

# ANALYSIS OF MOTIFS AND SYMBOLISM IN THE CARVING ART ON THE MIHRAB AND SIDE WALLS OF AL-FALAH MOSQUE, MARGOYOSO

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**Abstract.** Wood carving is a traditional art form that has flourished in Jepara, with carved wood frequently utilized as ornamentation in mosque architecture. The Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque is one such structure that incorporates these carvings, serving both to preserve the art of wood carving and to showcase a fusion of Middle Eastern architectural styles with traditional artistry. This study aims to uncover the meanings and values embedded in the carvings by analyzing the motifs and symbolism found on the \*mihrab\* (prayer niche) and side walls of the Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque. Specifically, the research seeks to identify the wood carvings present, the types of motifs employed, their symbolic significance, and the underlying values they convey. A descriptive qualitative research method was adopted, utilizing data collection techniques such as observation, structured interviews, documentation, and literature review. Data analysis involved data collection, reduction, presentation, conclusion drawing, and verification. The findings reveal that the \*mihrab\* and side walls of the Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque feature diverse wood-carved motifs, each carrying distinct symbolic meaning. These carvings embody various values, including those related to the Divine, religion, social interaction, morality, and cultural preservation.

**Keywords:** Mihrab, Motif, Decorative Pattern, Woodcarving, Symbolism

## 1. Introduction

Visual art is a form of culture that continues to evolve alongside societal life. The beauty of an artwork is perceived through its visual form based on visual elements harmoniously integrated with the work's style and inherent values (Pratiwinindya et al., 2017). Visual art serves not only to satisfy aesthetic needs but also acts as a medium for conveying ideas, values, beliefs, and cultural identities. It is the product of human thought and craftsmanship. According to Salam et al. (2020), the beauty radiating from human creations is known as artistic beauty. One form of visual art closely linked to Javanese culture is the art of woodcarving. Historically, woodcarving has served as a decorative element that enhances the beauty and value of objects and structures, such as houses, furniture, traditional buildings, and religious edifices.

Within the context of Indonesian culture, woodcarving holds a significant position as a form of traditional art. The motifs employed in this art form are highly diverse. These motifs constitute the essence of the decorative design, arranged from visual elements to create beautiful, harmonious patterns and ornaments (Kasanah & Naam, 2024). Carving motifs range from traditional designs to new creations born of imagination or inspired by real-world objects processed through simplification, stylization, and specific compositional arrangements. Beyond mere aesthetic appeal, the chosen motifs often carry symbolic meanings linked to cultural values and the community's perspective on the environment and life itself.

Indonesian woodcarving features a wide array of motifs and distinctive styles, a prominent example being Jepara carving. Jepara woodcarving is a valuable asset to the Indonesian nation (Viqriani, 2024).

Jepara woodcarving is a cultural heritage distinguished by unique forms and motifs that have evolved over centuries and been passed down through generations. While the motifs employed may sometimes be modified versions or adaptations of various Indonesian decorative styles, the craftsmanship of Jepara artisans remains remarkably consistent compared to that of surrounding regions. It is for this reason that Jepara has earned the title "Carving City."

Jepara woodcarving serves not only as an expression of fine art but also finds application in functional contexts, such as household furniture and architectural ornamentation. Religious structures, particularly mosques, frequently incorporate Jepara carvings as decorative elements. In mosques, these carvings serve purposes beyond mere decoration; their beauty often conceals deeper symbolic and spiritual meanings. The motifs found in mosques often embody philosophical significance linked to religious teachings, moral values, and the community's worldview. Consequently, mosque carvings act as a medium for conveying spiritual and life values while reinforcing local cultural identity. These ornaments also enhance the visual appeal and significance of the building itself.

The integration of woodcarving into mosque architecture presents a compelling subject within the study of visual arts, illustrating the interplay between traditional art and religious life. Mosques are viewed not merely as places of worship but also as cultural spaces that showcase community creativity and serve as venues for learning and self-reflection. The ornamentation found in mosques contributes to visual identity while simultaneously serving as a medium to articulate life and religious values through visual language.

The mihrab is a crucial architectural feature of the mosque. Beyond indicating the qibla (the direction of prayer toward the Kaaba), it serves as the designated space for the imam to lead prayers. Given its vital functional role, the mihrab often receives special attention in architectural design and decoration. Mihrabs are typically adorned with various ornaments such as calligraphy, geometric patterns, floral motifs, and other creative designs that enhance their quality; these embellishments not only provide visual aesthetic appeal but also open up possibilities for symbolic meanings linked to values of life and religion.

Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque is one of the mosques that incorporates carved ornamentation into its architectural design. Located in Margoyoso Village, Kalinyamatan District, Jepara Regency, the mosque was originally established around 1922. It has undergone several minor renovations and approximately three major overhauls; however, only two of these major renovations have been documented: one in the 1980s and the most recent one, which took place between 2015 and 2021. During this latest renovation, various decorative elements were employed, most notably wood carvings. These carvings adorn several parts of the structure, including the mihrab (prayer niche) and the adjacent side walls. The carvings on the mihrab and side walls are not merely visually appealing but are also rich in meaning. Nevertheless, public understanding regarding the symbolic significance and spiritual values embedded in these motifs remains limited, necessitating in-depth research to uncover the visual meanings and symbolism they contain.

Furthermore, the ongoing evolution of the times has influenced shifts in architectural styles and the use of ornamentation in buildings. Modern architecture tends to favor minimalist styles for various reasons, a trend that risks leading to the

abandonment of traditional ornamental arts. Through minimalist and technology-driven approaches, modern architecture often obscures the local identity inherent in traditional architecture (Nisa & Zahra, 2025). Consequently, incorporating elements of traditional ornamental art is crucial serving both as a preservation effort and as a tangible expression of the visual beauty and symbolic meaning of traditional art. It also demonstrates that traditional art can remain relevant and compatible when integrated with modern architectural styles. Traditional art is a cultural element capable of influencing cultural change and serves as a form of cultural identity with both social and ritual purposes (Prasiska & Wati, 2024). This study also aims to explore the symbolic meaning behind traditional Jepara woodcarving art, in order to ensure its preservation and continued existence amidst changing times. According to Nisa and Zahra (2025), integrating traditional values into modern architecture is not merely an effort to preserve the past, but a step toward designing a future that reflects cultural identity. This implies that incorporating traditional art does not mean being trapped in the past; rather, it represents an effort to shape the future as individuals of character and culture.

Based on the explanation above, this study focuses on uncovering the meanings and values embodied in the wood carvings found on the mihrab and side walls of the Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque through an analysis of motifs and symbolism. The research aims to identify the specific mihrab and side wall sections featuring wood carvings, the types of motifs employed, their symbolic significance, and the values they convey. In other words, this study is expected to contribute to the field of visual arts particularly regarding the interplay between art, culture, and spirituality and to support efforts to preserve the traditional art of wood carving as part of the nation's cultural heritage. A descriptive qualitative research method was employed, as this approach facilitates the exploration and explanation of the qualitative aspects of the research subjects. Data collection was conducted through observation, semi-structured interviews, documentation, and a literature review. Observation served to analyze the research objects, while semi-structured interviews were used to gather information from key informants, including mosque administrators, wood carvers, and the mosque's interior designer. Documentation provided accurate evidence regarding the research objects and the research process itself. Additionally, the literature review supplied secondary data to support and reinforce the research findings. The research process encompassed stages of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and verification. Data were first collected; subsequently, information relevant to the research focus was selected and presented in written form. The processed data were then simplified and verified to ensure accuracy. Data triangulation techniques were also applied by aligning and ensuring consistency among findings derived from observation, interviews, and relevant literature.

## 2. Results and Discussion

The majority of the residents in Margoyoso Village practice Islam. As a result, the village is home to several mosques, one of which is the Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque. This mosque boasts an intriguing architectural design, created through the fusion of Middle Eastern modern architectural concepts and traditional Javanese art. The incorporation of traditional art as a means of preservation further enhances its appeal. The Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque is one of the most magnificent mosques in Margoyoso Village – a fact clearly evident in its interior, where the walls and ceiling are adorned with a variety of beautiful and intricate decorations. Among these is the mihrab, an essential element of any mosque; the mihrab at the Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque is embellished with high-quality wood carvings. Not only the mihrab but also the side walls are adorned

with exquisite wood carvings. This mosque exemplifies the harmonious blend of Middle Eastern architecture and traditional Javanese art. One aspect of Javanese art is showcased through wood carvings on the mihrab and side walls, featuring various motifs each carrying its own unique meaning.

## 2.1 Mihrab and Side Wall of Al-Falah Mosque, Margoyoso



**Figure 1.** Mihrab and Side Wall of Al-Falah Mosque, Margoyoso

**Source:** Author's Documentation

Generally, a mihrab is a feature within the main prayer area, located in front of the first row or row of worshippers, and serves as the place for the imam to lead the prayer. The mihrab itself was originally a recessed niche used as a marker indicating the direction of the qibla, known as a "thooq." However, over time, its function evolved to become the designated space for the imam's prayer, which is now commonly referred to as the mihrab. In Indonesian mosques, the mihrab is typically situated on the western side (toward the qibla); this arrangement was based on the religious requirement that the imam leading the congregational prayer should not stand in the same line as the worshippers (Sidiq, 2011). Each mosque features a mihrab with diverse designs. The social and cultural dimensions of a mosque can be visually emphasized through its mihrab design. The physical form of the mihrab can serve as a medium for expressing the values or culture of its creators or designers, or it may reflect the broader society surrounding it (Syamsiyah, 2007). For this reason, mihrabs are often adorned with a variety of decorative elements to enhance their visual appeal and sometimes carry symbolic significance. The mihrab at Al-Falah Mosque in Margoyoso is the work of Mas Sulis Ilang. Design is the process of planning, arranging, coordinating, selecting, and organizing a range of textual and visual elements to create effective communication and visually convey a specific message (Setiawan & Sulaiman, 2017). Mas Sulis Ilang is an interior design expert trusted by the mosque's management; he has designed interior spaces for various buildings for many years and has recently focused his work on mosque interiors, as he considers this field more spiritually fulfilling. His designs are widely used in mosques throughout the Kalinyamatan region. He explains that in every mosque he designs, he always incorporates decorative elements that reflect the historical background of the mosque's establishment.

The carving work on the mihrab is carried out differently from that on the *gebyok*, as the Mosque Board considers the mihrab to be a special part of the mosque. He described the mihrab as akin to the crown of the mosque. The mihrab is the most important feature, as it indicates the direction of the qibla within the mosque and also serves as the place where the imam stands to lead the congregational prayer (Wiranto, 2012). Therefore, the mihrab was crafted by a highly skilled artisan, and his work has been exhibited internationally. The mihrab and the side walls were created by Mas Amin, a carving artisan from Sinanggul Village, Mlonggo; he possesses extensive professional experience, as his works have been displayed in various countries, including Israel, the

Vatican, and Austria. The mihrab at Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque measures 5 x 12 meters and is adorned with a variety of intricate carvings. It was crafted over a period of approximately 14 months using teak wood as its base material. The jati wood used is not new jati; instead, it utilizes aged jati timber that had previously been employed in earlier mosque structures, ensuring that this material is not wasted. This approach also serves to preserve the mosque's original identity and serve as a reminder of its historical origins before renovation. Each section is adorned with intricate carvings of flora and geometric patterns, seamlessly integrated together. These motifs are not chosen arbitrarily but are rooted in the original concept behind the mosque's construction and carry a distinct meaning as envisioned by the designer. Upon closer inspection, several motifs resemble those found on the *gebyok* (traditional decorative panels), creating a cohesive and unified interior ornamentation scheme for the Masjid Al-Falah Margoyoso.

Not only did Mas Sulis Ilang design the mihrab, but he also created carved designs on the mosque's side walls. Both interior spaces were designed using the same conceptual approach incorporating historical elements characteristic of the mosque's original location. The design of the side walls likewise follows a similar concept, integrating decorative motifs from the Middle East with Javanese decorative styles. The patterns on the side walls are slightly different from those on the mihrab as a variation in form while sharing the same underlying motif. This demonstrates that, broadly speaking, the design concept for the side walls is identical to that of the mihrab; however, the shapes of certain motifs have been varied to avoid monotony while maintaining a cohesive overall appearance.

## 2.2 Forms and Symbolic Meanings of Carved Motifs on the Mihrab and Side Walls of the Mosque

The initial design concept for the construction of Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque involved combining Islamic architecture (from the Middle East) with traditional artistic elements, specifically wood carving techniques. As a result, the interior of the mosque features various wood-carved ornaments that represent these traditional artistic styles. One area of the Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque adorned with wood carvings is the mihrab and the mosque's side walls; these spaces are decorated with a variety of motifs some replicating existing patterns, while others feature original motifs that have been adapted. These motifs were designed by an interior designer named Mas Sulis Ilang, resulting in an original design concept that remains consistent with the overall initial vision for the mosque's construction.



**Figure 2.** Wood Carving Motifs on the Mihrab

**Source:** Author's Documentation

For the mihrab section, the design features an original motif created by Mas Sulis Ilang, developed in consultation with the mosque committee. The resulting design blends Islamic (Middle Eastern) elements with Javanese ones; Mas Sulis Ilang incorporated geometric patterns and Arabic calligraphy to represent the Islamic style, while using floral motifs to represent Javanese aesthetics. Specifically, he utilized stylized and combined *kantil* (white champak) and clove motifs, integrated with geometric patterns. He is a trusted designer for numerous mosques in the Kalinyamatan District. The

creation of a carving motif is inseparable from the underlying elements of its inception, one of which is closely linked to the creator's worldview (SP et al., 2019). Mas Sulis Ilang is known for his signature approach of incorporating symbols related to the history of the mosque's location. For the Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque, he chose kantil and clove motifs because the site was historically part of the Kalinyamat and Kalingga Kingdoms. He maintains a state of calm and spiritual purity during the design process, often drawing inspiration from the creative journey itself. According to Kasanah & Naam (2024), creative expression can stem from one's emotions, experiences, worldview, and beliefs. While working on the mihrab motif for the Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque, he had a dream in which he met Ratu Retno Kencono (Ratu Kalinyamat); the encounter signaled the use of the Queen's favorite flower, the kantil. Much like the clove motif, Mas Sulis Ilang once dreamt of meeting Queen Shima (Queen of Kalingga), who signaled the use of her favorite flower the clove blossom. According to Mas Sulis Ilang, the symbolic meaning of a work is crucial, as it establishes the piece's identity and narrative. The kantil and clove flower motifs applied to the mihrab of the Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque symbolize the fact that the mosque stands on land that was once part of the territories of the Kalinyamat and Kalingga kingdoms. This serves as a reminder for us to consistently preserve history, as well as to remember and honor the origins of a place or region.

The "kantil" flower itself is a symbol of deep spiritual connection and the continuity of the relationship between humans and their ancestors (Purwanto & Ratnaningtyas, 2026). This aligns with the symbolism embodied by Mas Sulis Ilang in the mihrab design at the Al-Falah Mosque in Margoyoso – representing the understanding, appreciation, and preservation of ancestral heritage. The term "kantil" derives from the word "kumantil," meaning "attached," and symbolizes a close bond with fellow humans, the universe, and God. On the other hand, clove is a spice with a long history, as it was a commodity traded extensively by foreign powers, particularly the Europeans. According to Denissa (2022), clove was a highly prized spice in the 15th century, commanding an exorbitant price and becoming a favorite among European nations. This indicates that clove is a valuable and highly esteemed commodity; thus, its use can be interpreted as a reflection of high value and quality.

|                          | Motif Cangkang Kerang                                                               | Motif Tumpal                                                                         | Motif Besusulan                                                                       | Motif Buah Nanas                                                                      |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>MOTIF PADA GEBYOK</b> |  |   |  |  |
| <b>MOTIF PADA MIHRAB</b> |  |  |  |  |

**Figure 3.** Wood Carving Motifs on the Mihrab Resembling Those on the Gebyok

**Source:** Author's Documentation

Beyond the traditional floral and clove motifs, Mas Sulis Ilang also incorporates Javanese-inspired designs similar to those used on the gebyok into his artwork. The use of these analogous motifs enriches the mihrab with deeper symbolic meaning and reinforces the sense of unity and harmony with the gebyok as an integral part of the

interior decoration of Masjid Al-Falah Margoyoso. These motifs include the shell motif, the tumpal motif, and the besusunan motif; they are commonly found on traditional gebyoks displayed on the gebyok's saka (front panel). When examined, these motifs symbolize remembrance of prayer, devotion to God, and wisdom. The shell motif, when interpreted in relation to coastal motifs, signifies gratitude to God for the abundant seafood harvest and represents God's boundless love, as vast as the oceans themselves. When interpreted in relation to the motif depicted on the gebyok, the shell motif signifies the command to perform the five daily prayers; this is symbolized by a shell with five segments shaped like the palm of a hand. According to Arifin (2014), the shell motif on the gebyok represents the image of an open hand being raised during prayer (takbiratul ikhram), while reciting the name of Allah serving as a symbol to always remember Allah and adhere to the five daily prayers. As for the "tumpal" motif, according to Arifin (2018), the community refers to this motif as the "sorot" motif, as it features lines that resemble rays of light or beams of radiance. This motif is created using three layers of repetition, symbolizing three things that can illuminate human life: faith, Islam, and ihsan. The "besusunan" motif is depicted as a Buddhist hair-style pattern resembling a besusunan shell, adorned with various floral motifs on its sides. The self-following motif carries a meaning of wisdom, symbolized by the Buddhist hair design. The placement of these motifs on the mihrab further reinforces its function situated at the front of the first prayer shelf and serving as a place of worship symbolically reminding worshippers to consistently observe prayer and strengthen their faith in God, while also encouraging them to remain wise individuals capable of distinguishing between good and evil.

Upon closer inspection, there is also a nanas fruit motif hung above the mihrab – a design that resembles the nanas fruit depicted on a gebyok, symbolizing hard work and maintaining good relationships with others. According to Arifin (2014), the nanas fruit motif carries a symbolic meaning of diligence: to enjoy its sweet fruit, one must strive to overcome its tough, sharp skin. As Pitaloka & Susanti (2022) note, this motif also conveys a lesson against judging someone solely by their outward appearance; this is illustrated by the nanas fruit, which has a tough, sharp exterior but contains a sweet interior. Its placement above the mihrab can also be interpreted symbolically as a reminder to worshippers who pray with their heads raised to always accompany their prayers with hard work and to strive to benefit their surrounding community. This nanas fruit motif is highly popular as it is frequently found in various traditional architectural ornaments. One example is the Gedhe Kauman Mosque in Yogyakarta, whose name is a playful variation of the word "An-Nas" (meaning "human beings"), aiming to encourage us to always maintain good relationships among people (Hablumminannas). "An-Nas" is also a surah in the Quran that signifies that the best form of protection is protection from Allah, and it advises seeking such protection solely from Allah.

The motif represents Islamic (Middle East) concepts, featuring geometric patterns combined with lung-lungan and floral designs, complemented by wood carvings depicting Arabic calligraphy. The mihrab of Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque bears several Arabic inscriptions carved into its wooden surface. The first inscription is Surah Al-'Ankabut, verse 45, which states: "Read the Book (the Quran) which has been revealed to you (Muhammad), and perform prayer. Indeed, prayer guards against evil and wrongdoing. And (know) that remembering Allah through prayer is more noble than all other forms of worship. Allah knows what you do." In essence, this verse issues a call to pray as a means of safeguarding oneself against actions that violate religious or social norms. Above this inscription is a piece of calligraphy inscribing the names of the four companions of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), who were honored with the title "Khulafaur Rasyidin." The Khulafaur Rasyidin were the first caliphs to lead the Muslim community following the passing of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) between the years 632–661 AD. These leaders continued the mission of the Prophet in governing human society with fairness, wisdom, and discernment, always fulfilling their duties correctly in accordance with Allah's guidance (Zainudin, 2015). These leaders were Abu Bakr al-Shiddiq, Umar bin Khattab, Uthman bin Affan, and Ali bin Abi Thalib. They

possessed noble and exemplary qualities worthy of emulation, both socially and spiritually; they are renowned as leaders who were just, wise, and steadfast in upholding Islamic values. Their contributions were immense to the development of Islam, as they consistently stood by the Prophet in his struggle to promote the Islamic faith, even after the Prophet's passing. With its array of noble characters and the significant contributions bestowed upon it, the use of calligraphy to inscribe the names of the Rasyidin Caliphs aligns perfectly with the concept of mihrab design namely, to honor the lofty values of our forebears and to continually commemorate their deeds, thereby inspiring us to strive to become noble individuals who always safeguard and preserve the legacy of our ancestors.



**Figure 4.** Wood Carving Motif on the Side Wall

**Source:** Author's Documentation

At first glance, the carved motif on the side wall does not seem unfamiliar when viewed as a typical Jepara motif; it features floral patterns as well as small, clustered circles resembling the Wuni fruit – one of the distinctive motifs of Jepara. The Wuni fruit motif is a characteristic Jepara motif inspired by the appearance of the Wuni fruit, which can be found both in Jepara and in the northern coastal areas of Java (Wulandari & Salma, 2019). However, when asked about this, the artisan (Mas Amin) explained that the carved motif was improvised by the designer to make it more aesthetically pleasing, in line with his personal experience. As for the Wuni fruit motif itself, he stated that he did not intend to create it specifically; rather, due to his familiarity with the typical Jepara carving motifs, the design – which should have depicted flowers and cloves inadvertently resembled a Wuni fruit. This is quite natural, as Mas Amin, who is accustomed to the distinctive motifs of Jepara, seeks to express himself by transforming a two-dimensional design into a three dimensional carving which can sometimes lead to misunderstandings with the designer due to differences in background and perspective. Nevertheless, the wooden carving motifs on the side walls share a similar conceptual framework with those on the mihrab as a complementary element. At first glance, the shape of these motifs may differ from those on the mihrab, but the underlying concept and origin of the motifs are the same: they consist of interwoven and varied floral, cengkeh, and geometric patterns designed to avoid monotony. Thus, the majority of the carvings on the side walls carry a symbolic meaning roughly equivalent to that of the carvings on the mihrab.

The side wall also features a wooden carving depicting Arabic calligraphy. This calligraphy represents Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 255 commonly known as the "Verse of the Throne." This verse means the following: "Allah there is no deity other than Him is the Ever Living One who continuously tends to His creation; He is neither afflicted by sleep nor by rest." All that exists in the heavens and on Earth belongs to Him. Nothing can bestow mercy upon Him without His permission. He knows everything that lies

before them and everything that lies behind them. They know nothing of His knowledge, except what He wills. His throne His knowledge and His power encompasses both heaven and earth; He does not find it burdensome to sustain both. He is the Most High and the Most Great. In short, this verse emphasizes Allah SWT's oneness, power, absolute authority, and the perfect attributes of Allah. This serves as a reminder for us to always remain humble individuals and to seek protection and assistance solely from Allah. We should also always uphold good conduct by performing acts of kindness and avoiding anything that contradicts His prohibitions, wherever we may be, for Allah is All-Witnessing and All-Knowing even of things that we cannot see or understand.

Through the traditional woodcarving art found at the Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque, we can explore the symbolic meanings associated with the various life values and spiritual concepts embodied in the motifs. The carvings on the mosque's mihrab and side walls are rich in meaning; overall, the significance conveyed by each motif relates to spirituality. Fundamentally, spirituality is a personal human need that accompanies an individual throughout their life's journey. It constitutes the deepest part of the human self and is a crucial aspect influencing the formation of personality, wisdom, and life direction (Jefriyanto & Senjaya, 2026). Given the broad scope of spirituality, this concept is delimited here to specific values derived from the meanings of the identified motifs namely, values related to the Divine, religion, social interaction, morality, and cultural preservation.

The value of divinity relates to the attributes possessed by God. In the wood-carving motifs at the Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque, this value is expressed through concepts such as God's oneness, might, absolute sovereignty, and perfection as the center of the universe; these are conveyed explicitly via Arabic calligraphy specifically Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 255 located on the side wall. The value of divinity is also conveyed implicitly through the pineapple motif atop the mihrab, which symbolizes Surah An-Nas and signifies the absolute protection provided by Allah.

Religious values pertain to religious teachings, encompassing both theory and ritual practice. A religious value is conveyed implicitly through the seashell motif, which encourages the observance of the five daily prayers; this exhortation is also explicitly presented through the calligraphy of Surah Al-'Ankabut, verse 45. Prayer holds great importance as it is the first deed to be reckoned on the Day of Judgment, as stated in Hadith narrated by At-Tirmidhi (No. 413) and An-Nasa'i (No. 466). The seashell motif also conveys a message of constant gratitude toward God. Furthermore, the teaching to uphold iman (faith), islam (submission), and ihsan (spiritual excellence) which illuminate the path to taqwa (piety) is symbolized implicitly by the tumpal motif on the \*mihrab\*. Piety is essential for Muslims, as God measures a person's nobility based on their piety, in accordance with Surah Al-Hujurat, verse 13 of the Qur'an.

Social values pertain to the relationships between people. The social values depicted in the wooden carving motifs at the Al-Falah Mosque in Margoyoso represent a moral counsel for maintaining harmonious relationships among people, conveyed through the teaching of *hablumminannas* symbolized by the nanas fruit motif on the mihrab. The floral motif on the mihrab also carries a meaning related to human relationships with one another. The core of these implicitly conveyed social values is a call to strive to be individuals who foster positive relationships with others, offer mutual support, and serve as socially beneficial members of their community.

Moral values are connected to the conscience and the understanding of what is right or wrong. These moral values are conveyed through the symbolism of the kantil flower, which represents the relationship between humanity and the universe and serves as a teaching guide for individuals to become virtuous persons toward all aspects of life. Moral values are also reflected in the motif of the *besusulan* found on the mihrab, represented by the Buddhist hair-ribbon symbol, which carries the meaning of wisdom. Additionally, the calligraphic inscription of the names of the Khulafaur Rasyidin indirectly embodies moral values pertaining to the noble character they possessed a character that we can emulate and apply in our daily lives to become individuals of high moral integrity.

The value of cultural preservation is closely linked to efforts to safeguard

identity and selfhood. This value is embodied in the design concept of the Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque specifically, the use of wood carvings as a means to preserve traditional art. Additionally, many motifs also carry cultural preservation significance. For example, the motif of kantil and cengkeh flowers symbolizes that the Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque stands upon land that was once part of the territories of the Kalinyamat and Kalingga kingdoms, reflecting a commitment to honoring and preserving the site's historical origins. This cultural preservation value is also conveyed through the symbolic meaning of the kantil flower itself, which represents a connection to one's ancestors. A similar value is expressed through the use of calligraphic motifs depicting the names of the Khulafaur Rasyidin; these motifs serve as a way to understand and appreciate the noble traditions of our forebears, as conveyed through these symbols and calligraphic works.

### 3. Conclusion

The research yielded several conclusions. The wood carvings at the Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque are found, among other places, on the mihrab and the side walls. The design for the mihrab carvings was created by Mas Sulis Iclang in consultation with the mosque committee, while the actual carving was executed by Mas Amin from Mlonggo, a professional woodcarver. This approach was taken because the committee viewed the mihrab as the mosque's crown jewel a special and vital feature that indicates the qibla direction and serves as the prayer leader's station. The carvings on the side walls were also designed by Mas Sulis Iclang and crafted by Mas Amin.

The motifs on the mihrab and the side walls possess not only aesthetic value but also serve as a means of conveying symbolic meaning. These motifs embody a fusion of Middle Eastern Islamic and Javanese decorative patterns. The Middle Eastern Islamic motifs are represented by geometric designs and Arabic calligraphy, while the Javanese motifs feature floral patterns. Mas Sulis Iclang's designs are characterized by their integration of the mosque's historical background; he designed the mihrab and side walls of the Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque using kantil flower motifs to represent Ratu Retno Kencono (Ratu Kalinyamat) and cengkeh to represent Ratu Shima (Ratu Kalingga), drawing inspiration from his own creative process. The mihrab features motifs similar to those found on the gebyok – namely, shell-shell motifs, tumpal motifs, besusunan motifs, and nanas fruit motifs. The wooden carvings on the mihrab, which resemble Arabic calligraphic inscriptions, bear the names of the righteous caliphs (Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, Ali) and the 45th verse of Surah Al-Ankabut. Next is the calligraphy of Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 255 (the verse on the Throne), which is displayed on the side wall.

The carved motifs on the mihrab and side walls of the Al-Falah Margoyoso Mosque embody symbolic meanings related to values of divinity, religion, social interaction, morality, and cultural preservation. Divine values are reflected in attributes such as God's oneness, might, absolute sovereignty, perfection, and the provision of absolute divine protection. Religious values are conveyed through injunctions to observe prayer, practice gratitude, and deepen one's devotion. Social values are demonstrated through maintaining harmonious relationships with others, mutual assistance, and becoming a socially conscious individual who benefits the surrounding community. Moral values are exemplified by virtuous deeds and the cultivation of wisdom as a means of personal growth. Finally, the value of cultural preservation is evident in the use of traditional art as ornamentation, the appreciation and understanding of the noble values held by past generations, and an awareness of the site's historical origins.

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The authors state that there is no conflict of interest in the publication of this article

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