

Al-Andalus and Java: Still a Sanctuary for Interconnecting Religions and Traditions?

Kultūra atveria mums galimybę dalyvauti daugelyje socialinių santykių, tarp jų yra ir religija bei tradicijos, kurios taip pat kuria ir perteikia kultūrą. Islamo tiesų išraiška meno ir architektūros formomis atskiruose regionuose įgavo daugybę variantų. Hinduistų ir budistų lotoso žiedo simbolis, paplitęs Javos salos mečetėse, laikui bėgant įgavo naujų prasmių ir išraiškos formų. Lotoso žiedo simbolis neprarado savo prasmės, tik liudijo Javos salos musulmonų pagarbą vietiniams simboliams ir kultūriniam paveldui. Straipsnyje siekiama aptarti Indonezijos hinduistinio ir budistinio paveldo tęstinumą bei reikšmę, tiriant Javos salos mečečių simbolinę ir dekoratyvinę ornamentiką nuo XV a. iki šių laikų.

Culture allows us to engage in several forms of social intercourse, such as religions and traditions, needed for constructing and conveying culture. The expression of faith in art and architecture articulated the creed of Islam and produced complexity of regional variations. The symbolic life of Hindu-Buddhist lotus buds in Javanese mosques displayed the continuity with a variety of influence across time and space. The lotus bud proved its most consistent continuity, testifying Javanese Muslims' tolerance to local motifs and their love of cultural heritages. Thus, the aim of this article is to assess the continuity and significance of Hindu-Buddhist heritages in Indonesia, by investigating symbolic and decorative lotus buds in Javanese mosque ornamentation from the 15th century to the present day.

Preface

The aim of this research has two folds. Academically, it attempts to assess the continuity and significance of Hindu-Buddhist heritages in Indonesia, by investigating symbolic and decorative lotus buds in Javanese mosque ornamentation from the 15th century to the present day. The research starts with a belief that typical ornaments were consistently used both in Hindu-Buddhist temples and Islamic mosques in Java. This phenomenon was a result of syncretic Javanese Islam, composed of mystic animism, Hindu-Buddhism, and Islam, which differed from orthodox Islam in the Near East and Arab world. For a comparison between temple and mosque ornamentation, 10 Hindu-Buddhist temples and 30 mosques were purposively selected, but 20 scholars were needed for interviews due to the lack of materials on this subject. The findings revealed strong continuity of the lotus bud across the pre-Islamic and Islamic periods. Hindu-Buddhist symbolism was mingled with Islamic aesthetics, whilst keeping local Javanese characteristics. Practically, I hoped to enhance intercultural dialogues in current conflicted societies, because my research finding convinced me that the commonness in cultural heritage can mediate better communication between different religions. Accordingly al-Andalus where Judaism,

Christianity and Islam were co-existed was an excellent example throughout history. Al-Andalus refers to a period (711–1492) between the initiation of Umayyad Governors and the Catholic Monarch's victory. Abd al-Rahman I made Cordoba his capital as a crowning achievement of Islam, but Christians and Jews adapted themselves to the new situation without major problems, due to the Muslim rulers' tolerance. This continued under the Christian rule after Alfonso VI's capture of Toledo (1085). Muslim artisans constructed sacred buildings, and vegetal motifs in Santa Maria La Blanca Synagogue (1350) prove how ornamental strategies in Islamic buildings beautified a Jewish temple beyond ideological boundaries.

Intercultural Communication

The term "intercultural" defines 'between or among people of different cultures'. Originally referring to comparative studies on statistical compilations of cultural data, this term began to achieve a sense of cultural interactivity: how people from dissimilar cultures, religions, and traditions behave, communicate and perceive the world around them. Intercultural communication was put into practice as old as mankind, initiated to practical contacts between different tribal cultures when they met at the first time. History has full stories of peoples' willing to learn and understand other languages and cultures through a variety of means such as travel, trade, pilgrimage, colonisation, etc. However, it was the latter half of the 20th century that intercultural communication became a field of systematic study, caused by the recognition of cultural diversity as a decisive factor in communication.

The famous anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973) claims that culture is "a historically transmitted pattern of meaning embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life"¹. Culture can be regarded as a set of social rules, supplying a framework that gives meaning to events, objects, and people. And through these rules, we can make sense of our environments, decreasing uncertainty of the social circumstance. Therefore culture is (1) learned, (2) transmitted to inter-generations, (3) symbolic, (4) dynamic, and (5) ethnocentric². Consequently it allows us to engage in several forms of social intercourse, such as religions and traditions, needed for constructing and conveying culture.

La Convivencia of Toledo in Al-Andalus (711–1492)

Toledo is a municipality located in central Spain, 70 km south of Madrid. The city was declared by UNESCO in 1986 a World Heritage Site as a place of coexistence of Christian, Jewish and Moorish cultures. Earlier, it was the place of important historic events, for instance, the Visigothic Councils of Toledo, and a commercial-administrative centre in the Roman province of Tarraconensis. Toledo was the Visigothic capital by king Leovigild until the Moors conquered Iberia in the eighth century. Before 1030 the city regained its prime as the capital of a wealthy Taifa kingdom, the Dhu al-Nuid family.

Under the Caliphate of Cordoba, Toledo had a golden age known as *La Convivencia* (the coexistence of Christians/Jews/Muslims). Thomas Glick has articulated it in his introduction to the 1992 exhibition catalogue co-edited with Vivian Mann and Jerrilynn Dodds. *Convivencia* is a coexistence among the three religious communities that “carries connotations of mutual interpenetration and creative influence, even as it also embraces the phenomena of mutual friction, rivalry, and suspicion”³.

Three main religious groups existed: Christians, Muslims and Jews. The Muslims, united on the religious level, had several ethnic divisions; the main being the distinction between the Berbers and the Arabs. Mozarabs were Christians who lived under the Muslim rule and adopted some Arabic customs, art and words, while they kept their rituals and Romance languages. And due to the tolerance of Muslim rulers, Christians and Jews adapted themselves to the new situation without major problems. Each community inhabited distinct neighbourhoods in the cities, but in the 10th century a massive conversion of Christians took place, thus *muladies* (Christians who converted to Islam after the arrival of the Moors) comprised the majority of the population of al-Andalus by the century’s end.

Nevertheless, during the Islamic ruling years (711–1492), there was Reconquest which several Christian kingdoms succeeded in retaking and repopulating the Peninsula from the Muslims. The Islamic conquest of the Christian Visigothic kingdom (begun 710) extended over almost the entire peninsula, but by the 13th century, the Nasrid kingdom of Granada was remained, and eventually conquered in 1492 under Christian leadership. On this process, there arose a group of *Mudejar* Muslims who dwell in land conquered by the Christians. The best example was Toledo where Christian, Jewish and Muslim cultural heritages were mixed together.

On May 25, 1085 Alfonso VI of Castile took possession of the city of Toledo without resistance and established direct personal control over Toledo Taifa kingdom. As part of the terms of surrender, he sent his own troops to set up al-Qadir, his predecessor, on the throne of Valencia, and he also promised the Muslim inhabitants of Toledo physical safety, freedom of worship, the right to their own properties, and the use of the Friday mosque. What Alfonso had negotiated in shifting power was a pact drawn from important parts of the *dhimma*, a way of subduing a plural city learned from his Muslim allies.

This seizure was the first concrete step taken by the combined Christian kingdom of Leon-Castile in the Reconquest. Despite the Castilian conquest, Toledo remained as a main cultural centre. Its Arab libraries were kept, particularly in translation of books from Arabic or Hebrew to Spanish, and from Spanish to Latin, letting the old-lost knowledge spread through Christian Europe.

It is known that Cluny Peter the Venerable visited Toledo in 1142 to find possibility of translating the Koran for a discussion of Islam. Moreover, the 11th century Toledans inherited by Alfonso knew how to speak to each other in at least one language, sharing in the visible and audible signs of a culture that united them, despite their division in their worship places. The notion of the coexistence of their different laws could be blended with historical layers in its architecture.

In the 13th century, Toledo was a major cultural centre under the guidance of Alfonso X (see Figure 1), called “El Sabio” (the Wise) for his love of learning. The program of translations under Archbishop Raymond of Toledo continued to bring vast stories of knowledge to Europe by rendering great academic and philosophical works in Arabic into Latin. During the 16th century, as the capital of Castile, Toledo flourished until the Spanish court moved first to Valladolid and then to Madrid (1561) by Philip II.



Figure 1. Alfonso X as a judge, from his Libro de los Dados, completed ca. 1280 (photo: scanned from Four Gothic Kings, Elizabeth Hallam ed.)

As Toledo was known for religious tolerance and had large communities of Muslims and Jews until their expulsion from Spain (1492), each of them built their important religious monuments, such as Santa Maria la Blanca, El Transito synagogues, and Cristo de la Luz mosque. Privileges were offered to Christians and Jews, but Mudejar architecture was created by Muslim artisans (“mudejar”) who were working for them in this Christian territory. For example, at Santa Maria la Blanca, Muslim artisans served a vibrant Jewish community according to its need for a worship place by applying Islamic architectural ornamentation.

In order to describe interconnecting religions and traditions in a form of architectural ornamentation in al-Andalus, it is necessary to explain of a Mudejar style. It led to a fusion between the incipient Gothic style and the Islamic influences that had been integrated with late Romanesque. Appeared as an architectural style in the 12th century, Mudejar is a symbiosis of techniques and ways of understanding architecture resulting from Muslim and Christian cultures living side by side on the Iberian Peninsula. Mudejar reinterpreted of Western cultural styles through Islamic flavour.

The dominant geometrical character, distinctly Islamic, emerged in the accessory crafts using less expensive materials, such as tile or brickwork, wood or plaster carving,

and ornamental metals. To enliven the planar surfaces of wall and floor, Mudejar developed intricate tiling patterns in sophistication. Even after Muslims were no longer used, many elements which they had introduced were incorporated into Spanish architecture as a characteristic. The style developed in Sahagún, León and extended to the rest of the kingdom of León, Toledo, Ávila, etc. giving rise to be named “brick Romanesque style”.

Santa Maria la Blanca (1350)

Santa Maria La Blanca is originally known as the “Ibn Shushan Synagogue”. As the congregational synagogue of Toledo, it currently serves as museum. Erected in 1180 and rebuilt in 1350 on the side of an earlier structure, it is disputably the oldest, still standing synagogue building in Europe. The interior has a basilical structure with five narrow naves stretching from east to west; the central one being higher than the rest and separated by arcades with large circular horseshoe arches, hinting a Christian Mozarabic influence. The arcade is supported on octagonal columns of brick with a tiled plinth, which is rendered in plaster. It is characteristic of Mudejar building technique, while the ultra-semicircular arcade is another attribute of Mudejar taste (see Figure 2).



Figure 2. Mudejar inspired Santa Maria La Blanca 1350 (photo: left – Roy Lindman, right – the Author)

Noticeably, the capitals using a vegetal ornament of Islamic Almohad pine cones witness how ornamental strategies often seen in Islamic buildings can serve a Jewish temple, in order to add beauty without conflict with ideological boundaries. In other words, adapting Almohad architectural tradition to a non-Muslim context, the synagogue represents Mudejar architecture, developed out of the complex interaction between the Muslim, Christian, and Jewish cultures. The use of the multi-lobular blind arcade shows how common ornamental elements in Islamic buildings of al-Andalus could be incorporated into a Jewish building. After the forced expulsion of the Jews in 1492, the building was transferred to a church. Again, the stylistic and cultural classification of Santa Maria la Blanca is unique. It was constructed under the Christian Kingdom of Castile, by Muslim architects to serve a Jewish community as a worship place in accordance with their functional and ornamental program. It symbolises an excellent intercultural communication

which existed among the three populated cultures in the medieval Iberian Peninsula, connecting religions and traditions each other.

A Regional Islamic culture in Java, Indonesia

The Javanese finds it easy to fuse various religious conceptions. Mysticism was a necessity of life for him, whilst he rarely attached decisive importance to theological problems. This accounts for the characteristic feature of religious life in Java: an open-minded tolerance. The second characteristic...is ancestor worship, originating in the neolithic age.⁴

Indonesia, situated in Southeast Asia, is the fourth most populated (c. 243 millions. www.world-gazetteer.com) in the world, and almost 90 per cent of the population are Muslim (Christian: 7 per cent, Hindu: 2 per cent, Buddhist: 1 per cent), making Indonesia the largest Islamic nation. Its ethnic structure falls broadly into two groups, the Malayan and the Papuan, with many subdivisions. The most important island culturally and economically is Java with uninterrupted volcanoes, tropical climate, rich rainfall and fertile soils.

During the introduction of Islam into Southeast Asia around the 13th century, Islam not only changed local cultural landscapes, but it also created a unique regional heritage with areas which they came into contact, to comply with its religious and philosophical ideas. The expression of faith in art and architecture articulated the creed of Islam and produced complexity of regional variations. First, living in a spirit of tolerance, flexibility, and openness, the Malay people were able to accept changes through careful selection, reflection, and modification without discarding their wealthy cultural traditions. They witnessed Hindu-Buddhist, Chinese, Islamic and western cultures through their lifestyle. Second, the appearance of Islam to this area coincided with an era of zealous spiritualism in the Islamic world. Appeared in Persia, Sufi mysticism followed the Mongol seizure of Baghdad (1258) and rapidly spread through international trade routes. Local artists drew inspiration from a diverse heritage and selected to transform existing symbolism in accordance with Islam.

Moreover, the close relationship between the rulers and Islam was spatially symbolized by placing king's palaces adjacent to the grand mosque and the town's centre. In the case of Java, Islam replaced Hinduism and Buddhism by the end of the 16th century, but the Islamic Mataram kingdom patterned itself after the Hindu Majapahit kingdom, and practised mystic animism, Hindu-Buddhism, European pomp, and Islamic circumstance.

The common heritage in mosques reflects the close political relationship between Muslim rulers in different regions. Until the late 19th century, mosques were constructed in a vernacular style with a Hindu-Buddhist multi-tiered roof, using mostly wood to accommodate local conditions (see Figure 3). The persistence of indigenous buildings had to take into account the local profusion of natural resources and variable climates, resulting in exuberant and diverse architectural styles. Elements associated with Islamic architecture, such as the dome and geometric ornament, do not feature in these traditions.

Although pre-Islamic beliefs and art forms had influences on the pattern of life, a bond between Islam and local culture has been firm, because existing forms encouraged Javanese people to accept the Islamic ideologies. The idea of ‘Godliness’ of their ancestors and the primary aesthetics of cosmological belief in Malay were penetrated into Islamic cosmology in a form of syncretic culture. The three-tiered roof of the mosque symbolizes the mystical paths to God⁵.

It is known that the avoidance of figurative representation differentiates Islamic art from Hindu-Buddhist aesthetic style, but here Islamic art needed reconciliation of the ambivalent relationship between the two religions, caused by the ruler’s indigenous belief of the magic in art. Accordingly, the depiction of non-Islamic images, to name a few, the Hindu deity Ganesha or zoomorphic and anthropomorphic symbols combined by Koranic calligraphy was to be understood in the context of the earlier animism.



Figure 3. Agung Demak 1479, Demak in Central Java (photo: the Author)

Regarding Java, Krom (1923) was among the first scholars to discuss of the Islamisation process. Illustrating the minaret of Kudus as an adaptation of an old form, Islam in Java was not hostile to established architectural traditions, owing to gradual Javanese conversion to Islam, rather than revolution⁶. And significant modification was limited to the principles of decoration, in consequence of the Islamic prohibition on depicting living beings. This encouraged two leading Indonesian archaeologists.

To begin with, Tjandrasasmita (1984) attempts to prove that Islam took over local conditions and, to a certain extent, contributed to the preservation of indigenous cultural values and traditions. This could be due to the fact that the Islamic propagators and the Indonesian themselves have always known tolerance, which is not only obvious in architecture and decorative art, but is also in other aspects of their culture. For instances, in Astana Mantingan mosque (1559), a large number of sculpted foliated stone medallions are combined with stylised animals – elephant, tiger, monkey, and crab –, demonstrating

a clever and artistic way of replacing living figures, instead of rejecting them in orthodox Islam. The importance of ornaments in integrating Islam into Javanese culture encouraged artists to adjust themselves gradually to new realities, instead of putting any imposition on them. Islam penetrated slowly into Indonesian minds without force, due to its principal concept. Moreover, Sendang Duwur mosque (1561) reflects the process of acculturation with tolerance, syncretism, local genius, and friendship of the Javanese in the transitory period. It is the earliest product of the Islamic Indonesian art⁷.

According to Anbary in his *Finding the Civilization of Islam and Archaeology in Indonesia* (1998), Indonesian Islamic art was a continuation of indigenous art form with the full absorption of Islamic calligraphy as a new element. In other words, Islamic art in Java tends to be non-iconoclastic, particularly in places of worship⁸. For Prijotomo in an interview (2004), a combination of pre-Islamic and Islamic ideas and forms in floral decoration at Sendang Duwur creates ambiguity as well as a Javanese characteristic. "Javanese mosques use Hindu-Buddhist motifs in an Islamic way. The form is Hindu, but the idea is Islamic, or vice versa. As Islam allows liberty, everybody can make their own style, but keeping continuity."⁹

In fact, in the wake of Islamisation, the introduction of the mosque and the idea of a communal prayer were new in Indonesia, and the Koran contains few regulations regarding the form of a mosque, thus Javanese architects were free to interpret its basic requirement in accord with their individual experience from Hindu-Buddhist temples. It is known that pre-Islamic traditions underline the form and setting of the site, its buildings and images in sacred places. Consequently, mystical Sufis borrowed them, based on their belief of mosques to be sacred in space and structure, creating a combination of indigenous and Islamic ideas and forms in their mosques too. Javanese mosques adopted the existing forms to attract non-Muslims to enter the building and to receive Islamic teachings. Architecture was a mediator for introducing non-Muslims to Islam.

The character of Javanese mosque is Javanese culture. Muslims still consider Hindu-Buddhist ornament as a mystic way to approach to God. In his PhD, *The Javanese Mosque, a Regional Interpretation of Form and Mystical Concepts* (1996), Isaeni displays continuity of pre-Islamic mysticism to Javanese mosque elements. A multi-tiered roof symbolises a link between God and Muslims, based on Sufis' view. A mustaka, a crown of red lotus at its apex, is a container of the essence of divine unity in Hinduism, but in Islam, it embodies the ultimate goal of the mystical path into God. Soko guru, the four master columns, signifies the spiritual context: the verticality and centralisation express an ultimate unity between God and his believers which was continued from the Hindu belief in the identity of self and the universal soul.

Water has been significant in spiritual rituals to purify a person in Hindu-Buddhism and Islam. Islam requires ablution before prayer. Located in the front of the mosque, water channel represents new creatures that will fill the void of the universe with life. The development of pre-Islamic feature in Javanese mosques clearly indicates that Islam in Java did not initiate new forms of religious architecture. It is the teaching itself to be more important than physical characteristic of the mosque. Islam teaches that Allah has created this world as a mosque¹⁰.

Lotus buds in Javanese Muslims' imagination

The lotus flower symbolises the essential nature of all human beings and all things, in principle unpolluted...of the samsara sphere, or by Delusion, and realised by attaining Enlightenment...it forms a cosmic symbol which unfolds in all directions: the stalk represents the axis mundi, and thus the lotus also serves as the throne of the Buddha and the centre of the mandala.¹¹

In Hindu-Buddhist art, many motifs have a decorative function and may be components of a highly developed system of ornamentation. They are encountered on a great variety of works of art; buildings and carved-painted figures. And Islamic poets describe the flower as a book, where one can study the knowledge about God. In this regard, Hindu-Buddhist lotus could be the most influential in Islamic buildings in Southeast Asia.

Hindu mythology relates that the world was composed of atman (the soul) and maya (illusion), and its creation was symbolized by the growth of lotus. As the primordial lotus grew from the waters of eternity, bringing Brahma (god of creation) and all other creations, it became a dominant motif in representing creation and sanctity (see Figure 4). In Hindu-Buddhist temples of Central Java, lotus, either a form of bud or flower, was extensively used for the wall decoration, signifying ideal beauty and supernatural power. The identity of the primeval lotus and Dharma (mystical doctrine) is fundamental in Mahayanist (Great Vehicle) Buddhism too. Lotus, as creator and supporter of the Cosmic Tree, became the pattern for the abstract notions of Dharma, preached by the Buddha.



Figure 4. Prambanan Hindu Temple 8–9C, Kalasan Buddhist Temple 9C, Astana Mantingan Mosque 1559, Menar Kp Melayu Mosque 1820 (photo: the Author)

It is no wonder why Javanese Muslims wished to continue this motif, testified on the golden lotus bud at Menar Kp Melayu mosque (1820), reflecting the sacred golden lotus buds in temples. A lotus bud of Hindu Prambanan temple held by a hand of a goddess was transferred to an Islamic one at the entrance of Astana Mantingan mosque (1559). The symbolic life of Hindu-Buddhist lotus buds in Javanese mosques displayed the continuity with a variety of influence across time and space.

Why is it so?

Various components can be pointed out. (1) A tolerant attitude between incoming Islam and Javanese peoples' acceptance of it, (2) similarity of Sufism to existing animism

and Hindu-Buddhism in terms of mysticism, thus ancestor worship could transfer to Hindu-Buddhist gods and further to Allah, (3) flexibility of Islamic religion towards local motifs in mosque ornamentation, (4) contribution of ornaments in converting people. In the start of Islamisation, local traders chose politically and socially Islamic religion in order to gain equal rights and liberation from the Hindu caste system, rather than a religious zeal, (5) unskilled foreign missionaries in making orthodox Islamic ornaments, and above all (6) strong conscience of keeping Javanese tradition amongst the population.

It seems that the 'sacredness' of the lotus, rooted deeply in sacred Javanese temples, was extended to mosques by mystic Sufis. As Javanese mosques were sacred, any motif in ornamentation became sacred and symbolic¹². Javanese Muslims emphasise the significance of sacred Hindu-Buddhist ornaments, trying to connect them with Islam. A symbolic tree from the Garden of Eden, created by God, continued as an Islamic concept, and Javanese Muslims linked this with the Tree of Life of Hindu-Buddhism. Islamic art became an extension, rather than a change from earlier aesthetic traditions, caused by the inspiration of the Javanese, creating a regional Islamic culture and identity.

Moreover, Hindu-Buddhist lotus buds have an extraordinary position in Islam. Nur-cholish Madjid (2002: 111–2), a famous Indonesian intellectual on Islam, quotes of "Sidrat al-Muntaha", translated as 'lotus tree in the furthest limit' in the Koran (an-Najm 53:18). The story is that, when the Prophet came to the heaven, he saw lotus tree very far, growing in a dangerous place. Metaphorically, the lotus means the highest wisdom that the Prophet has reached by the blessing of God. And 'behind the tree' means God's mystery that only God knows. Reaching to God and achieving his messages are very far and difficult¹³.

Sidra is identified and validated by Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. Sidra means lotus tree or flower (seroja, padma), and lotus always grows together with the water. Sidra reflects moral and spiritual messages... Sidra in Hinduism-Buddhism symbolizes personal wisdom and maturity... Another wisdom arising from water flow is...the unity in diversity of life. It teaches us to listen to the sound of the water of which flows continuously...padma flower is... accepted as the symbol of holiness, wisdom, and knowledge.¹⁴

In an interview with Fanani (2006), the holy lotus (padma) is the birth of Vishnu in Hinduism, but it can be interpreted as 'oneness in Allah' in Islam, due to its round form which implies 'one' for all. He associates this with Muslims' perambulation of the holy Kaa'ba during the pilgrimage as one circle¹⁵.

If we agree with this, lotus buds had to be reincarnated to represent 'oneness in Allah' in transferring from temples to mosques to bestow their holiness. And the motif was the greatest mediator for Javanese syncretic ornamentation, and Javanese Muslims knew its magic, learned from their indebted ancestors. This fact reminds of Van Leur's *Indonesian Trade and Society* (1960) which argues "Indonesian history must be understood in its own terms, not in those borrowed from other cultures"¹⁶.

Conclusions

A Javanese term, “Bhinneka Tunggal Ika” (unity in diversity) stresses the Javanese identity and culture. Java was the centre where animism, Hindu-Buddhism and Islam coexisted, moving toward a syncretic Islamic religion. Living in peace, tradition and cultures are the first to be considered than faiths and religions. In an interview with Tjandrasasmita (2005), a distinguished Indonesian scholar in Islamic archaeology, he claimed that Javanese Islam has a few distinct characteristics. Javanese Muslims are very conscious of continuity of their cultural heritage which was created by the local genius across centuries¹⁷.

Returning to al-Andalus in the Iberian Peninsular, María Rosa Menocal (2002), a specialist in Iberian literature, argued that “tolerance was an inherent aspect of Andalusian society”. In her view, the Jewish and Christian dhimmis living under the Caliphate, while allowed fewer rights than Muslims, were much better off than in other parts of Christian Europe. Jews (5% of the population) emigrated to al-Andalus were treated with dignity. It was a key centre of Jewish life during the early Middle Ages¹⁸.

We know that for individuals, religious toleration is the condition of accepting or permitting others’ religious beliefs and practices which disagree with one’s own. In this regard, Toledo was the case for all religions with tolerance and dignity, even shown in the Mudejar style where Christians, Jews, and Muslims worked together. Toledan Mudejar would transform through renewed contacts with the different artistic traditions of al-Andalus beyond political hostilities from time to time.

Once again, al-Andalus and Java created a sanctuary for interconnecting religions and traditions through architectural ornamentation. On this process, anyone’s mutual communication can take place with enthusiasm and openness. It is an intercultural approach, even in medieval times.

This fact calls our attention to the German linguist Karlfried Knapp (1999): “Intercultural communication can... be defined as the interpersonal interaction between members of different groups, which differ from each other in respect of the knowledge shared by their members and in respect of their linguistic forms of symbolic behaviour.”¹⁹

A question arises.

Is this phenomenon still intact in current Toledo and Java? In other words, do we, citizens or outsiders, have tolerance and respect to ourselves at first, and then to others?

Whatsoever, at least, when the splendour of our common heritages starts to impregnate into our soul, mind and heart, there is always a space for our mutual communications. With this optimism, I continue my journey across the globe.

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- ⁴ *Wagner F.* Indonesia, the Art of an Island Group. New York: Crown Publishers, Inc. 1959. P. 98.
- ⁵ According to Suryo's article, "Traditional Javanese Mosque", published by *Romantika Arkeologia*, (i) the lowest roof represents Shariah, Islamic law, (ii) the second: Tariqah, a way to get Allah's blessing, (iii) the third: Hakikah, the spirit of a Muslim's good deed, and (iv) mustaka at the top. Maarifah to know Allah.
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Gauta: 2012 08 09

Parengta spaudai: 2012 12 04

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ANDALŪZIJA IR JAVOS SALA: ŠVENTYKLA, VIS DAR VIENTIANTIS RELIGIJAS IR TRADICIJAS?

S a n t r a u k a

Javos saloje, Indonezijoje, islamas tapo vyraujančia religija XVI a., bet animizmo, hinduizmo ir budizmo pagrindiniai bruožai buvo integruoti į sufijų išpažįtamą islamą. Sufijų „visuotinės tolerancijos“ suvokimas susiliejo su ikiislamiškąja kultūra ir įtvirtino „Dievo vienį“. Sufijai tikėjo, jog mečetės yra šventos, todėl ikiislamiškieji ornamentai tapo islamizacijos priemonėmis, sujungiančiomis vietinius ir islamo įsitikinimus bei formas. Siekiant tai įrodyti, buvo vertinamas ikiislamiškųjų Javos salos šventyklų ir mečečių ornamentikos tęstinumas. Lotoso žiedo motyvas buvo pasirinktas dėl simbolinės konotacijos ir estetinio grožio. Renkant faktinę medžiagą ir imant interviu Javos saloje, lotoso žiedo simbolis geriausiai patvirtino nuoseklų tęstinumą, įrodė Javos salos musulmonų pagarbą vietiniams simboliams ir kultūros paveldui. Paveldas ir tradicijos tyrinėta pirmiausia. Kadangi šiuo tyrimu buvo siekiama palyginti hinduistinę, budistinę ir islamiškąją architektūrą, kitas tyrimas buvo atliktas Toledė, Andalūzijoje (Al-Andalus, 711–1492). Šio regiono *La Convivencia* laikotarpis (kai taikiai sugyveno krikščionys, žydai ir musulmonai) yra išskirtinis religinės tolerancijos pavyzdys. Kaip tarpkultūrinis pavyzdys buvo pasirinkta dabartinė Santa Maria la Blanca šventovė. 1350 m. ji buvo pastatyta kaip žydų sinagoga krikščionių rajone, samdant musulmonų amatininkus, vadinamuosius mudecharus. Mudecharų stilius jungia romaniškąją, gotikinę ir islamiškąją architektūrinę ornamentaciją.

Javos salos ir Toledo hinduizmo, budizmo ir islamo ornamentikos tyrinėjimai turėtų paskatinti aktyvesnį tarpkultūrinį dialogą, pabrėžiant bendras paveldo sąsajas ir ieškant glaudesnio tarpreliginio bendradarbiavimo šiuolaikinėje konfliktų visuomenėje.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: Andalūzija, Javos sala, hinduizmas, budizmas, islamas, tarpkultūrinė komunikacija, paveldas.

KEY WORDS: Al-Andalus, Java, Hindu-Buddhism and Islam, Intercultural communication, heritages.

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