

# The Digitalization of the Ornamental Variety of the Tuha Indrapuri Mosque: An Initiative to Preserve Aceh's Traditional Visual Arts

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines the digitalization motifs at the Tuha Indrapuri Mosque as a means of preserving traditional Acehnese visual arts. This mosque stands as a historical landmark that exemplifies the amalgamation of Hindu, Islamic, and local wisdom through its decorative motifs, which possess both aesthetic and religious significance. However, numerous of these motifs have suffered damage and are at risk of being lost due to a lack of comprehensive documentation. This study employed a descriptive qualitative methodology through literature review, observation, interviews, documentation, and visual digitization utilizing graphics software, resulting in two-dimensional and three-dimensional decorative motif designs. The research findings reveal that the decorative motifs at the Tuha Indrapuri Mosque comprise floral and geometric shapes that embody the aesthetic, symbolic, and spiritual values of the Acehnese people. Digitization serves as a strategic step to document and preserve traditional decorative motifs, ensuring their relevance in contemporary artistic developments. Practically, the outcomes of this digitization can be utilized as design assets for the creative industry, authentic references for future physical building restorations, and digital educational media that facilitate the younger generation's access and learning about Acehnese cultural heritage visually.

## KEYWORDS

Digitalization,  
Decorative Motifs, Tuha  
Mosque, Indrapuri,  
Aceh

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## INTRODUCTION

Aceh is famous for its thick Islamic tradition and has many ancient mosques, one of which is the Tuha Indrapuri Mosque which is located in Indrapuri district, Aceh Besar regency. This mosque is not only a place of worship, but also a cultural heritage that depicts a combination of Hindu, Islamic, and local Acehnese wisdom such as ornamental varieties. The existence of mosques in the community can be the center of various activities, both social and religious (Rinanda et al., 2025). The proximity of the mosque to the life of the local community affects the shape and characteristics of the mosque which is different in each region. These differences occur due to the influence of the habits, culture, and customs of the community around the mosque. Therefore, in addition to being used as a place of worship, mosques also play an important role in various social activities that involve the community. Mosques are also important buildings for the community, especially Muslims (Mansyah & Jamil, 2024).

For Muslims, mosques are places to carry out worship activities, such as congregational prayer rituals. The abundant cultural diversity in Indonesia is a factor in the architectural aspect of the physical form of mosque buildings that vary from region to region due to adjustments to local customs and culture (Nabila et al., 2020). Mosques are also the main representation of Islamic

religious identity. On the other hand, mosques can also be considered as a product of a moving culture, as they are a form of architecture that is always created, used massively by the Muslim community, and passed down from generation to generation. Therefore, the architecture of the archipelago mosque shows the combination of Islamic elements with local traditions in each region (Prasetyo, 2023).

Buildings are not only created in a modest form, but also made with various ornaments that function as part of beauty and increase visual appeal to look beautiful and show an authoritative impression. The decorations used in mosques have special characteristics, roles, and meanings created by their creators when the building was built. One of the main characteristics is the variety of ornaments that have aesthetic and symbolic value as the cultural identity of the Acehnese people. In the context of traditional culture, the existence of ornaments is present in various forms of visual works, both in objects and monumental buildings, traditional dwellings, and sacred buildings such as mosques as a representation of the cultural identity of the community (Agustin et al., 2020). The variety of ornaments in mosque buildings not only functions as an aesthetic element, but also contains symbolic values and religious identity of the Muslim community (Nirmala et al., 2019).

As a cultural identity, ornamental varieties undergo a process of growth and development over time and still maintain traditional character and visual patterns. The peculiarity of Acehnese customs lies in the breath of Islam contained in it (LAKA, 2016, p. vii). From a cultural point of view, the transformation of ornamental varieties shows that culture often undergoes modifications and renewal with the times. These changes give birth to a variety of new forms, styles, and visual characters without removing the traditional basic elements. Aceh is rich in its diverse decorations, both in the form of decorative patterns and ornaments that appear in each cultural area. The variation in patterns is influenced by environmental conditions, socio-cultural backgrounds, and interactions with outside cultures that enter the community. However, each type of decoration still shows a certain archetype that is a visual characteristic in each cultural area in Aceh (Junaidi & Riyani, 2018). Traditional ornaments are a form of decorative art that is created following patterns and rules that have been applied from generation to generation, and is an element of tradition that is appreciated in the way it is made and presented (Nirmala et al., 2019).

The variety of decorations in this mosque reflect the outlook on life, aesthetics, and identity of the Acehnese people in the past. Ornamental varieties are a representation of cultural characters that have passed through the stages of birth, growth, and development without losing their distinctiveness. From a cultural point of view, it reflects the process of cultural development that is actively occurring. Unfortunately, many types of traditional decorations are currently in danger of disappearing due to age factors, lack of records, changes in building functions, and low attention to the younger generation. Therefore, protection efforts are needed by utilizing digital technology. Digitalization is a strategic solution to document, preserve, and reinterpret various decorations to keep them in line with the current development of visual culture. Digitization of ornaments or ornamental varieties is the act of moving the form of ornaments that incorporate certain parts of a house building into digital visuals utilizing computer devices and electronic technology (Kafri et al., 2023).

Previous research on ancient mosques in Aceh generally emphasizes more on building structural elements, roof shapes, and the history of their construction, as studied by Annisa (2017) and Bahri (2018). On the other hand, discussions that raise about the variety of ornaments, especially those related to the Tuha Indrapuri Mosque, are still very minimal. Although this mosque has been certified as a cultural heritage by the Aceh Cultural Heritage Preservation Center, analysis of the visual character and aesthetic meaning of its ornamental variety is still very rare. Junaidi & Riyani (2018) indeed discuss the variety of ornaments of Aceh in general, but have not touched on the aspect of precision digitization of this specific object of the mosque.

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on the precision visual digitization of the Tuha Indrapuri Mosque ornaments that have never been done in depth in previous research. For comparison, Annisa's (2017) research emphasizes more on the influence of Hindu architecture on the shape of mosque buildings, while Bahri (2018) focuses more on analysis related to Islamic values contained in building structures in general. Meanwhile, Junaidi and Riyani (2018) discuss the grouping of Aceh's ornamental varieties based on an ethnographic review and cultural geography

that are influenced by the environmental, cultural, and life conditions of the people in each region of Aceh. The study shows that each ornamental variety has a different visual character and cultural identity, but still maintains the basic ornamental pattern typical of Aceh. In contrast to previous research, this study presents a visual documentation process through two-dimensional and three-dimensional digitization as a strategy for cultural preservation as well as the development of innovative designs to remain relevant to the needs of today's society (Sukanadi, 2022).

The urgency of this research is based on the physical condition of the various ornaments in the interior of the Tuha Indrapuri Mosque which began to suffer damage over time. It is important to document and transform the media into traditional motifs as a form of preservation of visual culture so that the symbolic and philosophical values contained in it remain known by the next generation (Halawa & Kholida, 2022). In addition to the factor of physical damage, the low attention of the younger generation to the visual heritage of the past demands a more modern and interactive transformation of preservation media. The transformation of traditional ornamental varieties into modern design media also shows that ornaments not only serve as decorative elements, but can be developed into contemporary visual products that still retain local cultural values (Andriyanti et al., 2022). Scientific studies of this ancient mosque are very crucial to be carried out, because its presence is not only limited to seeing the physical growth of the mosque, but also as an effort to uncover the dynamics of Islamic civilization in the archipelago. Through the process of analysis and documentation of various ornaments, philosophical values, Islamic teachings, and cultural identities contained in motifs can be understood and preserved as the cultural heritage of the Acehnese people for future generations (Salihin et al., 2019).

This research aims to carry out the digitization process of the decorative variety of the Tuha Indrapuri Mosque in order to produce a visual database in a precise digital format. Through a descriptive qualitative method, this study intends to systematically document the forms of flora and geometric motifs and reveal the aesthetic and religious meanings inherent in each ornament. The final results of this study are expected to be an authentic reference for future building restoration efforts as well as a creative inspiration for the development of craft arts and designs based on local wisdom.

## METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative method with the aim of exploring in depth the meaning and visual characteristics of the ornamental variety in the Tuha Indrapuri Mosque. In the qualitative method, the researcher is positioned as a central instrument in the research process (Sugiyono, 2019, p. 223). The qualitative approach was chosen because it is able to provide symbolic and contextual interpretations of the aesthetic values and religious philosophies that underlie each ornamental variety. In this process, researchers play a role as the main instrument in collecting and processing data in the field.

### 1. Research Subject and Location

The subject studied is a variety of traditional Acehnese ornaments which include flora and geometric motifs on the interior of the mosque. The research location is centered in Indrapuri Pasar village, Indrapuri District, Aceh Besar Regency, Aceh Province. The selection of the location was based on the historical value of the building which was a former Hindu temple which was later transformed into a mosque in 1618 AD.

### 2. Research Instruments

In addition to the researcher as a key instrument, the supporting tools used include digital cameras for visual documentation, stationery for field notes, and computer hardware and software (CorelDRAW and 3D design applications) for the digitization stage. The visual digitization process uses digital graphic design software and hardware to transform ornament documentation into more accurate and easily developed images in modern design media (Budiarta, 2022).

### 3. Data Collection Techniques

The data is compiled using four interintegrated techniques:

- 1) Literature Study: Examining literature related to the history of the Tuha Indrapuri Mosque, Acehnese ornamental variety journals, and ornamental digitization theory to build a solid theoretical foundation.
- 2) Observation: Conducting direct observations at the location to map the types of motifs, arrangement patterns, sculptural techniques, and the location of various ornaments on architectural elements such as pillars, eas, and lisplang.
- 3) Interview: Involving traditional leaders, Acehnese cultural figures, and administrators of the Tuha Indrapuri mosque to explore the philosophical meaning behind ornamental varieties such as *Pucok Reubong* and *Bungong Meulu*.
- 4) Documentation: Recording every physical detail of the ornamental variety in the form of precision photos as raw materials for the digitization process of the ornamental variety in the Tuha Indrapuri mosque.

### 4. Research Procedure

The work procedure in this study is divided into three main stages:

- 1) Pre-Field Stage: Administrative preparation and determination of study focus.
- 2) Field Stage: The process of collecting visual and verbal data on the mosque site.
- 3) Visual Digitization Stage: A crucial stage where the documented photo is converted into vector format (2D) using graphics *software* to clarify the visual details, which is then developed into a three-dimensional (3D) model to provide a more scalable representation of the form.

### 5. Data Analysis Techniques

Data was analyzed using an interactive method consisting of data reduction (sorting out relevant motifs), data presentation (describing the form and results of digitization), and drawing conclusions based on a visual semiotics approach to reveal the spiritual message inherent in each variety of ornaments in the Tuha Indrapuri mosque

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Overview

The Tuha Indrapuri Mosque was originally a Hindu temple building. Then it was converted into a mosque building estimated in 1618 AD.

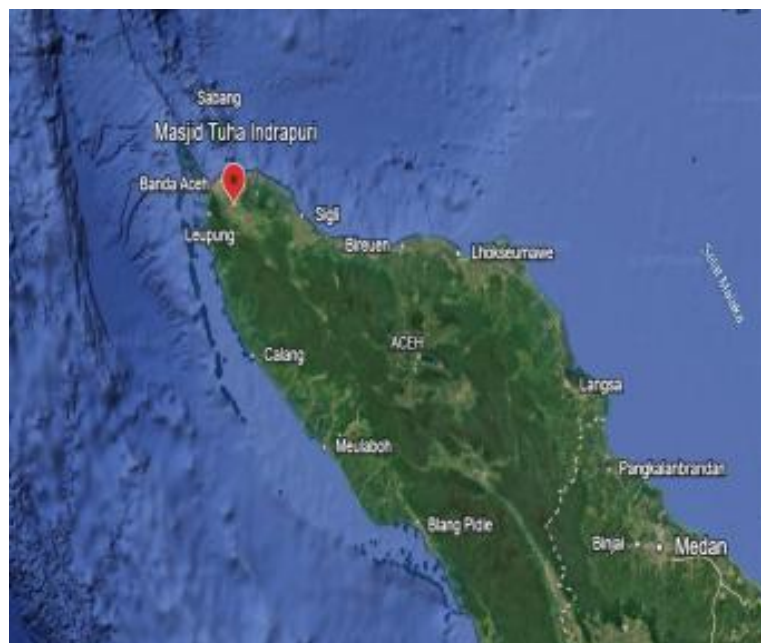


**Figure 1.** Tuha Indrapuri Mosque  
(Source: Documentation, Mansyah's Work 2025)

The building of this mosque stands on the ruins of a former Hindu temple (Annisa, 2017). The shape of the mosque building has undergone a lot of renovation and was last renovated in 1993.

Surrounded by a wall building approximately 2 meters high, the front of the mosque has a gate as well as a place for ablution, the left side is a 3-storey building that is useful for the rest of the mosque workers. In the past, this mosque was a center for Islamic religious activities and other important activities. However, currently, the Tuha Indrapuri mosque is only used as a place for prayer, recitation and cultural and traditional cultural activities by the surrounding community. The decoration on the interior of the Tuha Indrapuri Mosque building consists of a variety of ornamental types of Arabic script calligraphy and flora motifs and geometric motifs. Geometric is something that has a character or is made with lines and dots, shape (Susanto, 2011, p. 152).

The Tuha Indrapuri Mosque is located a little far from the city of Banda Aceh, located in the village of Indrapuri market, Indrapuri district, Aceh Besar Regency, Aceh province. Road access to this mosque is very easy because it is close to the Banda Aceh Medan highway, but it is small and in a crowded environment (Bahri, 2018).



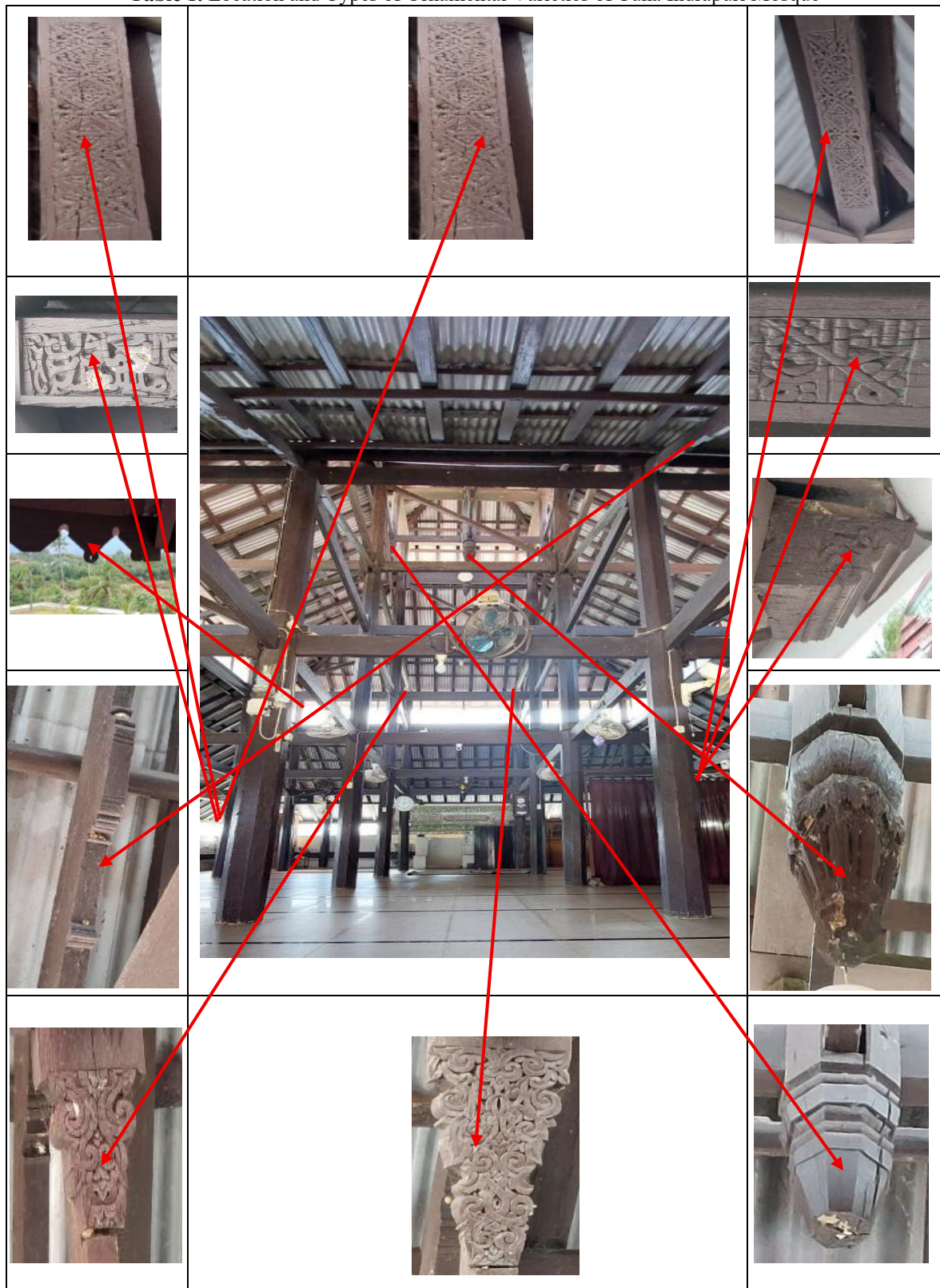
**Figure 2.** Location Map of Tuha Indrapuri Mosque  
(Source: Google Earth 2025)

## 2. Types, Forms, and Digitalization of Ornamental Varieties

As explained above, the types of ornaments used in the Tuha Indrapuri Mosque use a variety of flora (plants), and geometric. The types of ornamental varieties in the research objects are diverse in shapes, ranging from geometric, naturalistic, decorative motifs, to abstract forms. The geometric motifs in the Tuha Indrapuri Mosque feature repeated patterns of lines and planes, creating an attractive visual decorative look. In Islamic decoration, this motif is used to create an orderly, balanced, and visually beautiful impression on the mosque building. Research by Adriani & Fitriani (2023) also explains how this classification of motifs is applied to other cultural objects such as the Batak Angkola ulos weaving motif. The main motif and supporting motif are a unit contained in a variety of ornaments or ornaments (Mansyah et al., 2023). Shapes are visual in ornaments resulting from the repetition of certain elements so that they produce a balanced pattern (Maulana et al., 2018).

**a. Types of Ornamental Varieties**

**Table 1.** Location and Types of Ornamental Varieties of Tuha Indrapuri Mosque



**b. Shape and digitalization of Ornamental Varieties**

**Table 1.** Shape and Digitization of the Ornamental Variety of the Tuha Indrapuri Mosque.  
 (Source: Karya Mansyah, 2025)

Name of Ornamental Variety	Current Condition	Application	Digitization Two-Dimensional (2D)	Digitization Three-Dimensional (3D)
<i>Reubung and Awan Sitangke</i>		On the Horses of the building		
<i>Reubung and Awan Sitangke</i>		On the Horses of the building		
<i>Squirrels and Squirrels</i>		On the Horses of the building		

*Squirrels  
and  
Squirrels*



On the  
Horses of  
the  
building



*Sitangke  
clouds*



At the  
end of the  
building  
easel



*Calligraphy  
and clouds  
sitangke*



On the  
building  
easel



**Banana  
Heart**



On the  
building  
easel



**Banana  
Heart**



On the  
building  
easel



**Triangle  
shape**



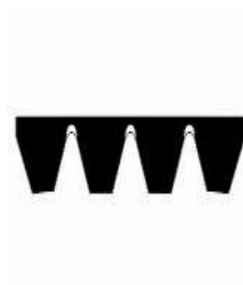
On  
lisplang



**Triangle  
shape**



On  
lisplang



**Irregular  
shape**



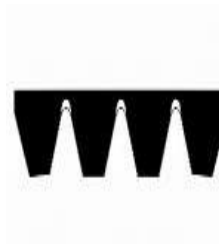
On the  
building  
easel



**Triangle  
shape**



On  
lisplang



**Arabic  
calligraphy**



On the  
building  
easel



**Arabic  
calligraphy**



On the  
building  
easel



### **c. An Examination of the Aesthetic and Symbolic Significance of Ornamental Plant Varieties**

Based on the results of documentations and digitalization, the Tuha Indrapuri Mosque exhibits visual richness that serves not only as a decorative element but also as a representation of the beliefs of the Acehnese people. The use of flora motifs that stylize the shape of native Acehnese plants demonstrates the application of Islamic aesthetic principles that avoid realistic depictions of living beings, resulting in symbolic and decorative ornamental forms. The analysis of visual aspects and symbolic meaning also reveals the similarity of characteristics reviewed through the principles of fine art, as evidenced in the study of Malay ornamental varieties (Sarinah & Azmi, 2019). In its development, traditional Acehnese visual elements no longer solely function as part of practical needs or rituals but have evolved into aesthetic representations and cultural identities that can be applied to various contemporary visual media. This transformation indicates that traditional ornamental varieties possess the ability to continue adapting without compromising their original philosophical value and visual character (Kafri & Wijaya, 2020). The existence of traditional ornaments not only serves an aesthetic function as a visual decoration but can also be adapted into contemporary design as an endeavor to preserve and strengthen cultural identity (Mesra et al., 2022).

Furthermore, each variety of ornaments with motifs in the Tuha Indrapuri Mosque carries a philosophical significance that harmonizes to form the visual identity of the building. The Pucok Reubong motif, for instance, visually represents an elongated triangular pattern, symbolizing growth and vitality, and reflecting the character of the Acehnese people who are resolute and prioritize spiritual values. Additionally, the Bungong Meulu motif, derived from the stylization of jasmine flowers, embodies the purity and fragrance of morals, while simultaneously establishing an aesthetic equilibrium between the sturdiness of the wooden structure and the softness of the floral ornaments. Conversely, the Banana Heart motif underscores the local uniqueness of Aceh, interpreting the banana tree as a symbol of the utility of human life for others. Consequently, the overall diversity of decorations not only serves as a decorative element but also as a representation of the philosophical, social, and spiritual values prevalent in Acehnese society.

### **d. A Comparative Analysis of Uniqueness with Other Mosques in Aceh**

In contrast to the diverse array of ornaments found at the Tuha Ulee Kareng Mosque in Banda Aceh, the ornaments in the Tuha Indrapuri Mosque exhibit a more robust character, reflecting the influence of Hindu-Islamic acculturation. The Ulee Kareng Mosque predominantly draws inspiration from colonial and Arab influences in its interior design. Conversely, the Tuha Indrapuri Mosque preserves fundamental geometric patterns reminiscent of ancient temple carvings, yet undergoes “Islamization” through the incorporation of plant motifs and Arabic script calligraphy.

This university’s uniqueness underscores the architectural theory that mosques are not merely religious artifacts but also mobile cultural products that encapsulate the dynamics of the community that constructed them. The transformation of the Tuha Indrapuri Mosque from a Hindu temple to a mosque in 1618 AD rendered it a rare visual laboratory within the archipelago.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research elucidates that the ornamental variety within the Tuha Indrapuri Mosque constitutes a distinctive visual entity arising from the amalgamation of Hindu-Islamic values, which is manifested through the predominance of flora and geometric motifs such as Pucok Reubong, Bungong Meulu, and Banana Heart. Interpretatively, these ornaments transcend their role as mere decorations of space, serving as a manifestation of the theological identity and local wisdom of the Acehnese people, which symbolize purity, perseverance, and the utility of life. Digitization endeavors into 2D and 3D formats have successfully transformed the physical heritage susceptible to deterioration into a precise digital asset, thereby ensuring the permanent preservation of the aesthetic core of this historic site. The implications of these findings hold significant importance for the preservation of technology-based cultural heritage, wherein the outcomes of digitization can serve as an authentic database for the physical restoration of buildings in the future, as well as inspiration for the creative industry that remains rooted in local cultural traditions.

Although this digitization provides a practical solution in documentation, this research acknowledges limitations in terms of the exploration of supporting materials and variations of manual sculptural techniques that are challenging to fully replicate by graphic software. Consequently, it is recommended for further research to expand the study on the aspects of the wood material utilized and conduct a broader comparative analysis with ancient mosques situated outside the Aceh Besar region to map the distribution of ornamental patterns across the archipelago. Additionally, the development of Augmented Reality (AR)-based interactive educational media is highly recommended to enhance the attention and accessibility of the younger generation to the philosophical values inherent in this sacred architecture.

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