Khatulistiwa : Journal of Islamic Studies
e-ISSN: 2502-8499 p-ISSN: 1412-5781
DOI: https://doi.org/10.24260/khatulistiwa.v16i1.6371
OPEN ACCESS

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Islam-Javanese Acculturation in Local Islamic Architecture: A Historical Study of Jami' Imam Pura Mosque in Ponorogo

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Received: 08-06-2026	Revised: 02-10-2026	Accepted: 04-11-2026

Abstract
This study examines the existence of Jami' Imam Pura Mosque in Sukosari, Babadan, Ponorogo, as a representation of local Islamic culture and architecture that reflects the harmony between Islamic teachings and Javanese traditions. This research employs a qualitative-historical approach with a focus on cultural studies, religious architecture, and religious symbolism. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with K. H. Maksum as the caretaker of the mosque, architectural observations of the building, and literature reviews of historical manuscripts related to Islam in Ponorogo. The findings reveal that Imam Pura Mosque functions not only as a place of worship but also as a social space, an educational center, and a symbol of Javanese-Islamic acculturation. Its architectural features, including the *limasan* structure, the four *soko guru* pillars, and the tiered roof, reflect the values of *tawhid* (Islamic monotheism) and cosmological balance integrated with Javanese cultural philosophy. The mosque serves as concrete evidence of how Islam in Ponorogo was disseminated through cultural and aesthetic approaches rather than through dogmatic confrontation. This study reinforces that the Islamization process in Ponorogo was cultural in nature, applying the principle of *al-muhafadzah 'ala al-qadim as-shalih wa al-akhdzu bi al-jadid al-ashlah* (preserving valuable old traditions while

adopting better new values). Through the preservation of the religious architecture of Imam Pura Mosque, it can be understood that Javanese Islam is a religion that lives within culture, not outside of it.

Keyword: Imam Pura Mosque, Cultural Acculturation, Islamic Architecture, Javanese Islam.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji keberadaan Masjid Jami' Imam Pura di Sukosari, Babadan, Ponorogo, sebagai representasi budaya dan arsitektur Islam lokal yang merefleksikan harmoni antara ajaran Islam dan tradisi Jawa. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif-historis dengan fokus pada kajian budaya, arsitektur religius, dan simbolisme keagamaan. Sumber data diperoleh melalui wawancara mendalam dengan K. H. Maksum selaku pengasuh masjid, observasi arsitektur bangunan, dan telaah pustaka terhadap naskah-naskah sejarah Islam di Ponorogo. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Masjid Imam Pura tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai tempat ibadah, tetapi juga sebagai ruang sosial, pusat pendidikan, dan simbol akulturasi Islam Jawa. Bentuk arsitektur *limasan*, empat *soko* guru, dan atap bertingkat mencerminkan nilai-nilai tauhid dan keseimbangan kosmologis yang dipadukan dengan filosofi budaya Jawa. Masjid ini menjadi bukti konkret bagaimana Islam di Ponorogo disebarkan melalui pendekatan budaya dan estetika, bukan melalui konfrontasi dogmatis. Penelitian ini mempertegas bahwa Islamisasi di Ponorogo bersifat kultural menerapkan prinsip *al-muhafadzah 'ala al-qadim as-shalih wa al-akhdzu bi al-jadid al-ashlah* (mempertahankan nilai lama yang baik dan mengambil hal baru yang lebih baik). Melalui pelestarian arsitektur religius Masjid Imam Pura, dapat dipahami bahwa Islam Jawa adalah agama yang hidup dalam budaya, bukan di luar budaya.

Kata Kunci: Masjid Imam Pura, Akulturasi Budaya, Arsitektur Islam, Islam Jawa.

A. INTRODUCTION

Jami' Imam Pura Mosque, established in 1778, is one of the important historical artifacts that demonstrates the integration of Islamic values with the local culture of Ponorogo. Functionally, the mosque serves as a place of worship, education, and social deliberation.(Azra, 2007, p. 87) Symbolically, however, it also represents the philosophy of Javanese Islam, which is rich in spiritual and cosmological meanings. The mosque's simple yet monumental architectural design reflects an effort to harmonize the principle of *tawhid* (the oneness of God) with the worldview of the agrarian Javanese community, which emphasizes balance among nature, humanity, and God.(Hidayatullah, 2020, p. 36)

In this context, mosque architecture is not merely an aesthetic product but also a cultural text that conveys theological messages. Feilden describes religious architecture as a "spiritual monument" that signifies continuity between the past and the present.(Feilden, 2003, p. 42) Imam Pura Mosque, with its three-tiered *limasan* roof and four main pillars (*soko guru*) made of old teak wood, is a tangible manifestation of this concept. Each architectural element carries religious symbolism: the three roof tiers represent *Iman* (faith), *Islam* (submission to God), and *Ihsan* (spiritual excellence), while the four *soko guru* symbolize the pillars of Islam.

In addition to being a historical heritage site, Imam Pura Mosque functions as a social space that brings together spiritual and cultural dimensions. Religious activities such as Islamic study gatherings (*pengajian*), *tahlilan* ceremonies, and the commemoration (*haul*) of Imam Pura serve not only ritual purposes but also act as a

means of preserving the cultural identity of the Sukosari community. This demonstrates the continuity of the inclusive, rooted, and contextual tradition of Indonesian Islam (*Islam Nusantara*).

This study is important within the context of preserving Islamic cultural heritage. As stated by Feilden, religious buildings are "living documents" that record the values, lifestyles, and spirituality of the communities of their time.(Feilden, 2003, p. 57) In this regard, Imam Pura Mosque serves as a tangible representation of the concept of *Islam Nusantara* an expression of Islam that is grounded in the universal values of divine revelation while developing within a fertile local cultural environment rich in symbols and meanings.

Furthermore, the significance of this study also lies in its relevance to religious moderation and character education in Indonesia. By uncovering the Islamic values of tolerance, courtesy, and inclusiveness as practiced by Kiai Ageng Imam Pura, this research offers a model of religious propagation (*dakwah*) based on local wisdom that remains relevant to the context of modern Indonesia. Islam is not positioned as a force in opposition to tradition; rather, it is presented as a source of spirituality that enriches and perfects local culture.(Fealy, 2006, p. 119)

This research is also significant because it addresses a gap in the study of Islamic religious architecture in the Ponorogo region, where previous scholarship has largely focused on Tegalsari Islamic Boarding School (*Pesantren Tegalsari*) and the prominent figure of Kiai Ageng Muhammad Besari. Through an integrative approach that combines historical, cultural, and architectural perspectives, this study seeks to provide a new understanding of how Javanese Islam is concretely manifested in the spatial organization, structural design, and symbolic elements of architectural forms.

This study holds significant value both academically and culturally. From an academic perspective, it contributes to the growing body of scholarship on *Islam Nusantara*, particularly in the fields of religious architecture and local Islamic culture. From a cultural perspective, this research demonstrates that the Islamization process in Ponorogo was not limited to verbal preaching (*dakwah*), but was also materially manifested through architectural structures, symbolic elements, and spatial organization.

With regard to the history of mosque architecture, several previous studies have served as important references for this research. The first is the work of M. Syaom Barliana entitled "The Development of Mosque Architecture: A Transformation of Form and Space." (Barliana, 2008, p. 54) In his study, Barliana identifies the shift in mosque design from traditional forms toward modern architectural expressions. However, he does not examine the theological and cultural dimensions underlying these architectural forms. The second is the work of Haris Hidayatullah entitled "The Development of Islamic Architecture: Understanding the Forms of Islamic Architecture in the Indonesian Archipelago." Hidayatullah explores various forms of Islamic architecture throughout the archipelago and emphasizes the importance of preserving local characteristics as an integral part of Indonesian Islamic identity.(Hidayatullah, 2020, p. 40)

The present study shares common ground with the works of Hidayatullah and Barliana in its effort to interpret architecture as an expression of religious values. However, this research goes beyond the analysis of architectural forms by connecting them to the biography of religious figures, social processes, and the functions of *dakwah*. Architecture is therefore viewed not as a passive object, but as a cultural agent that both shapes and is shaped by the religious practices of the community.

The novelty of this study lies in its integrative approach. While previous studies have tended to be fragmented across the disciplines of history, theology, and architecture, this

research brings these three perspectives together within a single framework of local Islamic cultural studies. First, this study proposes a semiotic interpretation of the architecture of Imam Pura Mosque. The mosque is understood not merely as a place of worship, but also as a system of signs that embodies theological values and social symbolism. The four *soko guru* (main pillars) are interpreted as representing the Pillars of Islam, while the three-tiered roof symbolizes the dimensions of *Iman* (faith), *Islam* (submission to God), and *Ihsan* (spiritual excellence). Furthermore, the mosque's open spatial arrangement emphasizes the Islamic values of equality, inclusiveness, and openness. Second, this study introduces the concept of *architectural Islamization*, referring to the process through which Islam is disseminated not only through preaching and education but also through architectural forms and spatial arrangements that embody Islamic values. In this sense, Imam Pura Mosque can be regarded as a manifestation of architectural *dakwah*, where spiritual values are materialized in physical structures and built environments. Third, this research highlights the contemporary relevance of preserving traditional mosques such as Imam Pura Mosque within the context of modern Islamic architectural development. At a time when many newly constructed mosques have lost their local character due to the imitation of Middle Eastern architectural styles, Imam Pura Mosque demonstrates a form of Islam that remains deeply rooted in the cultural traditions of the Indonesian archipelago while maintaining the universality of Islamic theological principles.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study aims to historically and culturally analyze the forms of acculturation between Islam and Javanese culture as reflected in the architecture of Jami' Imam Pura Mosque in Sukosari, Babadan, Ponorogo. Specifically, this study seeks to identify the architectural characteristics and spatial organization of the mosque, interpret the symbolic meanings embedded in its architectural elements from the perspectives of Islam and Javanese culture; and examine the mosque's functions as a space for worship, education, social activities, and da'wah through the incorporation of local wisdom. Furthermore, this study aims to elucidate the historical and cultural processes underlying the formation of Javanese Islamic identity within the Ponorogo community and to explore the relevance of preserving Jami' Imam Pura Mosque as a local Islamic cultural heritage amid the development of contemporary mosque architecture. Thus, this study is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between Islam, Javanese culture, and architecture as a medium for articulating the religious identity of local communities.

B. METHODS

The methodology employed in this study consisted of several systematic stages. The first stage involved data collection through several techniques. Field observation, (Moleong, 2018, p. 86) was conducted through direct observation at Jami' Imam Pura Mosque, located in Sukosari, Babadan, Ponorogo, to document its architectural characteristics, spatial organization, and socio-religious activities. In accordance with (Kartodirdjo, 1992, p. 79), the observation focused on physical elements, including the roof structure, *soko guru* (main supporting pillars), wood carvings, and the spatial arrangement of the prayer area.

In-depth interviews were conducted with K. H. Moch. Maksum, the eleventh-generation descendant of Imam Pura and the caretaker of the mosque, who also serves as its *juru kunci* (custodian). Interviews were also conducted with several senior community figures, namely Muhammad Irfan, a respected village elder, Ahmad Sanusi, the deputy village head, Ngadiyo, the village *penghulu* (religious official), and Ngasiran, the chairman

of Nahdlatul Ulama at the local level. These interviews provided information concerning the history of the mosque's establishment, its social functions, and architectural changes that have occurred over time.

This study also utilized various documentary sources and scholarly literature, including the *Babad Ponorogo* and academic literature on Islamic architecture in the Indonesian archipelago, particularly studies related to *Islam Nusantara*. The principal references included works by Azyumardi Azra, Clifford Geertz, Mark Woodward, and Haris Hidayatullah. (Azra, 2007, p. 89)

Data analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles and A. Michael Huberman, 1994, p. 110) Relevant data concerning historical development, architectural structures, and social practices were selected and systematically organized. The collected data were subsequently presented in the form of descriptive-analytical narratives to facilitate interpretation and understanding. Conclusions were drawn through an interpretation of the symbolic meanings identified from empirical findings and relevant literature.

All stages of the research were integrated through source triangulation by comparing findings obtained from observations, interviews, and literature reviews to ensure the validity and reliability of the research findings. (Sugiyono, 2019, p. 274)

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Historical Context of the Spread of Islam in Ponorogo

Ponorogo has been one of the most important centers of Islamic dissemination in the western region of East Java since the seventeenth century. The Islamization process in this area took place through Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), networks of Islamic scholars (*ulama*), and culturally based religious propagation (*dakwah*).(Ricklefs, 2006, p. 45) One of the most influential figures in this process was Kiai Ageng Imam Pura, a direct descendant of Kiai Ageng Muhammad Besari of Tegalsari, a central figure in the spread of Islam and the development of classical Islamic boarding school education in East Java.(Azra, 2007, p. 92)

Following the death of Kiai Ageng Muhammad Besari, the Tegalsari *dakwah* network expanded into various regions. Imam Pura, as one of his disciples and descendants, established a new center of Islamic propagation in Sukosari, Babadan, around the middle of the eighteenth century.(Moch. Maksum, personal communication, 2025) In 1778, he founded a mosque that later became known as Jami' Imam Pura Mosque. The mosque functioned not only as a place for prayer and religious instruction but also as a social center and a symbol of the spread of Islam in the western part of Ponorogo.(Moch. Maksum, personal communication, 2025)

The Islamization process carried out by Imam Pura emphasized the harmonization of Islamic values with Javanese culture. He was known for employing a Sufi-oriented and cultural approach in introducing Islam without rejecting existing local customs and traditions. Cultural practices such as *kenduren*, *nyadran*, and *slametan* were reinterpreted and given new meanings that were consistent with Islamic teachings, following the approach adopted by the earlier *Wali* (Islamic saints) in Java.(Geertz, 1960, p. 132)

The historical development described above indicates that the spread of Islam in Ponorogo was not a sudden transformation but a gradual process of social and cultural adaptation. The role of Imam Pura can therefore be understood not only in terms of religious transmission but also as part of a broader process of community formation. The establishment of the mosque provided a stable institutional space through which

religious teachings, social interaction, and local traditions could be integrated. In the author's interpretation, this historical process helps explain why the architectural character of Imam Pura Mosque demonstrates a strong relationship between Islamic teachings and Javanese cultural expressions. The mosque emerged within a social environment in which religious acceptance was closely connected to the community's existing cultural framework.

2. Architectural Characteristics of Imam Pura Mosque

Imam Pura Mosque is a tangible representation of traditional Javanese Islamic architecture. Based on field observations and documentation, the mosque has preserved its original structure with very few alterations for more than two centuries.(S. Nuraini, personal communication, 2025) The main building features a three-tiered *limasan* roof supported by four *soko guru* (main pillars) made of aged teak wood, each with a diameter of approximately 35 centimeters. This structural system is comparable to that of traditional Javanese mosques such as the Demak Mosque and Tegalsari Mosque, while also exhibiting distinctive local characteristics associated with Ponorogo. The wooden ornaments and carvings are predominantly decorated with teak-leaf motifs, symbolizing strength, resilience, and spiritual steadfastness.(Hidayatullah, 2020, p. 46)

The mosque walls are constructed from a mixture of brick and clay coated with lime plaster, while the flooring consists of red terracotta tiles. The mosque's interior is divided into three principal zones: the front veranda (*serambi* or *pendapa*), the main prayer hall, and the *pawestren* (women's prayer area). This spatial arrangement reflects the layered social structure of traditional Javanese society. Within an Islamic context, however, it may also be interpreted as representing stages of spiritual progression toward inner purification.(Norberg-Schulz, 1980, p. 45)

Another important architectural feature is the *mihrab* and *mimbar* (pulpit). The *mihrab* is made of wood and adorned with vine-pattern carvings and simple calligraphy bearing the inscription *Bismillahirrahmanirrahim* ("In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful"). These decorative motifs symbolize beauty and the divine mercy of Allah as the source of life.(Jencks, 1984, p. 33) The three-stepped *mimbar* reflects the spiritual symbolism of the three levels of religious attainment *Iman* (faith), *Islam* (submission to God), and *Ihsan* (spiritual excellence) which constitute a central theme in the architectural structure of the mosque.(Fealy, 2006, p. 120)

The architectural characteristics of Imam Pura Mosque indicate that preservation of traditional forms was not merely a matter of maintaining an old physical structure. Rather, the continued presence of the *limasan* roof, *soko guru*, *serambi*, *pawestren*, and traditional wooden elements demonstrates the continuity of a particular architectural tradition within an Islamic religious setting. From the author's perspective, the combination of these elements shows a process of architectural adaptation in which Islamic functions were accommodated through an established Javanese spatial and structural system. Therefore, the mosque's architectural identity should be understood as the result of an interaction between religious requirements and local architectural knowledge rather than as a simple reproduction of another traditional mosque.

3. Architectural Symbolism and Theological Values

Imam Pura Mosque is not merely a place of worship; it can also be understood as a theological text that conveys profound spiritual messages of Islam.(Nurcahya, 2025, p. 39) From the perspective of architectural semiotics, each architectural element carries symbolic meaning:(Nur Hakimuddin At-toyibi dan Dyah Titisari Widyastuti, 2021, p. 27)

a. The Four *Soko Guru* (Main Pillars): The four main pillars symbolize the Pillars of Islam and the four cardinal directions (east, west, north, and south), representing Islam's openness and universality toward all humanity.(Barthes, 1968, p. 89)

From the author's perspective, the symbolic interpretation of the four *soko guru* demonstrates how structural elements can acquire religious meaning within the cultural context of Javanese Islam. Functionally, the pillars support the roof structure, but symbolically they may also become a medium through which Islamic values are communicated to the community. The relationship between structural necessity and symbolic interpretation suggests that the architecture operates simultaneously at practical and cultural levels. However, the symbolic association with the Pillars of Islam should be understood as an interpretive meaning rather than as an inherent architectural meaning, particularly because the available evidence does not establish that this symbolism was explicitly intended by the original builder.

b. The Three-Tiered *Limasan* Roof: The three roof tiers represent *Iman* (faith), *Islam* (submission to God), and *Ihsan* (spiritual excellence), reflecting the vertical dimensions of Islamic spirituality.(Azra, 2007, p. 98)

The three-tiered roof can be interpreted as an example of how an established Javanese architectural form may be incorporated into an Islamic symbolic framework. The association of the three levels with *Iman*, *Islam*, and *Ihsan* provides a theological reading of the roof structure, although this meaning represents an analytical interpretation rather than a documented statement from the historical builder. In this sense, the architectural form becomes a medium for contemporary religious interpretation, allowing the community to connect a familiar traditional structure with Islamic concepts. This interpretation also reinforces the broader finding that the mosque functions as a meeting point between local architectural traditions and Islamic spirituality.

c. The *Limasan* Roof Form: Its pyramidal shape, converging toward a single point at the apex, symbolizes *tawhid* the oneness and unity of Allah.(Woodward, 1989, p. 101)

The interpretation of the pyramidal roof as a representation of *tawhid* highlights the relationship between architectural geometry and theological meaning. The convergence of the roof toward a single apex can be read metaphorically as an architectural expression of unity. Nevertheless, this relationship should be positioned as the researcher's semiotic interpretation rather than as a historically verified intention of Imam Pura. Its significance lies in the way the physical form enables contemporary observers to construct a theological understanding of the building. Thus, the architectural form contributes to the mosque's capacity to communicate religious values without relying exclusively on verbal religious instruction.

d. The Open Veranda (Serambi): The open veranda symbolizes Islam's openness to social interaction, dialogue, and engagement with local culture.(Feilden, 2003, p. 51)

The *serambi* is particularly significant because its openness reflects the mosque's broader social function. Unlike a space restricted exclusively to ritual prayer, the veranda provides an intermediate area where religious learning, social interaction, and community activities can take place. The author therefore interprets the *serambi* as an architectural representation of the mosque's accommodative character. Its spatial openness corresponds with the historical pattern of Islamic dissemination described in this study, in which religious teaching was integrated into everyday community life. Consequently, the *serambi* demonstrates that the mosque's architecture cannot be

separated from the social processes through which Islam was introduced and maintained in the local community.

These symbolic meanings demonstrate that Islam did not emerge to replace Javanese culture but rather to Islamize and enrich it with Islamic values.(Fanani, 2009, p. 20) This interpretation is consistent with the principle of cultural *dakwah* practiced by Imam Pura and the scholars of Tegalsari. Through this approach, Islam was embraced not through coercion but through meanings and values that became embedded in the everyday lives of the local community.(Moch. Maksum, personal communication, 2025)

4. Social and Cultural Functions of the Mosque

In addition to its religious function, the mosque plays a significant role in the social life of the community.(Tamuri, 2021, p. 81) This is also true of Imam Pura Mosque in Sukosari, Babadan, Ponorogo. Based on an interview with K.H. Moch. Maksum, the current caretaker of the mosque, the mosque regularly serves as a venue for socio-religious activities such as Friday night Islamic study gatherings (*pengajian*), *tahlilan* ceremonies, Qur'an completion recitations (*khataman al-Qur'an*), and the annual commemoration (*haul*) of Imam Pura held during the month of Muharram.(Moch. Maksum, personal communication, 2025)

The *haul* ceremony serves as a form of respect for a local Islamic figure who played a significant role in the spread of Islam, while also functioning as a medium for strengthening ties across generations.(Wasilah, 2023, p. 116) This event brings together people from diverse social backgrounds and serves as a means of preserving the collective memory of local Islamic traditions. Furthermore, the mosque functions as a center of informal education. In the past, Imam Pura taught Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsir*), Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), and Sufism (*tasawuf*) in the mosque's veranda (*serambi*). This educational tradition continues to the present day through the operation of *madrasah diniyah* (Islamic religious schools) and the regular study of classical Islamic texts (*kitab kuning*) held every afternoon.(S. Nuraini, personal communication, 2025) These social functions demonstrate that mosques in Java, particularly traditional ones, have never been separated from the social life of the community.(Waluyo, 2013, p. 25) Their architecture and spatial organization are designed to accommodate both spiritual and social dimensions simultaneously, making the mosque not only a place of worship but also a center of community life and cultural continuity.(Barliana, 2008, p. 63)

5. Dynamics of Preservation and Transformation

Imam Pura Mosque has stood for more than two centuries and remains structurally sound to this day. Renovations have been carried out only to a limited extent in order to preserve the mosque's original architectural character.(Pura, 1780) According to the mosque administrators, the principle guiding these renovations is *al-muhafadzah 'ala al-qadim as-shalih wa al-akhdzu bi al-jadid al-ashlah*, which means "preserving the good elements of the past while adopting beneficial new improvements."(Moch. Maksum, personal communication, 2025) Accordingly, renovation efforts have included the installation of improved lighting, repairs to the flooring, and reinforcement of the roof structure, while maintaining the original four *soko guru* (main pillars) and the traditional *limasan* roof design. This approach reflects the community's awareness of the mosque's value as a religious and cultural heritage site.

Such a conservative preservation strategy is consistent with Bernard Feilden's theory of conservation, which emphasizes the importance of maintaining the *spirit of*

place.(Feilden, 2003, p. 69) For the people of Sukosari, Imam Pura Mosque is not merely a historical monument; it is a spiritual center and a symbol of collective identity that connects the past with the present. Through its continued preservation, the mosque remains a living testament to the enduring relationship between Islamic faith, local culture, and community memory.

6. Theological and Cultural Interpretation

From a theological perspective, the architecture of Imam Pura Mosque reflects an ontological concept of *tawhid*, whereby the entire physical structure of the building is oriented toward the oneness and unity of God.(Nasr, 1987, p. 72) Within the framework of Javanese Islam, architecture is understood not merely as a physical space but also as a spiritual microcosm that connects human beings with God and the natural world.(Ricklefs, 2006, p. 94)

From a cultural perspective, the mosque serves as a concrete example of the accommodative nature of Javanese Islam. As explained by Mark Woodward, Islam in Java is characterized by a combination of *normative piety* and *mystical symbolism*.(Woodward, 1989, p. 105) The mosque's architecture, which continues to preserve traditional elements, demonstrates that Islam can adapt to local cultural contexts without compromising its universal values.(Aufa, 2010, p. 83)

Furthermore, this study reveals that religious architecture can function as an effective medium of *dakwah* (Islamic propagation).(Khoiri, 2020, p. 87) Imam Pura's *dakwah* was conveyed not only through words and religious teachings but also through architecture itself. The mosque, in a symbolic sense, "speaks" to the community by communicating messages of *tawhid*, humility, and simplicity to a society that remained deeply rooted in agrarian traditions. Thus, Imam Pura Mosque may be understood not only as a historical and architectural heritage site but also as a cultural and spiritual text that embodies the interaction between Islamic teachings and local Javanese culture. Its enduring existence illustrates how religious architecture can serve simultaneously as a medium of worship, education, cultural preservation, and the transmission of Islamic values across generations.(Moch. Maksum, personal communication, 2025)

7. Comparative Discussion

When compared with other traditional mosques such as the Demak Mosque, the Great Mosque of Banten, and Tegalsari Mosque, Imam Pura Mosque exhibits similarities in its fundamental architectural structure, particularly in the use of the *limasan* roof and the *soko guru* (main pillars). However, it differs in terms of scale, social context, and the intensity of its symbolic meanings.(Katarina, 2012, p. 920)

The Demak Mosque, for example, represents the political authority of Islam through its association with the Demak Sultanate. In contrast, Imam Pura Mosque reflects the character of cultural Islam rooted in a rural community setting.(Woodward, 1989, p. 49) This distinction indicates that the development of Islam in Ponorogo was driven primarily by socio-cultural processes rather than by political power or royal institutions.(Azra, 2007, p. 96) Therefore, Imam Pura Mosque can be understood as a tangible manifestation of a grassroots form of Islam an Islam that emerged and flourished from within the local community itself. Its architecture reflects not only religious devotion but also the cultural adaptation and social dynamics through which Islamic values were integrated into the everyday lives of the people of Ponorogo.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing discussion, it can be concluded that the Jami' Imam Pura Mosque in Sukosari, Babadan, Ponorogo, represents a concrete manifestation of the acculturation between Islamic values and Javanese culture in the development of local Islam. This is reflected in various architectural characteristics, including the multi-tiered *limasan* roof, four *soko guru* (main structural pillars), open veranda, as well as various ornaments and spatial arrangements that embody religious and cultural meanings. The mosque's architecture serves not merely as a physical component of the building but also as a medium through which the values of *tawhid* (the oneness of God), openness, balance, and Islamic spirituality are articulated within the Javanese cultural context. In addition to functioning as a place of worship, the Imam Pura Mosque serves as a center of education, a space for social interaction, and a medium for preaching (*dakwah*) grounded in local wisdom. Thus, the process of Islamization in Ponorogo can be understood as a cultural process that developed through an adaptive and accommodative approach to the traditions of the local community.

This study contributes to the field of Nusantara Islam studies by demonstrating that religious architecture can be understood both as a historical source and as a medium for conveying Islamic values. The Imam Pura Mosque demonstrates that the preservation of traditional architectural elements does not contradict the universality of Islamic teachings; rather, it can serve as a means of maintaining cultural identity and ensuring the continuity of religious practices within the community. The principle of *al-muhafadzah 'ala al-qadim as-shalih wa al-akhdzu bi al-jadid al-ashlah* preserving the good traditions of the past while adopting new approaches that are more beneficial is reflected in efforts to maintain the mosque's original character while making necessary adaptations. Therefore, the preservation of the Imam Pura Mosque is significant not only from the perspective of conserving a historical building but also as an effort to preserve collective memory, local Islamic identity, and the continuity of the relationship between religion, culture, and the social life of the Ponorogo community.

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