical instruments is prohibited by some Muslim scholars. Still, Sunan Kalijaga makes it more flexible where the songs used are traditional game songs in Javanese, where the lyrics contain invitations to do good and contain Islamic meanings. One of the songs the creation of Sunan Kalijaga that still exists in today's society is Lir-Irir. Then, the gamelan, which was previously a Hindu-Buddhist musical instrument, was then given a composition and adapted to Javanese society at that time. This gamelan is mostly performed at traditional events and is still used today. In terms of dress, Sunan also tried to imitate the clothing of the people and nobility of the Majapahit Kingdom so that he did not order people to change their way of dressing, like Muslims in general. With such acculturation, gradually, the people who were skeptical of Islam finally began to be touched and became converts but continued to carry out the traditions in the previous teachings as long as they did not violate Islamic principles. This is what eventually gave birth to a Kejawen Islamic teaching, in which Islamic teachings have been influenced by Javanese culture as a form of Sunan's respect for Javanese people who are



thick with ancestral traditions. The community still practices Kejawen Islam and has even spread to the Surakarta and Jogjakarta regions.

Meanwhile, today's acculturation is not so obvious. The acculturation can be seen in preserving community traditions on Islamic day and using traditional Javanese clothing daily, which can still be found in society today. Islamic celebrations carried out by the community around the mosque show that the Mosque has a significant role in developing the socio-cultural life of the community. One example of the celebration is Haul Raden Fatah which is held every 13 Jumadil Akhir (Islamic calendar system). During the *haul* celebration, the community also had social events in the courtyards of the mosque and the square, such as mass circumcisions and Al-Qur'an reading activities (*tilawatil Qur'an*), which were read by hafidz and hafidzah students. In addition to the *haul*, the community conducts routine recitations to commemorate Islamic holidays. Every Friday night Kliwon, the society performs pilgrimage activities (*makbaroh*) to the Raden Fatah and Sultan Trenggono graves. This demonstrates the local community's atmosphere of harmony and tolerance. Another tradition still being preserved by the local community is the tradition of the percussion of the Sunan Kalijaga drum, followed by a congregational night prayer at 24.00 WIB.

In addition, an activity as a form of acculturation preservation is to match Sunan Kalijaga's great Clothes, namely *Kotang Ontokusumo*, on the 10th of Dzulhijjah. In this tradition, traditional Javanese or Muslim clothes in the style of Sunan Kalijaga are worn simultaneously by mosque administrators and other participants. The community's routine is an example of how the community and the congregation at the Great Mosque of Demak have linked their social components. The Mosque is continuously used as a centre for Islamic religious study in the Java region. These actions demonstrate that mosques have complicated roles and functions in the social order of society. Hasanain and Muslimatusshalihah (2021) believe that the mosque's role in the community's social life positively impacts relations between people, can increase religiosity and makes society more moral. In addition, Shari'atmadari and Azad (2021) admit that there are natural mechanisms that occur in social life around mosques, where crime, social inequality, conflict, and tension among the residents will at least decrease when they are around mosques, while the cultural aspect is reflected in the physical form of the building which is an acculturation of three cultures at once.

Despite being dominated by Javanese culture, the shape of the building is made to approximate the form of a temple and merge with other Chinese cultures so that it is appealing and pleasant for non-Muslim citizens to visit. Cultural preservation has been carried out to preserve the mosque building and different customs since the Wali Songo era. Khaleghian, Adibzadeh, and Saedvand (2021) point out that five socio-cultural factors play an essential role in the resilience of mosques, including presence, community participation, community dedication to cultural preservation, diversity, and modernity. Al-Krenawi (2016) says mosques have always been a good way to promote the community's education, religious politics, economy, and social life. The rich tradition of the Mosque makes it a reference mosque for studying religion as well as the socio-cultural lives of its people. Despite being dominated by Muslims, the Muslim community may coexist with non-Muslim people surrounding the Great Demak mosque complex.

### **The Effect of the Mosque on the Economy of the Community**

The Great Mosque of Demak, in the center of a residential area, contributes significantly to the local community's economy. Some prefer to trade in the Pujasera Masjid Agung Demak street vendor area. According to Sari, one of Pujasera's souvenir vendors.

*"The presence of the Demak Great Mosque and Wali's tomb has significantly impacted our economy." Especially during Ramadan or the commemoration of Islamic holidays, many people from outside the city come on pilgrimages. So Alhamdulillah, many bought pilgrimage equipment and souvenirs, especially jenang"*

(Sari, 2023: personal communication, April 6).

Ahmad, a merchant, said that the Great Mosque of Demak affected not only the economy of the people of Demak, but also out-of-town traders who moved to Demak.

*"Previously, almost all of the merchants selling at the Demak Great Mosque's food court were Kauman people, but now only 60% of the traders are Demak natives, with the remaining 40% coming from outside the city, such as Kudus, Semarang, and Rembang." This transition occurred because business stalls in this area are frequently hereditary, so if a generation dies, the kiosk would be handed on to someone who can afford to pay the rent."*

(Ahmad, 2023: personal communication, April 6).

The impact of the existence of the Great Mosque of Demak on the economy is not only felt by the street vendors but also contributes to the economy of horse coachmen in the Demak area, especially during the month of Ramadan, as stated by Kani below:

*"During Ramadan, I normally earn more since many locals or visitors request to be delivered to Demak's Great Mosque. Aside from fasting days, few people are here since many guests prefer to ride a motorized vehicle rather than a delman (horse-drawn vehicle)."*

(Kani, 2023: personal communication, April 6).



**Fig. 2:** (a) Souvenir merchant at the food court; (b) delman traffic in the yard area of Demak Great Mosque

Source: Tourism Department, Demak Regency (2022)

The results show that the Great Mosque of Demak can catalyze the community's economy, especially the indigenous people of Demak Bintoro. The traders run their respective businesses by selling various accessories, souvenirs, pilgrimage equipment, and souvenirs. This follows Rizki and Zulaikha (2022) that the existence of a mosque can boost the economy of MSME actors around the mosque. The urbanization process by traders from outside the city also contributed to the economy around the Great Mosque of Demak. Malee and Balwi (2021) revealed that the mosque is used not only as a place of worship and a center for religious studies but can become a centre for business and financial development that encourages a sustainable economy, especially for business people. Economic activity around the Great Mosque of Demak is an example that mosques are not always known as sacred places for worship but are also good places for muamalah and carrying out economic activities following Islamic law.

## Conclusion

The Great Mosque of Demak as a historical place not only provides beauty but also presents its meaning contained in the design of the building and the ornaments in it. Based on the research results, the pragmatic element in the mosque is the function of the mosque from time to time. Pragmatically, the function of the mosque has changed over time, the mosque has

not only functioned as a place of worship like when it was first built but also functions as a place of pilgrimage tourism which has made the mosque still exist today. Together with pragmatic concepts, the semantic ornaments of Islam, Hinduism and Java contribute greatly to the syncretism of the mosque. Each ornament has its meaning. The semantics of Islamic ornaments are in the form of symbols of Divinity and Apostolate, always associated with the concept of monotheism and the principles of Syairah Islam. The semantics of Hindu ornaments highlight the Majapahit culture so that relics from the Majapahit Empire dominate it. Although the use of these ornaments is different from Islamic principles, the existence of Hindu ornaments implies tolerance between pre-Islamic culture and Islamic culture. It is only used as a symbol of beauty. While Javanese ornaments can be found in almost all corners of the mosque, semantically, every Javanese ornament always contains the meaning of the philosophy of life adopted by the Javanese people, namely *sangkan paraning dumadi*. The use of Javanese ornaments as well as a legacy of the Wali, has a variety of aesthetic shapes, purposes, and symbolic meanings directed toward the local architectural styles.

The acculturation is seen in the mosque building, which blends Hindu, Javanese and Islamic cultures. However, this acculturation is also felt by the local community where the Demak people who previously adhered to pre-Islamic religions, especially Hindus, can accept the existence of Islam until they embrace the religion but still do not completely abandon old traditions, giving rise to a *kejawen* Islamic teaching so that the Demak people do not feel ostracized and surprised at the changes. The Great Mosque of Demak also influences the socio-cultural and economic life of the local community. The preservation of the Great Mosque of Demak, carried out by the community, generally works together and worships together on celebrating holy days related to Wali Songo. Cultural preservation was also carried out by building the Great Mosque of Demak Museum as a place for preserving heritage objects from Wali Songo and a silent witness to the construction of mosques in the past. Economically, the community is greatly assisted by the existence of the Great Mosque of Demak as a religious tourism site which can increase the sales turnover of traders and regional income. Throughout time, this Mosque still maintains its existence as a place of worship, a historical building, and a symbol of the democratic nature of the Demak people as a result of Wali Songo's socio-cultural legacy.

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